ABSTRACT
        A review of the literature on coordination between
organizations tested the assumptions that coordination is "good,"
that coordinated efforts are more effective than the efforts of
individual organizations, and that various coordination strategies
work equally well. The literature review revealed that the
development of the coordination concept was affected successively by
the philosophies of utilitarianism, altruism, administrative
rationality, and citizen participation. "Coordination" can be defined
as a process in which organizations use internally created or
externally mandated decision rules to deal collectively with a shared
environment. The elements coordinated (at the appropriate level) may
include information, clients, program development, and resources.
Numerous linkage mechanisms and models for coordinating exist.
Coordination is affected by both subjective and objective
facilitators and inhibitors. The consequences of coordination have
rarely been assessed. Different audiences have different success
criteria, and different models of coordination have different
consequences. The research on coordination has been inadequate,
dominated by assumptions favoring coordination. Longitudinal studies
have been rare and few studies of the private sector have been made.
Materials guiding practitioners in coordination are also few and
usually inadequate. Research is needed on contextual effects, on
structural interests, and on rules for structure formation.
(Author/PGD)

Assessment of the Nature and Impact of Coordination Between Organizations:

Summary of a Research Network's Findings

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Preface

Coordination between organizations and agencies in the public and private sectors has received considerable research attention for several years. Calls for increased coordination come from state and federal governments and from clients and administrators. It is almost taken for granted that coordination is "good" and that one coordination strategy will work about as well as another. Unfortunately, there are many questions yet to be answered about coordination and the outcomes from it.

A research network, or interest group, was formed in 1977 under the auspices of the North Central Regional Center for Rural Development. Its purpose was to assess the available knowledge about coordination and to prepare summaries of key results and research needs. This report is the summary; it summarizes what the research network deemed to be the most relevant and significant research. The key questions considered included the role of alternative philosophies of coordination, coordination as a process, antecedent facilitators and inhibitors, consequences, methodology typically used to study coordination, applied materials for practitioners, and recognition of the importance of networks and policy sectors. Implications of the findings are discussed for practitioners and for specialists.

A companion report (Research Needs on Interagency Coordination) suggests what the research network believes to be important facets for

further study. This publication also is available from the North Central.
Regional Center for Rural Development.

The Authors

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ASSESSMENT OF THE NATURE AND IMPACT OF

COORDINATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONS

Introduction

During the last several years, coordination between organizations
and agencies in the public and private sectors has increasingly been
defined as desirable. Calls for increased coordination come from state
and federal governments, clients, and agency administrators. It is
almost always taken for granted that coordination is "good," that co-
ordinated efforts will produce greater impact than when organizations
work alone, or that one coordination strategy will work as well as
another. Are these assumptions accurate? Research that provides "hard
data" on the positive benefits of coordination is difficult to find.
Furthermore, there appears to be little appreciation for the range in
available coordination styles. For example, would clients and con-
sumers of services prefer that organizations such as schools, hospitals
and the social service organizations compete for their business? Does
coordination sometimes only mean that the participating organizations
use this process to "divide up the turf" and legitimize each other's
organization?

The purpose of our research during the past year was to assess the
scientific and applied literature on coordination. We hoped to identify
some underlying principles of coordination that are characterized by a
degree of certainty, to identify gaps in knowledge, and identify

priorities for future research. We developed an extensive bibliography
of the literature during our research. To maximize our efforts, we
developed a list of priority questions and issues and concentrated our
efforts on one or more of these. Meetings were held during 1977-78
and drafts of manuscripts read and critiqued. The primary purpose of
the present publication is to present a summary of the key results and
conclusions reached by the research group.

Key questions considered

We selected several key questions to organize our research and guide
our analysis. These questions were selected because they have relevance
for scientists and practitioners alike. Some of the key issues and
questions that are considered in each of the chapters of the larger mono-
graph are presented in Table 1. The following procedure will be used
here when presenting the key results. First, we will briefly indicate
why these questions and issues are relevant. Second, we will present
the key results and conclusions reached by the interest network. Summary
or integrative statements will be indicated in the text with an asterisk
(*). In other words, we are presenting the information that we consider
to be the most important, reliable, and up-to-date at this time.

Philosophies of Coordination

Many are aware that the behavior of managers and specialists interested
in business and economic organizations have been guided and influenced by
major management philosophies, namely, "scientific management," "human

Table 1. Key issues and questions analyzed in the research

Chapter	Issues and Questions
I. "Search for philosophies of coordination: focus on the human service industry" by David Rogers and Charles L. Mulford	a. What philosophies are used to justify coordination today? How do these philosophies differ from previous ones? b. How have social, economic and political trends influenced philosophies of coordination? c. What explanations are given for the failure of various philosophies?
II. "Coordination defined: elements, linkages and models" by Charles L. Mulford and David Rogers	a. What do we mean by coordination? How does coordination differ from other processes? b. What is actually coordinated? What "elements" are coordinated? c. How does coordination occur?
III. "Antecedent conditions which facilitate or inhibit coordination" by Burton Halpert	a. What barriers exist to make coordination difficult? b. What conditions facilitate coordination? c. How important are crises and survival factors for stimulating coordination?
IV. "Consequences of coordination models" by David Rogers and Charles L. Mulford	a. What criteria should be used to evaluate coordinated efforts? b. How can the consequences of coordination be determined? c. What information needs do clients, administrators, and policy makers have about coordination outcomes?
V. "Methodology used to study coordination" by David A. Whetten	a. What research designs and methodologies have been used to study coordination? b. What kinds of data have been analyzed? c. What are some of the limits of existing designs?
VI. "Analysis of applied materials and training for coordination" by Charles L. Mulford and and David Rogers	a. What applied needs do practitioners have? b. How adequate are existing applied materials and training packages? c. What priorities should be given in the development of applied materials. d. What are the constraints and limitations on training?
VII. "Interorganizational networks and and policy sectors" by J. Kenneth Benson	a. What larger and more macro factors influence coordination within the several functional sectors? b. Limitations of conventional theories for explaining sector coordination. c. What "vested interests" are served by coordination? d. How are acceptable "rules of the game" developed?

relations," and "industrial humanism." The development of these management philosophies, and the emergence of administrative practices used in interagency coordination are effected by changes in the larger social, economic, and political arenas. Management philosophies act as guides to behavior and action (e.g., how a manager leads his/her subordinates is determined in part by a philosophy of management)..

.Coordination in the public and private sectors has been influenced. by different philosophies at particular times in history. The coordination of human services can be used to illustrate changes in coordination philosophies. This sector was chosen for illustration because an increasing amount of our resources is designated each year for human services and because a majority of the coordination literature has focused upon the human services.

*Utilitarianism, or laissez-faire approach--
the dominant philosophy of the 1850-1920s.

The dominant philosophy of coordination during the early period in the development of social services and human services in the United States was based upon utilitarian and laissez-faire principles comparable in some ways to the scientific management philosophy of management. The major process used to achieve order between organizations was competition. Nearly all human services were private with each organization possessing its own power base. The basis of power or control among these agencies was possession of resources in a context of resource scarcity. A widely held assumption was that competition would eliminate duplication of services, would help identify program gaps, and would improve efficiency.

Why did this philosophy lose support as a major organizing principle? The utilitarian approach did not live up to expectations. The depression of the 1930s brought a disenchantment with this approach among both public and private sectors. But despite the negative criticisms of this philosophy of coordination, it has continued to be an important force. This has occurred even though there are serious constraints on the "free market" and even in times of public and private monopolies.

*Rise and fall of <u>altruism</u> as a philosophy of coordination in 1920-1950s.

During the 1920-1950s the utilitarian, laissez-faire philosophy was replaced by altruism as the dominant philosophy of coordination. In contrast to the focus on individualism and competition of the earlier period, cooperation and social responsibility were stressed. Harmony and solidarity were sought. Appeals for cooperation between organizations were made. Coordinating councils were created and primarily reliance was placed on moral obligation to induce coordination. Was this philosophy successful? Again, the evidence is not conclusive. Cooperation did not occur as frequently as desired. It became apparent that the goals and programs of organizations are frequently in conflict, and managers discovered that conflict could not be eliminated through voluntary cooperation.

*<u>Administrative rationality</u> and <u>bureaucracy</u> stressed in the 1950-1970s period.

A "corporate" or "managed economy" are terms used to describe the organization of human services among the public and private sectors

during the 1950 to 1970 period. Since World War II, the private human service sector has been overshadowed by the growth of the public sector; government has turned to bureaucracy as a tool for achieving coordination. Management techniques that showed promise in business and industry often were copied. The large and increasing number of government programs was accompanied by a greater reliance on a single bureaucratic authority to bring order. Guidelines and administrative regulations were emphasized, and in the 1960s efforts were made to increase the linkages between local, state, and federal levels. In the private sector during this period, community welfare councils changed their focus so that they were more involved in centralized planning; fund raising efforts were centralized and United Funding programs increased. Community councils (the United Way) at times recommended changes in the service delivery system and in individual agency programs. Service integration programs that sought to coordinate public and private agencies at local and state levels by creating new administrative relationships were implemented.

Has this philosophy which emphasizes the role of administration and bureaucracy been successful? Those who try to promote service integration often have less power than the organizations being coordinated, thereby weakening the role of the integrator. Comprehensive planning has not been well received. Political, constitutional, legal; and technical barriers all act to hinder coordination through a centralized approach. This philosophy of centralized coordination is confronted today by a strong emphasis on pluralism, which argues that multiple centers of power are best. The emphasis on local control is still

strong and acts as a challenge to bureaucratic control in interagency systems. Finally, there is little systematic evidence of success to support this approach. While pluralism has hindered the spread of administrative, bureaucratic philosophy, it has encouraged the development of another more recent philosophy.

*Citizen participation and public choice stressed, 1960-1970s.

Some have argued during the 1960-70s that the interests of all relevant groups should be considered when creating a service delivery system. Citizen participation in decision making and client choice among service programs are being stressed more often. This rise in the power of "consumers" of social services parallels a rise in the power of interest groups in the public sector. It is argued that citizen participation in agency planning will reduce the unresponsive and unaccountable nature of human service organizations. Another alternative associated with this philosophy is to create opportunities for consumers of services to choose and "purchase" the desired services with vouchers. It is assumed that "purchases" will be from organizations which are doing the best job of providing services. Problems with this more egalitarian philosophy include the difficulties of creating a meaningful citizen participation, and dealing with the argument that consumers may not be the best judge of the effectiveness of service providers. Criteria used by consumers may be unreliable or not relevant.

What will be the dominant philosophy used to guide coordination in the 1980-2000 period? Will continued inflation and competition for resources favor a return to a utilitarian philosophy? Or, will some combination of bureaucratic authority and reliance upon citizen involvement be stressed? There is uncertainty here. We argue that the predominate philosophy of administration will be consistent with the larger social, political, and economic environment within which it operates, and may parallel the dominant philosophy in business and economic management.

Practitioners should be aware of their own personal philosophy and be able to see how this affects their behavior. They also should realize that conflict can develop between persons who identify with different philosophies of coordination.

Analysis of Coordination as a Process

Our review of the literature revealed very little consensus about coordination as a process. Coordination is frequently confused with or defined in terms of other processes. Our approach in defining coordination begins from the perspective that organizations are doing something together to meet the individual needs of their own units. But then we go a step further and include the idea that they also are interested in a larger problem or issue that extends beyond their own special interests.

> *Coordination means that organizations use decision rules to deal collectively with a shared environment.

*The decision rules can be <u>mandated</u> by a third
party or may be <u>created</u> by the participants.

The decision rules that govern the interagency system are frequently

developed by the participating organizations. However, the rules may be

mandated by superordinate levels. Rules may describe what is required

to secure federal funding stipulating that planning for health, police

services and so must be done on an area basis or multicounty basis.

Even when the rules are mandated, they are usually general enough to

allow some give and take and negotiation between the organizations.

Coordination, then, always involves a degree of adjustment in the indi-

vidual organization's goals, methods, and procedures as an organization

coordinates with others.

*The <u>elements</u> that are coordinated may include
<u>information</u>, <u>clients</u>, <u>program development</u>, and
<u>resources</u>.

A variety of elements can be coordinated, and it may not be necessary

to coordinate all of these elements in every interaction. Two organi-

zations might decide to coordinate their efforts to determine which

programs are most crucial for their common clients, but may decide not

to try to coordinate the delivery of services to these clients.

*<u>Elements</u> should be coordinated at the
appropriate <u>level</u>.

Whatever elements are coordinated, it is important that the elements

are coordinated at the appropriate level. It is argued that securing

funding and resources is best accomplished at the institutional or com-

munity level. Decisions about program development are best made by

organizational leaders, and clients are best coordinated at the agency line staff level. Information, on the other hand, should be coordinated at all levels.

> *A wide choice of <u>linkage</u> <u>mechanisms</u> exist for
> coordinating elements.

Practitioners have many choices to consider when seeking mechanisms to link the units being coordinated. Many administrative linkages such as joint budgeting, fund transfer, joint funding, and purchases of services are available. Linkages that have to do with personnel practices are available such as joint use of staff, colocation of staff, staff transfers and staff outstationing can be used. Planning and programming linkages include joint planning, programming, and evaluation. Administrative support services can also be used as linkages; these include joint record keeping, common grant--management, and use of common support services such as clerical, printing and postage services.

Linkage mechanisms to coordinate clients and recipients of services can include core services such as client outreach, intake, diagnosis, referrals, and follow-up. A variety of modes of case coordination also is available such as case conferences, using a case coordinator, and using a team to work with clients.

> *A number of <u>models</u> or general plans for
> <u>coordination</u> exist.

When we speak of models for coordination we mean general plans or approaches that are available. Fortunately, a variety of coordination models exist. We use the term "fortunately" because no single model

may be best for use in both the public and private sectors or in efforts
to integrate the two sectors. Three models of coordination considered
in this project include mutual adjustment, alliances, and corporate
models.

Mutual adjustment

When the mutual adjustment model is used, very limited rights and
powers are granted by organizations to a coordinator or to other organi-
zations. An example of coordination by mutual adjustment would be several
organizations participating in a project to provide youth services on
a voluntary basis. Any common goals that emerge are likely to be temp-
orary. Professionals or staff at the supervisory--rather than the top
administrative level--will often be involved in meetings, and coordina-
tion theough staff conferences will occur as need arises. Few organi-
zational resources are committed and informal agreements, rather than
a reliance upon formal rules and contracts tends to prevail.

Alliance models of coordination

Interagency federations and councils are examples of coordination
through alliances. Who represents the organization depends on the
elements being coordinated and the degree of commitment that organiza-
tions make to the effort. If decisions are made that affect member
agencies, higher-ranking persons will participate. If the goal is
primarily one of providing better services to clients, lower-ranking
persons are more likely to participate. Rules and formality are
more likely to occur in this approach than with mutual adjustment,

but these rules and formal agreements are not so rigid that they preclude further negotiations among organizations. Coalitions may develop or the organizations may choose to create a central administrative unit and allocate some power to it. The new unit (created by the agencies) can play a mediator or broker role if needed and may facilitate agreements. With alliance as the model for coordination, both the member agencies and the central unit have power.

Corporate models of coordination

A major characteristic of corporate models is a hierarchical authority system. An example of a corporate model would be departments within a local municipal government that are required to relate to a common chief executive and administrative system. Department heads and upper-level administrators are more likely to be involved in contacts between organizations. There is considerable emphasis on the use of written policies and formal procedures. Part of this emphasis occurs because the resources committed to this type of coordination may be relatively high.

Given the wide variety of elements to be coordinated, linkage mechanisms available for use, levels for coordination, and general models to choose from, we argue that a contingency perspective of coordination is best. That is, the most appropriate coordination model will depend on the characteristics of the participating organizations, on the clients involved, and the elements to be coordinated. Administrators and planners should be encouraged to review alternative approaches to coordination that are possible, and should be aware that the "best" model of coordination often depends on a number of relevant factors.

Antecedent Facilitators and Inhibitors
of Coordination

An understanding of factors that may serve to inhibit or facilitate
coordination is very important. Practitioners can use this information
to better understand why failures and successes have occurred. This
information may also be used by coordinators to plan and guide coordina-
tion when it is attempted.

> *Organizations often turn to coordination
> to survive.

To maximize their own resources, to capture the resources of others,
or to respond to mandates from superordinate organizations, agency admin-
istrators may decide to coordinate. Coordination always involves some
costs and always results in some degree of internal disruption as organ-
izations adjust to each other when working toward joint decisions and
actions. Orientations toward coordination will vary among organizations.
These orientations depend in part upon the broader institutional thought
structure that exists in the community and in part upon the meanings and
interpretations reached by organizational leaders. For example, coordin-
ated efforts are more likely to occur when community-wide perceptions
favor coordinated efforts. Coordination also is more likely if organi-
zational leaders perceive that benefits from coordination will outweigh
costs and that all organizations participating in the system are legiti-
mate. In addition to these perceptions about coordination, a number of
specific inhibitors and facilitators have been identified.

*There are both subjective and objective
- facilitators.

A variety of subjective and objective facilitators exist. For example, coordination is more likely if administrators have a positive attitude toward coordination, when organizations have similar interests and coordination is perceived as needed. When administrators are aware of the ways their organization is interdependent with others, coordination becomes more likely.

Close geographical proximity acts as a facilitator because this allows for informal communication between key decision makers and staff. In addition, commonly held views of community needs, shared professional ethics, and a cosmopolitan outlook among decision makers also encourages coordination.

Actual or suspected losses of clientele make coordination less likely to occur and this probability is increased if the organizations have already experienced negative results from prior interaction and if there is a structure that discourages coordination. Organizations whose procedures are highly standardized are better able to prepare for joint endeavors. Organizations that have multiple goals or a broad conception of their target goals and clientele are more likely to coordinate. Finally, coordination is more likely if the persons who represent their organizations ("boundary spanners") are delegated the authority required for them to participate effectively.

*There are both subjective and objective <u>inhibitors</u>.
Coordination is less-likely to occur if too much disruption in organizational functioning is expected by agency personnel. Disruption

is feared because coordination almost always requires some degree of retraining, role definitions, and perhaps a reassessment of rewards for the persons who are involved in tasks that are atypical to them.

The results of prior coordination efforts can affect the likelihood of coordination. Efforts to promote coordination will be more difficult if some organizations are seen as a threat or if they do not have a good reputation. Coordination, on the other hand, is more likely if it is thought that participating will add to an organization's prestige or power.

Coordination is facilitated when leaders are similar in their social status and if frequent communication already occurs between the organizations. Organizations with differing degrees of bureaucratization are less likely to coordinate. Organizations that are greatly dissimilar will have difficulty in planning and acting on a joint basis. In addition, organizations that have almost no administrative machinery find it difficult to coordinate without being coopted.

Coordination is more likely to occur when it is mandated. But contradictory mandates sometimes exist that inhibit coordination. Overlapping political and geographical domain designations occur frequently. Mandates also are less likely to be effective if there is a prior history of poor federal-state-local relations or if jurisdictional boundaries and lines of accountibility and mission are not clear.

A wide range of people have an interest in facilitators and inhibitors of coordination. It is probably true, however, that an even larger number of people are interested in the "results," or consequences of coordinated

efforts. Although the "bottom line" question may relate to the consequences of coordination, this issue is difficult to deal with because of the number of different kinds of interests that exist and the different criteria of success used by these groups.

Consequences of Coordination Models

A relatively large number of different audiences with different success criteria is interested in the outcomes of coordination including: 1) coordinators; 2) policy makers, 3) agency administrators, and 4) clients and others.

> *Relatively few efforts have been made to gauge the <u>consequences</u> of coordination.
> *<u>Different</u> <u>audiences</u> use different success criteria.
> *Different coordination models have <u>different</u> <u>consequences</u>.

Very little systematic work is available that demonstrates the actual outcomes or consequences of coordination. This is surprising given the great interest in coordination today by its many advocates. A very clear priority should be given to documenting the actual, compared to the projected, outcomes of coordination. It could be, for example, that coordination in some cases is too costly, is actually less efficient, and is unnecessary. On the other hand, it is possible that more coordination exists than is detected in previous studies. Therefore, this position is difficult to assess.

Policy makers and funding agencies may be less interested in the dynamics of the coordinated effort than in its ultimate outcomes in terms of clients reached and impact on clients. Coordinators and

organizations trying to promote coordination may be more interested in
the joint results that occur and in the relationships that result or
in eliminating any conflict that might be present. Agency administra-
tors tend to be concerned about their agencies' missions and whether
coordination has had a positive affect. Clients want to know if joint
efforts will help them meet their needs and solve problems.

What do the results of previous studies reveal? Given the limited
amount of available data, what can be said about the consequences of
alternative coordination models? The concerns of policy makers often
include greater accessibility of services, greater continuity, and
greater efficiency. Greater accessibility and continuity are more
likely to be relaized through corporate models of coordination, and
greater efficiency achieved with alliances and with corporate models.
For these reasons policy makers may not support coordination efforts
using mutual adjustment.

Coordinators realize that conflict is more likely to occur in
mutual adjustment and alliance models. Corporate models may be pre-
ferred by coordinators who hope to minimize conflict. Coordinators
who hope to emphasize comprehensive planning and priority setting
may prefer corporate models. In addition, coordinators who hope to
see the development of system (comprehensive) goals, compared to
individual agency goals, may prefer corporate models because these are
more easily accomplished with these models. In addition, coordinators
who hope to see the development of system (comprehensive) goals, com-
pared to individual agency goals, may prefer corporate models. Formal
provisions for the distribution of resources are provided for in

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corporate models, but if informal bargaining and negotiation are desired, mutual adjustment or alliances are more appropriate designs.

Agency administrators tend to be concerned about organizational autonomy. Mutual adjustment models result in less loss of autonomy; alliances and corporate models tend to be resisted when possible. Participation in joint efforts with a strong centralized authority makes it more difficult for organizations to secure and maintain public support. If resources are relatively scarce, mutual adjustment may be preferred by administrators because the costs for participation are less. Studies show that mutual adjustment models involve fewer resources than do corporate efforts.

Little empirical evidence is available about the direct benefits for clients from the various coordination models. Research on this topic should be given a high priority. Some limited evidence indicates that corporate models do provide greater accessibility and continuity of services. Citizen participation is reported to be both high and low with corporate models, however, depending upon other relevant factors. Similarily, evidence about the impact of alliances on clients is quite mixed. We know very little about the actual consequences of corporate, alliance, or mutual adjustment models of coordination. Hopefully, an assessment of the research strategies that have been, and might be used, will lead to more appropriate and comprehensive evaluations.

Methodology Used to Study Coordination

Our review of the research on coordination reveals many problems and inadequacies. More research is required before we will be able

to know about the entire impact of coordination and before we will be
'able to provide practitioners with the information that is really
useful to them.

> *Previous research has assumed that coordination
> is a highly valued activity regardless of cost.
> Benefits have been analyzed primarily from the
> point of view of elites.
> *Research has only rarely examined coordination
> using multiple levels of analysis.

The research has been dominated by an interest in increasing
coordination, or by studies of the correlates of coordination. An un-
stated assumption has been that coordination is good. The research
has primarily emphasized studies of the organization of voluntary co-
ordination. Relatively few studies have considered the influence of
coercion, force, or mandates on the decision to coordinate. This pro-
coordination orientation appears to exist because: 1) our society as
a whole looks with favor on consensus, compatability, and unity, 2) be-
cause much of the early pioneering research took this perspective,
3) because the sponsors of research have been willing to fund research
on cooperative coordination, and 4) because research on coordination
is easier to conduct than research on conflict and competition.

Research has only rarely looked at benefits from coordination except
in terms of the needs and interests of elites who have a vested interest
in maintaining the status quo. Administrators of specific agencies
have often been regarded as the primary consumers of research findings.
Because of the biases cited above, most research has focused upon
single organizations or upon dyadic relationships. Very few studies

have considered the impact of community settings on coordination and very few studies have considered the wider network of organizations or relations between networks. It is very important that research be conducted on these larger networks because they are so vital in our understanding of community.

>*Survey research on organizations studied at
>a single point in time have been conducted
>most frequently.

Almost no longitudinal studies of coordination, except for limited case studies are available. Longitudinal studies are needed to determine the actual impact of coordination and to evaluate alternative theories. In addition, very few ethnological studies that provide indepth analysis of the processes of coordination and of the impact of coordination on the functioning of organizations are available. We do not know whether organization members who represent their organizations in coordinated efforts require special training. We do not know if these members face unusual role stress. At present we cannot answer these questions with any high degree of confidence and longitudinal research is a high priority.

>*Relatively _few_ studies of the _private sector_
>have been completed.

Research on public agencies has dominated the field. A great portion of the work has been done in health and welfare settings. Research in the private sector has usually been done with the secondary analysis of data and with extremely gross indicators of coordination. Consequently,

we know very little about coordination between business organizations
and other organizations in the private sector.

>*A narrow view of the coordination process
has predominated.

The research has not emphasized the several options that exist with
regard to the elements being coordinated or the linkage mechanisms used.
In addition, the research has not been comprehensive enough to consider
the possible benefits for a variety of relevant audiences, including
clients, interest groups, administrators, coordinators, and policy
makers.

Analysis of Applied Materials of Practitioners and Training for Coordination

Although coordination has been strongly encouraged, a very high
degree of interest shown by practitioners, very few guidelines for
practitioners have been developed and made available in training materials.

>*Few of the applied materials contain specific
steps to follow or checklists to use.

We think that most practitioners would be disappointed by the applied
materials that exist on the subject of coordination. Most of the applied
materials are really only orientations to the process. Few of the mater-
ials contain specific steps to follow or checklists and guides to use.
Most of the training that has been done has been of very short duration
with little in-depth training provided. The impact of the training may
be slight because usually only one or two persons from the same organiza-
tion have been trained.

Most of the applied materials have been centered on services for youth, mental health, family planning, and mental retardation which limits their usefulness across a wide spectrum of possible coordinating situations.

*The theoretical and empirical support for training materials is modest at best.

Very little emphasis has been given to examining the relationship between the content of the applied materials and what the research and theory on coordination will actually support. Much of the content of the applied materials actually focuses on interpersonal relations and how the attitudes and knowledge of administrators can be changed, e.g., the content does not have much to do directly with coordination between organizations.

*The training has not been evaluated.

Very little attention has been paid to determining the outcomes from training about coordination. A wide variety of training options could be considered, depending upon the needs of the persons being trained and their organizations, such as the analysis of case studies, simulations and so on. Training needs of persons at different levels in the organization should be determined and the impact of the train-ing much more carefully evaluated. Administrators are reminded that coordination usually does result in some disruption of normal organ-izational activities. This disruption may be greater when trainees try to use newly acquired coordination skills for the first time than when they are more expert. In addition, if it is known that coordination is to be emphasized, administrators may wish to try to hire persons who are

positive in their orientation toward working with other organizations or those who already have these skills. We do not really know at present if training for coordination is useful or not. Codification of research results, coordination principles, action steps to follow, and options for coordination should be compiled. We suggest that priority should be given to bringing theorists, researchers, and practitioners together to discuss the state of the art with regard to coordination, to evaluate how this knowledge might be made useful for a variety of training audiences, and to take steps to develop and test learning modules.

Interorganizational Networks and Policy Sectors

The research and theory about coordination and the applied materials that have been developed for the practitioners have largely ignored the political-economic context within which coordination occurs. The focus instead has been on exchanges that occur between organizations and the ways that councils work. The forces that influence the interdependencies, such as legal mandates, the influence of community elites, and so on have recieved scant attention.

> *An analysis of political-economic sectors is
> required to complement existing research.

Because most of the current research and theory focus only upon surface-level phenomena, we suggest that an analysis of "deeper structures" that impact and set the stage for relations between organizations is needed. Functional sectors of organizations, connected to each other

through resource dependencies, and distinguished from other clusters of organizations, form the basic units of analysis in a macro approach to coordination. For example, in the economic sphere we may recognize an interdependently connected set of firms producing a common product as an industry; in the political sphere, we may see an interconnected set of agencies as a policy subsystem or policy arena. A comparative analysis of interorganizational sectors, between sectors in whole societies, and between sectors in different societies should be considered.

> *To understand relationships of resource dependence,
> one must look to the existing <u>structural</u> <u>interests</u>
> and to the existing <u>structure</u> <u>formation</u> <u>rules</u>.

From a political-economic perspective, coordination occurs primarily because of resource dependence between organizations which form clusters such as dyads, larger sets, networks, and even sectors. Previous research and theory have concentrated only on an analysis of the resource dependencies, and usually only in dyads or sets of organizations.

The larger or "deeper structure" of relationships between organizations consists of the sets of vested interests served by and supporting the present organization of a policy sector. The vested interests of a policy sector, or their representatives establish the rules that define the permissible solutions to situations that require coordination. For example, vested interests have a large impact on legislation that results in mandates for coordination. Sometimes the rules that result are contradictory, inadequate, and are poorly conceived. Not all of the rules are formal and in the form of law. The power elites in a

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sector may establish informal rules, too. The point is, however, that
coordination is greatly influenced by the "rules" that vested interests,
and the sources of the existing rules of the coordination game, only
limited understanding is possible. It is especially appropriate that
practitioners, including those charged with promoting coordination in
communities, be made aware of the fact that the present information
about interest groups is quite limited. In some cases, it may be more
useful to focus one's energies on understanding who the vested interests
are and how the formation of rules can be changed or introduced than
it is to try to promote or influence coordination directly between two
agencies.

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