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ABSTRACT
                This paper presents a grounded theory of educational
partnership process. A case-study design was used to describe aspects
of the partnership process of the Cooperative Alliance for Gifted
Education (CAGE) during part of its second year of operation. Three
organizations served as partners: a large urban school district, a
state university, and a large corporation. Funded through the
Educational Partnerships Program, CAGE was a 4-year project designed
to integrate inquiry learning and the authentic use of technology in
the K-12 curriculum, develop nontraditional assessment of exceptional
potential of disadvantaged and minority students, and study the
development of the partnership itself. Data were gathered from three
subgroups of the partnership--3 CAGE partners, 3 members of the Joint
Partnership Advisory Council, and 4 local experts on partnership
process--through interviews, audio- and video-tapes of member
meetings, document analysis, and a modified Q-sort activity. Common
characteristics and conditions identified in the study were also
found across existing theory and research. Thirteen categories used
to describe the partnership process were identified, which showed
that collaboration required some modification in operating
procedures. Partners expected one another to operate as peers, to
seek consensus, and to be committed; members' roles and
responsibilities were related to their strengths and expertise; and
involvement was sustained because of a shared project focus on goals
and outcomes. Implications for practice are that: (1) leaders and
directors can enhance the effectiveness of an educational partnership
by monitoring and managing the partnership process; and (2) leaders
and directors can maintain commitment of members by encouraging focus
on worthwhile goals, identifying and communicating successful
outcomes, and facilitating opportunities for professional growth.
Three figures and three tables are included. Contains 54 references.
(LMI)

School-University-Community Collaboration:
Establishing and Maintaining Partnerships for School Improvement

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Introduction

As part of school reform and restructuring, educational partnerships have been receiving national attention. The interest of outside groups in public education is not new, however. Initial preparation of as well as lifelong learning by the work force brings business and education into partnership. Likewise, the articulation of school-university programs as well as preservice and inservice teacher education joins school and university. In addition, current national educational goals encourage collaborative approaches to reform and restructuring. As educational, business, and governmental agencies embrace partnerships as a vehicle for reform, systematic study is required to create a knowledge base about how to establish and maintain effective partnerships. Getting representatives of diverse organizations (e.g., schools, businesses, universities) to collaborate suggests a complex process of establishing shared expectations and responsibilities.

Theoretical Framework

Organization and interorganization theory provide frameworks with which to think about partnerships as organizations and relationships. Organizational elements to be examined include members, structure, goals, resources, and output. Further, multiple views of organizations focus on systems, human resources, political, and symbolic theories (Bolman & Deal, 1991). Viewing organizations as open systems emphasizes their operation within an environment (Huse & Cummings, 1985). Partnerships, then, may be formed as an appropriate response to environmental turbulence or uncertainty of member organizations (Daft, 1989). In addition, if the partnership itself is conceived of as an organization, it will need to be responsive to its environment including potential users of services and availability of external resources. Organization development may be an appropriate strategy for diagnosis and intervention (French & Bell, 1984) to maintain effective partnership operation.

Interorganization theory suggests that partnerships can be thought of as linkages of two or more organizations which establish expectations for their collective, goal-directed behavior (Van de Ven, Emmett, & Koenig, 1980). Study of interagency relationships includes analysis of situational factors, process dimensions (including the flow of information and resources), structural dimensions, as well as perceived effectiveness (Van de Ven, 1976). Depending upon their level of interdependence, organizations may interact through cooperation, coordination, or collaboration (Intriligator, 1992). The latter is more difficult to achieve, requiring some risk-taking of participants (Cook & Cookingham, 1980).

Viewing a partnership as a linkage of organizations who negotiate and renegotiate their relationship as they work together to solve a problem of common interest (Gray, B., 1989) suggests the complex and dynamic nature of such associations. The value of organization and interorganization theories, then, is in enabling the observation, analysis, understanding, and management of partnerships as organizations and relationships.

Review of Research

The study of educational partnerships as a specific form of interagency relationship is just beginning. The study of process to manage and maintain educational partnerships is new as well. In his review of the literature, Clark (1988) concluded,

> There has been much written, particularly in recent years, about school-university relationships, described variously as collaborations or partnerships. Much of this material consists of brief descriptions of individual arrangements, generally by one of the key participants in the relationship. While there is often an effort to offer generalizations about such relationships, there is much less serious scholarship and therefore less theoretical framework for considering them. That is not to say that there are not a number of theoretical constructs in sociology, organization theory, and other fields that may be relevant; but most of the people writing on the subject have not given much attention to these constructs. (pp. 37-38)

Research reviewed to identify characteristics of and conditions for effective partnerships included reviews of research (Clark, 1988; Su, 1990), a synthesis of knowledge and practice (Grobe, 1990/1993), multi-site and longitudinal studies, and dissertation studies. Multi-site and longitudinal studies included (a) Havelock, Cox, Huberman, & Levinson's (1982) cross-case analysis of three collaborative networks; (b) Intriligator's development of a theory of interagency collaboration (Goldman & Intriligator, 1990; Intriligator, 1986, 1992); (c) study of the development of an OERI-funded school-university-community partnership (Padak, Peck, Borthwick, & Shaklee, 1993a, 1993b; Padak, Shaklee, Peck, Barton, & Johnson, 1994; Shaklee, Padak, Barton, & Johnson, 1991); and (d) Tushnet's (1993a, 1993b, 1993c) study of the development of 22 and later 30 OERI-funded educational partnership projects. Ten dissertation studies were also reviewed; seven of the dissertations examined single partnerships (Caplan, 1987/1988; DelPizzo, 1990/1991; Gray, D., 1989/1990; Greene, 1985; Harrington, 1989/1990; Klohmann, 1987/1988; Wangemann, 1988/1989), and the other three gathered information from between 10 and 60 partnerships (Crown, 1990/1991; Flowe, 1990; Smith, 1988/1989). Flowe's (1990) sample of 10 partnerships compared five institutionalized and five non-institutionalized partnerships.

In summary, the literature suggests that educational partnerships can be viewed as change efforts, targeting school reform and sometimes reform in higher education as well (Clark, 1988; Goodlad & Soder, 1992; Su, 1990). Partnerships are thought to evolve and change over time, perhaps moving through identifiable stages (Padak et al, 1994; Wilson et al. 1989). Although partnerships suggest parity among the partners (Smith, 1988/89; Su, 1990; Tushnet, 1993a, 1993c), specific structure of partnerships may be unrelated to achieving successful outcomes (Goodlad, 1988; Havelock et al, 1982; Tushnet, 1993b). Partnerships operate at varying levels of interdependence including cooperation, coordination, and collaboration (Goldman & Intriligator, 1990; Intriligator, 1992). In some cases, partnerships may not be the best approach to educational reform, primarily because of the complex nature of partnership process (Tushnet, 1993b).

Within the literature reviewed, the following elements of partnership process were identified: shared goals (Goodlad & Soder, 1992; Harrington, 1989/1990; Intriligator, 1986; Klohmann, 1987/1988; Tushnet, 1993b; Zywine, 1991); diverse members (Padak et al., 1994; Grobe, 1990; Wangemann, 1988/1989); continuing individual and organizational

commitment (Intriligator, 1986; Padak et al, 1994; Smith, 1988/89); clear roles and responsibilities (Grobe, 1990; Padak et al., 1994; Wangemann, 1988/1989); leadership (Caplan, 1987/1988; Clark, 1988; Havelock et al., 1982; Padak et al., 1994; Tushnet, 1993b); multiple kinds (Caplan, 1987/1988; Harrington, 1989/1990) and contributors (Tushnet, 1993b) of resources; exchange of resources (DelPizzo, 1990/1991; Havelock et al., 1982; Intriligator, 1986); open, honest communication (Caplan, 1987/1988; Crown, 1990/1991; DelPizzo, 1990/1991; Goodlad & Soder, 1992; Tushnet, 1993b); shared decision-making (Boyd et al., 1992; Harrington, 1989/1990; Tushnet, 1993b); building of trust (Padak et al., 1994; Tushnet, 1993b); and formative evaluation of structure (Sirotnik, 1988; Tushnet, 1993b), process (Intriligator, 1992; Sirotnik, 1988), and agenda (Padak et al., 1994; Sirotnik, 1988).

A review of the literature provides some information about members' expectations, evaluation, roles and responsibilities, and reasons for staying involved in an educational partnership. However, the summary of related literature cannot be assumed to cover the depth and breath of relevant issues. Further, while commonplaces (e.g., goals, resources, communications) exist across partnerships, the weaving together of such constructs or elements to establish a theory of educational partnership process remains incomplete. Together, do and how do these elements create and maintain the process of an educational partnership?

Although Rogers (1982) identified the need for research of interagency cooperation in the education sector, Su's review of the literature in 1990 concluded that "we still know very little about the necessary processes for creating the partnership culture except that they are neither simple nor easy" (pp. 101-102). Greene (1985) stated, "The need for further studies which elaborate and provide an internal perspective on interorganizational relationships cannot be overstated" (p. 156). Havelock et al. (1982) reinforced the case study approach to such research based on the array of data collection procedures to be used and the number of variables in operation, and DelPizzo (1990/1991) recommended "study at the most basic level to search for themes" (p. 213) of educational partnership participation.

Methodology and Data Sources

Setting and Subjects

A case study design (Merriam, 1988) was used to describe aspects of the partnership process of the Cooperative Alliance for Gifted Education (CAGE) during a portion of its second year of operation. Three organizations served as partners, a large urban school district, a state university located approximately 35 miles from the school district, and a large corporation that produced and marketed educational technology. Seven individuals represented the three organizations making up the CAGE partnership: the superintendent and assistant to the superintendent of a cluster of schools, four College and Graduate School of Education faculty, and a business employee. During the time frame of this study, the representative of the business partner changed following reorganization within the company. The first representative, the state education advisor, was later replaced by the manager who was responsible for marketing and systems engineers for the northern half of the state. Eleven organizations provided representatives for a Joint Partnership Advisory Council (JPAC) which met quarterly. These organizations included a library, two museums, a hospital, a public television station, a local business, a community college, three community

agencies, and a representative from the state Board of Regents. In addition, members of the partner organizations participated on the advisory council bringing the total number of members to 27.

Funded through the Educational Partnerships Program, Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI), the U.S. Department of Education, CAGE was a four-year project designed to integrate inquiry learning and the authentic use of technology in the K-12 curriculum, develop nontraditional assessment of exceptional potential of disadvantaged and minority students, and study the development of the partnership itself. Two of the partner representatives served as co-principal investigators for the grant, a university professor specializing in gifted and talented education and the assistant to the school district cluster superintendent. The project director was the only full-time employee of the CAGE project, and other staff included several graduate students and a half-time secretary. The CAGE office was located at the university.

Activities of the Cooperative Alliance for Gifted Education were directed to impact upon target classrooms within five schools of a cluster of 23 schools. At the time, the school district served almost 74,000 students in 127 schools; six clusters were operating under a decentralization plan that encouraged site-based decision-making. Since 1978 the district had been under a Remedial Order to eliminate racial segregation. One of the 14 components of the Remedial Order called for cooperation with universities, businesses, and cultural institutions.

Data Collection and Analysis

Four research questions were used to guide the study: (1) What are members' expectations about the partnership process?, (2) How do members evaluate the partnership process?, (3) How do members define their own roles and the roles of other members in the partnership process?, and (4) Why do members stay involved in a partnership project?

Qualitative data were gathered from three "layers" or subgroups of the partnership: three CAGE partners, three members of the Joint Partnership Advisory Council, and four local experts on partnership process. Local experts included one CAGE partner and three JPAC members; these individuals had extensive experience in multiple partnership efforts (e.g., the executive director of county-wide collaborative, the director of school district office responsible for finding corporate partners for all district high schools). Data were gathered through the use of semi-structured interviews, audiotapes and videotapes of member meetings, a log kept by the researcher/project director, documents, and a modified Q-sort activity. The latter involved the interview of four local partnership experts following their sorting of naturalistic Q-sample (McKeown & Thomas, 1988); stimulus items for the Q-sort were 71 statements from a set of semi-structured interviews of three partners and four JPAC members. As described in Table 1, data used in the study were collected over the period of approximately one year. Data collected specifically for this study included process interviews, Q-sort reflections, and the project director log; other data were part of the project's documentation and evaluation efforts.

Data analysis followed the four steps of the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The Ethnograph (Seidel, Kjolseth, & Seymour, 1988) was used to code and sort textual data which included transcriptions of interviews and meetings as well as documents. Content analysis of 852 pages of transcribed text provided a total of 2,333 data

segments for the four research questions. An outside volunteer was asked to verify domains and exemplars identified by the researcher; interrater reliability was 88% on domains and 90% on categories on a sample of 254 segments. In addition, a member check included obtaining feedback from two informants regarding the accuracy of results based on their interview transcripts. Data collection, coding, and analysis occurred throughout the study, as the researcher developed a substantive theory according to steps recommended by Glaser and Strauss (1967).

Results

Results provided answers to the four research questions and were used to develop a grounded theory and model of educational partnership process. Content analysis to answer the four research questions revealed five domains which encompassed the data: focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, and stages. Categories were established for four domains as listed in Figure 1. Within each research question, results were reported by source to document efforts at triangulation (Mathison, 1988). Table 2 reports the total number of data segments by domain/category for each research question, and Table 3 documents the total number of data segments by source for each domain and category. Sources for quoted material are listed as P (partner interviews), J (JPAC member interviews), PM (partner meetings), JM (JPAC meetings), L (project director's log), D (documents), and E (local expert Q-Sort interviews). The surfacing of the same categories throughout the four research questions suggested their non-linear occurrence throughout the educational partnership process.

What Are Members' Expectations About the Partnership Process?

Members of an educational partnership shared expectations about focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, and stages of the partnership process.

Focus

Members expected an educational partnership to focus on major, long-range goals that were interrelated with teacher, school, community, state, and national goals. Goals were described as a "joint vision" and focus on "where we're headed" (P). "People get together...because they have a dream, a vision" (E). "You talk about what you would do if there were no restrictions. That becomes the vision statement" (E). The "vision... help[s] get you from and through the petty things that you have to go through and have to do in real life projects" (E). Although priorities within project goals were expected to change over time, members pictured outcomes of the partnership to be centered around stated goals as well as broader visions. Members anticipated their activities would focus on the specific context or setting, taking into consideration local school district procedures and politics. During their meetings, partners considered "circumstances within the district" including "follow[ing] whatever procedure the school has," utilizing in-place support services, and potential roadblocks (PM).

Members

Diversity among partnership members was expected to provide complementary skills, knowledge, and perspectives to partnership efforts. "Shar[ing] becomes a learning and a growing experience"; further, "all skills aren't...based in one group, so in order for the project to succeed, all groups must work together" (P). Although differences were expected, they were not always looked forward to.

The academic world tends to study, and think, and ponder, and discuss a whole lot
more than either of the other [partner] entities in the partnership. And that's not
something wrong with universities, it's just a difference in their orientation, in their
mission in life. (P)

Leaders or those with new perspectives were expected to help change the status quo,
and active members who committed time, effort, and resources were expected to provide on-
going support. Partners envisioned commitment from multiple levels: individual
representatives, top corporate leadership, participating organizations, and school district
personnel (students, teachers, cluster superintendent, deputy superintendent, and board of
education). "There must be a commitment from the top and throughout an organization" (E).
While partners anticipated that "the level of person that would participate at the partner
meetings needed to be someone who could make a commitment" (L), a local expert reflected
that realistically most of the partners "are in the lower echelon of these organizations and
institutions...not necessarily empowered but simply authorized to enter into some limited
agreements affecting each of our institutions" (E).

Needs and Resources

Members foresaw that over time they would determine both needs to be met and
resources to be tapped.

I think we go in with a preconception [of our contribution], but I don't think we have
any clue because...partnerships are evolving, because their potential changes over time
if the dynamic is good. And so you don't really know what you are gonna do. (E)

Reviewing the Year I interviews of JPAC members, partners found, "A goodly number of
people said...'We are willing to support this project, but you need to tell us what you need'"
(PM). In the words of one JPAC member, "I don't see it yet--how we can help out" (J).
Partners, then, began to consider "possible specific contributions from JPAC organizations"
(D).

Members were expected to contribute funds when possible and developed strategies
for obtaining external funds, including submitting additional grant proposals. Resources were
envisioned as including the sharing of information or expertise. "Resources don't necessarily
have to provide money. They can provide information. They can provide contacts. They
can provide courses of action. They can relate you to potential suppliers of information" (J).
Networking was expected to link partnership members to other individuals, groups, and
organizations for mutual, project and community benefit. "Give and take" (E) and "mutually
beneficial" (J) were descriptors used in talking about educational partnerships. "There's this
kind of give and take and meeting of needs and getting needs met, exchanged" (J). "The
other entities must see something of value for them as well as I see something of value for
me" (E).

Interactions

Members' expectations for their interactions included communications, decision-
making/action planning, group dynamics, and self-study.

Communications. Although the project director was viewed as the hub for
communications, open lines of communication among all partnership participants were
envisioned. Meetings were expected to serve as the primary vehicle for communication.
Partners described their own meetings as involving "give and take" (P), "everybody [able] to

express their point of view" (P), and "put[ting] all of the issues on the table and talk[ing] about them up front" (P). Members also looked for systematic and expanding dissemination of project efforts at sch:ol district, regional, and national levels. Partners planned for systematic dissemination, expressing the "need tr, expand knowledge of the CAGE project....creating an identity for ourselves" (JM). Each partner was expected to "shar[e]...information within her organization" (D), and it was hoped JPAC members would do likewise, perhaps by including information about CAGE in newsletters for their organizations. In addition, telecommunications was envisioned as a tool to increase internal contacts as well as external dissemination.

Decision-Making/Action Planning. Participants anticipated that the processes for decision-making and action planning would evolve over time. Considering the potentially disparate entities involved in a partnership activity, one local expert reflected,

> You lay everything out on the table and then have people with different perspectives
> and different assumptions and different definitions, very often, challenging and asking
> and questioning, "Why do that?" Very difficult thing to do because everyone comes
> in with their own rules and regulations for how things should happen. (E)

Partners were expected to serve as the primary decision-making group, focusing on long-term goals to agree on project activities through consensus. Several local experts saw "voting sometimes [as] an excuse not to come to grips with the issues and work them through" (E) and preferred coming to consensus "especially if we are talking about committing disparate entities to a course of action" (E). CAGE partners worked to "resolve the issues" rather than say, "I disagree" (P). There was a "seeking of opinion and real partnership decision-making with all of the back-and-forth discussion that that takes" (P).

In addition, partners expected that decisions would be influenced by input provided by other constituencies. "The partners are able to make more informed decisions based on input we get from the Teacher Advisory Council" (P). JPAC members also provided input; as described by one partner, "I think they've given us a lot of good input as far as how to solve problems. I think they've given us some good ideas that we've then been able to take back and incorporate" (P).

CAGE partners relied upon "action planning to implement project objectives and problem-solving to overcome barriers to implementation" (D). Action planning was described as being the "how can we" of going forward to "reach that goal" (P). CAGE participants as well as local area experts expected that problems would arise during the normal course of business. "Barriers...come up! They always do" (J). One member went even further, suggesting that if no mistakes had been made, then probably no progress had been made either.

> So that if you started off with an initial plan and everything worked quite smoothly
> along the course, then we're not accomplishing learning activity and we wouldn't have
> needed to meet other than the first time that we met to establish the overall goals. So
> it's that no project is supposed to run smoothly on this order. (Laughter) At least I
> don't think so. (J)

Group Dynamics. Within their collaborative effort, multiple partners expected to operate as peers. The CAGE school-university-community partnership was seen as having a "different dynamic" than typical business partnerships because it operated on a "peer-to-peer"

level as opposed to having "more of a pyramid structure" (J). Factors involved in establishing a working relationship were expected to include political considerations, level of involvement, attending to member input, the time required for functioning as a group, and work load. Partnerships, explained one local expert, "don't have to be 50/50....No partnership is 50/50. We just like to think that they are. And that includes marriages" (E) Similarly, another local expert commented, "It has to be something like marriage--90/10, or something like that. It's not 50/50; you give more than you get" (E). And a third local expert emphasized "getting the work done. Maybe the efforts should not be equal, but then at the same time, no one should carry anyone else on their backs" (E). Data reflected the expectation that members would be involved in a "participatory" fashion (J). One local expert suggested that an educational partnership in itself makes "people feel empowered, and they feel it is egalitarian. It's probably one of the most democratizing events that I have seen happen in the schools" (E).

Partners described the process of developing or establishing trust, mutual respect, and understanding of one another's responsible action, professionalism, and viewpoints. One partner suggested that building trust within a partnership might have been more difficult because participants were geographically separated.

> One of the issues that we have is that we all don't live and work together. So, the development of trust goes more slowly, because we don't know one another well enough...I also have a feeling that it's important that we meet and talk with these people at times when the issues are not so critical. It seems as if right now we're in the mode of meeting together when we have a critical decision to make. (P)

Making a partnership "really work...take[s] some time, and it is a time-consuming process" (E) (P). Several factors were thought to add to the amount of time required to effect partnership efforts. First, partners and members needed to get to know one another. Second, the partnership brought together several "entities who ha[d] different work patterns" (P) and who needed to interact in a collaborative fashion.

> I think it takes longer for this committee to figure out how to do those things than it would for a normal business enterprise to put together that kind of an activity....Part of it is just simply how it is with committees. The bigger the committee, the longer it takes. (P)

Finally, except for the project director, all persons involved in the partnership activity were part-time participants.

Inquiry into Partnership Process. Inquiry into their partnership process was expected to provide members with feedback of a formative nature. Efforts of "technical assistance to the operation of the partnership [came] primarily through critical inquiry designed as part of the research and evaluation plan" (D). In addition, local inquiry designed by university partners was expected to increase the general knowledge base about partnership process and efficacy.

Stages

The partnership itself was expected to evolve over time, moving through stages of development, stabilization, and institutionalization. Members anticipated changes throughout the partnership process, including modifications in goals, members, needs and resources, and interactions. One local partnership expert pointed out,

As the relationships mature, or as people feel out their comfort zones and comfort levels and begin to better understand the motives and intentions of their partners, new things come up on the screen, new ideas evolve, new possibilities emerge. And so, what may not have been possible in the beginning becomes possible after the relationship matures. So I think they do evolve. (E)

How Do Members Evaluate the Partnership Process?

A basic requirement of data selected as relevant to this research question was the reference to some sort of value judgement. Such evaluations could suggest positive or negative impact, for example, "fantastic" (D) and "success" (P) versus "big weaknesses" (P) and "biggest impediment" (J). Results indicated that members assessed partnership focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, and stages.

Focus

Members thought all participants should be aware of and understand the partnership's goals. As described by one partner, "I think we have a pretty good sense as a team of where we're headed" and "we've been successful in establishing some common perceptions of goals" (P). The importance of such knowledge and understanding of project goals was affirmed by one local partnership expert in the following manner:

It's critical that [partners]...can at least tell an outsider what the objectives of that partnership [are]....They may not know all of the 20 steps for getting there, but they can describe the vision....We may not agree on how to get there, but we all know we want to go there. We want to see a sunrise. So we all know that if that's truly what we want, we have to go east. (E)

Effective partnerships were thought to focus on worthy goals and to balance broad versus specific goals. "Why would you invest time in a partnership--and that gets to that significance issue. People's time is precious. When you ask somebody to do something, it needs to be an important issue" (E). Over-specification of goals was thought to lead to "rigidity," which might prevent utilization of "some keen perspectives gained along the path" (J).

Members collected data to demonstrate their success in achieving established goals as well as broader educational reform. In examining the "real potential for impact" (P), partnership members expected to look back and determine "Did it work? Did this interesting amalgam...improve the quality of education?" (J). Members looked for project impact on students, teachers, the school system, and wider community through in-person visits, performance measures, and other data gathered as part of an evaluation design. Participants anticipated that allowing JPAC community members to "hav[e] access to and impact on the schools" (PM) would "increase community commitment for educational reform" (PM). In addition,

I think that the information that [teachers] could present to [JPAC members] could help to change their attitudes towards education....People think that there isn't a lot going on and if you can get the [members] to see there is a lot going on...then I think attitudes would begin to change. (J)

Furthermore, partnerships were expected to be more effective if they operated in a stable and supportive school district and community.

Members

Members of an effective partnership were evaluated based on their diversity, leadership, participation, commitment, and role.

General characteristics. Effective partnerships were seen as including members of "political diversity, the geographic diversity if there is any, the vocational diversity, racial diversity, [and] social diversity" (E). Strong leadership complemented by active members with good ideas and time to be involved were desired. Characteristics identified as desirable in partnership representatives included: "good ideas" (P), "good sense" (P), "dedicated" (J), "motivated" (J), "leaders" (J) (E), "powerful...within their domain" (J), visionary (E), "actively involved" (P), "energetic" (J), task-oriented (P), and giving of their time (P).

Commitment. Commitment was a specific trait upon which members were frequently evaluated, particularly in terms of levels of interest/support, ownership, and attendance of partnership participants. Indicators of interest in the partnership included looking for demonstration of member caring and "determination to make it go" (J). "People care so much and are willing to give an extraordinary amount of their time" (J). JPAC members were expected "to attend all the meetings" (J), and other members noticed those who were absent or had changed representatives.

> You would go to a new meeting, and there were new people, and some of the old people were no longer there. It would have been nice to see the same people all the way through. I just think it would have been easier on the administrators to not have to explain everything over [including] the mission of the project. (J)

One local partnership expert, though, suggested that "attendance is not always a measure of interest and/or commitment" (E).

Organizational commitment was judged based on continuity of membership as well as resources to support partnership activity. The importance of educational partnerships as institutional relationships was affirmed by one local partnership expert in the following statement:

> The representatives may change, but the relationship, the partnership goes on. And we need to factor that into our equation when we talk about the nature of partnerships...the nature of relationships that cannot always rely on a specific individual. We are talking about some institutional arrangements.... (E)

Mere attendance by an organizational representative was not seen as significant commitment, but providing financial resources was. For example, one participant expressed concern about the need "to be out...scrambling for monies to keep that project going...there's not any commitment." Instead, this individual believed that the project should be institutionalized "if they mean business" (E).

Roles/responsibilities. Active participation of various member groups was valued. Teacher participation, including attendance at staff development activities (J) and efforts to implement the project, was viewed as critical to project success (D). Breadth of contact by the project director was also seen as important.

Needs and Resources

Members valued opportunities for networking and sharing, making partners of all participants including students, teachers, parents, and community members. Exchanges for mutual benefit were viewed as an essential element of an educational partnership.

Involvement of the advisory board of community members was seen as providing additional contacts.

> I think another strength is the fact that they serve as a true resource base where they act as kind of a networking system for the project. So if they don't know, they know someone who might know. And they connect people up that way. (J)

Multiple references highlighted concern with sustaining funding for the project. "My greatest concern right now is funding," commented one partner during a JPAC subcommittee meeting. Additional financing (D) in the form of "hard dollars" (P) was seen as "critical" (D). Lack of success in "obtaining funds" (J) was a disappointment and a "major worry" (J). Partnership members differed in their perceptions of the importance of funding to achieve project goals. As summarized by one JPAC member: "The project has a goodly degree of funding. It needs more money to be effective....I don't think we'll be able to hit some of the goals of the project....And the scope of the project has been limited" (J).

Interactions

In evaluating interactions, members considered communications, decision-making/ action planning, group dynamics, and inquiry into partnership process.

Communications. Members valued timely, clear communication which they thought could be enhanced through persistent attempts at personal contact, small group meetings, the provision of systematic written information, and contact via telecommunications. Overall, members found "that it takes a great deal of time, systematic and personal communication to all participants" to make the partnership work (D). The project director was viewed as the center of partnership communications. Formation of JPAC subcommittees was seen as increasing opportunities for communication. One JPAC member reflected "on the effectiveness of small group sessions" because of the increased opportunity for participation (L). Cost/benefit ratio of dissemination activities was carefully weighed. Concerns related to dissemination included both audience and methods. "More community awareness" (J) was desired along with awareness of project efforts and needs by CAGE school principals, the [City Schools] Board of Education (PM), and the State Superintendent of Education.

Decision-making/action planning. Methods for shared decision-making and coming to consensus were viewed as somewhat difficult to establish. Nevertheless, members valued open discussion of issues and problems in the development of action plans to enable smooth implementation of project activities. As described by one partner,

> I do know that it's working better than at least one other...collaboration that we're involved in. And I think it's largely due to the fact that we do put all of the issues on the table and talk about them up front....Whereas, in the other collaboration....issues are raised only when they become critical and when it's now a crisis situation.... (P)

And as described by another partner, "When a difference of opinion arises between university and school, there is a willingness to look at other options. I think that's very positive" (P).

Early in the partnership, developing "a loose consensus" (P) without much discussion of the decision sometimes created a lack of clarity in expectations. However, thorough discussion of issues was met with both praise and frustration. Such discussion was valued by one local partnership expert as "[a]bsolutely necessary. There are no quick fixes....Hopefully [we] arrive at a position based upon wisdom and truth" (E). However, in reflecting on the length of time it took to make decisions, one partner commented: "I'm not sure [another

partner] understood the length of time it took to make a decision sometimes" (P) and another local expert cautioned that lengthy consideration "will kill it" (E). Discussion to achieve shared or common ideas was not always valued either. "And then, sometimes, when we do homogenize stuff, the end result is some kind of unpalatable pablum" (E).

Data revealed that action planning was valued. "When I walk away from a meeting, I would like to see more concrete 'to do's,' more specific action. You know that, 'By the next time we meet, let's have this, this, this, and this...'" (P). Partner meetings were deemed worthwhile, then, "if we have come away with an action plan, not just sat and talked. "In fact, that's probably the key" (P).

Group dynamics. Successful partnerships were seen as coupling hard work with attention to group dynamics. Several members mentioned a degree of caution in their initial participation in the partnership. "When a project begins, people have to gel. They kind of have to fit in together. And I think that molding is occurring" (J). Likewise, members were unsure of the level of "active cooperation" or actual participation they could expect from each other. Members appreciated that their views were heard, and they were more willing to express themselves as the level of trust among participants grew over time. The significance of trust was reflected in the following statement: "Decrease in communication, decrease in trust would lead to decrease in growth or destruction of the partnership" (P).

Although partners might carry unequal loads, no partner was expected to dominate over the others. Further, in judging the participation of outside agencies in partnerships with schools, a local expert shared: "They are part of the process. They are part of the team. They are not heavy-handed. They...are in a help mode and it's non-threatening" (E).

Local partnership experts differed on amount of attention that should be given to the politics involved in interorganizational relationships. One local expert thought too much attention to such considerations might stultify partnership efforts: You've "got to look at those things, but boy, if you are going to start putting that on the front burner...you won't get anywhere" (E). Another local expert weighed the importance of attending to such considerations against simple hard work on the part of the partnership members.

Hard work is part of it, but it doesn't just take hard work. I know a lot of people who work real hard and nothing happens with a partnership. For lots of reasons-- wrong people at the table, not enough people at the table, no political consideration, not smart work, mainly, just non-inclusive, you can go through a list. Now you need all those other things and then the hard work to pull them off. (E)

Inquiry into partnership process. Study of their own partnership process was viewed as a method of educating members and others about key variables for establishing successful partnerships. The Continuation Application for Year II stated, "Examination of the process of developing and maintaining partnerships is an important focus of project evaluation" (D). And, in the eyes of one partner, the value of conducting inquiry into the partnership process was seen as finding out "what do we have to do in order to have it...be a self-sustaining, ongoing, alive, if you will, project" (P). Prudence, however, was recommended in applying generalized principles to partnerships of widely varying characteristics (e.g., size, goals). In reflecting on participation in several partnerships, one local expert commented, "The same thing that makes [major partnership] thrive, makes our little project work, and the CAGE project work. And when you deviate from those things,

you can almost predict there is going to be a problem" (E). However, another local expert, while seeing some "common denominators" or "very key variables" in educational partnerships, thought the importance of such variables differed depending upon the type of partnership.

Stages

Participants valued progress in the establishment and development of the partnership. Success was reflected by progress in developing a clear focus for the project as well as productive members with effective interactions. For example, commenting on the project's focus, one JPAC member explained:

> I believe the goals were clearer than I thought--than I was aware of. At the beginning of this project, it seemed like a frenzied effort to collect technology and try to apply it. And it didn't seem very well coordinated. And it then, very quickly, narrowed its scope down to kind of a mission statement, and then it became focused....It was actually...more of a direct path than I was aware of. (J)

How Do Members Define Their Own Roles and the Roles of Other Members in the Partnership Process?

Partners, advisory council members, teachers, and the project director were described as having major roles in the partnership process.

Roles and Responsibilities of Partners

Partners served as a steering committee, assuming responsibilities across all areas of partnership process including focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, as well as stages of partnership development. Both time commitments and responsibilities assumed by the specific partners varied; participation often related to strengths or expertise they brought to the partnership. For example, one partner was described as the "'trouble shooter' for the implementation of technology" (D).

Roles and Responsibilities of JPAC Members

Responsibilities for advisory council members existed across the areas of focus, members, needs and resources, as well as interactions. In comparison to the partners, advisory council members held fewer responsibilities and these were of a less critical nature. For example, while partners were responsible for achieving project goals, advisory council members were responsible for reviewing progress toward those goals.

Partners and JPAC members differed somewhat in their views of the appropriate role for JPAC members. Some partners anticipated that over time JPAC members would increase their participation and leadership, but JPAC members felt comfortable with an advisory role. As asserted by one JPAC member,

> I think an advisory board should be that--it should be advisc y. It should not be taking over, driving, controlling. It should stay true to the name....I think our role should be to advise in areas where it can be helpful to you folks as the project runners and drivers of it. (J)

On the other hand, perhaps because of so much work to do, partners wished for more active participation of JPAC members.

> And we [have]...to get the JPAC to not just give advice but to take some ownership in following through with things. For instance, on the [Subcommittee], I have a lot of good advice; I have not one who volunteered to do anything. And we can't keep

adding tasks to all the overloaded loads. And so we need the JPAC to not only give advice but to take ownership and follow through with some particular ideas that they had. (P)

Though JPAC members may have been content in an advisory capacity, they did "take the project seriously" (J) enough to attend meetings regularly. One JPAC member pointed out how difficult that could be sometimes. "And I go to sometimes extraordinary lengths for me to go to the [JPAC] meetings. Because, invariably, you call a meeting, my director calls another meeting after you have....And these are important meetings [of my organization]" (J).

Roles and Responsibilities of Teachers

Both teachers and the project director were more directly charged with the implementation of project activities. The intent within CAGE was that teachers have the role of "collaborators rather than recipients" (D). Like partners and JPAC members, teachers were expected to "provide guidance and recommendations" (D). However, in their role as "school-based partners...work[ing] collaboratively to achieve project goals" (D), teachers' efforts were focused much more on project implementation. "They're the actual people who are the doers, more so than all of us who kind of stand around and say, 'Okay, this is what we should be doing,'" said one partner (P). One comparison of interest involved attendance at meetings as a responsibility of partners, JPAC members, and teachers. Because of their role in the classroom, teachers were sometimes hesitant to attend daytime meetings.

Pros and cons of alternating attendance by various teachers at JPAC meetings was discussed. None of the three teachers in attendance at the December TAC [Teacher Advisory Council] meeting wanted to attend the February JPAC meeting because it [was] during the school day and they were reluctant to request to leave their classes. (D)

Although the final outcome was to rotate participation at JPAC meetings among CAGE teacher participants, concern was expressed about the effects of such disjointed participation.

Roles and Responsibilities of Project Director

The only individual with a full-time role for the partnership, the project director was described as "assum[ing] primary responsibility for implementation of grant activities" (D). Portrayed as the person "most fundamentally in touch with the entire scope of the project" (J), the project director was seen as "knowing...all the pieces" (P) and "pulling all of this together" (P). Such intensive knowledge of project activities and contact with project members was illustrated in the scope of communication activities attributed to the project director. In addition, the project director was characterized as "taking care of business" (E) and doing "a lot of the running around, legwork" (E). Finally, the project director was assumed to be a "good worrier" (J). "I don't really worry...mostly because I think [the project director is] a very good worrier...and...will handle everything that goes wrong" (J). Likewise, as described by one partner, the project director "can hear from all three partners and take care of little things before they get to be big things" (P). "But add to that, take care of big things before they get to be little things," postulated a local partnership expert (E).

Roles and Responsibilities of Others

Information about the roles of others involved in or touched by the CAGE project included CAGE staff, students, and parents. Graduate assistants who served as project

liaisons with CAGE teachers and collected data in CAGE classrooms were seen as perhaps the most "knowledgeable... about what the teacher[s] [were] doing" (PM). The role of students in the partnership was debated. While some thought a student representative should be appointed to the JPAC, local partnership experts recommended otherwise. "Let students be students. Give them a chance to grow [up]. And then give them the responsibility for organizing and directing the activities" (E). Similarly, a role for parents on the advisory council was debated.

> I think...people believe that parents of children in schools are important to have as active partners in the process. And having gone back and forth on that one for years, I don't believe that anymore. I think that parents of children in schools are important as consumers....And I get a feeling often from parents that...they wanted a better thing, and they wanted to work on a specific, tangible part of it. But they didn't feel like architects of a system. (E)

Parental participation of a limited nature was reflected in CAGE documents. For example, a parent volunteering in a CAGE classroom was credited with "enabling student success with telecommunications" in that classroom (D).

Changes in Roles and Responsibilities Over Time

Clarification of as well as evolution in member roles was described. As mentioned above, while partners anticipated that over time advisory council members would increase their participation and leadership, advisory council members felt comfortable with their role as overseers. In addition, institutionalization of the project within the school district was seen as requiring an increasing role for school-based partners and a decreasing role for external partners whose initial activity had enabled the project to get off the ground. As described by one local partnership expert,

> People who may start out as being very laid back, marginal in terms of even their involvement, suddenly can...emerge as the key leaders. So, I think there are roles that are defined in terms of the organization, but it should be ready to accept and take on changing roles, that people can play multiple roles. (E)

Why Do Members Stay Involved in a Partnership Project?

Members' reasons for staying involved in a partnership project included the project's focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, and stages. However, the number of references within each of these domains varied greatly (see Table 2).

Focus

Member participation was sustained primarily due to project focus, including worthwhile goals, broader visions for school reform, and project outcomes. "The goals of the project are worthwhile. That's why I actually stay involved in it" (J). "You mustn't lose sight of the goal. That's what keeps people's spirits up" (J). "We didn't go into it for any knowledge of rewards. We got into it because we thought it might really help the students" (J). A sense of successful impact was also viewed as eliciting continued commitment. Demonstrating outcomes of project efforts included references to the "quality of student preparation" (D), meeting "educational standards" of JPAC member groups (J), and "articulat[ing] the benefits" (P). "If the partnership is going to survive...we need to demonstrate effectiveness." Partnership involvement, then, was expected to be sustained and even grow as members "saw wonderful things happening" (P). Even parent interest and

participation in CAGE classrooms was seen as increasing as a result of successful outcomes. "So that now parents who were not previously involved are asking ways that they can help their children better as they've seen how their children have adapted and evolved from...meeting the goals of the project" (J).

Exchanges for Mutual Benefit

Exchanges for mutual benefit were a strong second in the reasons for continued partnership participation. Unlike business partnerships, explained one JPAC member, educational partnerships were not seen as operating based upon "profit incentive" (J). And, while a second JPAC member pointed out that "we didn't go into it for any knowledge of reward" (J), a partner perceived that "most people will stay with the project when they're getting something out of it--either intrinsic--usually intrinsic--sometimes extrinsic reward" (P). "If we don't figure out some ways to do that and reciprocate within the partnership...there won't be any reason for the partnership to be sustained over time" (P). Likewise, yet another JPAC member felt that "if the partners, all of those [JPAC members], don't feel that they can benefit as much as they give, that they enhance the project by, then they're going to get discouraged and that commitment level will reduce" (J).

Although the school district was the major beneficiary of intended project activities, other groups including the business partner, the university partner, and JPAC members also received benefits from their participation. Such benefits were identified as "part of the attraction to" the partnership (J). For example, the business partner

> felt that here was an opportunity to use technology, to test technology, to see how technology would work in a different environment....Are there things here that we as a company could use to model for other schools where they may want to take a look at the same thing, and then possibly be a conduit for passing that information to other customers? (P)

Further, the project enabled the university to highlight its investment in "a very positive way, in teacher education and reform of classroom practice" (P). In discussing their participation as one of "mutual benefit" (J), one JPAC member described a recent decision to withdraw from another partnership activity. "The other partnership that we just pulled out of, we saw no benefit to [our organization], we saw no benefit to the students....We didn't want our name to be a part of it" (J). In describing benefits of CAGE participation, this member commented on learning about new technologies as well as potential application to their parent organization (J).

Additional Elements Eliciting Commitment

Other elements influencing continuing involvement included: location of members/member organizations within the partner school district; professional interests, positions, expertise, altruism, and responsible attitude of members; demonstration of commitment by other partnership members; a sense of usefulness; funding strategies requiring partnership efforts; material resources provided to classrooms; public recognition of personal/organizational contributions; broadening awareness of project efforts; personal satisfaction; a sense of organization and teamwork; curiosity about and systematic research on partnership process; and the potential for institutionalization of project activities.

Theory Development and Model of
Educational Partnership Process

The substantive theory and model of educational partnership process presented below were based upon a case study of selected aspects of the partnership process of the Cooperative Alliance for Gifted Education (CAGE) and developed through constant comparative analysis (Glaser & Strauss, 1967)

Educational partnership is a process that brings together members (institutions, organizations, and/or agencies) and resources to produce outcomes directed to the enhancement of education. Divers? members develop open lines of communication and working relationships to focus on long-term goals, identifying both needs to be met and resources to be tapped.

Partners expect to operate as peers and seek consensus in determining priorities and project activities. Members value discussion of issues and problems in the development of action plans to enable smooth implementation. Commitment from individual participants as well as their organizations is anticipated. Personal commitment is demonstrated by interest/support, ownership, and attendance. Organizational commitment is demonstrated by continuity of membership as well as resources to support partnership activity. Resources extend beyond funding to include other material resources and the sharing of information or technical expertise. Networking links partnership members to other individuals, groups, and organizations for mutual, project, and community benefit.

Roles and responsibilities of specific members often relate to their strengths or expertise and may evolve over time. For example, in the CAGE project major roles were held by partners, advisory council members, teachers, and the project director. Serving as a steering committee, partners assumed responsibilities across all areas of the partnership. Advisory council members served as overseers and held fewer responsibilities of a less critical nature. Both teachers and the project director were more directly charged with the implementation of project activities.

Member involvement is sustained primarily due to project focus, including worthwhile goals and the perception of successful outcomes. Examination of data gathered about project outcomes (impact on students, teachers, the school system, and wider community) as well as partnership process provides members with feedback of a formative nature. Cost/benefit ratio of dissemination activities is carefully weighed.

Figure 2 is a model of the theory of partnership process described above. The model is limited by its use of a two-dimensional medium to represent a complex and dynamic relationship. The irregular shape of the perimeter of the model represents the dynamic nature of an educational partnership. In the center of the model are members and resources. The outer ring (communications, decision-making/action planning, group dynamics, and inquiry) represents interactions through which members manage and monitor the flow and exchange of information and resources to effect desired outcomes. The central focus of members on shared goals maintains their commitment and sustains the partnership.

Conclusions

Very often, results of this study lend support to previous research and reinforce the applicability of organization and interorganization theory to the understanding of educational partnership process. On occasion, the literature introduced concepts or used terminology not

identified in this study. Some items appear to be differences in terminology rather than differences in concepts. For example, within the construct of communications, Grobe (1990) referred to public relations. CAGE participants referred primarily to dissemination, even though a JPAC subcommittee was named Funding, Dissemination, and Public Relations.

More substantive differences included references to members, resources, and interactions. For example, domain similarity (Van de Ven, 1976) and domain consensus (Levine & White, 1961) of participating organizations were not mentioned by CAGE participants. Such domain consensus of the three CAGE partners existed, however, as school, university, and business partners shared an overlapping interest in educational technology. In another example, while the CAGE project director w s expected to be in contact with all partners and tracking all aspects of the project, she was not referred to as a boundary spanner (Daft, 1989; Lieberman, 1992) or venture educator (Fox, Anglin, Fromberg, & Grady, 1986). Such differences, while numerous, are minor in nature. In many cases, CAGE participants operated in accordance with current theory or research but were seemingly unaware of operant conditions or simply did not reflect on them in CAGE documents, meetings, or interviews. In addition, comparisons have been made with data collected during a limited time frame of the CAGE partnership's operation.

One element not addressed by participants in this study and not consistently found in the research on educational partnerships was simultaneous renewal of member organizations as defined by Goodlad (1987). Goodlad's dismissal of collaborations that do not focus on simultaneous renewal as "little more than projects" (Goodlad & Soder, 1992, p. 15) and excluding them from consideration as partnerships seems altogether too limiting. A more moderate expectation, such as that of Intriligator (1992) that collaboration "always requires some modification in agency operating procedures" (p. 7), may provide a more accurate description of the changes which can be anticipated across organization members in many educational partnerships.

Although Su (1990) concluded that little was known about the processes necessary to educational partnerships, common characteristics and conditions (e.g., goals, members, resources, communications) identified in this study were also found across existing theory and research. One reason this research may have identified so many of the constructs mentioned across the literature was its inclusion of multiple layers of partnership members as subjects in the study. Further, the inclusion of four local partnership experts with experience in multiple partnership projects may have provided a more comprehensive and complete picture.

The methodology and results of this study provide some insight into the complex interaction of elements (focus, members, needs and resources, interactions, and stages) which together make up the process of an educational partnership. The interrelationship of elements was first noted by this researcher during data analysis using the constant comparative method to establish discrete categories. The interconnected nature of partnership elements was further reinforced during the process of establishing interrater reliability. First, the surfacing of the same categories throughout the four research questions of this study suggested their non-linear occurrence throughout the educational partnership process. Second, connections between categories were frequently noted. For example, consider the categories of goals and outcomes, commitment and outcomes, commitment and goals. Goals have been described as a driving and binding force; that is shared goals focus members on achievement of desired

outcomes and help to maintain the commitment of members interested in achieving those goals. Changing the goals or even the priorities among goals suggests changes in outcomes to be achieved; further, goal changes may lead to changes in membership as the partnership loses those members who find the adjusted goals less compelling.

This study identified 13 categories used to describe the partnership process. A matrix of possible relationships among these elements could be created by listing the 13 categories (goals, context, outcomes, member characteristics, commitment, roles and responsibilities, funding and other material resources, connections and exchanges, communications, decision-making and action planning, group dynamics, inquiry, and stages) along both the x and y axes. Perhaps some elements act as independent variables, some as dependent variables, some as both, and some, stages for example, are inert. An example of two variables which might act as both dependent and independent variables are goals and members. Problems to be solved or goals to be achieved determine relevant stakeholders to include as members of the partnership. On the other hand, it is the partnership members who subsequently determine project goals, objectives, and priorities. In other words, goals suggest members, and members suggest goals.

Beyond the construction of a grounded theory of educational partnership process, this study has not sought to uncover how all the variables interrelate and which elements may serve as dependent or independent variables. The point is that many such interrelationships exist. The requisite monitoring of such interconnected elements to sustain partnership activity demonstrates why the process of an educational partnership cannot be ignored. Whether pursuit of a detailed examination of the interactions of these variables is of value remains for future research.

Implications for Research

Listed below are several hypotheses and a research question for further investigation.

1. Hypothesis: Common qualities of successful partnership process included as domains and categories in this study occur regardless of specific partnership scope and structure. The grounded theory based on this single case study was congruent with the synthesis of literature completed for this paper. Scope and structure of the many partnerships examined by that body of literature varied widely, yet commonalities in process components and issues were frequent. Confirmation of how much of what we know about partnership process is applicable across varying partnerships could provide immediate input to partnership practice.

2. Hypothesis: Implementation of partnership activities is a process within a process. Although this research excluded the study of implementation of partnership activities, it may be hypothesized that implementation is a process within a process. Figure 3 illustrates this hypothesis. The inner process (implementation) touches or overlaps elements of the outer process (educational partnership). The model attempts to display the complexity of implementation of classroom innovations, for example, as planned, funded, and supported by one set of partnership members (outer set) but as implemented primarily by classroom teachers and other school personnel involved in yet another layer of partnership process (inner set). Over time, one process can be expected to eclipse the other, as implementation and institutionalization create increasing involvement of school-based members and decreasing roles for external participants. Or, in some cases, the relationship of the two processes may

be variable, where each process comes to the forefront in a cyclical pattern. Successful implementation of one activity, then, would lead to a renewed cycle of goal setting and planning for another innovation. The model could also explain why partnerships with multiple objectives experience greater difficulty in managing and maintaining the partnership process. Each objective to be implemented may create an additional process, creating many implementation processes (inner sets) which exist simultaneously within the educational partnership (outer set).

3. Hypothesis: Members' examination of their educational partnership, including diagnosis of process and "actions/interventions to correct problems" (French & Bell, 1984, p. 65), facilitates successful partnership process. Of the categories identified in this case study, inquiry into partnership process had one of the lowest frequencies of data segments. However, the literature reviewed included references to inquiry (Sirotnik, 1988), self-study (Sirotnik, 1988), evaluation (Wangemann, 1988/1989), technical assistance (Grobe, 1990), nurturing (Goodlad & Sirotnik, 1988), and adaptation (Van de Ven, 1976) of interagency efforts. The complexity (Tushnet, 1993b) and non-linearity (Lieberman, 1992) of collaborative ventures reinforces the need for attention to the evolving interorganizational unit. As summarized by Intriligator (1992), "The ways in which agencies relate to each other can either facilitate or destroy an interagency effort" (p. 20). Systematic study of the impact, cost, and value of self-study could reinforce its importance as an element of partnership process.

4. Proposed Research Question: Do differences exist between school-university-community and school-community partnerships? What difference does the university partner make? Although the National Network for Educational Renewal focuses on symbiotic school-university partnerships, many interorganizational relationships involve schools and businesses or schools and other community agencies. Crown (1990/1991), for example, studied 60 business-school partnerships. Although Harrington (1989/1990) studied differences in tripartite (school-university-business) and bipartite (school-university and school-business) partnerships, her research examined differences caused by the addition of a third major partner rather than influence of the work culture of a university partner. Perhaps, for example, partnerships with a university partner are more apt to (a) create an identity (through conference presentations or publications), (b) document partnership activities and outcomes, or (c) plan for technical assistance to project activities and partnership process. Systematic study of such differences could inform practice about influences on process by a particular type of institutional member.

Implications for Practice.

Based upon this study of educational partnership process, several recommendations for practice can be made.

1. Leaders and directors can enhance the effectiveness of an educational partnership by monitoring and managing the partnership process. These include focusing on shared and worthy goals; collecting data to demonstrate success in achievement of established goals; maintaining continuity of membership; providing timely, clear communication; and facilitating exchanges for mutual benefit of partnership members.

2. Leaders and directors can maintain commitment of partnership members by encouraging focus on worthwhile goals, identifying and communicating successful outcomes,

and facilitating opportunities for mutual exchange. Members need to feel the project is worthy of their time and effort; therefore goals of perceived significance that are neither too broad nor too specific should be established. Planned evaluation of partnership efforts should include assessment of impact on students, teachers, and the school system through performance measures and other data gathered as part of an evaluation plan. In addition to satisfaction in achieving successful outcomes, partnership members may be on the lookout for some benefit to their own organizations. Such benefits may include the chance to highlight a particular expertise or product. Creation of a model program, for example, may demonstrate successful teaching and learning in the classroom setting (benefits school partner's image) integrating new technology (benefits business supplier's reputation and sales) with new methods (facilitates university partner's research and development). Broadly speaking, participants also value educational improvement as it reflects positively on the surrounding community.

Importance

An assumption underlying this study was the need for members to attend to both task and process to accomplish their goals (Luft, 1984). The use of partnership resources to support project tasks or activities may be viewed as a direct connection between the input and output of the interorganizational agency. On the other hand, resources directed to support of interorganizational processes may be viewed as a rather indirect route to achievement of desired outcomes. Wilson et al. (1989) referred to this issue as "The Great Dichotomy....If we have an emphasis on process, then we think we eliminate content; if we focus on content, we fear elimination of process" (p. 6). However, as Fullan and Miles (1992) pointed out, "Change initiatives do not run themselves. They require that substantial effort be devoted to such tasks as monitoring, implementation, keeping everyone informed of what's happening, linking multiple change projects..., locating unsolved problems, and taking clear coping action" (p. 751). Sirotnik (1991) suggested the process-substance debate was a non-issue, a false dichotomy. "There is great substance in process and great process in substance" (p. 22). The study of educational partnership process continues to be important. Such examination enables confirmation of healthy interagency units, able to provide both leadership and resources for educational reform.

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Table 1

Data Collection Procedures

Data Collection Tools	Group or Subgroup	Time Frame for Collection
Interviews		
Process	Partner & JPAC Focus Groups	January - February, 1992
Project, Year I	Partner & JPAC Focus Groups	May - September, 1991
Project, Year II	Partner & JPAC Focus Groups	May - August, 1992
Meeting Tapes		
Partner, audiotapes	Partners	January, 1992 March, 1992 April, 1992
JPAC, videotapes	JPAC Members, Partners, Project Director	November, 1991 February, 1992 May, 1992
JPAC Sub- committees, videotapes	JPAC Members, Partners	November, 1991 February, 1992
Selected Documents	Partners, JPAC Members, Project Staff	October, 1990 - May, 1992
Q-Sort Reflections	Local Partnership Experts	May - July, 1992
Log	Researcher/Project Director	January - May, 1992

Table 2

Number of Data Segments for Each Research Question

Category/ DOMAIN	RQ1 Expectations	RQ2 Evaluation	RQ3 Roles/ Responsibilities	RQ4 Staying Involved	Total	% of Total
Goals	86	39	15	31	171	7%
Context	26	9	7	5	47	2%
Outcomes		110	30	15	155	7%
FOCUS	**112**	**158**	**52**	**51**	**373**	**16%**
Characteristics	60	40	45	7	152	7%
Commitment	74	72	31	10	187	8%
Roles & Responsibilities		51	36	2	89	4%
MEMBERS	**134**	**163**	**112**	**19**	**428**	**18%**
Needs & Resources	23	5	11	0	39	2%
Funding and Other Material Resources	101	19	113	7	240	10%
Connections	102	20	64	33	219	9%
NEEDS & RESOURCES	**226**	**44**	**188**	**40**	**498**	**21%**
Communications	142	45	249	2	438	19%
Decision-Making	141	27	131	0	299	13%
Group Dynamics	93	27	46	7	173	7%
Inquiry	12	23	16	1	52	2%
INTERACTIONS	**388**	**122**	**442**	**10**	**962**	**41%**
STAGES	**48**	**16**	**5**	**3**	**72**	**3%**
TOTAL	908	503	799	123	2333	100%
Percent of Total					100%	

Note. Totals may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Table 3

Number of Data Segments for All Research Questions by Data Source

Category/ DOMAIN	Data Source							Total	% of Total
	P	J	PM	JM	L	D	E		
Goals	39	31	13	17	4	32	35	171	7%
Context	14	12	6	0	3	8	4	47	2%
Outcomes	30	29	14	9	4	46	23	155	7%
FOCUS	**83**	**72**	**33**	**26**	**11**	**86**	**62**	**373**	**16%**
Characteristics	56	17	18	10	7	21	23	152	7%
Commitment	38	46	36	2	3	40	22	187	8%
Roles & Responsibilities	25	27	7	1	2	19	8	89	4%
MEMBERS	**119**	**90**	**61**	**13**	**12**	**80**	**53**	**428**	**18%**
Needs & Resources	10	8	7	5	0	7	2	39	2%
Funding and Other Material Resources	19	28	41	26	7	116	3	240	10%
Connections	29	60	27	43	2	53	5	219	9%
NEEDS & RESOURCES	**58**	**96**	**75**	**74**	**9**	**176**	**10**	**498**	**21%**
Communications	39	45	61	49	10	220	14	438	19%
Decision-Making	73	30	49	13	3	93	38	299	13%
Group Dynamics	35	47	23	3	5	19	41	173	7%
Inquiry	4	4	3	1	2	23	15	52	2%
INTERACTIONS	**151**	**126**	**136**	**66**	**20**	**355**	**108**	**962**	**41%**
STAGES	**34**	**4**	**5**	**1**	**1**	**9**	**18**	**72**	**3%**
TOTAL	445	388	310	180	53	706	251	2333	100%
Percent of Total	19%	17%	13%	8%	2%	30%	11% .	100%	

Note. Totals may exceed 100% due to rounding.

Partnership Process	Focus	Goals	
		Context	
		Outcomes	
	Members	General Characteristics	
		Commitment	
		Roles and Responsi-bilities	Partners*
			Advisory Council Members*
			Teachers*
			Project Director*
			Other*
	Needs and Resources	Funding and Other Material Resources	
		Connections, Sharing, Exchanges	
	Interactions	Communications	
		Decision-Making / Action Planning	
		Group Dynamics	
		Inquiry into Partnership Process	
	Stages		

Note. Analysis of roles and responsibilities of participant groups (marked with *) also used the same domains/categories (i.e., Focus, Members, Needs and Resources, Interactions, Stages).

Figure 1. Taxonomy of domains and categories.
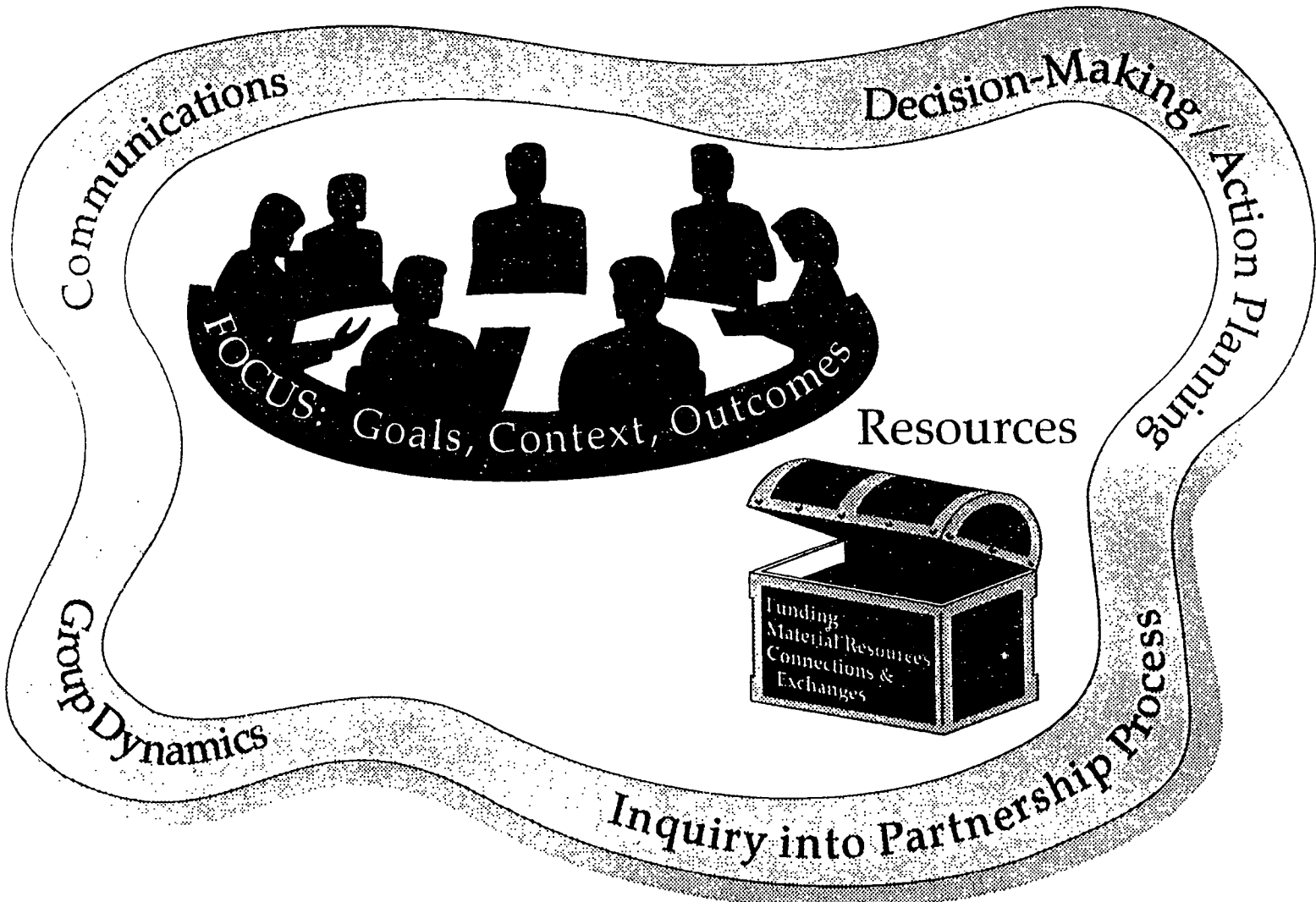
Figure 2. Partnership as a process that brings together members and resources to produce outcomes.
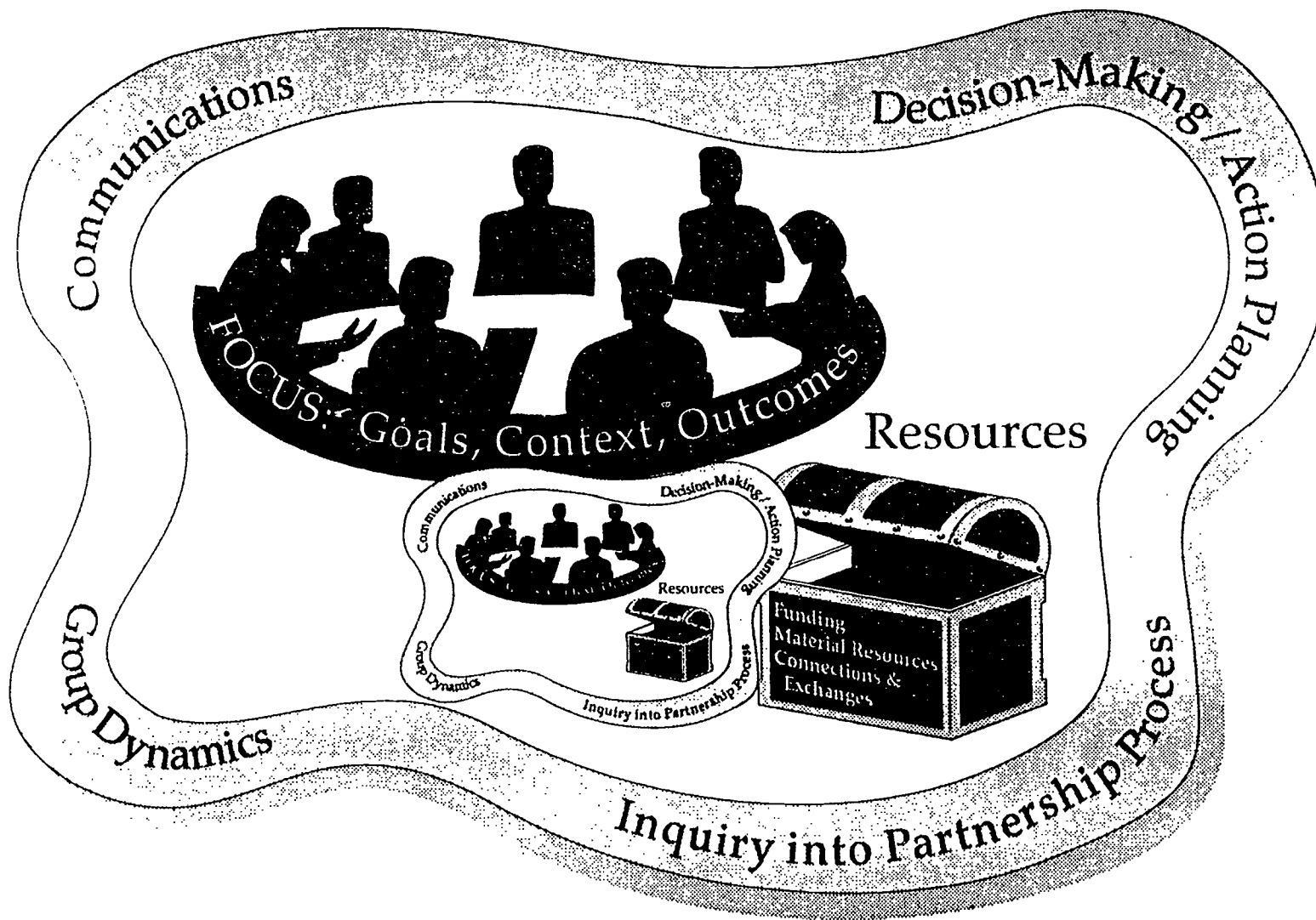
Borthwick, AERA, 1995

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Figure 3. Partnership project implementation as a process within a process.