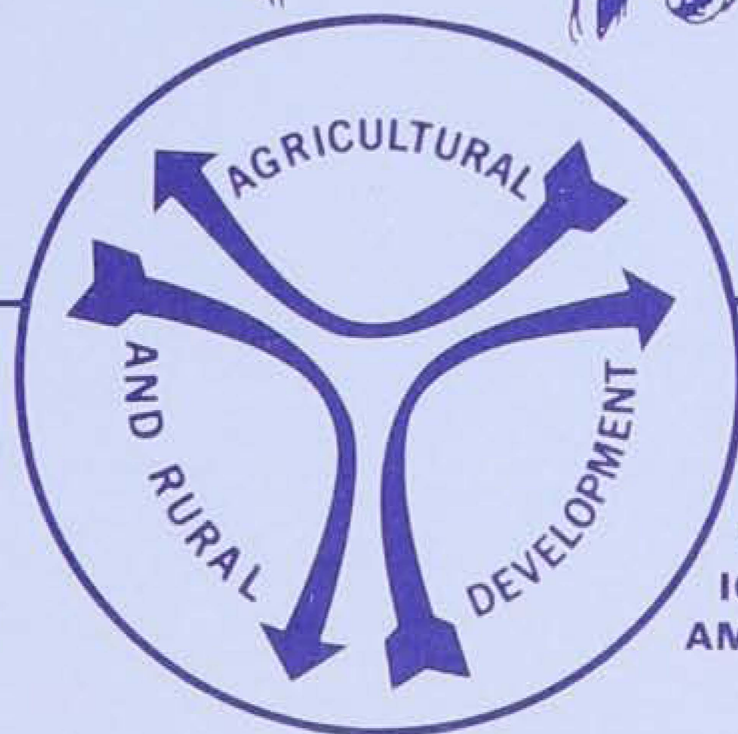


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Interorganizational Relations Among Development Organizations:

Empirical Assessment and Implications for Interorganizational Coordination



CARD Report 62

THE CENTER FOR AGRICULTURAL
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INTERORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS AMONG DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS:
EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERORGANIZATIONAL
COORDINATION

by

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This research was sponsored by the Iowa Agricultural and
Home Economics Experiment Station through Project 1883
in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Iowa
State University.

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ABSTRACT

This report examines cooperative interaction among development organizations in 16 Iowa counties. Several sets of organizational characteristics were found to relate to levels of interorganizational relations (IOR). Organizations that were well-established, prestigious, and perceived as being effective tended to report the most intensive interaction with other units. The presence of formalized rules and procedures was associated with more intensive levels of IOR. Organizations with less autonomy in funding and programming reported higher levels of interaction than did the more autonomous groups. Innovative organizations with broad service responsibilities also reported more intensive interaction.

Administrative attitudes were found to have important consequences for interorganizational relations. Administrators who expressed positive attitudes toward interagency activity, expressed a sense of influence over other elements in the county system, and felt that county residents supported their organization and its activities, reported the highest IOR. Increased levels of interagency communication and mutual awareness among development organizations were the most frequently mentioned benefits of IOR.

The importance of an administrator's orientation is stressed when attempts are made to identify other agencies that have a high potential for IOR. Finally, seven recommendations are made for interagency program development.

CHAPTER IV

The first section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the various methods of determining the relative humidity of air. It is well known that the relative humidity of air is a function of the temperature and the amount of water vapor present. The most common method of determining the relative humidity of air is by using a hygrometer. There are two types of hygrometers: the wet-bulb thermometer and the psychrometer. The wet-bulb thermometer consists of a thermometer bulb wrapped in a wet cloth. The temperature of the bulb is lowered by the evaporation of water from the cloth. The difference between the wet-bulb temperature and the dry-bulb temperature is a measure of the relative humidity of the air. The psychrometer consists of two thermometers: one with a dry bulb and one with a wet bulb. The difference between the two temperatures is a measure of the relative humidity of the air. Another method of determining the relative humidity of air is by using a dew point hygrometer. This instrument measures the dew point of the air, which is the temperature at which the air becomes saturated with water vapor. The relative humidity of the air can then be determined from the dew point and the dry-bulb temperature. The second section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the various methods of determining the absolute humidity of air. The absolute humidity of air is the mass of water vapor per unit volume of air. The most common method of determining the absolute humidity of air is by using a gravimetric method. This method involves weighing a known volume of air before and after it has been dried. The difference in weight is a measure of the mass of water vapor in the air. Another method of determining the absolute humidity of air is by using a volumetric method. This method involves measuring the volume of air at a known pressure and temperature, and then measuring the volume of the same air after it has been dried. The difference in volume is a measure of the mass of water vapor in the air. The third section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the various methods of determining the vapor pressure of water. The vapor pressure of water is the pressure exerted by water vapor in equilibrium with liquid water. The most common method of determining the vapor pressure of water is by using a manometer. This instrument consists of a U-shaped tube filled with a liquid. One end of the tube is connected to a container of water, and the other end is open to the atmosphere. The difference in height between the two liquid levels is a measure of the vapor pressure of the water. Another method of determining the vapor pressure of water is by using a thermocouple. This instrument consists of two wires of different materials joined at one end. The other ends of the wires are connected to a galvanometer. The voltage produced by the thermocouple is a function of the temperature of the junction. The vapor pressure of water can then be determined from the temperature of the junction and the voltage produced by the thermocouple.

The fourth section of this chapter is devoted to a discussion of the various methods of determining the latent heat of vaporization of water. The latent heat of vaporization of water is the amount of heat required to convert a unit mass of liquid water into a unit mass of water vapor. The most common method of determining the latent heat of vaporization of water is by using a calorimeter. This instrument consists of a container of water with a thermometer and a heat source. The heat source is used to heat the water, and the temperature of the water is measured. The amount of heat required to convert a unit mass of liquid water into a unit mass of water vapor can then be determined from the temperature of the water and the amount of heat required to heat the water. Another method of determining the latent heat of vaporization of water is by using a thermocouple. This instrument consists of two wires of different materials joined at one end. The other ends of the wires are connected to a galvanometer. The voltage produced by the thermocouple is a function of the temperature of the junction. The latent heat of vaporization of water can then be determined from the temperature of the junction and the voltage produced by the thermocouple.

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I. ROLE OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Introduction

Improving the quality of life in rural America is an increasing concern among rural residents. Pressures to deliver a wide range of public and private services at reasonable cost continue to mount as the population shifts to urban areas and smaller numbers of people scattered over larger areas are left to assume the financial burden of providing necessary services. Adequate support for services is difficult to provide where the level of economic activity is declining or where the number of professional and technically trained persons in local governments is small. As a result of these and other pressures, the need to develop cooperative inter-organization relations among agencies that provide public and private services in rural areas is becoming increasingly important for planners and administrators.

The need to examine the merits of interorganizational delivery systems is further intensified as a result of increased program specialization among both public and private groups, the categorical funding programs of the federal government, and the increase in the number of public and private organizations providing social and technical services. In partial recognition of the limits of single-agency programs to provide for the comprehensive needs of an area, the number of interagency coordinating groups has increased. Among the more familiar of these coordinating units are state central planning offices, regional planning commissions, county councils of government, community interagency councils, and informal ad hoc

coalitions of agency personnel. As a result of federal initiatives, coordinating units have been developed in areas of health (HEW-comprehensive health planning), law enforcement (Justice-LEAA), aging (HEW-Commission on Aging), low income (OEO and HUD-model cities), housing and urban development (HUD-701), resource development and conservation (USDA-RC and D), labor and manpower (Labor-CAMPS), and in the overall review of federal grants through state clearing house programs (A-95 reviews). Each of these interagency systems involves two or more organizations working together toward some joint purpose or broader objectives. In some cases agencies may exchange resources, information, staff, or clients in an interagency program. Even between agencies involved in coordinated programs, there may be efforts by one organization to interfere with or to block the activities of others, but these should be reduced through joint agreements between organizations.

Attempts to coordinate public service programs at the federal, state, substate, or local levels have proved ineffective in many instances [14,20,21]. These inefficiencies in the quality and quantity of services appear at times to result more from a lack of cooperation among specialized agencies than from the lack of funds or programs available to the organizations. Given the wide array of services available to the public and the fragmented nature of their delivery, attempts to improve delivery must focus on comprehensive planning with special emphasis on interorganizational cooperation and techniques for improving the cooperative programs.

Problem

Planning for comprehensive rural development requires an understanding of the formal organizations involved in delivering services and their willingness or reluctance to enter into interagency commitments with one another. The problems in building cooperative, interagency relations among development organizations need to be identified and remedies need to be sought for overcoming resistance to interagency programs if planners and administrators are to develop successful rural development programs.

Two important factors that influence an agency's willingness to participate in interorganizational activities are: (1) characteristics of the organization's structure and processes, and (2) administrators' attitudes, values, and beliefs about interagency cooperation [17]. We will examine the relationships between these two sets of factors and the intensity of interorganizational relations between agencies. We will examine whether the intensity of interaction between organizations is related to their: (1) reputational factors, (2) organizational complexity, (3) formalization, (4) autonomy, (5) output, (6) goals, or (7) administrators' attitudes and perceptions of interagency efforts. Some of the above factors such as organization image or administrators' attitudes may be subject to manipulation, but others such as organizational complexity or autonomy may not. It is important to understand all the factors that influence interaction whether they can be manipulated or not. Factors that can not be manipulated need to be recognized as structural barriers that may continue to limit an agency's involvement in interagency activities.

In summary, the purpose of this report is to identify which organizational and administrative factors are related to interorganizational relations and to explore administrative alternatives that might be used to increase interaction among development organizations. The organizational and administrative factors examined are viewed as independent variables or factors that cause changes in an agency's level of interorganizational relations.

Interorganizational Relations

Development organizations are characterized by a broad range of goals, concerns, and objectives that define their specific organizational missions. Many of these organizations attempt to operate as isolated units with each seeking to achieve its own goals independent of other groups. Some organizations cooperate with other units and share information, facilities, funds and personnel in an effort to achieve their own goals. Other organizations cooperate with other groups to improve the flow of services to the larger community. Some of the benefits of interagency cooperation may flow to individual organizations, but benefits also may flow to the larger communities and contribute to their general well-being. This latter occurrence happens when organizations participate in comprehensive development programs that go beyond the scope of their individual units and is the result of the combined efforts of an organizational network.

An important building block and one that is necessary for interagency coordination where two or more organizations work together to achieve an inclusive goal is agency interaction. Interaction as we use the term in

this report, refers to a wide range of contacts among organizations. Contacts may range from those of a cooperative nature to those involving conflict, but each type of contact reflects an interaction between two or more organizations. In this report we have chosen to focus on cooperative interorganizational relations rather than on those involving conflict because of our interest in improving the coordination among development agencies.

The following terms are used interchangeably throughout the report to reflect this focus: interorganizational relations, organizational interaction, and interagency relations. Throughout this report the terms "interagency" and "interorganizational" are used synonymously, even though agencies may be viewed as a subset of a larger class of organizations. Agencies are conceptualized as formal organizations providing a service for a set of clients. They may be either publicly or privately supported.

Interaction between organizations may develop for a variety of reasons. Units may work together to avoid duplication of effort, to minimize conflict, or to coordinate areas of common interest. Interaction is sometimes described in terms of organizational exchange, which is a voluntary activity between two organizations that has consequences for the realization of their respective goals and objectives [10]. Exchanges may include the flow of information, products, services, personnel, or other elements between units. Exchanges may serve both units involved by providing information about uncertain or changing environments, by

providing scarce resources, or as a mechanism for coordinating activities. Although we recognize that all interaction does not necessarily involve exchange, our discussion of factors that influence interaction will be developed around the idea of exchange. We have found this perspective useful for interpreting our data.

II. SAMPLE AND RESEARCH PROCEDURES

Sample Counties

Data were obtained through interviews with the top administrators in each of 167 public and private development-related organizations. The organizations in the study were drawn from 16 counties in Iowa. The counties were selected to represent some of the different types of social and economic problems encountered in the state. An attempt was made to include counties in which the distribution of rural and urban residence, of population size, of population growth and decline, of levels of family income were similar to those occurring in the state as a whole. A more complete discussion of the representative qualities of these sample counties is found in an earlier report [17].

Sample of Organizations

In each of the counties, 15 organizations were selected for study. Organizations were included if they met two criteria: 1) they were currently participating in, or offered a potential for participating in, development activities, and 2) they had county-wide responsibility in their programming. These organizations were determined through interviews with community resource development specialists, local rural development committees, and other individuals knowledgeable about the development process and activity. Organizations offering county-wide programs were determined by a review of the territory over which each is responsible. Organizations with programs limited to a single community were not included.

The organizations studied were categorized into three groups. These groups and the number of organizations in each are as follows: USDA agencies including the Agricultural Stabilization and Conservation Service (16), Soil Conservation Service (16), Cooperative Extension Service (16), and Farmers Home Administration (14). State and county agencies including welfare (16), forest service (5), conservation board (13), planning and zoning (6), employment (8), and community action agencies (6). Private associations including: rural electric cooperatives (9), Farm Bureau (16), bankers' associations (9), ministerial associations (6), and industrial development corporations (13). Industrial development corporations in the county-seat towns were included in the study even though it is questionable whether they always met the criteria of being county-wide organizations. Since industrial development groups often play an important role in county development, we were interested in the extent to which they participated in the larger development system.

Once the organizations had been selected, state-level administrators of county-based organizations were contacted. In all cases, they agreed to cooperate by sending a letter to their county offices informing the top administrators of the study and requesting their support. The researchers then mailed letters to the top administrator of each county-based organization describing the study and its objectives and asking for cooperation.¹

¹Some of the organizations in the study operated on a multi-county rather than on a county basis; employment and community action agencies are examples of this arrangement. When an organization was established on a multi-county basis, we interviewed the administrator in the sample county if there was an office located in the county, and we asked the administrator to respond only for that county, even though he had jurisdiction in other counties as well. If the office was located in an adjoining county and had jurisdiction for the sample county, we interviewed the administrator about the sample county.

Afterwards, the top administrator of each organization was informed that a questionnaire would be mailed in advance of a personal interview. Interviews were held with the top administrator of each organization. Top-level administrators were selected for interviewing because of their knowledge of the organization, its contacts with other groups, and because of their major role in decision making.

The mail questionnaire from which data in the report were taken obtained descriptions of the staffing arrangements and other dimensions of internal administrative structures. Interviews were conducted at the administrator's place of work by a trained interviewer. These interviews covered three broad content areas: 1) administrators' attitudes toward their work and their organization's role in county development efforts; 2) questions about the relationships between an agency and other county development groups; and 3) a series of questions probed the activities and process of county Rural Development Committees.

Measurement

Organizational and Attitudinal Properties

Organizational and attitudinal properties presented in this report were developed from data collected in the questionnaire and interview process. Because the number of response categories for some of the measures was large, we often collapsed these responses into approximately equal categories of "high," "medium," and "low" for purposes of analysis. Procedures used in the development of the IOR measure are described in

the following section. Measurement of the independent or "causal" properties is presented as these properties are introduced in the following chapters.

Interorganizational Relations

One method for determining the extent of interaction between organizations is to measure the amount of resources committed to the interaction. We will refer to this resource investment in organizational interaction as the intensity of interorganizational relations or simply IOR. The measure used in this report was developed over several years at Iowa State University. Although no reference was made to intensity of interaction in early work by Klonglan, Dillman, Wright, and Beal, they used three items similar to those used in this report [6]. Each of the items in the measure used in this report were used in an earlier study by Klonglan and Paulson [7]. At that time, however, each item was treated as a specific dimension. No scaling was done on the eleven items they used to measure interaction. In a paper prepared just prior to this report, Klonglan, Paulson, and Rogers described the development of an 8-item scale of intensity of interaction [8]. No reference, however, was made to the common underlying dimension of resource investment that helps give this measure its theoretical grounding.

Rogers has tested and described the properties of this multiple-indicator measure [18] and has shown that the IOR index is appropriate for use among public service agencies. This same IOR index is used in this report. The top-level administrator in each organization was asked a series of questions about his agency and its contacts with other groups

in the county. The six questions asked are listed below and ordered in terms of the intensity of organizational interaction involved in the relationship.

1. Are you acquainted with the director or person in charge of _____ in your county? (lowest intensity)
2. Have you met with the director of _____ at any time during the past year to discuss the activities of your respective agencies?
3. Is _____ on your organization's mailing list or is your organization on their mailing list?
4. Has your organization shared, loaned, or provided resources to _____ at any time during the last two years or has their organization shared, loaned, or provided resources to your organization?
5. Does anyone from your organization serve on boards, councils, or committees of _____? Does anyone from _____ serve on your boards, etc.
6. Does your organization have any written agreements with _____? (highest intensity)

These six questions represent a sequential or stepwise measure of organizational investment in interorganizational relations [18]. The first intensity measure is director acquaintance. It represents little resource investment and may arise from planned encounters or from informal or chance meetings. A second measure is director interaction. Administrators may confer with one another about the business of their respective organizations with some degree of regularity. This interaction is more specific and the contacts are apt to be less ad hoc.

The third measure of IOR is information exchange between organizations. Information exchanges may involve newsletters, activity summaries,

or a general accounting of organizational operations and orientations. Resources must be expanded to produce and consume information involved in the exchange.

Exchanging resources constitutes the fourth measure of IOR and occurs as organizations seek needed inputs. These resources may include material objects (e.g., clients, finances, equipment), and non-material assets such as power, prestige, ideas, or information.

The presence of overlapping boards of directors is the next most intensive level of organizational interaction. Joint boards are a form of cooperative decision making. Each organization permits members of the other organization to participate in its decision making functions.

The most intense measure of IOR is written agreements between organizations. This activity might be viewed as an example of temporary coalitions or fusions between organizations. All resource exchanges and joint programs offer the potential for written agreements between the parties in an exchange. Formalizing arrangements by putting them in written form reflects a high level of resource investment. Written agreements increase an organization's chances of receiving support from a second organization, but they also institutionalize reciprocal obligations and costs associated with joint activities by providing structure and continuity to the relationship.

Each "yes" response to a question was scored 1, and the positive responses were summed to form an index ranging from 0 to 6. A high score represents a greater level of resource commitment. The index scores

used in this report are the average intensity scores reported by each organization. The organization's intensity scores associated with all contacts were summed and then divided by the number of possible contacts in the particular county in which the organization was located. The resulting mean score ranged from 0.00 to 4.93 and was considered to be a more appropriate indicator of IOR because it adjusts for variation in the number of possible groups with which interaction might take place.

Statistical Tests

In presenting the findings, the mean level of interorganizational relations associated with different levels of selected organizational and attitudinal properties is reported. The objective is to examine whether variations in the level of interorganizational relations are associated with differences in the organizational and attitudinal properties examined.

The statistical ratio "F" tests for the differences in the variation between groups and variation within groups. A statistically significant F-ratio (denoted by*) indicates that differences in levels of interorganizational relations among the respondents choosing different response categories are unlikely to have occurred by chance. Significant overall variation does not necessarily imply significant differences between any two categories of a variable.

There were isolated cases where administrators failed to answer questions or to provide the needed information. When this occurred, the data was coded as missing. The amount of missing data varies slightly from one question to the next, therefore, the number of cases upon which the calculations were performed also varied. The number of respondents answering each item is presented in the tables.

III. ORGANIZATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS AND INTERORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS

Two important factors in understanding relations among development organizations are the character of their internal arrangements and administrators' attitudes toward interagency cooperation. In this chapter, we will examine the relationship between selected structural and functional characteristics of development organizations and their levels of interaction. Among the organizational characteristics examined are the reputation, complexity, formalization, autonomy, output, and goals of development organizations.

Reputational Characteristics

A major factor in the development of interagency relations is administrators' perceptions of other groups with which they interact. Definitions of the roles and responsibilities of various groups and perceptions of their relative prestige and effectiveness appear to be important preconditions for relations among organizations. The definitions and perceptions influence the way in which organizations are approached, which organizations will take initiative, and the type and intensity of resource exchange among organizations.

Length of Service

One factor that may affect an organization's reputation and consequently its relations with other groups is its length of service in an area. Established groups may be reluctant to recognize or develop relations with new agencies whose roles and responsibilities are not well

defined. New groups may be accepted more quickly and become part of interagency systems when their programs are not perceived as threatening to established patterns. Information about other units is a necessary precondition for interaction [22].

In addition to the reluctance of groups to interact with unfamiliar units, some new organizations may find it difficult to participate because of the amount of resources required for agency interaction. Newer organizations may not have had time to develop a resource base sufficient for participation in interagency efforts. Recent origin also may preclude intensive contacts with other groups if new organizations lack experience or stability and, therefore, doubts are raised about their ability to fulfill commitments to other groups. Length of service was measured by the number of years an organization had been operating in a county. Organizations were divided into three categories representing 20 year periods of time.

Organizations varied in the length of time they had been operating in their respective counties. The dates of their origin ranged from the early 1900's for some to the 1970's for others. Most of these organizations began operating between 1931 and 1950. Data in Table 1 show that length of service in the county was associated in a consistently positive direction with IOR scores. Newer organizations tended to have less intensive contacts with other organizations than did older, more well-established units.

Prestige

A second characteristic that may affect an organization's role in interagency activities is its prestige. Organizational prestige refers to an opinion about the relative image or reputation of an organization [3]. A favorable image (prestige) held by relevant groups may increase the likelihood that units will be able to secure necessary resources and support from other groups in their area. Prestigious organizations may be sought out by other organizations to sponsor or lend legitimacy to activities and programs. Prestigious organizations also tend to initiate more interaction with other units than do less prestigious units [23].

Each administrator was asked to rate the prestige of other organizations in his county on a 10-point scale.¹ He was not asked to rate his own group. The prestige ratings supplied by administrators were summed and averaged within each county. The prestige score, therefore, represents the average ranking assigned an organization by other administrators in its county. Organizations were divided equally into three prestige categories for purposes of this analysis.

Table 1 shows a positive relationship between organizational prestige and intensity of IOR activity. More prestigious groups reported more intense levels of interaction than did groups receiving medium or low ratings by other administrators.

Effectiveness

Effectiveness refers to the degree to which an organization is achieving its goals. Effective organizations tend to be better accepted and may be

¹ Administrators were instructed as follows: "An organization that ranks high on the prestige scale is one that many persons and organizations want very much to be associated with and one which is very well thought of in the community or area in which it works. Please score the organization according to its prestige."

Table 1. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Reputational Characteristics of Organizations

REPUTATIONAL CHARACTERISTICS	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Length of Service</u>			
Before 1931	2.64	34	5.66*
1931-1950	2.32	85	
1951-1970	2.08	45	
Total		164	
<u>Prestige</u>			
Low	2.04	53	8.56*
Medium	2.40	55	
High	2.86	48	
Total		156	
<u>Effectiveness</u>			
Low	1.97	49	9.28*
Medium	2.29	59	
High	2.86	48	
Total		156	

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

be approached to participate in interagency efforts because of the confidence and assurance that other administrators may associate with the organization's past performance. Organizations involved in interaction also may be more effective in their operations when additional resources are obtained through interaction. A major component of agency interaction is the exchange of resources (i.e., personnel, finances, information) that may contribute to goal attainment. It follows, therefore, that organizations with greater cooperative interagency contacts will have greater access to resources and greater effectiveness. Each administrator in our study was asked to rate the effectiveness of other local organizations in achieving their goals. The four response categories provided administrators ranged from "very effective" to "not effective." Each organization's effectiveness scores provided by other administrators were summed and divided by the number of raters. These average scores then were arbitrarily divided into three categories of approximately equal size.

Intensity of interorganizational relations was related in a positive direction to perceived organizational effectiveness. Organizations that reported the lowest interaction received the lowest effectiveness ratings, while those judged most effective reported the highest interaction with other organizations.

Summary

The data reveal relationships between each of the three factors used to reflect organizational image or reputation and intensity of organizational interaction. Organizations that have operated in the

county for a long time, that are prestigious, and that are perceived as being effective reported higher levels of interaction with other units in the county.

It is possible that new organizations may not possess sufficient resources nor be stable enough to seek out joint activities with other groups. Furthermore, they may not be invited to participate with other groups for some of these same reasons. Interorganizational activities typically require additional resources beyond those normally consumed in the operation of the organization itself.

Established organizations may have developed mechanisms for approaching other groups and may receive recognition because of their more central positions of the interorganizational field (county). Prestigious units appear to be sought out for interaction and, conversely, interacting units tend to be ranked as being prestigious. These results suggest the possibility that an organization's public image is improved by interacting with other units. Including prestigious organizations in an interagency effort may lend legitimacy to new undertakings and attract other organizations with additional resources. Participation of organizations perceived as effective may be solicited to ensure the success of interagency efforts. Perceptions of effectiveness may be based on past experience with the organization in question in other interactions. It also is possible that the more intense interaction by some organizations may have increased resource flows to other organizations making goal attainment more possible [13].

Organizational Complexity

Organizational complexity refers to the degree of structural differentiation with the unit. An organization's internal structural arrangements may facilitate or impede its relations with other groups. Some patterns of communication and decision making may be more adaptable and workable when organizations are involved in negotiations with external groups than are other patterns. Units with a large number of levels may be less flexible in responding to changes from outside the organization but they also seem to have a greater capacity for implementing change within their own units [1]. In the following section, we will examine several indicators of organizational complexity in relation to intensity of interorganizational relations.

Number of Administrative Levels

The number of hierarchical levels of authority through which communications and directives must flow reflects the degree of vertical differentiation in an organization. A larger number of administrative levels (greater vertical differentiation) may require assigning interorganizational liaison duties to specific authority positions and thus ensure some degree of continuity and legitimate structure for relations with other units. A high degree of vertical differentiation, therefore, may facilitate organizations that seek to initiate and sustain a high intensity of IOR. Although vertical units may be less flexible in responding to changes from outside the organizations, they seem to have a greater capacity for implementing changes within. This may be especially important where

organizations are less likely to respond to horizontal pressures to interact than to vertical instructions to work with other units.

Each administrator was asked to list the titles of all paid personnel in their local office, both part-time and full-time. Five hierarchical levels were identified and summed to form an index. These levels included the top administrator, assistants to the top administrator, the professional staff, secretarial and clerical staff, and skilled and unskilled workers.

Table 2 indicates that 13 percent of the units have only one administrative level and that 4 percent had five administrative levels. The data also show that the mean IOR score was higher in organizations with a larger number of administrative levels. Organizations with four levels tended to have slightly lower IOR scores, however, than did those with five levels. There were significant differences in IOR between the five levels. Organizations with smaller as well as larger numbers of levels tended to commit more resources to interorganizational activities.

Number of Positions

The number of different job specialties in an organization may be used to reflect horizontal differentiation or internal diversity. Horizontal differentiation has been shown to influence the rate of innovation within organizations. These higher rates of innovation or change may increase an organization's need for resources and in turn organizations may seek these resources from outside groups. A greater number of different job specialties within an organization increases both the probability of change occurring within a unit and the amount of interorganizational contact necessary to secure resources to support these new activities [1].

Table 2. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Organizational Complexity

ORGANIZATIONAL COMPLEXITY	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Number of Administrative Levels</u>			
One	1.82	19	
Two	2.36	34	
Three	2.66	47	
Four	2.55	38	
Five	2.62	6	
Total		144	2.37*
<u>Number of Positions</u>			
1-2 Positions	2.12	47	
3-5 Positions	2.67	65	
6 or more Positions	2.44	31	
Total		143	3.75*
<u>Number of Personnel</u>			
Single paid employee	1.50	34	
2-5 employees	2.53	72	
6-10 employees	2.72	30	
11-37 employees	2.17	108	
Total		164	9.80*
<u>Size of Budget/Employee Ratio</u>			
Low	2.52	29	
Medium	2.58	57	
High	2.33	53	
Total		139	0.43

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

The numbers of different occupational titles of persons employed in the local office were reported by each administrator and summed to form an index. We grouped the organizations into three nearly equal categories consisting of those with one or two occupational specialties, those with three to five specialties, and those with more than six specialties.

Organizations with one or two positions and those with six or more positions had the lowest levels of interaction. There were significant differences in IOR levels among the three categories of organizations with the middle category having the highest IOR.

Number of Paid Personnel

Organizational size is an important factor related to relations among organizations [7]. Larger agencies are likely to have more personnel available for interagency efforts than are smaller agencies. When interagency efforts are defined as "extra" activities, administrators may be slow to enter into relations with other units unless they have sufficient personnel to cover these activities.

Administrators were asked to list the number of paid staff who were employed either full or part time. Four categories were created, the first consisting of those with one employee, another with two to five employees, six to ten employees, and finally, organizations with eleven to forty-five employees.

Twenty percent of the organizations had a single employee and 66 percent had more than 10 employees. Intermediate size organizations reported the highest level of interaction with other units. The smallest

and largest organizations had the lowest levels of IOR. This suggests a curvilinear rather than a linear trend in the relationship between size and interaction.

Budget/Employee Ratio

The annual budget reflects the amount of resources an organization will have available for conducting its programs. Larger budget-employee ratios may permit more administrative flexibility in allocating resources for participation in interagency activities. Larger budgets, however, also may be associated with more restrictive constraints on the allocation and control of finances. Organizations with larger budget ratios may have a greater capacity for contributing to joint efforts, but as a result of their potential for greater investment, they may seek a greater measure of control over the use of pooled funds or activities and, therefore, may not be sought out for resource exchanges. The only previous research on this topic shows a negative relationship between expenditures and interaction [7].

Administrators were asked, "Approximately how much were your organization's total expenditures for the last calendar or fiscal year?" The expenditures reported included the cost of operating the office and monies paid out to clients either through loans or direct assistance. The range of expenditures in the sample were from less than \$5,000 to more than \$500,000 thousand dollars. To obtain a budget/employee ratio, the previous year's expenditures were divided by the number of paid employees for that year. The resulting figures were divided into three categories, for purposes of analysis.

The data in Table 2 show that the budget/employee ratio was not associated with the intensity of interaction between organizations in the sample.

Summary

These findings as a whole do not support generalizations about a linear relationship between organizational complexity and intensity of interaction. A higher degree of vertical differentiation (one measure of complexity) may permit specialized attention to interorganizational affairs and lead to greater interorganizational activity but only to a certain point, after which the impact is reduced slightly. Horizontal differentiation and size of staff tended to relate to the intensity of IOR in a curvilinear rather than linear fashion.

Organizational Formalization

This section examines the degree to which the use of rules and standardized procedures influence relationships between organizations. Highly formalized organizations make extensive use of written records and standardized policies. Less formalized organizations tend to rely more on verbal commitments that are casual, situational, or informal.

Highly formalized organizations may be better able to conduct interorganizational relations because of the degree of internal control associated with their more routinized internal arrangements. The use of rules and standardized procedures within an organization may affect its capacity to enter into interaction with outside groups [11]. In the

following section three indicators of formalization will be examined: number of rules, frequency of reporting, and specificity of rules.

Number of Rules

This measure refers to the degree to which rules and procedures are written and codified. A large number of written rules and operating procedures may predetermine the kind of decisions that are made and the speed with which they are implemented. These factors are especially crucial when organizations attempt to participate in interagency systems which often are subject to rapid changes in the configuration and domain of the participating agencies. Standardized policies and procedures for internal activities also may influence relations with outside groups. They may reduce uncertainty and facilitate interaction with other organizations, but they also may slow decision making and inhibit interagency efforts. Limited evidence suggests that more formalized organizations have higher levels of interaction [7].

Administrators were asked whether they had a written office procedure manual, written job descriptions, written policies, or whether they had any other written policies or guidelines. The number of different procedures that were written for each organization were counted and added.

Just over 20 percent of the organizations reported that none of the three types of procedures were written out. About 47 percent of the organizations reported that all three procedures were written out. Codification of rules and procedures was positively associated with differences in the mean intensity of interorganizational relations as shown in Table 3.

Although the causal order of events cannot be specified, it appears that extensive written rules and procedures may be developed in organizations that are involved in interagency relations to provide stability and regularity in their activities. The use of formalized procedures makes it possible for organizations to become involved in several simultaneous interactions. These procedures may increase the predictability and control of the internal workings of organizations that might otherwise be disrupted when they interact with other units (e.g., receive external inputs such as information, resources, personnel, or new clients).

Frequency of Reports

Another indicator of organizational formalization is the frequency with which lower administrative levels are required to report to their superiors. Accountability for action has been shown to influence an organization's involvement in the interorganizational system [2]. Organizations in which local administrators are closely monitored often have specific objectives and activities that are reported and assessed on a daily or weekly basis. Frequent supervisory review may reduce uncertainty and ambiguity at operating levels, but it may also limit the autonomy of local administrators. Organizations that have more general goals and objectives, engage in diverse activities and programs, and are evaluated at less frequent intervals may have more latitude in initiating interaction with outside groups. Many of these organizations may prefer to remain independent of other units. Where this is the case, closer supervision may be associated with more intense interaction. The administrators

Table 3. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Organizational Formalization

ORGANIZATIONAL FORMALIZATION	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Number of Rules</u>			
No written procedures	1.56	36	
One written procedures	1.80	20	
Two written procedures	2.30	18	
Three written procedures	2.70	79	
Four written procedures	2.60	14	
Total		167	9.38*
<u>Frequency of Reports to Higher Levels</u>			
Less than twice a year	1.68	32	
Less than once a month	1.85	5	
Monthly	2.25	87	
Weekly	3.23	27	
Daily	3.21	10	
Total		151	12.63*
<u>Specificity of Reports</u>			
General oral review	1.68	21	
General written review	2.14	21	
One or more general statistics	2.28	15	
Detailed statistics	2.57	98	
Total		155	6.09*

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

were asked, "How often are you required to submit reports to your next higher administrative level?" Five response categories ranging from "less than twice a year" to "daily" were used.

Twenty percent of the organizations reported to higher levels less than twice a year and 6 percent reported daily. Monthly reports were reported as being given by just over 50 percent of the organizations. Organizations that reported on a weekly or daily basis had the highest intensity of IOR. The amount of interaction was significantly lower for organizations that reported monthly and especially those that reported less than twice a year.

Specificity of Reports

Reports may vary in the detail required. Reports may be submitted on standardized forms (e.g., recording counts, quotas, number of cases) when activities reoccur with some degree of regularity. General reports may be submitted in instances where organizational activities are directed toward a larger goal or purpose and when the methods and procedures are not prescribed in detail. Administrators who are required to submit specific reports and records for purposes of evaluation, and whose contacts with outside groups are not closely monitored, may be reluctant to participate in efforts out of fear of diverting their energies and resources away from those specific activities that serve as indicators of their performance. To determine the specific nature of reporting, administrators were asked, "How specific are the records or reports which you submit?" Four response categories ranging from "general oral review" to "detailed statistics" were used.

Just over 60 percent of the organizations indicated that they must submit detailed statistical reports to the next higher administrative level. Organizations with these more detailed reporting systems had the highest levels of interaction. The reporting of detailed statistics tends to focus attention on specific types of organizational behavior. It is possible that one of the types of behavior being evaluated is inter-organizational or involves an interorganizational component. The submission of specific reports, however, also may work to discourage IOR when the organization's program goals are specific and narrow and they are being closely monitored.

Summary

Formalization of organizations is associated with higher levels of IOR. This finding is consistent with earlier work [7]. Structured rules and operating procedures may reduce ambiguity and provide a more clearly defined context within which an organization may allocate resources to interagency efforts. Relations with outside groups may be covered in the operating guidelines and may be facilitated because of the precision involved in the organization's operations. Frequent and detailed reports of organizational activity also may include a record in interagency contacts. Where this is the case, administrators will have additional reason for seeking out other agencies for joint projects. Finally, the frequency and detail of reports does not appear to reduce agency participation in interagency programs even though they may be difficult to document and report.

Organizational Autonomy

This section examines the relationship between four indicators of administrative autonomy and interorganizational relations. These four indicators include: 1) organizational decision making, 2) accountability, 3) funding sources, and 4) program sources. The scope of an administrator's authority and the kind of administrative structure in which he operates may have consequences for his organization's relations with other groups. Some administrators possess more autonomy or freedom to make decisions about activities with other organizations than do others. Do organizations with more autonomy avoid interagency commitments with their associated costs and constraints on independent action?

Autonomous organizations may encounter fewer obstacles to involvement in IOR activities because there will be fewer levels of decision making to traverse and fewer chances that traditional interagency patterns will interfere with new interaction. Autonomous organizations, however, may resist interaction when they do not need additional resources and when minimizing outside control is an important value. Previous research shows that organizations would not enter into relations with other groups until they were assured that their autonomy would not be reduced [4, 12].

In this section the relationship between the four indicators of organizational autonomy and intensity of interorganizational relations reported in our study will be examined.

Organizational Decision Making

A local agency's independence with respect to the larger organizational structure of which it is a part may be an important factor in its interagency

activities. Organizations that can determine their internal operations and are less dependent on their environment may wish to avoid many of the constraints that develop in interorganizational relations. Maintaining a level of freedom for pursuing their own specific goals and activities and for minimizing commitments to other groups may be an important factor in the development of relations with other organizations. Higher levels of local decision making may mean more flexibility for responding to what are often the ad hoc demands of interagency activities, but this may also create a reluctance to relinquish any of the organization's capacity for independent action that might be reduced as a result of IOR.

Administrators were asked about their ability to determine policy and make decisions about several different areas of local operations. These included: determining new services, dismissal of personnel, salary determination, promotions, creation of new departments, alteration of work responsibilities, training methods, creation of new jobs, and the authority to spend unbudgeted money. The number of areas in which the administrator possessed authority to make decisions was summed and used as an index of the organization's relative autonomy. In summarizing the results, we grouped into three nearly equal categories those who endorsed none or one item, two to four items, and five to nine items to form low, medium, and high categories.

The data in Table 4 reveal no relationship between the index and the mean level of interorganizational relations.

Table 4. Mean level of interorganizational relations by organizational autonomy.

ORGANIZATION AUTONOMY	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Organizational Decision Making Index</u>			
0-1 Items	2.03	51	
2-4 Items	2.50	66	
5-9 Items	2.27	50	
Total		167	2.61
<u>Accountability</u>			
Members	1.46	17	
Single authority	2.21	108	
Multiple authority	2.89	41	
Total		166	8.99*
<u>Number of Funding Sources</u>			
One	2.13	105	
Two	2.47	31	
Three	2.89	21	
Total		157	4.91*
<u>Number of Program Sources</u>			
0-2 Sources	1.88	70	
3-5 Sources	2.33	60	
6-8 Sources	3.01	37	
Total		167	14.81*
<u>Number of Sources of Pressure to Implement Programs</u>			
Low (0-1)	1.87	69	
Medium (2-5)	2.45	71	
High (6-8)	2.92	21	
Total		167	11.30*
	Some of Great Pressure	Little or no Pressure	
<u>Individual Sources of Pressure to Implement Programs^a</u>			
	Mean Score	Number	F-Value
National level	2.70	74	0.24
State level	2.57	81	2.04
District or area level	2.85	48	0.84
Advisory council	2.72	67	6.14*
Local county level	2.62	71	3.00
Operating committees	2.84	33	0.29
Membership	2.44	38	1.17
Clients	3.21	25	3.04
Overall Mean	2.29	167	

*The F value is significant at the .05 level.

^aComparison between organizations that indicated "some or great" pressure and those that reported "no or little" pressure from each source.

Accountability

Another factor that may affect organizational interaction is the distance between the local unit and its ultimate source of authority. In some organizations, the local unit is governed by a local board; in others there are district or area administrators; while some answer to state and federal administrators. Participation in interagency efforts and the level of resources committed to such efforts may, in many instances, depend upon approval from higher administrative levels. One or more of these higher offices may be located outside the geographical area and may not approve requests generated at lower levels to increase interagency contacts. Authority structures may, however, include higher administrative units which have broad administrative responsibilities and which may encourage or require interaction at the local level to broaden the scope of organizational impact and effectiveness. One example of higher level encouragement is a memorandum sent from the USDA in Washington to state USDA agencies encouraging them to coordinate their rural development activities and set up state rural development committees. Some of the state USDA councils sent memos to county-level USDA units encouraging them to do the same. Where this occurs, local organizations may increase their IOR because of the demands of higher administrative levels.

To determine organizational accountability, each administrator was asked, "To what person or groups of persons are you directly responsible (i.e., to whom do you report as a higher authority)?" The three categories included "members," and higher administrative levels which might involve a state or federal level or some combination of both.

Most of the organizations (65 percent) reported to only one other unit. This might be an area, state, or federal level. Nearly one fourth of the organizations reported to more than a single administrative unit.

The accountability structure in which organizations operated was related to the intensity of IOR. Organizations that were accountable to two or more "higher" units reported the highest interaction. Diverse expectations from different groups may require greater involvement in cooperative interagency efforts. Expectations may exceed an organization's capacity for action, and as a result, coordinated efforts with other units may be selected as a means for meeting these expectations and achieving broader development goals.

Number of Funding Sources

One of the major problems that organizations face is how to secure the necessary financial resources. Funds may be provided by a number of different suppliers (i.e., units at different administrative levels and by other organizations in the area). Multiple funding may create ties to more than one decision-making body. Organizations that receive funds from several sources may have a greater obligation to coordinate their efforts with these different funding sources. Fulfilling the conditions of such relationships, in many instances, may mean more participation in cooperative interaction.

Administrators were asked to list each of the sources of organizational revenue. These included federal, state, and county governments; organizational fund raising; the community chest or united fund; service fees, member dues; donations; and any other sources.

Most of the organizations in the study (67 percent) indicated they received funds from a single source. Units that reported two or more funding sources had the most intense levels of interaction. Organizations that draw from a wider range of funding sources may have to engage in higher levels of contact with other groups to secure resources, but these additional contacts also may be necessary to fulfill the expectations emanating from the different funding sources. Furthermore, some organizations may receive funds as a result of interagency projects that require interaction among the units.

Number of Program Sources

Organizations may develop programs and services in response to instructions or requirements of a variety of groups. Programs may be internally generated, they may be developed and sent down from higher administrative levels, or they emerge through interaction with other groups. Frequency of horizontal interorganizational contacts has been shown to relate to contacts (vertical) with higher administrative levels [7]. Less autonomous units, therefore, tend to report higher levels of IOR.

The number of different program sources that administrators reported as initiating new programs for their organization was summed. These initiating sources included the national, state, district, or area, county levels, local advisory councils, members, operating committees, and clients.

Results

The number of different sources from which programs were initiated and directed was positively related to IOR. Programs developed by units

outside the local administrative unit may leave it with less autonomy in deciding its own activities. When this occurs, the intensity of contracts in the horizontal system increase. Increased IOR (horizontal) on the part of the local unit may be used to offset pressures from outside units or it may be used to aid the organization in meeting the expectations of the various groups giving direction.

Number of Sources of Pressure

While outside units may either make suggestions or give direction about a local organization's programming efforts, they may vary in the amount of pressure they bring to bear on their suggestions or directions. When units receive directions and pressure from several different sources, they may have to engage in interaction with other units to ensure the success of new programs or to integrate their efforts with the activities of these other groups.

To measure the extent of pressure from outside sources, the number of program sources that administrators reported as exerting "some" or "great" pressure on their organization was counted.

Administrators who mentioned the largest number of different program sources of pressure also reported the most intense levels of IOR. Organizations with "none" or "single" source of pressure reported the lowest IOR. The least autonomous units (measured in terms of number of pressure points) engaged in the highest levels of interaction with other groups in their area.

Individual Sources of Pressure

Some outside units may be more influential than others in their efforts to impact the programs of a local unit. But is there any relationship between the pressure (and its corresponding lack of autonomy) from different initiating sources and the level of IOR reported by a local unit? Higher administrative levels may focus new programming efforts on routine organizational activities and on existing areas of responsibility. Initiating sources closer to the unit may feel that a broader organizational approach, one that includes cooperation with other organizations, is needed. This might be the case where clients participate in program development.

The impact of pressure from different program sources was determined by comparing the mean IOR scores of organizations reporting "some" or "great" pressure from each individual program source with organizations reporting "little" or "no" pressure.

Results

State administrators were reported most frequently by respondents as a source of pressure to implement programs. This level was followed by national and county units. Clients were mentioned least frequently as a source of programming pressure. The largest differences between levels of pressure and interaction occurred among agencies that reported pressure from advisory councils. Citizen inputs into organizational programming significantly effected levels of IOR when it exerted pressure on the organization to implement programs. The relationships between level of pressure and IOR were not significant for other external units.

Summary

This section examined several indicators of organizational autonomy and their relationship to intensity of IOR among development organizations. Although administrative decision making was not related to interaction, organizations that possessed multiple ties with outside groups in terms of funding, accountability, and programming (lower autonomy) consistently demonstrated more intense IOR. Greater autonomy may mean less reliance on other groups in the area and greater control over organizational goal setting and programming. Organizations with greater autonomy reported the lowest levels of IOR. These units did not seek additional resources and apparently were less inclined than others to interact and create new dependencies.

Output Characteristics

Activities or services that organizations perform may influence the nature and degree of their contact with outside organizations. Some services may require more intensive contacts with outside organizations than do others. Organizations that provide services for clients may interact with other organizations through the referral process. Some organizational activities may inherently involve other units as receivers or indirect transmitters of the service. Other organizational activities may require little or no contact with outside groups (e.g., direct loan or technical aid). This section examines the type and scope of organizational activity as they relate to levels of interaction.

Number of Services

Organizations that offer several services may need to interact with different networks of organizations, each of which are associated with a particular service offered. Organizations with a narrower range of services may have less reason to interact with other units because of their more specialized interests.

Administrators were asked to indicate whether or not each of the following services was provided by his organization: financial assistance, referrals to other agencies, formal educational services, mass media education services, planning assistance, technical assistance, and assistance for attracting new industry. The positive responses were counted to form an index of the number of services.

The data in Table 5 show a positive relationship between the number of services an organization offers and its IOR intensity. Offering a wide variety of services appears to increase an organization's need for interaction and exchange; it also may increase the number of interdependencies an organization shares with other groups in its environment.

Types of Services

The type of service that organizations offer may have a direct effect on the nature and quantity of relations with other organizations in their area. Some services may be widely shared, requiring coordination to avoid duplication and to provide effective coverage. Other services may be directed to specific client systems and may not require the participation of other organizations. In order to refer clients to other agencies, some

Table 5. Mean level of interorganizational relations by output characteristics.

OUTPUT CHARACTERISTICS	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Number of Services</u>			
1-2 Services	1.36	34	
3-4 Services	2.42	84	
5-6 Services	3.06	41	
Total		159	32.73*
<u>Number of New Programs</u>			
None	1.79	51	
One	2.43	49	
Two	2.56	33	
Three or more	2.51	31	
Total		164	5.26*
<u>Type of Services^a</u>	<u>Offered</u> <u>N</u>	<u>Not Offered</u> <u>N</u>	
Planning assistance	2.54 (123)	1.58 (41)	26.72*
Referrals	2.57 (121)	1.54 (45)	33.87*
Mass media education	2.57 (114)	1.69 (53)	26.52*
Financial assistance	2.27 (79)	2.31 (88)	0.05
Technical assistance	2.78 (78)	1.89 (86)	31.53*
Attract new industry	2.49 (70)	2.15 (97)	3.96*
Formal education	2.89 (44)	2.08 (123)	19.11*
Overall Mean	2.29 (167)		

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

^aComparison of organizations that offered service with those that did not offer service.

information about their programs must be exchanged. Technical assistance, for example, may be provided to clients on the condition that they work with other organizations at the same time or welfare aid may be provided on the condition that the recipient undertake certain types of training. Instead of summing the services offered as in the above measure, we examined the relationship between each service and IOR.

Some services were associated with more intense interaction than were others. Table 5 lists each type of service and the mean IOR score of organizations that offered that service and of those that did not offer the particular service. The F-value indicates whether there was a significant difference in IOR scores between organizations in each service category. Organizations that offered formal education and technical assistance had the highest interaction. Planning assistance, referrals, mass media education, and industrial development were associated with lower IOR scores. Those supplying financial assistance had the lowest level of interaction.

Number of New Programs

The number of new programs adopted by an organization over a period of time often is used as an indicator of organizational change or adaptation. New programs may grow out of internal pressures to reorganize or to expand. New programs may involve interaction with other groups to avoid duplicating efforts and to provide for a more efficient allocation and use of existing facilities and personnel. New programming may require consultation and cooperation with outside organizations that possess

experience and expertise needed for the development of these new activities. Interagency planning also may generate internal organizational change as a result of actual or projected activities. The number of new programs has been shown to relate in a positive direction with interorganizational contacts [1]. Administrators were requested to report the number of new programs or services added in the last five years. The programs were divided into four categories ranging from "none" to "three or more."

The number of new programs adopted by an organization was related to the intensity of interorganizational activity. Some of the new programs adopted might have been the result of joint organizational efforts or might have led to new interorganizational activity. Program adoption and success may be facilitated by consultation and aid from other organizations. In some cases, interorganizational cooperation might even be a requisite for the success of a new program.

Summary

Organizations that offered a broad range of services and that had a high level of service and program innovation over the past five years reported the highest levels of interorganizational contact. Multi-purpose organizations may seek contacts with other groups to facilitate service delivery or program coordination. Organizations that are introducing new programs or services may seek participation in joint programs to insure that their new programs become integrated into the existing service delivery system. The number and type of outputs appear to be important factors influencing the level of interorganizational activity.

Organizational Goals

Organizational goals are statements about the aims or purposes of an organization. Organizations may be single- or multi-purposed and their objectives may be specific or general. This section examines the relationship between the clarity of goals, the type of goals among development organizations, and the intensity of their interorganizational relations.

Goal Clarity

The goals of some organizations may be very clearly defined. Other groups may operate under very general mandates and are allowed to define their own specific goals and objectives. If interorganizational contacts are defined as a regular part of organizational activities, the presence of well-specified objectives and operating procedures may require more interaction and consultation with other organizations. Interagency activities in some instances, however, may not be defined as an important part of an organization's responsibilities. Administration emphasis may rest instead on internal program requirements, many of which may not be perceived as requiring the cooperation of other organizations. Few, if any, goals may be explicitly stated as requiring collective activity.

Administrators were asked, "In terms of the goals of your organization, as you see them, do you feel they are very clearly, somewhat clearly, somewhat unclearly, or very unclearly defined?"

Administrators who described their organizational goals as unclear (Table 6) reported the lowest intensity of interorganizational relations. Organizations with clearly defined goals reported significantly higher levels of interaction.

Table 6. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Clarity and Type of Organizational Goals

ORGANIZATIONAL GOALS	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>How are Your Goals Defined</u>			
Very unclear	0.89	1	
Somewhat unclear	1.11	10	
Somewhat clear	2.39	46	
Very clear	2.37	110	
Total		167	4.99*
<u>Major Organizational Purposes or Goals</u>			
Improve the life of the farmer	2.40 ^a	33	
Conserve natural resources	2.54	25	
Serve the disadvantaged	2.38	17	
Improve the life of rural people	2.25	13	
Help establish industry	1.92	11	
Other goals	2.19	68	
Overall Mean	2.29	167	.72

*The F-value is significant at .05 level.

^aMean IOR score for organizations endorsing each major organizational purpose or goal.

Types of Organizational Goals

Some types of organizational purposes or goals may require higher levels of interaction because of the nature of efforts required to achieve them. Some goals necessarily involve the operations of other organizations because the scope of their activities requires a variety of resources and expertise. Other goals may be such that little interaction with other groups is required.

Administrators were asked to list their major organizational purposes or goals. Only the five most frequently mentioned organizational purposes or goals were used in this analysis. The number of responses to the other purposes or goals was too small for drawing any conclusions, therefore, they were collapsed into a single category. The data in Table 6 reveal no differences in levels of IOR between organizations reporting different goals.

Organizations that reported their goals were to conserve natural resources reported the highest level of interorganizational activity. Administrators who reported a goal of helping establish new industry reported the lowest intensity of interagency activity. The level of interaction reported by organizations indicating each of these goals except industrial development and improving the life of rural people were above the mean IOR score.

Summary

This chapter examined the relationship between six characteristics of development organizations and the intensity of interaction found among

these units. A number of these characteristics were found to be associated with intensity of IOR among the organizations in our study.

The reputational characteristics of organizations including the organization's length of service in the county, its prestige, and its perceived effectiveness were related in a positive direction with intensity of IOR. Those organizations which were well-established, prestigious, and perceived as being effective tended to report the most intensive interaction with other units.

Three of the four indicators of complexity were related to cooperative interaction in a curvilinear direction. Organizations with larger and smaller numbers of hierarchical levels, of personnel, and ratios of budget/employees reported the greatest intensity of interorganizational contacts.

Formalization related to IOR intensity. Units that had a large number of written rules and procedures, and that were required to submit frequent reports of specific activities reported the highest intensity of interorganizational relations. A conclusion is that the presence of standardized operating procedures within an organization may increase an organization's predictability and control over programs and may enable a unit to enter into a larger number of external commitments which would otherwise be difficult to undertake.

Several indicators of organizational autonomy related to IOR. The scope of administrative decision making at the local operating level was not related to IOR, but organizations which had multiple authority, multiple funding, and multiple programming (low autonomy) reported more intense

interorganizational relations than did organizations reporting to a single source of authority, receiving operating funds from a single source, or receiving programming directions from a relatively small number of sources.

The number and kind of organizational outputs both related to intensity of interorganizational relations as did changes in programs and services. Units that provided a variety of services reported more intense IOR than did those which offered a smaller number or a single service. Certain types of services were associated with higher levels of intensity than were others. Units with higher degrees of program innovation reported more intense levels of cooperative interaction. Organizations with clearly defined goals and those in which administrators defined their objectives as extending beyond their own individual organization's specific programs reported more interaction.

IV. ADMINISTRATORS' ATTITUDES AND PERCEPTIONS OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL RELATIONS

Interaction between organizations involves administrators or other personnel assigned to represent each of the units. In the previous chapter, selected structural and functional characteristics within organizations were shown to influence intensity of interorganizational contacts. These characteristics were measured for the most part by asking administrators to report on factual matters (e.g., number of, or does your organization have?) Three of these characteristics involved judgements by administrators about the prestige and effectiveness of other units, and about the clarity of their own unit's goals. In this chapter administrative perceptions and feelings about a wider range of events will be explored. A primary concern will be the question: "Do attitudes and perceptions of organizational administrators affect the intensity of interaction in which their unit is involved?"

The attitudes and perceptions discussed in this chapter include: administrators' attitudes toward cooperative relations among organizations, perceived organizational control in the county, perceived support of local residents, administrative preconditions for participation in IOR, and administrative assessment of past interagency experiences.

Attitudes Toward Cooperative Relations Among Organizations

Previous research on the relationship of administrative attitudes and IOR could not be found, but based on other general studies of attitudes and behavior, it is expected that administrators' feelings about interagency

programs will influence their organizations' level of involvement with other groups. Administrators' who indicate they are committed to inter-agency programs and are less concerned about how their own agency benefits through joint activity will be expected to report higher levels of interaction among their organizations.

Table 7 lists five statements about cooperative relations among organizations. Administrators were asked to evaluate these items using five response categories ranging from "definitely true" to "definitely false." In cases where no one used a response category, the category was dropped from the analysis.

Respondents were divided nearly equally between agree and disagree on the question about whether development organizations should cooperate in a unified effort. There were no significant differences among administrators who agreed or disagreed with this statement. Most of the administrators agreed that collective action would yield better results than individual action and those who agreed also reported the highest levels of interorganizational relations. Nearly all administrators felt that their organizations should be involved in joint development projects. There was a positive relationship between this feeling and intensity of contacts with other groups. Nearly all administrators felt that residents should expect cooperation among development organizations. Those who endorsed this statement as "definitely true" reported the highest IOR. A majority of administrators did not agree that maintaining and building their own organizational programs always came first. Those administrators who felt that their organizations came before larger development activities reported the lowest levels of interaction with other groups.

Table 7. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Administrator Attitudes Toward Cooperative Relations Among Organizations

ATTITUDES TOWARD COOPERATIVE RELATIONS AMONG ORGANIZATIONS	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Organizations which participate in development activities should co-operate in a unified effort.</u>			
Definitely true	2.41	24	
Mostly true	2.39	57	
Neither true nor false	2.48	27	
Mostly false	2.24	41	
Definitely false	1.79	15	
Total		164	1.20
<u>Collective action by public or private groups will yield better results in our county development efforts than will the efforts of several groups which act independently of one another.</u>			
Definitely true	2.53	83	
Mostly true	2.16	71	
Neither true nor false	1.69	4	
Mostly False	1.10	5	
Total		163	2.96*
<u>Although joint development projects may never aid our organization directly in achieving its special objectives, we still have a responsibility to contribute to the larger effort.</u>			
Definitely true	2.54	79	
Mostly true	2.19	80	
Neither true nor false	1.11	4	
Total		163	3.36*
<u>Residents in our county have the right to expect that the major groups will co-operate together in development activities.</u>			
Definitely true	2.52	73	
Mostly true	2.16	87	
Neither true nor false	1.62	5	
Total		165	3.30*
<u>Maintaining and building our programs, not participating in larger development activities, is what we are paid for.</u>			
Definitely true	1.88	16	
Mostly true	2.13	37	
Neither true nor false	2.05	25	
Mostly false	2.75	43	
Definitely false	2.50	38	
Total		159	3.45*

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

Administrators who attached a high degree of importance to collective interagency efforts, who felt positively about the relevance of interagency cooperation in development activity, who recognized a larger "community" interest, who felt that client groups expect interagency cooperation, and who held a positive view about participating in development activities, tended to report their organizations were engaged in the most intense levels of organizational interaction. Commitment to interorganizational activity on the part of the administrators appears to be an important factor in their willingness to contribute organizational resources and to support development activities on a larger, more inclusive level.

Perceived Organizational Control and IOR

Organizations are dependent upon other groups in their area to the degree that they must rely on them for information, clients, funding, or facilities. Giving up some measure of control to other organizations in exchange for important resources may be a necessary action if the unit is to survive or maintain its current level of operation. Conversely, the organizations that provide resources or services to other units may gain power or influence over the other unit's activities as a result of this transfer. Influential organizations may be expected to commit more resources to IOR because of their more favorable bargaining position. Administrators from organizations with relatively low degrees of influence, however, also may report intense interaction as they try to secure necessary resources from outside groups. In this situation, they may be exchanging control over programs for needed resources [17]. Less powerful organizations

also might choose to remain isolated and pursue an independent course of action. It is not clear from previous research just which of these two explanations is more valid. In this section four statements about organizational power (and its counterpart--dependence) and their relationships to interorganizational relations will be examined.

In Table 8 the data show that administrators who indicated that their organizations' activities were influenced by the larger system of which they were a part (more dependent) reported more intensive IOR than did those who disagreed with this statement. Organizations with strong vertical linkages to a larger system (e.g., state or federal) reported greater investments in interaction with other county-level units. Units which were not part of vertical administrative structures extending outside the local area but were more self-contained, tended to report less intense interaction. Linkage to higher administrative levels, especially federal, often are accompanied by requirements for interagency cooperation. Locally based units, on the other hand, tend to have more local control and may be more self-sufficient in their operations.

Respondents who felt that their organization could influence decisions made by other organizations in their county (were more powerful) reported the most intense levels of interaction. Organizations whose administrators reported they have more influence and control tended to enter into interagency relations more frequently than the less influential units. Their position of control may provide a more advantageous position from which to conduct relations. Less influential organizations may avoid interaction, especially where their powerlessness is obvious and they risk losing more than they gain through interaction.

Table 8. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Perceived Organizational Control.

PERCEIVED ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Our organization's activities are influenced by the larger groups of which we are a part.</u>			
Definitely true	2.60	42	
Mostly true	2.35	61	
Neither	2.42	25	
Mostly false	2.08	26	
Definitely false	1.27	10	
Total		164	3.63*
<u>Our organization has the ability to influence decisions made by other organizations.</u>			
Definitely true	3.09	15	
Mostly true	2.43	72	
Neither	2.26	37	
Mostly false	1.97	32	
Definitely false	1.35	9	
Total		165	5.08*
<u>Our organization works independently of other groups.</u>			
Definitely true	1.64	22	
Mostly true	1.70	43	
Neither	2.56	22	
Mostly false	2.46	54	
Definitely false	3.03	24	
Total		165	7.73*
<u>Our organization can act without regard for other groups in the county.</u>			
Definitely true	2.10	22	
Mostly true	1.98	52	
Neither	2.33	14	
Mostly false	2.47	46	
Definitely false	2.82	30	
Total		164	3.51*

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

When organizational objectives do not require involvement with other units, administrators may have little reason to engage in interaction. Administrators who reported that their organizations worked independently of other groups (were autonomous) reported less intensive interaction by their unit than did those who disagreed with this statement. Organizations whose programs are not tied closely with other groups are not as likely to be bound by reciprocal obligations growing out of these involvements and, therefore, are less susceptible to pressure for interaction.¹

Administrators who felt that their unit could act without regard for other organizations (autonomous) reported the lowest intensity of interaction. Participation in joint programs with other units means increased commitments and additional constraints on independent action. Units that had greater autonomy reported the lowest interaction. Although autonomy may facilitate the attainment of specific organizational goals and objectives, it may reduce a unit's level of participation in development efforts with other groups.

Perceived Support of County Residents

Organizations do not operate in a vacuum; they must be responsive to pressures from their social environment. Positive attitudes or support by the general public, in addition to support by those who are directly affected by organizational activities, can increase an organization's potential for survival. Organizations that are perceived by the public as making positive contributions through their programs and services (assuming

¹This question also may be appropriately viewed as a test of the validity of our IOR measure. Higher dependency is shown to be related to high intensity of IOR.

administrators have an accurate perception of how the public feels) may be more readily accepted and invited to participate in interagency efforts by other units. Table 9 presents two administrative perceptions about support by county residents and relates each to intensity of interorganizational relations.

Administrators were asked if county residents were willing to serve on a voluntary basis in their organization. Administrators who agreed that residents would serve in their organizations (Table 9) were from units reporting the most intensive levels of interorganizational contact. Organizations involved in exchanges with other units (i.e., were a more integrated part of the county system) were those units whose administrators reported the greatest acceptance by local residents.

Administrators who felt that their organization's method, techniques, and staff orientations were supported by the public reported more intensive IOR than did those indicating less public support. Public approval may be influenced by the increased visibility associated with IOR or by the cooperation demonstrated by interacting units.

Administrative Preconditions for Participation in IOR

Administrators may expect that certain preconditions be met before they are willing to commit resources to interagency activities. These preconditions may involve some clarification of the roles and responsibilities that each of the participating units would be expected to assume. They may include specification of the fiscal arrangements and obligations, an understanding of the relationship of the new effort to their current

Table 9. Mean Level of Interorganizational Relations by Administrative Perceptions of Support by County Residents

PERCEIVED SUPPORT OF COUNTY RESIDENTS	MEAN IOR SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>County residents are willing to serve on a voluntary basis.</u>			
Definitely true	2.67	50	
Mostly true	2.26	71	
Neither	2.12	27	
Mostly false	1.97	8	
Definitely false	1.49	6	
Total		162	2.68*
<u>County residents support our methods, procedures, and staff orientations.</u>			
Definitely true	2.73	29	
Mostly true	2.37	103	
Neither	1.70	15	
Mostly false	1.80	12	
Definitely false	1.64	4	
Total		163	3.52*

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

activities, and some agreement about how recognition will be given for their effort [15]. This section examines the relationship of intensity of interaction to the number and types of assurances required by administrators. Each respondent was asked to respond "yes" or "no" to a series of preconditions that were derived from earlier work [15].

The number of assurances required was not associated with the intensity of IOR. Some assurances were mentioned more frequently than were others (Table 10). A larger proportion of the administrators felt clarification would be needed about the goals of interagency effort. The next most frequently mentioned item was information about the costs involved. Other concerns included responsibility for program implementation, public recognition for organizational contributions, and the manner in which administrative authority was to be distributed.

Administrators that needed the most clarification about interagency activities tended to report the least intensive levels of IOR (Table 10). Reluctance to join interagency programs, however, may be reflected by the amount of caution that an administrator displays with respect to committing his organization to joint efforts. Only the comparison between administrators who need information about the distribution of public recognition and those who do not require this information was shown to be significant. None of the other assurances tended to distinguish between high and low interaction among organizations.

Administrative Assessment of Past Interagency Experiences

The results of previous interagency activities may influence an administrator's involvement in future interagency efforts. Previous

Table 10. Mean level of interorganizational relations by administrative preconditions for participation in IOR.

ADMINISTRATIVE PRECONDITIONS FOR PARTICIPATION IN IOR	MEAN IOR	SCORE	NUMBER	F-VALUE
<u>Number of assurances required for participation</u>				
Low (0-2)	2.60		32	
Medium (3-4)	2.34		81	
High (5-6)	2.02		42	
Total			155	2.51
<u>Kind of assurances for participation^a</u>				
	<u>Required</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Not Required</u>	<u>N</u>
Similarity of program goals	2.34	(138)	2.00	(23)
Detailed knowledge of costs involved	2.27	(134)	2.43	(26)
Clear specific responsibility in program implementation	2.35	(108)	2.16	(53)
Distributed public recognition	2.10	(85)	2.51	(76)
Some program administrative authority	2.12	(72)	2.43	(89)
Other assurances	2.26	(15)	2.45	(22)
<u>Overall Mean</u>	2.29	(167)		

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

^aComparison of organizations that required each assurance with those who did not.

interagency activities may influence an organization's willingness to contribute manpower and other resources, especially if these activities were not perceived as rewarding or beneficial.

Administrators were presented a list of statements describing possible benefits and costs of IOR and were asked to indicate by a "yes" or "no" which benefits had come to their organization as a result of participating in previous interagency activities. In a similar manner, administrators were asked to indicate the disadvantages (e.g., costs) that resulted from their participation in interagency activities.

Table 11 presents a series of benefits attributed to IOR in the order of frequency with which they were endorsed by administrators. The mean intensity of IOR associated with those endorsed each benefit is reported, as well as the score of those who indicated that it was not a benefit. The most frequently mentioned of the benefits of IOR was "improved information exchange." A majority of the respondents reported this item and other similar items including, "providing a sounding board for ideas" and "increasing our awareness of other organization's objectives." A common theme among these items was the benefit of increased communication. The least frequently mentioned items referred to a reduction of competition and conflict between organizations.

Table 12 shows the mean intensity score for organizations endorsing each of the perceived costs of interagency activities as well as the score of those indicating that it was not a cost. The most frequently mentioned cost was, "Participation revealed organizational weaknesses." Increasing

Table 11. Mean level of interorganizational relations by administrative assessment of past interagency experiences.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PAST INTERAGENCY EXPERIENCES ^a	MEAN IOR SCORE				F-VALUE
	Endorsed	N	Not Endorsed	N	
Improves exchange of information	1.86	(91)	1.37	(6)	1.57
Provides a sounding board for ideas	1.88	(90)	1.14	(7)	4.28*
Increases awareness of other organizations' objectives	1.90	(86)	1.32	(11)	3.82
Helps involve community influentials	1.98	(83)	1.00	(14)	15.38*
Enables organizations to take a united stand	1.88	(82)	1.56	(15)	1.58
Increased organizational effectiveness	1.89	(80)	1.55	(17)	1.91
Provides better services for clients/members	1.96	(77)	1.32	(18)	7.37*
Reduces possibility of one unit being played off another	1.95	(72)	1.51	(25)	4.16
Reduces competition	1.95	(55)	1.73	(40)	0.69
Reduces interest group threats	1.94	(47)	1.72	(48)	1.27
Reduces pressures from superiors	2.11	(31)	1.69	(65)	4.30*
<u>Overall Mean</u>	2.99	(167)			

*The F value is significant at .05 level.

^aComparison of scores for organizations endorsing the benefit with those that did not claim the benefit.

Table 12. Mean level of interorganizational relations by administrative assessment of past interagency experiences.

ADMINISTRATIVE ASSESSMENT OF PAST INTERAGENCY EXPERIENCES	MEAN IOR SCORE		F-VALUE		
	<u>Endorsed</u>	<u>N</u>	<u>Not Endorsed</u>	<u>N</u>	
Participation reveals some of our weaknesses	2.17	(17)	1.83	(72)	1.91
Results do not justify time spent	2.05	(16)	1.86	(73)	0.55
Takes too much time away from main purpose	1.84	(15)	1.90	(73)	0.10
There were no incentives to participate	2.01	(11)	1.87	(77)	0.21
There were attempts to influ- ence our operations and goals	2.66	(9)	1.80	(79)	3.76
Participation reduced indepen- dence	2.08	(3)	1.88	(85)	0.13
Threat to our effective operation	1.40	(3)	1.91	(85)	0.85
<u>Overall Mean</u>	2.29	(167)			

communication among agencies meant that organizational ideas and plans might be prematurely disclosed. Other costs of interagency activities related to the amount of time spent in these activities. A number of administrators felt that these activities took too much time away from their central organizational purpose, and others felt that the results obtained from these efforts did not justify the time spent. Few administrators felt that their internal operations or independence had been threatened in past interagency activities.

A larger proportion of administrators listed benefits from previous interagency activities than listed costs. Administrators listing costs did not report significantly lower levels of IOR in their units than did those reporting no costs. There was no association between any of the costs identified and IOR activity. Organizations encounter costs and benefits in all interagency activities. They will continue to be involved in IOR as long as these activities provide, or have a potential for providing, benefits for the individual organization or the larger community or both.

Generally, administrators who expressed positive attitudes toward interagency activity, expressed a sense of influence over other elements of the county system, and felt that county residents supported their organization and its activities, reported the highest IOR. Administrators who required fewer preconditions for participation in interagency systems reported the highest interaction. Increased levels of interagency communication or mutual awareness among county development organizations was the most frequently mentioned benefit of IOR.

V. IMPLICATIONS

In this chapter some practical implications of these results for administrators involved in rural development planning will be considered. The following recommendations are based largely on the results of our analysis of 167 public and private organizations located in 16 different counties. This study constitutes one of the largest comparative analyses of interorganizations conducted to date. The recommendations have grown from this and previous examinations of this data [17,18,19].

One additional point needs to be made about the measurement of IOR used in developing these recommendations. The data used in this analysis reflect the intensity of organizational interaction reported by individual agencies. Some of this interaction involved exchanges between two units and some involved participation in interagency projects. Only a limited amount of information about interagency systems (reports of past costs and benefits is the single instance of this type of information) was presented. And it was assumed, therefore, that information describing the full range of interaction into which units enter might be more helpful in analyzing interaction patterns and could be used to identify why certain organizations avoided interaction with other units and why others were more heavily involved in joint activities.

In this section three different approaches to suggest methods for improving interagency cooperation will be used. First, the data provides important clues that can be used to help identify which organizations are most likely to participate in interagency activities, and which organizations,

although not presently involved, might be brought into the system. Second, the results suggest several potential problem areas that might be avoided when creating new or improving existing interagency programs. Finally, the results suggest some areas in which educational efforts might be designed to help overcome the natural resistance to interagency programs.

Identifying Organizational Potential for IOR

In each county there are numerous public and private organizations that have resources which could be important in a comprehensive development program. Among these organizations are those that have recently expanded their programs into the development arena and have changed their organizational mission, and those new groups that have been formed to meet changing needs in the area. These new organizational resources need to be identified and located if they are to be used. Because of their origin, these groups are not likely to be involved presently in interagency projects, but they could provide important contributions to a development effort.

In an earlier examination of these organizations, it was found that nearly all the agencies which reported they were not presently involved in rural development activities also indicated that they should become involved [17]. Identifying these organizations may take additional effort, since they are apt to be less visible and are less likely to part of a vertical (extra-county) network. The most obvious examples of this type of organization are private associations that exist in many counties, including medical associations, ministerial associations, bankers

associations, and other private groups with specialized interests in the well-being of individuals in their county. These groups could be invited to participate in general development efforts in which they might not ordinarily become involved.

Discussions with organizational administrators often reveal how they feel about interorganizational programs. This information may be useful when attempts are made to increase IOR or to increase the number of agencies involved in an interagency program. Administrators who express positive feelings about interagency efforts, even where their own agency's structural arrangements might constrain investments in IOR, can be expected to be more receptive to the need for cooperation and lend additional support to these efforts.

Problem Areas in Establishing IOR

There are several findings in our data that suggest problems in building or improving interagency programs. One of these findings is that organizations presently involved in IOR tend to have higher prestige and to report greater power or control in their relations with other units in the area. These results suggest a problem for interagency cooperation because it may be difficult to secure cooperation among units of unequal power or strength. In the absence of a central regulating unit (council or staff), concerns about being controlled by stronger organizations, about losing autonomy, and about being co-opted become of central importance. Combining organizations of unequal power, however, may not be a problem if there is some protection for the weaker

units. Attention must be given where there are units involved of unequal power to prevent the stronger ones from dominating the less powerful groups. If protection is not given, the only alternative may be for the weaker units to withdraw their support, assuming this is an option they may choose.

In addition to the clustering of prestigious units and units with more power, there also tends to be a clustering of units along functional and administrative lines. The USDA agencies, the social service agencies, and the land-use agencies were each found to cluster together in terms of their patterns of interaction [19]. Although there were some contacts between clusters, the predominate interaction patterns appeared to occur within organizational clusters. This clustering may become a problem when each of the clusters develops its own programs rather than working with other groups in approaching a common problem. The clustering of organizations also suggests difficulties in crossing boundaries of in-group versus out-group feelings, and of communicating problems and solutions across clusters.

The data also suggest that there may be special problems when attempts are made to involve either the very small or the very large and complex organizations. The smaller, less complex units may not have the necessary resources for IOR activity including manpower, staff time, or finances. They may not have specific personnel to assign for liaison duties and may have greater problems maintaining a stable and consistent input into IOR. These organizations also tend to be less formalized,

and, consequently, may have greater problems trying to deal with uncertainty which may increase as interaction increases. Larger, more complex units, on the other hand, tend to be more autonomous and may feel less need to enter into interagency programs. When they do participate, it may be with the stipulation that they will exert a major influence and will expect a larger share of the benefits.

Because of their autonomous nature, locally based organizations (those without extra-county ties) will probably be more difficult to draw into interagency activities. Where there is a need to involve a specific local unit or private association, attention will have to be given to specifying the pay-offs associated with a joint program that might go to the agency. Those units which have been instructed to participate in interagency programs may be less interested in benefits than those not so instructed.

In constructing new interagency programs or in improving existing ones, it is important to recognize the value placed on organizational autonomy. Joint programs will have to be created so they do not threaten the control which agencies have over their own programs. One way to do this is to design programs so that joint activity is unique to the project rather than an extension of the activities of any of the organizations involved. A special funding arrangement could be set up so that it does not interfere with current programs of any of the cooperating agencies [5].

The data show that single-purpose organizations tend to invest a smaller number of resources in interorganizational relations than do

multi-purpose organizations. Single-purpose organizations may have less need to interact because of their narrower program focus, their lower need for additional resources, and their smaller commonality with other groups. More success might be achieved in building interagency cooperation by working with multi-purpose organizations.

A special problem can be expected when administrators are "organization-centered" as contrasted with "system-centered." Although it is easier to find administrators who put their own agency first on every issue, and define development in terms of their own agency's mission, there are other administrators who hold more of a "system" view and define development as a comprehensive process involving several agencies, each of which might have a small part in the total approach. It is with the latter administrators that a planner could expect to find the greatest acceptance of interagency programs.

Educational Efforts

Administrators and others responsible for developing interagency systems will need help to map out the relevant organizations in their area. Care needs to be given not to eliminate potentially relevant organizations on the basis of the present consensus or lack of consensus about their respective domains. Identification of relevant organizations might be accomplished by listing all organizations that have important resources, related programs, or staff with needed expertise [9].

Opinions about which units should be involved in development can be changed and in some instances may need to be modified. There is a great

need for improving communication between organizations, even if this only involves providing accurate information about services each organization offers, to whom do these services go, and at what cost.

Secondly, some training should be helpful for small, less well-financed organizations to show how interagency programs do not necessarily draw off limited resources, but in fact might make more resources available, through special grants or other interagency funds. These smaller units can be shown that they have important resources to contribute in addition to staff time and finances. They might also provide for the use of facilities, equipment, and support by members or by clients.

An exploration of the reasons why organizations resist involvement in interagency programs may reveal a fear of losing autonomy, loss of public recognition, or other more direct costs [9]. Program changes designed to reduce these impacts both in fact and in perception may be needed.

Third, as with other efforts to identify power actors, those responsible for interagency planning need to be aware of the organizations which are most central to the development process, those whose roles and operations are most likely to affect other units, and those organizations which because of their centrality, have direct access to the large number of groups in an area. In earlier analyses we showed which of the organizations in this study were the most central in terms of their contacts with other groups in the county [19]. A fairly simple sociometric technique could be used to reveal central organizations, cliques or clusters, and isolates. Following this identification, efforts could then be

directed toward working with the central organizations, developing new and possibly larger clusters, and trying to integrate the isolates.

Fourth, an important concern to all organizations is what benefits will flow from the interagency project. Benefits are present in all interagency programs, but they may not be recognized, or more importantly, they may not be distributed in an equitable manner to the member agencies. An important finding here is that IOR was not perceived as detracting from interorganizational effectiveness but instead related in a positive direction with IOR. The concern that involvement in IOR will detract an organization from its original mission and cause it to be less effective does not appear to be the case.

Fifth, some attention needs to be given to helping planners and other administrators (both of whom often are trained intra-agency techniques) understand that organizations have different expectations about interagency programs and that they have different requirements for participating. We found that several administrators needed clarification and assurances about five to six of the preconditions we examined. Clarification needs to be given the respect to interagency goals, costs, division of labor, recognition, and authority. It is necessary, therefore, for interagency coordinators to clarify all of these dimensions as well as to discuss these concerns with prospective member agencies.

Sixth, attention needs to be given to how to change the attitudes and opinions of administrators who do not hold positive views about interagency programs in instances where this is important. A training

effort might be developed to broaden administrators' perceptions of rural development, to help them better identify the scope of the development problem in their area, to understand the interrelated nature of development problems, and to emphasize the positive aspects of inter-agency programs.

One final point needs to be developed in this training effort. Although attitudes and opinions held by administrators are important determinants of interaction, recognition also must be given to the fact that idiosyncratic behavior of administrators is only part of the reason why organizations interact or fail to become involved in interagency systems. An equally, if not more, important reason is the structural and processual limits associated with organizations which also facilitate or constraint IOR.

Conclusion

A major premise throughout this report has been that organizations working together will be more effective in meeting local needs than each organization working independently of others on its own programs. Although this premise may and should be questioned, there seems to be some evidence to support its validity. Using this premise, we have attempted, therefore, to examine the relationship of structural and functional properties, and of administrative perceptions and attitudes with levels of interorganizational relations, which are viewed as basic building blocks of interorganizational cooperation.

There are other properties that also may affect interagency relations including those of the larger social, economic, and political environment in which organizations operate, and those of the organizations task environment including its clients, suppliers, and regulators. The impact of the type of interorganizational system (i.e., centralized vs. non-centralized) on the level of IOR was not considered. This is another important area of analysis [9]. Instead only two problem areas out of all those that might potentially affect IOR have been subjected to close examination. Hopefully, in the future, additional research will systematically examine other important determinants of IOR and map out the total set of factors relevant for understanding levels of interorganizational relations.

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