

8-2018

## **'Making Things Happen' in Cross-sector Partnerships: A Multiple Case Study**

Priyanka Shah Brunese  
*Purdue University*

Follow this and additional works at: [https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open\\_access\\_dissertations](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open_access_dissertations)

---

### **Recommended Citation**

Brunese, Priyanka Shah, "'Making Things Happen' in Cross-sector Partnerships: A Multiple Case Study" (2018). *Open Access Dissertations*. 1909.  
[https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open\\_access\\_dissertations/1909](https://docs.lib.purdue.edu/open_access_dissertations/1909)

This document has been made available through Purdue e-Pubs, a service of the Purdue University Libraries. Please contact [epubs@purdue.edu](mailto:epubs@purdue.edu) for additional information.

**‘MAKING THINGS HAPPEN’ IN CROSS-SECTOR COLLABORATIVE  
PARTNERSHIPS: A MULTIPLE CASE STUDY**

by

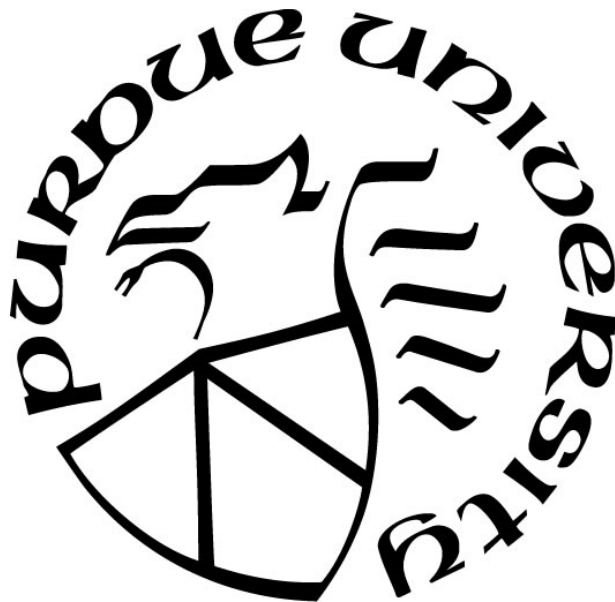
**Priyanka Shah Brunese**

**A Dissertation**

*Submitted to the Faculty of Purdue University*

*In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of*

**Doctor of Philosophy**



Department of Technology Leadership & Innovation

West Lafayette, Indiana

August 2018

**THE PURDUE UNIVERSITY GRADUATE SCHOOL  
STATEMENT OF COMMITTEE APPROVAL**

Dr. Brett Crawford, Co-Chair

Department of Technology, Leadership, and Innovation

Dr. Jenny L. Daugherty, Co-Chair

School of Leadership & Human Resource Development

Louisiana State University

Dr. Chad M. Laux

Department of Computer and Information Technology

Dr. Brad Alge

Krannert School of Management

**Approved by:**

Dr. Kathy Newton

Head of the Graduate Program

Purdue Polytechnic Institute

*Dedication*

For Pat and Maahika

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation could not have been completed without so many important people in my life. I would like to take this opportunity to thank my family, my friends, co-workers and mentors, who have supported me through this journey.

My parents, Arti and Jatin have been my pillar of strength and have cheered me on every day. Without their strong hearts and a fierce belief in me, I could not have moved out of India to pursue my dreams. I am going to be indebted by all the sacrifices they have made for me. I sincerely hope I have made you proud.

I thank my colleagues at Purdue Center for Regional Development, who not only gave me access to their program, but also have provided incredible support to get this dissertation to the finish line.

I could not have done this without my committee members, Dr. Crawford, Dr. Daugherty, Dr. Laux, Dr. Alge, and Dr. Hurt, who helped me push through every time I was stuck in “inertia”. Thank you, Jenny, for holding my hand through this journey. And, thank you Brett for believing in me, challenging me to stick to deadlines and helping me seeing this through.

I acknowledge the support of so many of my friends and family members. Megan (Nyre), you are my soul mate, and I truly appreciate you being there for me, through every brainstorm session, through all the edits and re-edits. Jasmine (Linabary), you helped me immensely with your knowledge, your advice and your ability to reassure me. I thank my sister, Tanvi, who supported me these last six months and helped take care of my baby so that I could focus on writing.

I thank my beautiful twenty-month old daughter Maahika. You helped me find my drive to finish this dissertation. I wanted to show you that women are strong and can achieve our desires. This dissertation is dedicated to you.

Lastly, I also dedicate this project to my husband Pat. You have been the co-author and collaborator through the life we’ve made over the past several years. You did not let me give up, you took care of everything so I could focus on writing, you stayed up with me, challenged me, and loved me through every frustration and success. I could not have done this without you.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	xi
LIST OF FIGURES .....	xii
GLOSSARY .....	xiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS.....	xv
ABSTRACT.....	xvi
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
1.1 Background.....	1
1.2 Purpose of this Study .....	3
1.3 Research Questions.....	4
1.4 Nature of the Study.....	5
1.5 Significance of the Study.....	6
1.6 Key Terminology and Definitions Used in the Study.....	7
1.7 Dissertation Structure.....	8
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW .....	10
2.1 Review of the Field of Inter-Organizational Relationships .....	10
2.1.1 Evolution of IOR Research.....	10
2.1.2 The Fragmented Field of IOR.....	12
2.1.3 Core Concepts and Theories in IOR Research .....	15
2.1.3.1 Type and Context of IOR research.....	16
2.1.3.2 Conditions and Success Drivers for IORs .....	17
2.1.3.3 Partnership Life-Cycle.....	18
2.1.3.4 Partnership Outcomes.....	18
2.1.3.5 Section Summary.....	19
2.2 Cross-sector Collaborative Partnerships .....	20
2.3 Theoretical Foundation .....	23
2.3.1 Theory of Collaborative Advantage .....	23
2.3.2 Conceptual Framework of “Making Things Happen’ in Partnerships .....	27
2.4 Chapter Summary .....	32
CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY.....	34

3.1	Underpinning Research Philosophy and Researcher Postionality .....	34
3.2	Research Questions .....	37
3.3	Research Design: Multiple Case Study Approach .....	37
3.3.1	Unit of Analysis .....	38
3.3.2	Binding the Case .....	39
3.3.3	Research Constructs and Definitions .....	40
3.3.4	Multiple Case Study Selection Criteria .....	41
3.3.5	Pilot Study Case Selection .....	44
3.3.6	Main Study Case Selection .....	47
3.4	Main Study Context .....	48
3.4.1	Hometown Collaboration Initiative Program .....	49
3.4.1.1	Operational Relationship Between HCI and Partnerships .....	50
3.4.1.2	HCI Program Influence on Partnerships .....	51
3.4.2	Context of Case Study Partnership A .....	53
3.4.3	Context of Case Study Partnership B .....	54
3.5	Data Generation Procedures .....	56
3.5.1	Pilot Study Methods .....	59
3.5.2	Pilot Case Study & Lessons Learned .....	62
3.5.2.1	Issues Around Observations .....	62
3.5.2.2	Issues Around Interviews .....	63
3.5.2.3	Revisions to Main Study Design and Implementation .....	64
3.5.3	Main Study Methods .....	65
3.5.3.1	Phase 1: Understanding the HCI Program .....	68
3.5.3.1.1	Meetings With Organization Contacts .....	69
3.5.3.1.2	Unstructured Interviews .....	69
3.5.3.1.3	Document Review .....	70
3.5.3.2	Phase 2: Selecting the Partnership Cases .....	70
3.5.3.2.1	Conference Call Meeting Observations .....	70
3.5.3.2.2	Informants Meeting .....	71
3.5.3.2.3	Document Review .....	72
3.5.3.3	Phase 3: Investigating Partnership A and Partnership B .....	72

3.5.3.3.1 Meeting Observations .....	72
3.5.3.3.2 Documents Reviewed.....	73
3.5.3.3.3 Semi-structured Interviews .....	75
3.6 Data Analysis .....	78
3.6.1 Analysis to Understand Individual Cases .....	80
3.6.1.1 Time-Series Analysis.....	81
3.6.1.2 Collaborative Inertia Analysis.....	82
3.6.1.3 Narrating or Explaining the Cases.....	85
3.6.2 Analysis to Answer Research Questions .....	85
3.6.3 Bringing it Together .....	91
3.7 Quality and Rigor for the Study.....	92
CHAPTER 4. CASE STUDY NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS .....	95
4.1 Case Study Narratives.....	95
4.1.1 Story of Partnership A .....	96
4.1.1.1 Year One: January – May .....	96
4.1.1.2 Year One: May – July.....	98
4.1.1.3 Year One: July –December.....	101
4.1.1.4 Year Two: January – July.....	103
4.1.1.5 Year Two: July –August.....	105
4.1.1.6 Year Two: August .....	106
4.1.1.7 Year Two: August – December .....	108
4.1.2 Story of Partnership B .....	112
4.1.2.1 Year One: January – May .....	113
4.1.2.2 Year One: May- December.....	115
4.1.2.3 Year Two (January – December).....	118
4.2 Response to Research Questions .....	124
4.2.1 Research Question 1: How is the Partnership Structure Created and How is it Influencing the Implementation of Partnership Agendas? .....	125
4.2.1.1 Membership Structure .....	127
4.2.1.1.1 Imposed and Composed Membership Structure .....	128
4.2.1.1.2 Team Size.....	129



4.2.1.1.3	Membership Composition .....	132
4.2.1.1.4	Individual Member Characteristics .....	134
4.2.2	Process Structure .....	137
4.2.3	Communication Structure .....	140
4.2.4	Goal Structure .....	146
4.3	Research Question 2: How Are the Communication Processes Influencing the Creation and Implementation of Partnership Agendas? .....	147
4.3.1	Five Communication Processes .....	148
4.3.1.1	Instructional Learning Processes .....	148
4.3.1.2	Team Discussion Processes .....	149
4.3.1.3	Team Decision-Making Processes .....	149
4.3.1.4	Action Planning .....	149
4.3.1.5	Action Taking .....	150
4.3.2	Relationship between Communication Processes and Partnership Agendas .....	150
4.4	Research Question 3: How Are the Key Roles and Responsibilities in the Partnership Influencing the Creation and Implementation of the Agendas? .....	154
4.4.1	Formal and Informal Roles .....	155
4.4.1.1	Impact of Coach’s Role on Creation and Implementation of Agendas: .....	156
4.4.1.2	Informal Emergent Roles .....	160
4.4.1.2.1	‘Input-givers’ .....	161
4.4.1.2.2	Doers .....	162
4.4.1.2.3	Leaders .....	163
4.4.2	Relationships Among ‘Input-giver’, ‘Doer’ and ‘Leader’ roles .....	166
4.4.3	Individual and Collective Responsibilities .....	167
4.5	Research Question 4: How Are Partnership Team Members Acting to ‘Make Things Happen’ in the Partnership? .....	170
4.5.1	Partnership Outcomes/ ‘Making Things Happen’ .....	171
4.5.2	Actions that “Made Things Happen” .....	175
4.5.2.1	Showing Up .....	177
4.5.2.2	Being Engaged .....	179
4.5.2.3	Making Decisions .....	181

4.5.2.4	Reflecting Intentionally .....	182
4.5.2.5	Following Through .....	183
4.5.2.6	Persevering .....	184
CHAPTER 5.	DISCUSSION .....	187
5.1	Theoretical Contributions .....	187
5.1.1	Contribution One: Defining “Making Things Happen” .....	189
5.1.2	Contribution Two: Expanding the Concepts of Collaborative Inertia and Collaborative Advantage .....	189
5.1.3	Contribution Three: Issues that Lead to Collaborative Inertia .....	192
5.1.4	Contribution Four: Making Things Happen Through Partnership Structure.....	194
5.1.4.1	Imposed and Composed Structure .....	195
5.1.4.2	Consistency and Fluidity in Membership .....	196
5.1.5	Contribution Five: Making Things Happen Through Partnership’s Communication Processes.....	198
5.1.6	Contribution Six: Making Things Happen Through Balancing Member Roles.....	201
5.1.6.1	Orientation of the Positional Roles.....	201
5.1.6.2	Balancing the Emerging Roles .....	203
5.1.7	Contribution Seven: Making Things Happen Through Collective Actions .....	205
5.1.8	Contribution Eight: Reflective Handles for Collaborative Capacity in Cross-sector Partnerships.....	206
5.2	Practical Contributions.....	208
5.2.1	Cultivate Your Collaborative Space .....	209
5.2.2	Trust the Process, and Require Decisions.....	210
5.2.3	Gauge Partnership Team Capacity .....	212
5.2.4	Read the Room .....	213
5.3	Limitations of the Study.....	214
5.4	Directions for Future Research .....	215
5.5	Conclusions.....	217
REFERENCES	.....	219
APPENDIX A.	Interview Guides.....	239
APPENDIX B.	THEMES FROM PILOT STUDY .....	244

APPENDIX C. HCI PROGRAM GOALS/OUTCOMES ..... 246

APPENDIX D. COLLABORATIVE INERTIA DATA AND ANALYSIS ..... 247

VITA..... 251

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1: Frequently used IOR Terminology in the Literature. From Cropper et al. (2008a, p. 4). .....	13
Table 3.1: Research Constructs and Definitions (Adapted from Huxham & Vangen, 2005) and Vangen and Huxham, 2003, 2006, 2012) .....	40
Table 3.2: Data Source Table for Pilot Study .....	62
Table 3.3: Data Sources for main study .....	66
Table 3.4: Demographics for Interview Participants .....	77
Table 3.5: Example of this time-series (6-month) analysis done for Case A. ....	82
Table 3.6: Collaborative Inertia Operational Definition.....	84
Table 3.7: Example of Fractured Structural Analysis.....	90
Table 4.1: Average meeting attendance per month for each partnership .....	130
Table 4.2: Number of meetings per month for each partnership .....	144

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Core Concepts and Research Trends in the Field of IORs.....	16
Figure 2.2: Theory of Collaborative Advantage. From Huxham and Vangen (2005, p. 38).....	25
Figure 2.3: Conceptual Model of Mechanisms that “Make Things Happen” in Cross-Sector Partnerships.....	28
Figure 3.1: Binding the Case: Creation and Implementation of Partnership Agendas.....	39
Figure 3.2: Visual Representation of Operational Relationship between HCI Program and Partnerships.....	51
Figure 3.3: Phases and Processes mandated by HCI Program.....	52
Figure 3.4: Phases of Data Collection.....	65
Figure 3.5: Levels of Data Analysis .....	80
Figure 3.6: Example of Code Development Process .....	89
Figure 4.1: Breakdown of community group membership over the course of the project for partnership A. Number in each bubble represents the total amount of team members from that particular community group.....	97
Figure 4.2: Breakdown of community group membership over the course of the project for partnership B. Number in each bubble represents the total amount of team members from that particular community group.....	114
Figure 4.3: Partnership structural elements and emergent themes .....	126
Figure 4.4: Role of the coach as a connector between the partnerships and HCI.....	141
Figure 4.5: Role of the coach as a connector in partnership A.....	142
Figure 4.6: Role of the coach and team lead as connectors in partnership A.....	142
Figure 4.7: Pictorial representation of the five communication processes .....	147
Figure 4.8: Meeting-by-meeting occurrence of communication processes for the partnerships	151
Figure 4.9: Formal and informal role types in the partnerships.....	156
Figure 4.10: Responsibilities for an HCI coach [Source: HCI program documents].....	156
Figure 4.11: Core team collective responsibilities [Source: HCI program documents].....	168
Figure 4.12: Task based responsibility example from Partnership B.....	169
Figure 4.13: Outcome directionality during meetings.....	171

Figure 4.14: Month-by-month summary of the tangible outputs for the two selected partnerships .....	172
Figure 4.15: Pictorial representation of the cyclical behavior of positive and negative intangible outcomes on team members due to the generation (or lack thereof) of team outcomes.....	175
Figure 4.16: Pictorial representation of the overlap between the six interrelated actions that make things happen .....	176
Figure 4.17: Levels of collaborative inertia for each partnership, month-by-month, highlighting the average number of attendees to monthly meetings.....	178
Figure 5.1: Pictorial representation of the collaborative inertia spectrum.....	191
Figure 5.2: Critical factors leading to collaborative inertia .....	192
Figure 5.3: Structural change from imposed to composed within the partnership requires ownership from the team members .....	196
Figure 5.4: Tension between fluidity and consistency in membership.....	198
Figure 5.5: Relationship between outputs and collaborative variables.....	200
Figure 5.6: Tensions between positional roles in cross-sector partnerships.....	202
Figure 5.7: Tension arising from the decision-making process.....	203
Figure 5.8: Tension between informal team member roles .....	204
Figure 5.9: Model of Reflective Handles for Collaborative Capacity in Cross-Sector Partnerships .....	207

## GLOSSARY

*Collaboration* is a process through which, parties that see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their limited vision of what is possible (Gray, 1989, p. 5). In this type of arrangement, actors continue to undertake most of their work independently but relinquish varying degrees of resources and autonomy to achieve collective aims (Intriligator, 1992, p. 3).

*Cross-sector partnership* is an inter-organizational group involving individuals and organizations from public, private and nonprofit sectors, with a purpose to address complex problems, working together under some form of recognized governance, towards common goals by exchanging or co-developing resources and capabilities by sharing managerial control to obtain outcomes beneficial to all involved. The definition frequently stipulates the need for community participation and frequently focuses on the inclusion of all stakeholders who are affected by the issue under consideration (Armistead et al. 2007; Wilson et al., 2010; Vangen et al., 2014).

*Collaborative advantage* is the benefit that organizations obtain while addressing social issues that would otherwise fall between the gaps when different types of organizations such as for-profit, non-for-profit and public organizations partner together (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

*Collaborative inertia* is a state of slow progress during the process of collaboration when things don't get accomplished. "A partnership is in a state of inertia if: the output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible, the rate of output is extremely slow, stories of pain and hard grind are integral to successes achieved" (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p.23)

"*Making things happen,*" indicated that there were outcomes being generated (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

EDC: Economic Development Council

FFA: Future Farmers of America

HCI: Hometown Collaboration Initiative

IOR: Inter-organizational Relationships

ISBDC: Indiana Small Business Development Corporation

LEDO: Local Economic Development Office

OCRA: Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs

PRIDE: PRIDE Youth Programs

WRCTE: Wabash River Career & Technical Education

YEP: Young Educational Professionals



## ABSTRACT

Author: Brunese, Priyanka, S. PhD

Institution: Purdue University

Degree Received: August 2018

Title: 'Making Things Happen' in Cross-sector Partnerships: A Multiple Case Study

Committee Chair: Brett Crawford and Jenny Daugherty

Cross-sector collaborative partnerships aim to bring resources and knowledge from their particular sectors to provide innovative solutions in response to current social, economic and environmental problems, and for developing policies and processes for emergent issues. However, cross-sector partnerships involving public (i.e., institutions of higher education), private, and non-profit organizations are complex and dynamic systems that are extremely difficult to manage once they have been established. Organizations spanning different sectors not only have dissimilar operating models, working cultures, values, and leadership styles, but are driven by different motives in joining the partnership thereby making the act of collaborating very challenging. When performing well, cross-sector collaborative partnerships have transformative outcomes due to the collaborative advantage possible with the participants' knowledge and resources. However, these partnerships are rarely successful due to what is termed "collaborative inertia," which prevents progress towards goals.

This study examined the mechanisms that "make things happen" in two cross-sector collaborative partnerships using a qualitative, multiple case study approach. The study analyzed numerous data sources, providing 24-months of longitudinal data regarding the creation and operations of the partnerships. Through this approach, this research was able to operationalize the concept of collaborative inertia and made substantial contributions to the concept of "making things happen" in the theory of collaborative advantage. In particular, deeper understanding has

been provided in understanding the importance of partnership structure, repetitive communication processes, regularity in usage of collaborative spaces, balance in informal team roles, and collective actions that were key mechanisms that “made things happen” in the cross-sector collaborative partnerships studied.

## CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

Complex or ‘wicked problems’ cannot be addressed by single organizations (Crosby & Bryson, 2005; Rittel & Webber, 1973; Trist, 1983). In recent years, complex problems, such as improving and developing societal commodities, require more innovative approaches. The complexity of these problems prompted the establishment of inter-organizational partnerships to include individuals and organizations from different sectors such as public, private and non-profit (Crosby & Bryson, 2005; Gray, 1985; Osborne et al., 2008; Van Tulder et al., 2015; Warner & Sullivan, 2004). Cross-sector partnerships have greatly impacted national and global innovation, as well as research and development policies (Elmuti, et al., 2005; Kelly, 2007; Osborne et al., 2008).

Cross-sector partnerships have been effective at tackling complex issues especially because they include diversity and a common goal. They tend to focus on shared problems rather than specific interests of a single sector. They aim to obtain diverse, cross-sectoral resources and expertise to provide innovative solutions in response to complex problems, and for developing policies and processes to emergent issues (Seitanidi, 2008; Van Tulder et al., 2014). A driving assumption motivating more organizations across sectors to engage in partnerships is that the combined efforts and resources from the collaborating organizations will yield better results and hence a collaborative advantage (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Brownie, 2007).

However, these cross-sector partnerships involving public, private, and non-profit organizations are complex and dynamic systems and are extremely difficult to manage once established (Bryson et al., 2006; Dickinson & Glasby, 2010; Innes & Booher, 1999; Powell &

Dowling, 2006). Organizations spanning different sectors not only have dissimilar operating models, working cultures, values, and leadership styles, but also are driven by different motives in joining the partnership. These differences, along with the lack of single source of leadership within the partnership, make the act of collaborating very challenging (Osborn & Marion, 2009; Vangen & Huxham, 2012).

When cross-sector partnerships are faced with these different challenges, the different individuals and organizations involved often lose their motivation, and the partnership enters a state of collaborative inertia (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). This commonly occurs when progress towards achieving the goals has slowed and things do not seem to get accomplished. Huxham and Vangen (2000) explain that there are several reasons attributing to this slowdown; competing priorities, especially if the goals of the partnership are not aligned and accepted by all the partnership members involved; and difficulty in decision-making, since responsibilities, such as defining the vision, mission, goals and objectives are usually shared among the participating members. Thus, there is a need to understand two areas: the different challenges faced in partnerships that lead to collaborative inertia, and how partnerships can achieve success and collaborative advantage.

For this study, a cross-sector collaborative partnership is defined as an inter-organizational group involving individuals and organizations from public, private and nonprofit sectors, with a purpose to address complex problems, working together under some form of recognized governance, towards common goals by exchanging or co-developing resources and capabilities by sharing managerial control to obtain outcomes beneficial to all involved. The definition frequently stipulates the need for community participation and frequently focuses on the inclusion of all

stakeholders who are affected by the issue under consideration (Armistead et al. 2007; Vangen et al., 2014; Wilson et al., 2010).

Academic literature on cross-sector partnerships has used the broader terminology to categorize research on this topic as the field of inter-organizational relationships (IORs). Research on IORs is vast, inter-disciplinary and extremely fragmented. The majority of research is focused on antecedents, content, patterns, forms, and outcomes of business partnerships or alliances. Very few researchers have investigated the ‘act/practice of collaborating’ or explored the underlying complexities of the post-formation phases of a partnership, which focus on the creation of short and long-term goals and objectives, governance mechanisms, collaboration and coordination protocols, trust and leadership in partnerships.

In order to address this gap, this dissertation explored the ‘act of collaborating’ by grounding it in the theory of collaborative advantage and expanded the concept of “making things happen” in cross-sector collaborative partnerships. The purpose of this study, its research questions, its theoretical and methodological frameworks and significance are discussed in the sections below. This chapter ends with a list of key definitions and an overview of the dissertation structure.

## 1.2 Purpose of this Study

This study aimed to (1) to explore how cross-sector collaborative partnerships are led to achieve collaborative advantage instead of collaborative inertia, and (2) to understand the mechanisms that ‘make things happen’ to achieve the goals of the partnership, such as partnership’s structures, processes, participants and their activities. Thus, the purpose of this study was the develop a richer understanding of the phenomenon of “making things happens” in inter-

organizational relationships by using holistic multiple case study approach to investigate a partnership's structure, processes, participants and participant activities.

The following objectives were created to support the goals of this study:

1. To explore the concepts of collaborative inertia and collaborative advantage in cross-sector collaborative partnerships.
2. To understand the act of collaborating among the partnering members.
3. To understand structures and processes used to create and implement agendas to achieve the set goals for the cross-sector partnerships.
4. To understand the activities performed by members of the partnership to 'make things happen' in the partnerships.

### 1.3 Research Questions

The following research questions to address the above-mentioned objectives focus on the act of collaborating in cross-sector collaborative partnerships:

1. How is the partnership structure created and influencing the creation and implementation of partnership agendas?
2. How are the key roles and responsibilities in the partnership influencing the creation and implementation of the agendas?
3. How are the communication processes influencing the creation and implementation of partnership agendas?
4. How are members acting to 'make things happen' in the partnerships?

#### 1.4 Nature of the Study

The study aimed to investigate and describe the dynamics of creating and implementing agendas in cross-sector collaborative partnerships involving institutions of higher education and other private, public or nonprofit organizations in the Midwest, U.S. The focus of the study was to understand “how” partnership structure, key roles, communication processes and members’ activities influenced the planning and execution of partnership agendas in order to achieve collaborative advantage. Accordingly, the study used Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) theory of collaborative advantage as a theoretical foundation to guide the understanding of collaboration in IORs.

The theory of collaborative advantage is thematic and descriptive in nature and describes the complexity involved in inter-organizational collaborations through different themes such as common aims, culture, power, trust, leadership, and social capital needed to achieve collaborative advantage. Huxham and Vangen (2005) introduced the phenomenon of “making things happen” in collaborations and referred to it as leadership in collaboration. They explained that it was through a partnership’s structure, participants, processes and members’ activities that “made things happen”.

The underpinning philosophy for this study was social constructivism. This stemmed from my own epistemological worldview, as I believe that human beings create meaning about the world they live and interact in (Creswell, 2014). Thus, the study aimed to understand the actors' or participants' perspectives about the context or situation in which the phenomenon is being studied (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 1984). For this reason, a qualitative research methodology using a multiple case study approach was employed to investigate “how” partnerships make things happen (Yin, 2009). Using this approach, I investigated each holistic case separately, understanding the

context and issues specific to that case, but also sought similarities or contrasts in the findings across the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2009).

A single case study with a different cross-sector collaborative partnership was used as a pilot study before starting the main study to inform the methodological procedures of the main study. All the case studies were selected using specific criteria based on the methodological approaches recommended by Yin (2014) and Stake (1995). For each case, a separate, holistic, collaborative, non-hierarchical, cross-sector, community-based partnership was selected.

The research questions were derived from the theoretical framework, described in Chapter 2. Qualitative data collection methods were used to investigate the two case studies, allowing me to gather and generate interpretative and subjective data from the selected partnerships. Several data analysis techniques were used to interpret and analyze the data, including case study narratives, time series analysis, thematic structural analysis, pattern matching and categorical aggregation. Findings reported through case study narratives give a rich description of each case and inform the responses to the above research questions.

### 1.5 Significance of the Study

After studying different types of inter-organizational relationships over fifteen years, Huxham & Vangen (2005) transparently stated that “seeking collaborative advantage is a seriously resource-consuming activity, so it is only to be considered when the stakes are really worth pursuing...don’t do it unless you have to” (2013, p. 13). The ‘act of collaborating’ in any kind of inter-organizational relationships is challenging. However, investigating the concepts of collaborative inertia and collaborative advantage to explore “making things happen” provided depth of understanding of the complexity underneath this phenomenon.



This study presents mechanisms that move the partnerships forward towards collaborative advantage, and also uncovers issues that contribute to collaborative inertia. This has a large impact on the temporal design and management of the structural and process elements of such partnerships. The findings presented in this dissertation provide indicators for partnership managers to watch, suggesting when the partnership is heading towards collaborative inertia; and provides guidance for the design of prescriptive interventions to “jump-start” the partnership.

### 1.6 Key Terminology and Definitions Used in the Study

*Collaboration* is a process through which, parties that see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their limited vision of what is possible (Gray, 1989, p. 5). In this type of arrangement, actors continue to undertake most of their work independently but relinquish varying degrees of resources and autonomy to achieve collective aims (Intriligator, 1992, p. 3).

*Cross-sector partnership* is an inter-organizational group involving individuals and organizations from public, private and nonprofit sectors, with a purpose to address complex problems, working together under some form of recognized governance, towards common goals by exchanging or co-developing resources and capabilities by sharing managerial control to obtain outcomes beneficial to all involved. The definition frequently stipulates the need for community participation and frequently focuses on the inclusion of all stakeholders who are affected by the issue under consideration (Armistead et al. 2007; Wilson et al., 2010; Vangen et al., 2014).

*Collaborative advantage* is the benefit that organizations obtain while addressing social issues that would otherwise fall between the gaps when different types of organizations such as for-profit, non-for-profit and public organizations partner together (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

*Collaborative inertia* is a state of slow progress during the process of collaboration when things don't get accomplished. "A partnership is in a state of inertia if: the output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible, the rate of output is extremely slow, stories of pain and hard grind are integral to successes achieved" (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p.23).

"*Making things happen*," indicated that there were outcomes being generated (Huxham & Vangen, 2005).

"*Community*" in community-based cross-sector collaborative partnerships refers to a geographic, physical territory, or place that has relationships and interaction between the community's organizations and its residents, and these interactions are towards a common interest (Green & Haines, 2002). For this study, professional, virtual or interest-based communities are excluded and the focus is around place-based communities.

## 1.7 Dissertation Structure

Ultimately, this dissertation aimed to understand how cross-sector partnerships achieve collaborative advantage or become stuck in collaborative inertia. It did so by using two holistic multiple case studies, where two separate partnerships were investigated to understand how mechanisms like partnerships' structure, processes, participants and their actions "make things happen".

This dissertation has a total of five chapters including this 'Introduction' chapter. In Chapter 2, I provide the overview of the field of inter-organizational relationships and summarize the different ways in which this very vast and inter-disciplinary field is studied. I then highlight the need for investigating the 'act of collaborating' and identify gaps for this topic in the literature.

I present and describe the theory of collaborative advantage, which is used to ground this study. Using this theory, and the conceptual framework of “making things happen”, I propose research questions for this dissertation. In Chapter 3, I outline and justify the research design and methods used to investigate this dissertation’s research questions. I also describe the context of the two partnerships in Chapter 3. I have divided Chapter 4 into two parts, the first part being the multiple case study narratives and the second part being the findings as responding to the four research questions. I then discuss the theoretical and practical contributions of this dissertation in Chapter 5. I conclude Chapter 5 with discussions on this study’s limitations and future research opportunities, as well as a conclusion of the overall work.

## CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study aimed to understand mechanisms that ‘make things happen’ in cross-sector collaborative partnerships. This study is rooted in the vast inter-disciplinary field of inter-organizational relationships (IORs). Thus, I began this chapter by providing an in-depth overview of what inter-organization relationships are and how they have been studied over time. I then provided an understanding of how cross-sector collaborative partnerships are defined and studied in the literature. I also highlighted not only the problems facing such partnerships, but also gaps in the literature around understanding those problems. The theory of collaborative advantage is then explained along with the discussion of the conceptual model for this study. This chapter is concluded by listing the research questions, derived from the conceptual model for this dissertation.

### 2.1 Review of the Field of Inter-Organizational Relationships

There is a vast amount of research done on why organizations collaborate, what attributes are needed by organizations to be successful in partnering, characteristics of the relationships between the organizations and the outcomes of these collaborations. Since cross-sector partnerships are a type of inter-organizational relationships (IORs), I have provided a detailed overview of the field of inter-organizational relationships (IORs), including the evolution of this field, the inter-disciplinary fragmentation of the field, and an overview of core concepts and theories in this field.

#### 2.1.1 Evolution of IOR Research.

I have used the Handbook of Inter-Organizational Relations (Cropper et al., 2008) to provide an overview of the history and evolution of the field of IOR. The phenomenon of IOR was

studied rudimentarily in the 1940s and 50s in the fields of economics, sociology and political science. By the mid-1950s, the foundation for starting IOR research was laid by Von Bertalanffy (1951) through his general systems theory, and then continued by Boulding (1956) who used the systems theory for social science problems. The terminology or nomenclature used for IORs was still not established. It was when the general systems theory was used in the development of management theory by Johnson et al. (1964) that internal and external factors affecting organizations were considered and organizations were starting to be considered as part of larger systems such as the concept of industries.

Researchers such as Ridgeway (1957), Dill (1959) and Phillips (1960) started exploring IORs between firms. Levine and White (1961) used social exchange theory to study relationships between health and welfare agencies. Litwak and Hyton (1962) explored the interactions between community chests and social services. It was Evan's (1965) seminal paper on 'a theory of inter-organizational relations' that served as a milestone to call for more studies that focused on organizations and their relations. He highlighted the gaps in the literature with regards to studying IORs as its own phenomenon instead of only studying the 'focal' organization in an IOR.

Economists and management scholars explored IORs for the purpose of developing the so-called Resource-Based theory that suggested that organizations formed IORs for seeking resources from other organizations. Contingency theory scholars studied IORs from a political lens and introduced the concept of networks and strategy in the IOR body of knowledge. Scholars such as Ostrom et al. (1974), Cook (1977) and Williamson (1975) studied exchange, power, and trade-offs in different types of IORs, thus furthering the transaction cost theory. Social network analysis was also applied to study organizations as part of larger networks.

Thus, economists, sociologists, political scientists, and management scholars studied IORs for different purposes and in different ways. It was not till the mid-70s that scholars started analyzing the IOR body of knowledge and writing literature reviews. Van de Ven (1976), Galaskiewicz (1985), Oliver (1990) and Barringer and Harrison (2000) published their own synthesis of the IOR literature and highlighted the inter-disciplinary and inconsistent nature of the field.

### 2.1.2 The Fragmented Field of IOR

My search for articles to understand inter-organizational relationships (IORs) started with using the terms 'strategic alliances' and 'strategic partnerships' in the university's library portal and free scholarly search engines and databases. These searches generated a vast number of articles that were published in a variety of disciplinary and industry/sector specific journals such as management, organization behavior, organization learning, economics, construction, information technology and marketing, to name a few. When I included the terms 'inter-organizational relationships' and 'collaborations', the search generated several literature reviews and meta-analysis of the field of IORs. In their reviews, Barringer and Harrison (2000), Cropper et al. (2008a, 2008b), Oliver (1990), Provan et al. (2007), Todeva and Knoke (2005), and Whetten (1981) painted a disparate picture of this field as well as highlighting opportunities for future research.

However, I found a few terms that were used repeatedly, but defined differently depending on the author, the focus of the study, and the type of IOR they were studying. This led me to the realization that there was no single or standard way of defining IORs. There was a lack of cohesiveness in the taxonomy and terminology used, but also an overlap in the way the terms inter-organizational relationship, inter-organizational collaboration, strategic alliances, and partnerships have been used and described in the literature. Cropper et al. (2008a) in the Handbook of Inter-

Organizational Relationships tried to clarify this confusion in the terminology by differentiating the term relationship with entity as seen in Table 2.1 below.

Table 2.1: Frequently used IOR Terminology in the Literature. From Cropper et al. (2008a, p. 4).

<b>Names for inter-organizational entities or manifestations of IORs</b>			
an alliance	an association	a cluster	a coalition
a collaboration	a consortium	a constellation	a cooperation
a federation	a joint venture	a network	a one stop shop
a partnership	a relationship	a strategic alliance	a zone
<b>Descriptors for inter-organizational entities</b>			
Collaborative...	Cooperative...	Coordinated...	Interlocking...
Inter-organizational...	Inter-professional...	Joined-up...	Joint...
Multi-agency...	Multi-party...	Multi-organizational...	Multiplex...
Trans-organizational...	Virtual...	Arms-length...	Vertical integration...
<b>Names for inter-organizational acts</b>			
Bridging	Collaboration	Contracting	Cooperation
Franchising	Networking	Outsourcing	Partnering
Working together			

Inter-organizational relationships have been studied across various disciplines and for understanding the IORs' characteristics and patterns, the way they were formed, the drivers and rationale for forming them and their outcomes or consequences. IORs can be formed between/among actors that are for-profit such as businesses, non-for-profits such as universities, as well as public and government organizations; and they could be dyadic in nature, i.e., involving only two actors, or they could be a network of actors, i.e., involving more than two actors.

As seen in Table 1, IORs assumed several manifestations based on the type, number of the actors involved, as well as the type of relationship formed. These manifestations are also referred to as inter-organizational entities rather than relations. These included partnerships, strategic alliances, joint ventures, collaborations, cooperative agreements, consortia, clusters, networks, supply agreements, licensing, co-branding, franchising, cross-sector partnerships, and trade associations (Cropper et al., 2011; Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011).

There was also confusion in the literature about describing collaboration as a process versus using it as an entity or noun. For example, Gray and Wood (1991) differentiated these terms by using the word 'collaboration' to describe the process of collaborating, and the word 'collaborative alliances' to refer to the forms or entities such as joint-ventures, partnerships, and trade associations. But, Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant (2005) defined inter-organizational collaboration as “A cooperative, inter-organizational relationship in which participants rely on neither market nor hierarchical mechanisms of control to gain cooperation from each other” (p. 58). Cropper et al. (2008a) differentiated the manifestations of IORs from the acts or processes involved in IORs such as the act of collaborating, the act of cooperating, etc.

Table 1 also lists the descriptors for the different manifestations of IORs such as collaborative, multi-party, or arms-length. This was an important categorization, because, not all



partnerships or alliances are collaborative or multi-party. For example, a partnership that is multi-party and collaborative would have very different characteristics and challenges than a partnership that is arms-length and cooperative.

Thus, it was very *important to decide the definition and the context for studying inter-organizational relationships*.

### 2.1.3 Core Concepts and Theories in IOR Research

The phenomenon of inter-organizational research was studied extensively with different disciplinary and sector lenses, different theoretical perspectives, through a spectrum of macro to microanalysis levels and at different phases of the relationship. I have pictorially presented the core concepts and theoretical perspectives studied in the extant literature in Figure 2.1 below.

I developed this figure by using several meta-analysis articles such as the overview of inter-organizational relationships by Cropper et al. (2008a); Kale and Singh's (2009) depiction of the success drivers for the different phases of a partnership's life-cycle; Todeva and Knoke's (2005) synthesis on the literature on IORs; and Gray and Wood's (1991) review on theories used in this literature.

In the left side of Figure 2.1, I have presented core concepts that are studied across the field of inter-organizational relationships. The concepts investigated were: different dimensions and characteristics of partnering actors, the relationships among them and the context in which they are studied (Cropper et al., 2008b). While, in the right side of the figure, I have presented core empirical and theoretical perspectives used to study IORs, which include: conditions needed for selecting partners, drivers for success, the macro and micro elements of partnerships, the process of forming, designing and implementing IORs, and measuring outcomes at the partnership, individual organization and overall society level. In the following subsections, I provided an

overview of all the elements depicted in Figure 2.1 and highlighted some of the empirical and theoretical trends in the field of IORs.

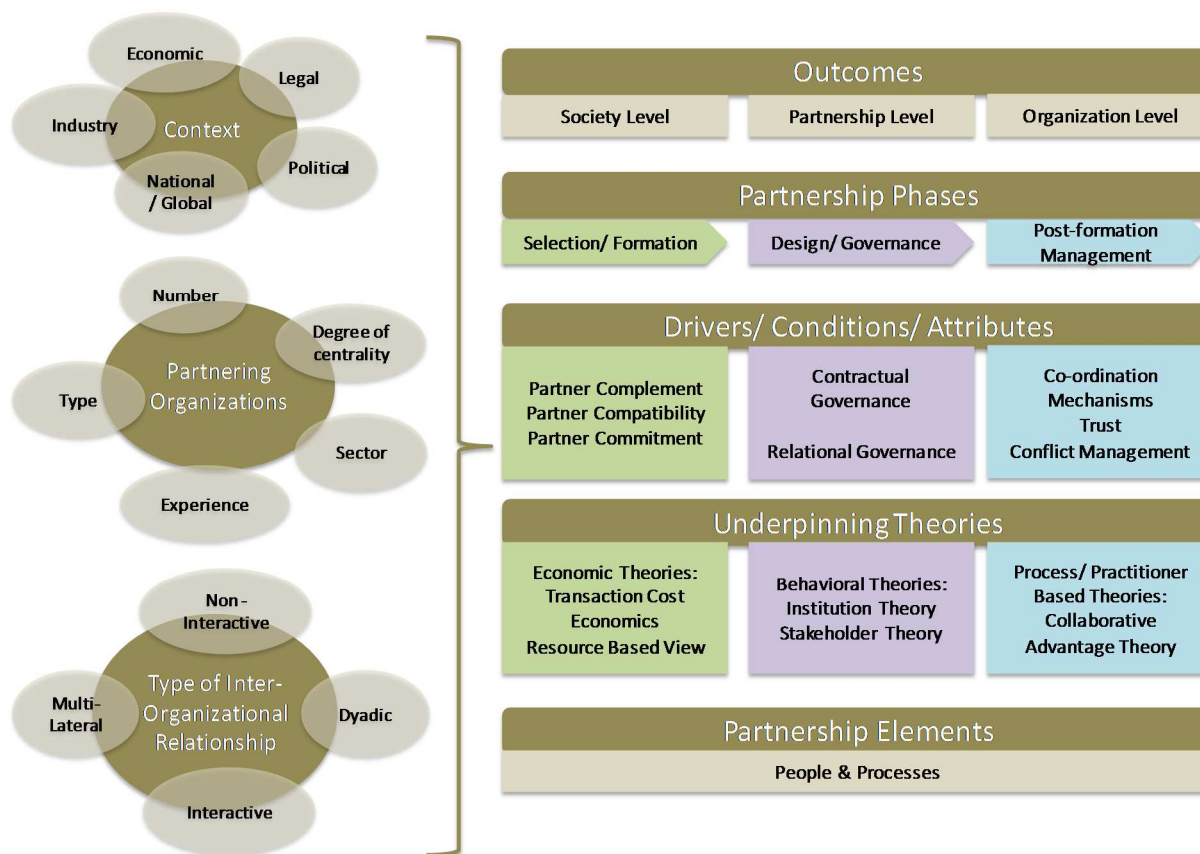


Figure 2.1: Core Concepts and Research Trends in the Field of IORs

### 2.1.3.1 Type and Context of IOR research

Inter-organizational relationships can be formed between two organizations (dyadic) or among multiple organizations (multilateral). Further, these relationships can be interactive or non-interactive in nature. Interactive relationships have an exchange of information between the partnering organizations. Researchers have studied the content of information exchanged such as Wernerfelt's (1984) study of tangible and intangible resources; Nonaka's (1991) study of tacit and explicit knowledge shared; and Gulati's (1995) study focusing on the amount and frequency of

information exchange in IORs. Other researchers studying relationships between organizations have studied trust (Bachmann & Zaheer, 2008), social exchange characteristics such as reciprocity and equity (Ouchi, 1981; Uzzi, 1997), incentive structures (Nooteboom, 1996) and contractual relationships (Ring, 2008). Researchers have studied relationships from a network perspective, looking at multiplexity (Wasserman & Faust, 1994), intensity and closeness (Coleman, 1990) and clustering (Lomi et al., 2006).

Organizations and relationships between them have also been studied with a macro and micro context. Examples of studies with micro-level context included: Stock's (2006) study focused on attributes of inter-organizational teams; Higgins and Gulati's (2003) study on the different personal characteristics such as career history, status, and relationships of the managers involved in IORs; Uzzi's (1997) study on the nature of the relationships among the members of the IORs and Huxham and Vangen's (2005) study on the goals and cognitions of individual members of the IORs. At a macro level, IORs are studied in the context of legal (Oxley, 1999), political (Knoke & Chen, 2008), economic (Provan & Milward, 1995), and national and cultural environments (Park & Luo, 2001).

#### 2.1.3.2 Conditions and Success Drivers for IORs

An actor must have specific motives and incentives to want to form a partnership with other organizations. These motives lead to certain criteria for selecting partners. A majority of the IOR research stemming from the disciplines such as economics and management has investigated the selection/ formation phase of IORs. Researching on how partners complement each other, are compatible and committed were found to be some of the conditions as well as success drivers for IORs (Kale, Singh & Perlmutter, 2000; Todeva & Knoke, 2005; Kale & Singh, 2009). Most of the research focusing on these conditions used transaction cost and resource-based theories as their

foundation (Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011; Barringer & Harrison, 2000). This research also accounted for the largest part of IOR literature.

Researchers studying success factors for designing IORs have studied and highlighted the need for contractual and relational governance mechanisms used to design and establish relationships between actors. The theories underlying this research included behavioral theories such as stakeholder and institution theories (Barringer & Harrison, 2000; Parmigiani & Rivera-Santos, 2011; Gray, 1991).

Lastly, success drivers attributed and largely studied for the post-formation phase were: the way partners perform coordination and conflict management and the amount of trust among partners. Huxham and Vangen's (2000) theory of collaborative advantage was one of the very limited theories that underpin the post-formation phase.

#### 2.1.3.3 Partnership Life-Cycle

Gray's (1985) and Larson's (1992) studies focused on stages or phases of IOR lifecycle; Sullivan et al's (2007) study was on the evolution and dissolution of IORs and Inkpen and Beamish's (1997) longitudinal study was on inter-partner learning. Todeva and Knoke (2005) provided a detailed review of the literature on strategic alliances since 1995 by categorizing it in: (1) formation, (2) implementation, and (3) measurement of outcomes. In addition, Wohlstetter, Smith, and Malloy (2005) provided a conceptual model of strategic alliance evolution phases, which include initiation, operationalization and evaluation.

#### 2.1.3.4 Partnership Outcomes.

Todeva and Knoke (2005) categorized outcomes at the partnership level which included the survival or termination of the partnership; at the organizational level which included achieving

learning objectives, impact on individual partners' outcomes, and at the societal level including the impact of the partnership on society.

#### 2.1.3.5 Section Summary

In this section I provided an overview of the field of inter-organizational relationships by categorizing the different types of literature around core concepts and the underlying theories. It was clear that one of the main reasons that the field of inter-organizational relations is fragmented including the inconsistencies in terminology is because of the different disciplinary and theoretical perspectives used. To further this body of literature, researchers Gray and Wood (1991), Culpan (2009) and Cropper et al. (2011) have called for an integrated body of knowledge and to inductively research different types of collaborations and identify themes for preconditions, processes and outcomes leading to theories of collaboration.

There was also lack of literature around different types of inter-organizational partnerships including cross-sector partnerships, as they face unique challenges (Cropper et al., 2008b; Kale & Singh, 2009; Bryson et al., 2015). The post-formation phase of IORs and topic of implementing different types of partnerships lacked empirical research because it involves studying of complex and dynamic processes (Todeva & Knocke, 2005; Huxham & Vangen, 2000; Bryson et al., 2015). Thus, these authors highlighted the need to study the “practice of collaborating” that addresses “how” to make collaborations work, after the partnerships are established.

From a methodological perspective, Hodgkinson (2001), Van de Ven and Johnson (2006), Cummings (2007) among others have called for more “applied or engaged research” (Cropper et al., 2008b, p.732) with regards to understanding inter-organizational relationships. Parkhe (1993) stated that IOR theory needs to catch up with the practice and there noted a need for “messy research” as IORs are complex in nature. Nooteboom, (1999) highlighted the lack of IOR research

from a multidisciplinary perspective. Culpan (2009) noted that these kinds of complex and multidisciplinary studies would require exploratory and non-linear research methodologies for different theories to emerge.

## 2.2 Cross-sector Collaborative Partnerships

Cross-sector partnerships were defined as a ‘multi-lateral’ type of IORs, which are comprised of individuals, groups and organizations from different sectors such businesses, government, non-profit organizations, academic, and community or civil society groups. Just like other types of inter-organizational relationships, these partnerships range from being collaborative to contractual in nature, where the latter are typically public-private partnerships (Bryson et al., 2015). Collaborative cross-sector partnerships were ones that allowed “linking or sharing of information, resources, activities, and capabilities by organizations in two or more sectors to achieve jointly an outcome that could not be achieved by organizations in one sector separately (Bryson, et al., 2006, p. 44). Such collaborative cross-sector partnerships arose from the need to address complex social problems such as economic development, public health, environment, or poverty, which could not be solved by a single group or organization and cannot be addressed by organizations in a single sector (Selsky & Parker, 2005; Koschmann et al., 2012). The cross-sector and collaborative nature allowed for development of shared and mutual goals to address common problem domains by sharing of sector-specific information and resources to achieve the notion of collective and collaborative advantage (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Provan & Kenis, 2008; Rein & Stott, 2009; Seitanidi & Crane, 2009; Koschmann et al., 2012). The current literature on cross-sector partnerships was also laden with a variety of terminology. Social partnerships, multi-stakeholder collaboratives, cross-sector collaboration, and social service partnerships are just a few examples (Koschmann et al., 2012). These cross-sector collaborative partnerships offered

great prospects, but are more likely to fail in achieving this advantage (Bendell & Murphy, 1999; Jamali & Keshishian, 2008; Turcotte & Pasquero, 2001; Andrews & Entwistle, 2010; Hodge & Greve, 2007).

There were several reasons contributing to the failure of such cross-sector collaborative partnerships in the literature. Several tensions were created when individuals and organizations from different sectors collaborate. First, different sectors had different motives for entering such partnerships, even though the end objective might be same. This created issues while developing shared and mutual goals (Selsky & Parker, 2005). Also, there were differences in the expectations, cultural environments, and leadership styles across different sectors, which created tensions around the “act of collaborating” (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). These issues had several consequences like, not achieving the set goals (Idemudia, 2008; Kern & Willcocks, 2000; Lund-Thomsen, 2008; Takahashi & Smutny, 2002; Wettenhall, 2003), and result in a state of collaborative inertia, where they are stuck in a gridlock (Gray, 2000; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Koschmann et al., 2012).

In their recent review of the literature on cross-sector partnerships, Bryson, Crosby, and Middleton Stone (2015) identified several gaps and opportunities for future research. The literature on cross-sector collaborative partnerships lacked empirical research on understanding the different elements of partnerships like structures, processes and actions, over a period of time. Bryson et al. (2015) called for more research that studies cross-sector partnerships as collaborative systems using longitudinal qualitative and quantitative approaches. Cross-sector partnerships are complex and dynamic systems (Fligstein & McAdam, 2012). There is a need to study and uncover the complexities and dynamics underlying these partnerships as called for by Berardo, Heikkila, and Gerlak: “Collaboration processes are complex enough as to demand a simultaneous analysis of all its moving parts, a goal that should drive future research efforts in this area” (2014, 701).

Bryson et al. (2015), in their review, highlighted a limited number of areas in the cross-sector partnership literature that have been well developed. However, they called for more empirical research on topics such as understanding of: leadership in cross-sector partnerships; effects of external/ environmental entities on the structure, processes and collaborative action in different contexts; outcomes of cross-sector partnerships, especially as it relates to the concept of collaborative advantage (Huxham & Vangen, 2005); and the role of technology in such partnerships.

Methodologically, Bryson et al. (2015) highlighted the need for

“a dynamic systems perspective also would allow researchers to more perceptively probe the interaction of processes and structure and the way crucial tensions play out over time... deepen understanding of the effects of antecedents, processes, structures, and contingencies on outcomes (positive and negative). Ideally, researchers will seek to uncover the precise causal mechanisms that can advance or undermine effective collaboration (Mayntz 2004; Tilly and Tarrow 2007)” (p. 658).

There was very little research conducted in the literature of cross-sector partnerships that employed the use of “longitudinal, multilevel, multi-method, comparative case studies” (Bryson et al., 2015, p. 659). These types of studies would allow for understanding the evolutionary aspects of different variables and dynamic relationships among those variables. These would provide the ability to “trace causality among antecedents, process, structure, and outcomes; compare cross-sector collaborations focused on similar problems but in very different contexts and on different problems in similar contexts; trace the effects of power dynamics and differing governance structures on outputs and outcomes; and incorporate the multiple dimensions of outcomes” (Bryson et al., 2015, p. 659).



## 2.3 Theoretical Foundation

In this subsection, I have explained the theoretical and conceptual underpinnings for this study by basing it on the extensive literature on collaborative advantage as discussed in a variety of research publications by authors Siv Vangen and Chris Huxham.

### 2.3.1 Theory of Collaborative Advantage

Huxham and Vangen (2005) defined the term collaboration as “working across organizational boundaries towards some positive end” (p. 4). They introduced the concept of collaborative advantage, explained as the advantage that organizations obtain while addressing social issues that would otherwise fall between the gaps when different types of organizations such as for-profit, non-for-profit and public organizations partner together. As discussed in the previous section, the purpose and motives of different organizations to be part of specific inter-organizational relations depends on the context. However, the underlying basis for collaboration was the concept of collaborative advantage, which was this “notion that synergy can be achieved by integrating the resources and expertise of one organization with that of others” (Vangen & Huxham, 2006). Examples of the type of advantage were: getting access to resources, sharing the risk, improving efficiency, to obtain coordination and seamlessness, learning from others or for moral reasons such as environmental reasons.

One of the major issues during such partnerships aimed at obtaining collaborative advantage is slow progress when things don't seem to get accomplished. This concept was introduced as collaborative inertia. Another dilemma faced while managing collaborations was called “tension”, which occurs when there are alternative possibilities for addressing issues leading to opposing kinds of action.

Huxham and Vangen's (2005) 'collaborative advantage' theory aimed at understanding the complexity involved in inter-organizational collaborations. It was used to describe and convey the complexity applicable to practitioners involved in partnerships. The theory also sought to empower the individuals facing the issues of collaborating by legitimizing the pain and addressing the isolation. Lastly, the theory intended to empower practitioners to help them "know what to nurture" by providing 'handles' for reflective practice such as facing 'collaborative fatigue' or 'partnership fatigue' or when practitioners face 'collaborative thuggery' when there is manipulation and politics involved in the collaboration.

It was a 'descriptive theory' based on reflective practice rather than being prescriptive in nature and one that could be made useful for practice. The researchers used action-research to collect rich data about collaborations systematically. They created a research agenda around issues that were perceived as causing grief to practitioners involved in collaborations. These issues were called "themes in collaboration practice". They used these themes to then construct the theory of collaborative advantage using grounded theory approach as depicted in Figure 2.2 below.

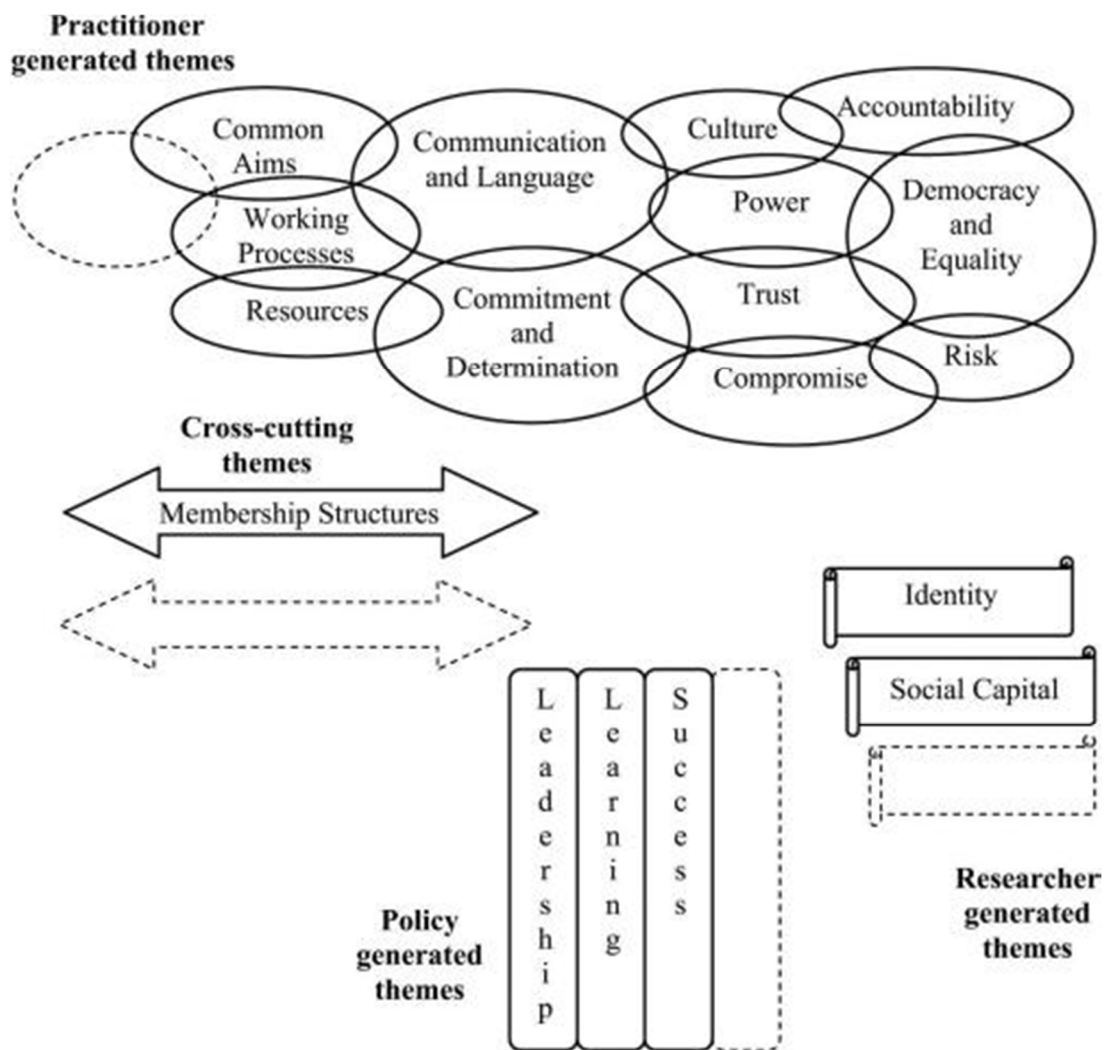


Figure 2.2: Theory of Collaborative Advantage. From Huxham and Vangen (2005, p. 38)

Huxham and Vangen (2005) used action-research to collect rich data about eight partnerships systematically. Each of these partnerships were different because of different types of organizations being involved, the different purposes underlying the partnerships as well as the different situations under which the partnerships were created. They created a research agenda around issues that were perceived as causing grief to practitioners involved in collaborations, the nature of collaborative situations that makes collaboration so prone to frustration, and how these situations be managed to obtain the full potential/advantage of the collaboration.

The researchers collected rich, non-historical data using video recording, observations, note taking and supplementary interviews during the interventions as well as phone and conference calls. They also collected data from previous settings where those organizations had collaborated. The researchers used several stages to analyze the data they collected from all the interventions and collaborations they were involved in, resulting in identification of different “themes in collaborative practice”.

Thus, the overall framework for theory development consisted of having a theory-building research agenda derived from exploration of practitioner-generated issues, which were then clustered into themes, and finally theoretical conceptualizations of collaborative practice.

The main categories of these themes were ‘practitioner generated’ and included themes such as: common aims, communication and language, working processes, resources, compromise, commitment and determination, culture, power, trust, accountability, risk, democracy, and equality. The membership structure in these collaborations and partnerships was a theme that was not brought up as an issue on its own, but it crossed across many of the themes and issues identified by the practitioners. Thus, the theory framework identified any themes that were ‘cross cutting’.

The researchers also added ‘policy based’ themes to the theory framework. These included themes like leadership, learning, and successes. These themes were not on the research agenda and were not even identified by practitioners. However, these themes were very relevant to the research of collaboration as policy related issues since policy impacts the actual practice of collaboration.

Lastly, the ‘research generated’ themes were added to the theoretical structure. These were themes that were identified by academic scholars studying collaboration instead of practitioners. Some of the researcher-generated themes included identity, social capital, and transparency.

### 2.3.2 Conceptual Framework of “Making Things Happen’ in Partnerships

The practice-oriented theory of collaborative advantage allowed Huxham and Vangen (2000) to conceptualize and define leadership in collaboration as mechanisms that “make things happen”. Their research explored, “what actually happens in real situations to shape the way that collaborations progress” (p. 1161).

I have developed and presented a conceptual model on mechanisms that make things happen using Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) theoretical framework of leadership <sup>1</sup>in collaborations in Figure 2.3. The figure depicts these inter-connected relationships between partnership goals, shaping the partnership agenda, partnership media, and activities enacted by participants to “make things happen” leading to either collaborative advantage or collaborative inertia. Huxham and Vangen (2000) theorized that leadership in partnerships, "as being enacted not only through the behavior of participants identified as leaders, but also through the things that happen because of the structures and processes embedded within the collaboration" (p.2000). They also argued that, "within the contextual leadership provided by the three media, individual participants become involved in "leadership" activities that are intended to take collaborations forward" (p.2000).

---

<sup>1</sup> I acknowledge that there is a vast body of knowledge on the topic of leadership, and several researchers (Crosby and Bryson, 2005; Connelly, 2007; Armistead et. al., 2007) have attempted to understand leadership in collaborations. Even though I am using Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) conceptualization of leadership from their theory of collaborative advantage, as the theoretical framework, the focus of my study is mechanisms that make things happen in cross-sector partnerships and not leadership in cross-sector collaborations.

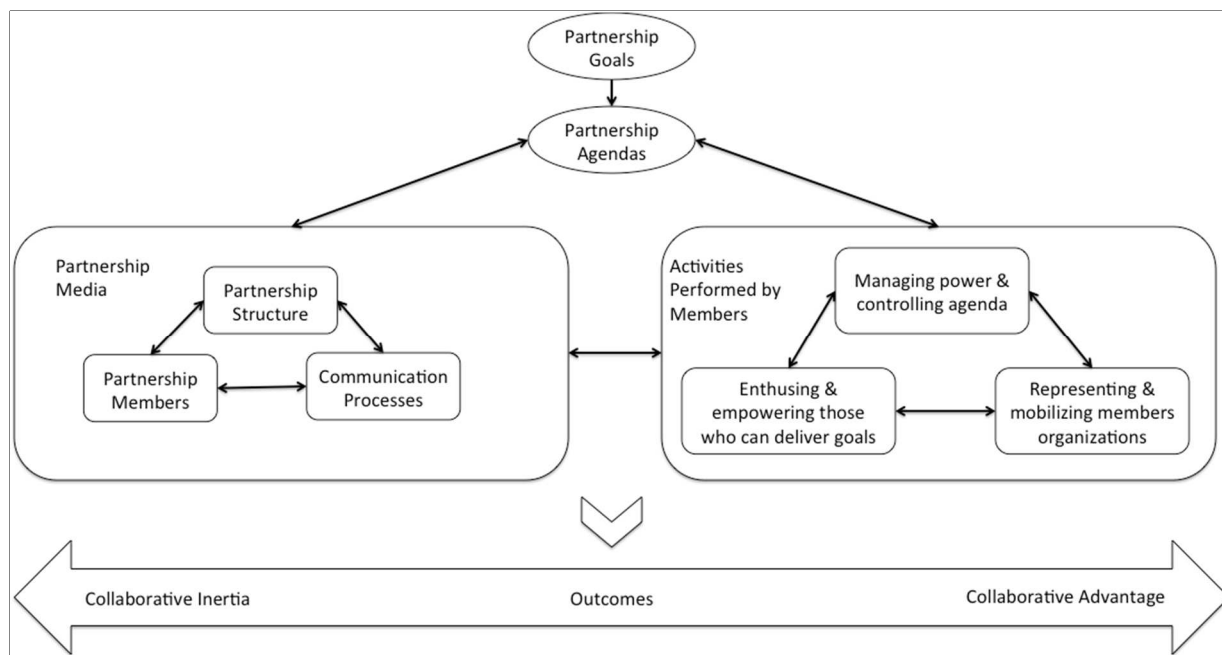


Figure 2.3: Conceptual Model of Mechanisms that “Make Things Happen” in Cross-Sector Partnerships

I have explained the different elements of the conceptual model in Figure 2.3 below. The first element was the partnerships’ goals. Assuming that partnerships were created to achieve positive outcomes and collaborative advantage, "making things happen" could be attributed to "making partnerships to achieve success", more specifically, to achieve the shared goals set and agreed upon by all the partners. These goals are created at the partnership level and do not represent the goals set by individual organizations for themselves or those set by the individuals participating in the partnership.

The second element of the model was the partnership’s agendas. Once the partnership is established and the shared goals are set and agreed upon, weekly/monthly/quarterly agendas are created by the individuals involved to identify high priority objectives (aligned with the overall goals) that need to be executed in order to achieve collaborative advantage.

A partnership's media was the next element of the conceptual model, and includes the partnership structure, the key roles/ participants involved, and the communication processes used by these individuals to interact. Ranson et al. (1980) defined organizational structure as "a complex medium of control which is continually produced and recreated in interactions yet shapes that interaction" (p.3). Huxham and Vangen (2000) conceptualized partnership structure to be "the organizations and individuals associated with it and the structural inter-connections between them" (p.1166). They affirmed that the way a partnership was structured impacted the way the partnership's agenda was created and executed. An open structure (where any organization can participate and have access to the agenda) versus a more controlled or closed structure (where only key stakeholders or organizations participate and can influence the agenda) for the partnership would affect the agenda's creation and implementation as it would depict which organization or member has more power and resources. Huxham and Vangen (2000) defined processes as "any formal and informal instruments – such as committees, workshops, seminars, telephone, email – through which collaboration's communications take place" (p.1167). These were communication processes that were established in the partnership either collaboratively by the partnership members or mandated through external entities such as funding deadlines. According to Huxham and Vangen (2000), the way in which these processes were established and the frequency with which communication occurs influenced the shaping and implementation of the partnership agenda. They explained that some processes such as face-to-face workshops, meetings or seminars not only allowed members to access the agenda, but also to deliberate and debate the items on the partnership agenda. There were some communication processes that fostered and promoted common understanding and language. Thus, communications processes impacted the partnership agenda by either encouraging or hindering members to share information. Huxham and Vangen

(2000) conceptualized partnership members as "individuals, groups and organization associated with the collaboration who has the power and the know-how to influence and enact the partnership agenda" (p.1167). There were several types of members that participated in the partnership. Some members such as policy makers, funding organizations, lead or host organizations had positional roles and might be expected to lead or provide direction. Management committees, board or steering committees including members from partnering organizations had joint decision power for the direction of the collaboration. There might be members that were appointed to assume chair or convener roles for these committees. Other types of roles assumed by members could be partnership manager, director, chief executive, researcher, facilitator or consultant. The type of role assumed or given to the members influenced the shaping and implementation of the agenda. For example, if the convener was dominant, the agenda was controlled and strongly affected while a weak convener might have left the members ambiguous and without direction. In some partnerships, the roles and responsibilities such as that of a convener were shared and rotated among members for power distribution. Thus, some members might have been expected to lead while some members might have taken unexpected leadership roles to move the partnership agenda forward.

The fourth element of the conceptual model was the activities that the individual members in the partnership perform to influence and implement the partnership agenda to achieve collaborative advantage instead of collaborative inertia. "What is it that participants do to cope with, or build on, the constraints or possibilities dictated by structures, processes or other participants?" (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p.1169). These activities were categorized into three main activities where individual members: manage power and control the agenda, represent and



mobilize the organizations they are representing and empower the individuals who are willing and capable to deliver the goals (Huxham & Vangen. 2000).

The partnership agenda can be managed through manipulation where individuals use their positional power, tools and skills, or, through facilitating empowerment and collaboration where all members have access to the agenda and there is active communication and development of common understanding. In order to shape the agenda, it is important that the individuals involved in the partnership are representing not only their organization's needs but also collaborating with others to have a common understanding. In order to represent their organizations, partnership members need to not only understand their organization's needs and motives to participate in the partnership, but also act as conduits to their organization's resources. In order to mobilize their organizations, members need to obtain buy-in through capacity building activities that allow other individuals in their member organizations to have confidence and support the partnership agenda. Lastly, individuals that have the skills and the resources to deliver and implement the goals need to be actively involved empowered and enthused.

A partnership's outcome was the next element of the conceptual model. Based on the conceptualizations and definitions provided by Huxham and Vangen (2000), it is evident that the perspective on leadership in partnerships, "as being enacted not only through the behavior of participants identified as leaders, but also through the things that happen because of the structures and processes embedded within the collaboration" (p.2000). They also argued that, "within the contextual leadership provided by the three media, individual participants become involved in "leadership" activities that are intended to take collaborations forward" (p.2000). This model proposed that the creation and implementation of partnership agendas were not only driven by the goals of the partnership, but also highly impacted by how the partnership is structured, the way

communication occurs and the members of the partnership, and activities performed by individuals involved in the partnership. The outcome of achieving collaborative advantage or collaborative inertia will depend on the way the partnership agendas are shaped and implemented, and the partnership agendas are impacted by the way partnership media and activities performed by the participants to “make things happen”.

## 2.4 Chapter Summary

In this chapter I have provided an overview of what inter-organizational relationships (IORs) are and all the different ways they have been studied empirically and theoretically. Through this overview, many authors have highlighted the need to study different types of IORs, especially cross-sector partnerships, using more inductive, non-linear, “messy”, engaged research methodologies. I provided an overview of cross-sector partnership literature that includes the need for such partnerships and the issues around managing them. Using Bryson et al.’s (2015) review I discussed the gaps and needs for future research.

Thus, based on the literature review and my personal interest in understanding how complex social problems can be effectively addressed through collaboration, I chose to study the mechanisms that make things happen in cross-sector collaborative partnerships by using multiple case study approach. I have used the theory of collaborative advantage as my theoretical underpinning and used the conceptual framework of “making things happen” in cross-sector partnerships. Based on the conceptual model of “making things happen” in cross-sector partnerships and the theory of collaborative advantage, the research questions for this study were:

1. How is the partnership structure created and influencing the implementation of partnership agendas?

2. How are the key roles and responsibilities in the partnership influencing the creation and implementation of the agendas?
3. How are the communication processes influencing the creation and implementation of partnership agendas?
4. How are members acting to ‘make things happen’ in the partnerships?

For brevity I have used the word “partnership” instead of “cross-sector collaborative partnerships” in the remaining chapters of this dissertation.

## CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

Consistent with the interpretive approach, which is aligned with my constructivist epistemology, this study used multiple case study research methodology to investigate the dynamic and interactive nature of collaborative partnerships. The study aimed to understand the mechanisms that 'make things happen' in cross-sector partnerships and how they influence collaborative advantage. A multiple case study approach allowed me to study this phenomenon in two collaborative partnerships that were established through a community development program delivered by extension educators from Purdue University. This chapter begins by discussing the epistemological perspective of myself and my role as the researcher. The research design section provides the research construct definitions, followed by a description of the methods used in a pilot study that impacted the research methodology for the main study. The chapter then describes the data collection, management and analysis strategies used for the main study.

### 3.1 Underpinning Research Philosophy and Research Positionality

A researcher's philosophical worldview influences how the researcher seeks to study the phenomena, in turn impacting how the particular research methodology, research design and data collection and analysis methods are used to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2009). Quantitative and qualitative research approaches are fundamentally different as they are based on different philosophical worldviews or paradigms. Thomas Kuhn described paradigms as worldviews through which knowledge is filtered (Kuhn, 1970 p.175). Guba and Lincoln (1998) described paradigms as an individual's basic beliefs and how they view and process knowledge. Every researcher brings ontological, epistemological and methodological perspective into their research approach (Guba & Lincoln, 1998). Ontologically, the question asked is, "what the form

and nature of reality is, and therefore, what is there that can be known about it?" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998 p. 201). Epistemologically, the question is, "what can be known?" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998 p. 201). Depending on the epistemological perspective, quantitative or qualitative methodological perspective is chosen (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004).

I held a constructivist (also called social constructivist or interpretivist) worldview. Constructivists want to understand the actors' or participants' perspective about the context or situation in which the phenomenon is being studied (Creswell, 2014; Bryman, 1984). Creswell (2014) provided a summary of the beliefs and assumptions made by constructivist researchers using Crotty's (1998) perspective as follows: "Constructivist researchers believe that human beings seek and construct meaning and understanding about the world they live and interact in. Their social, cultural and personal experiences become subjective explanations about certain objects within specific contexts" (p. 9). Constructivists develop relationships with the participants and understand "social construction of the participant's reality" (Baxter & Jack, 2008) and seek rich stories and explanations by using open-ended questions, visiting the site or context as the researcher becomes part of the data collecting and data-interpreting instrument (Creswell, 2014). This philosophy differs from positivistic epistemological worldview as it does not pre-determine dependent and independent variables, propositions or hypotheses (Kaplan & Maxwell, 1994).

This underpinning philosophy of the constructivist/interpretivist approach, drove every element of this dissertation, including conceptualization, development of research questions and research design as well implementation, analysis and write up. Accordingly, I held the view that for such qualitative studies, data is generated rather than just collected (Yanow & Schwartz-Shea, 2014; Elias et al., 2017). I generated data through participant observations, in-depth interviews and documents, and simultaneously analyzed data by memoing and developing preliminary themes.

Consistent with the interpretivist approach, I used a poststructuralist grounded theory approach for analyzing the generated data. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2004) explained, “poststructuralists unravel meaning through a process of critical and reflexive deconstruction – not with the intent to reconstruct and thereby impose another theoretical framework on their data, but rather to expose and naturally transform it” (p. 415). My epistemological worldview can be seen in which I have narrated the case studies and presented my findings as I aligned with the philosophy that there is “no one truth out there, one experience, or one beginning, middle or end to a story” (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2004, p. 422). Thus, my writing was an on-going understanding of finding meaning and interpretation in my data (Richardson, 1998).

Along with having a constructivist worldview, I started this research study from the position of an immigrant, non-resident alien, female graduate student. Having lived in the United States for around ten years, being married to a white, U.S. born man, working in corporate America, and living in the Midwest, has allowed me to assimilate well and understand American cultural references. I was very aware through the span of this project that I had to show competence and gain trust to get access to the case studies and participants. The partnerships investigated as part of this study were primarily located in rural Indiana, with predominantly caucasian population, I was aware of my outsider bias. I had to shorten my name and use my work experience at Whirlpool Corporation to show my knowledge about challenges of small communities to build trust and goodwill with the participants. My part-time work with Purdue Center for Regional Development allowed me to get access to the vast number of documents created by the participants. I have been reflective of my privileges, biases and others’ perception of me as I designed and implemented this research study.

### 3.2 Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to understand mechanisms that make things happen in collaborative partnerships and how they achieve the shared goals for collaborative advantage instead of collaborative inertia. From this purpose, the following research questions were developed for this study:

1. How is the partnership structure created and influencing the implementation of partnership agendas?
2. How are the key roles and responsibilities in the partnership influencing the creation and implementation of the agendas?
3. How are the communication processes influencing the creation and implementation of partnership agendas?
4. How are members acting to ‘make things happen’ in the partnerships?

### 3.3 Research Design: Multiple Case Study Approach

The research design elements for the study including justifications for the methodology selected to investigate the propositions and answer the research questions listed above are described in this section.

There are several quantitative and qualitative approaches that researchers use to investigate organizational and social science phenomena. Case study approach is a more fitting research methodology when investigating ‘how’ or ‘why’ of a phenomenon as well as when study variables cannot be controlled (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). While studying the phenomenon of inter-organizational relationships, I could not control the different variables and

was not intervening in its operations, making case-study research a more suitable approach over conducting an experiment or performing action research.

A qualitative, multiple case study approach, also called multiple holistic design (Yin, 2014; Yazan, 2015) was used to understand "how" partnership agendas were created and implemented to achieve collaborative advantage. The purpose of using multiple case study approach was to understand how the phenomenon "operates in different situations" (Stake, 2006, p. vi). Using this approach, I could not only investigate each holistic case separately, understanding the context and issues specific to that case, but also look for similarities or contrast in the findings across the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2014). The multiple case study approach used was not intended to be comparative in nature where the findings from one case were compared and evaluated against those of the other case.

### 3.3.1 Unit of Analysis

Stake (2006) defined a case as "a noun, thing or entity; seldom a verb, a participle, a functioning" (p. 1). It is a bounded system that has a purpose and working parts. It is dynamic in nature where the working components of the case interact and are impacted by components outside its system. The basic purpose of this study was to understand the *functioning of partnerships*; hence, the unit of analysis or the case was a single, holistic partnership (Yin, 2014). The unit of analysis was not a particular actor involved (individual or organization) in the partnership, but the structure and function of the partnership. Also, since a multiple case study design was used, two partnerships were selected for the main study, and the unit of analysis was at the partnership level for each case (Yin, 2014). This meant that each partnership was studied individually to contribute further to the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.



### 3.3.2 Binding the Case

Both Yin (2014) and Stake (1995) discussed the need to identify the scope of research with respect to each of the cases to keep the overall study manageable. Creswell (2009) recommended binding the case through time and place, while Stake (1995) suggested explicitly defining the type of activity under investigation, and Miles and Huberman (1994) proposed stating the context for the cases (Baxter & Jack, 2008). I investigated the following variables creating binding for each of the cases:

- The time period was twenty-four months after the partnership was established.
- The activity was the way in which partnership goals and agendas were created and implemented as shown in the contextual model.
- The context specific factors such as the type of partnership selected that affected the operation of the partnership.

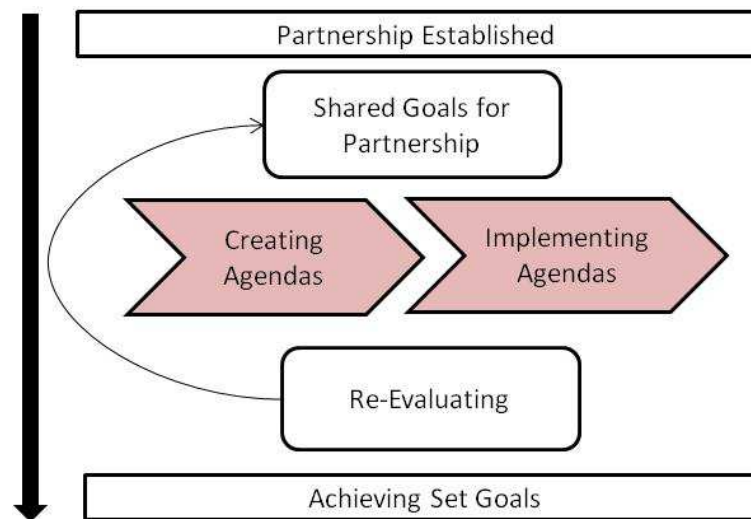


Figure 3.1: Binding the Case: Creation and Implementation of Partnership Agendas

### 3.3.3 Research Constructs and Definitions

Yin (2014, p.29) recommended using a conceptual model to aid the data analysis process to use techniques like pattern matching. The conceptual model derived from the collaborative advantage theory was presented in Chapter 2 and Figure 2.1; which assisted in deriving the research questions. To increase the rigor for data analysis, the constructs used in the conceptual model were further defined in Table 3.1 These definitions were adopted from Huxham and Vangen's (2005) framework.

Table 3.1: Research Constructs and Definitions (Adapted from Huxham & Vangen, 2005) and Vangen and Huxham, 2003, 2006, 2012)

<b>Construct/ Concept</b>	<b>Definition</b>
Cross-sector Collaborative Partnership	This type of partnership involves “participation by government / public agencies and not for profit organizations, it frequently stipulates the need for community participation and frequently focuses on the inclusion of all stakeholders who are affected by the issue under consideration” (Vangen et al., 2015, p.7).
Partnership goals	The defined and agreed upon substantive objectives for the partnership (what motivates potential partners to be involved)
Partnership agendas	These are action items and activities specific to facilitating the partnership and are meeting specific.
Partnership structure	The organizational elements that make-up the partnership structure.
Partnership members	The actors (individuals, groups and organizations) associated with the partnership who have the power and the know-how to influence and enact the partnership agenda.
Membership structure	The structural interconnections between the partnership members.
Partnership's communication processes	Any formal or informal processes that allowed the partnership members to interact.

Table 3.1 continued

Partnership members' actions	The ways, in which individual members act to manage power and control the agenda, represent and mobilize the organizations they are representing and empower the individuals who are willing and capable to deliver the goals.
Collaborative Inertia	The tendency for the partnership, to be slow, to produce output or be uncomfortably conflict ridden. "A partnership is in a state of inertia if: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible</li> <li>• The rate of output is extremely slow</li> <li>• Stories of pain and hard grind are integral to successes achieved" (Huxham &amp; Vangen, 2004, p. 191; Huxham &amp; Vangen, 2005, p.60)</li> </ul>
Collaborative Advantage	The idea that synergy can be created through working collaboratively and the benefit that organizations obtain while addressing social issues that would otherwise fall between the gaps when different types of organizations such as for-profit, non-for-profit and public organizations partner together
Making Things Happen in Partnerships	Theory of Collaborative Advantage conceptualizes leadership in collaborations (when single entity cannot take on a challenge alone) as being concerned with "making things happen". In other words, mechanisms that lead collaboration's policy and activity agenda in one direction rather than other. Thus, the theory explains that, leadership is ENACTED (actions) by the individuals involved, within the CONTEXT of structure, processes and participants.

#### 3.3.4 Multiple Case Study Selection Criteria

Stake (2006) stated that in a single researcher situation, when time and funding are constrained, it is pragmatic and common to use between two and four cases in a multiple case study methodology. Thus, the research design for this study included one pilot case and two cases for the main study. The unit of analysis for the pilot study was the same as that for the cases in the main study. The pilot study was conducted prior to starting the main study. Lessons learned from the pilot study about case study data collection and analysis methods were used to improve the main study.

Stake (2006) provided critical criteria for selecting cases: “(1) Is the case relevant to the quintain (phenomenon being studied)? (2) Do the cases provide diversity across contexts? (3) Do the cases provide good opportunities to learn about complexity and contexts?” (p. 23)

Since the main study was comprised of only two cases, the selection sample could not be random, but had to be purposive in nature (Stake, 2006). In order to address the first selection criteria suggested by Stake (2006), the following three factors were used to purposively select each partnership for both the pilot and main studies:

- The partnerships selected were on-going and mature. This meant that the selected partnerships were active, established and had moved into partnership goal operationalization or implementation phase. Selecting an ongoing partnership meant that the partnership structure, goals and processes were established allowing the collection of longitudinal data.
- The partnerships were cross-sector in nature, in which team members represented different sectors and groups including academic, government, for-profit businesses, non-profit organizations and community members. Dynamics in cross-sector partnerships is different than partnerships between actors from the same sector as explained in Chapter 2. Since the phenomenon under investigation was cross-sector partnerships, this was an important factor.
- Partnerships that were selected are collaborative in nature, where team members do not have a hierarchical reporting structure; rather they all have the same level of engagement. This type of partnership had shared goals developed by team members rather than a vendor - client type of partnership with client-determined goals. This factor was used

because the study aimed to explore the concept of collective leadership in partnerships.

During the initial stages of the research study, the researcher was aiming to select a university-industry partnership to represent a cross-sector partnership. However, access to these discreet, contractual partnerships proved to be challenging, despite pursuing different opportunities for more than a year. Ultimately, the researcher sought other opportunities to study cross-sector partnerships, and considered different type of cross-sector partnerships, as described in Chapter 2.

The partnerships selected for the pilot case and the two main study cases were cross-sector and collaborative in nature. Stake's (2006) second selection criteria, diversity across contexts, was provided by selecting each of the partnerships in different place-based communities (as defined in Chapter 1) across Indiana, had different issues and relationships and were working towards different partnership goals. However, these partnerships were also "typical" or "representative" of such cross-sector, collaborative partnerships (Firestone, 1993; Stake, 2006).

Stake (2006) stated that cases must be selected that allow for "opportunities to learn about complexities and contexts" (p. 23). Thus, partnerships that were beyond their initial establishment stage and had matured to acting on the partnership agenda were selected. Mature partnerships offered the best opportunities for capturing the complexity and contexts of cross-sector relationships.

Stake (2006) and Yin (2014) stressed that multiple case study designs are not used for generalization purposes. According to Stake (1995), the unit of analysis is the case itself, so statistical generalizations of the findings cannot be made. However, using multiple cases allows

exploring of trends in findings from the separate cases, providing more insight to the phenomenon being studied (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2014).

The selection logic used for the two cases in the main study followed Yin's (2014) replication logic. Even though their contexts were diverse, the two partnerships selected, were predicted to have similar results (Yin, 2014). Both partnerships were established under the umbrella of a specific community development program and were provided similar resources to learn, develop and implement their goals. Thus, investigating these two partnerships would inform similar or contrasting patterns about mechanisms that "made things happen" in these partnerships.

### 3.3.5 Pilot Study Case Selection

A pilot study is usually conducted prior to the main study to inform the methodological procedures of the main study. It has been called a 'feasibility study', 'small-scale study', 'trial study' as it allows the researcher to prepare and 'test' the study methods on a 'miniature version of anticipated research' to inform and help refine elements of the research design (Jariath et al., 2000; Kim, 2011; Prescott and Soeken, 1989: 60; van Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002).

Pilot studies in qualitative research have been used for various reasons, to test data collection instruments such as observation and interview protocols (Holloway, 1997), to gauge the researcher's ability to conduct qualitative research (Beebe, 2007; Lancaster et al., 2004), to check the 'feasibility' of research topic (Denzin and Lincoln, 1998; Sampson, 2004; Seidman, 1998) and to address any ethical and logistical issues that may arise (Kelly, 2007; Kim, 2011; Sampson, 2004). The most prevalent way, in which several empirical case studies have used pilot studies, is by recruiting a small number of participants to test their data collection instruments (Doody & Doody, 2015; Kim, 2011; Weberg, 2013).

For this study, I decided to use the pilot study as its own separate case study where the unit of analysis was a holistic cross-sector partnership. The reason for this pilot study design was to truly conduct a ‘small scale study’ that replicated the larger main study cases. Using this research design, I was able to pilot all the different elements of case study research, which included, accessing a partnership, recruiting partnership members for interviews, observing partnership meetings and obtaining access to the partnership team’s documents. Conducting the pilot study in this holistic manner also allowed me to pilot different data analysis techniques. The lessons learned were then used to refine the data collection instruments and data analysis methods. The purpose of this section was to provide an understanding of the methods piloted and discuss lessons learned and their impact on the main study and not to describe actual case or its findings.

After getting approved by the Institutional Review Board and using the above-mentioned case and partnership selection criteria, I contacted the key member of a local partnership, which was comprised of individuals from different types of organizations, and local community members who planned and executed an annual event in the community. This key informant provided the following overview of the partnership.

This collaborative partnership was established in 2001 and its members represented two city offices, two non-profit organizations, a local university, a local community college, local businesses and citizens residing in the community. This partnership was non-hierarchical in nature, where members did not have any formal reporting relationships to each other. Also, most of the partnership members were involved in this partnership as volunteers, except for one local business who was involved as a service provider. One non-profit organization involved served as a ‘backbone’ or lead organization as it managed the funding and operations for the partnership. The shared

goals for the partnership were established initially when the partnership was formed but evolved slightly as the partnership matured and new members joined. The partnership primarily planned and implemented an annual community event aimed to bring the two cities together by celebrating the presence of the local river that runs between them.

Since this, cross-sector partnership matched the selection criteria, I asked for permission to use it as a pilot case study. After approval from the key member of the partnership, I was able to get consent from all participating members of the partnership to attend and observe their working meetings and recruited five members to participate in semi-structured interviews. The key informant also provided access to some archival documents including meeting agendas and emails.

The partnership members attending the team meetings were employees of different organizations in our community such as local city offices, non-profit organizations, local businesses, university and local community college. They were organized in core and coordinating teams, who plan and execute the activities required for the partnership. They attended the meetings and were responsible for “making things happen” to achieve the goals of the partnership. The total number of team members involved was fifteen. However, not all fifteen team members were present in the two observed meetings. Six team members were considered part of the core team that were responsible to plan and execute different activities for the annual event; and the remaining team members were part of the coordinating team and supported the core team in their activities. Three team members who agreed to be interviewed were part of the core team, while two were coordinating team members. Three team members were engaged in the partnership longer than the other two participants. The interviewees included: the key member and informant



to the partnership who represented the back-bone organization, city 1 representative, city 2 representative, partnering non-profit representative and local business service provider.

### 3.3.6 Main Study Case Selection

After the pilot study was completed, I was still searching for relevant, cross-sector partnerships that I could gain access to for the main study. I found that my University's Extension office had developed a community development program called Hometown Collaboration Initiative that fostered establishment of formal collaborations among diverse stakeholders in Indiana communities. Fifteen communities across Indiana were part of this community development program and were in different phases of the program. Ten out of these fifteen partnerships had been operating for eighteen to twenty-four months, before I became involved and were in the phase of developing and implementing their shared goals.

In the field of community development, these community-based collaborations were defined as collaborative citizen groups. However, as discussed in chapter two, the field of inter-organizational relationships is vast and inconsistent in its terminology. Several studies that have examined such groups have categorized them as community partnerships under the umbrella of different types of inter-organizational relationships. Thus, for this study, I have defined "*community*" in community-based cross-sector collaborative partnerships as a geographic, physical territory or place that has relationships and interaction between the community's organizations and its residents, and these interactions are towards a common interest (Green & Haines, 2002).

Since these collaborations were established under a formal community-development program, had a legitimate funding source through the State of Indiana, needed letters of

commitment from the intentionally selected team members, were non-hierarchical in nature, and were working towards development and implementation of shared goals; they fit my definition of a cross-sector, collaborative partnership; even though there was disparity in terminology. Selecting two of these partnerships as separate, holistic cases would match the multiple case study selection criteria discussed in the corresponding section earlier in the document.

I received permission from the Program Leader of the community development program to select two of the mature and on-going partnerships for the main study. I consulted with the Program Leader, Assistant Program Leader as well as some of the program coaches to further select the two partnerships. These individuals served as informants and assisted me in selecting two cases studies by using Yin's (2014) replication logic for multiple case selections.

With the help from these knowledgeable informants, I selected two partnerships that started the Hometown Collaboration Initiative program at the same time, were provided similar resources to establish and operate their partnerships and were predicted to have successful outcomes. However, both the partnerships were operating in different communities in Indiana and with very different contexts, types of partnership members and goals. Also, at that time of selection, I was informed that one these partnerships was struggling to “make things happen”, while the other partnership was finally “making things happen”. These factors introduced diversity in contexts between the two cases and provided the opportunity to investigate the complexities of partnership dynamics in both cases (Stake, 2006).

### 3.4 Main Study Context

The two partnerships selected as cases for the main study were established and operating as part of a community development program called Hometown Collaboration Initiative. This

section describes this program; it's influence on the two partnerships and the community context for each partnership.

### 3.4.1 Hometown Collaboration Initiative Program

The Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI) program was developed by Purdue University – Community Development Extension and Ball State University – Indiana Communities Institute, in 2014 with support funding from the Indiana Office of Community and Rural Affairs (OCRA), with the goal of “Promoting collaboration among local stakeholders, inclusion of diverse sectors and demographic audiences and fostering community buy-in” [HCI website]. This was a community development program aimed at long-term capacity building in communities where local community stakeholders were made responsible for community development decisions by building relationships between economic development, environmental and social requirements of the community (Green & Haines, 2002). There were three main elements of the HCI program: establishing the collaborative team for their partnership; learning about their community's economic, leadership and ‘place-making’ needs; and then developing and implementing shared project goals around addressing one of the community's needs. A community's economic development needs could include workforce development, resources for business retention and expansion as well as developing support for entrepreneurs. A community might also have a need to develop community leaders and it's place-making needs could include housing, broadband as well as development of public spaces.

The three organizations involved (Purdue University – Community Development Extension and Ball State University – Indiana Communities Institute and OCRA) in the development and delivery of the HCI program were members of the HCI State Team. Each of these organizations played a specific role. Purdue's Community Development Extension was the

lead organization and developed program curriculum specific to community economic development and community leadership development. They also provided personnel such as the program coordinator, curriculum specialists and Extension statewide educators, who acted as coaches for a large number of partnerships involved in the HCI program. Ball State's Indiana Communities Institute provided expertise on place-making in communities. They also provided a smaller number of personnel including place-making curriculum specialists who also acted as coaches for some partnerships. And OCRA provided \$5,000 funding to the partnerships participating in the HCI program to implement their shared project goals. The HCI State Team comprised of approximately twenty-five personnel involved from the three organizations.

#### 3.4.1.1 Operational Relationship Between HCI and Partnerships

There were fifteen communities across the state of Indiana, which were part of the Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI) program. Each of these communities was tasked to establish a cross-sector collaborative partnership team as part of the HCI program. A coach from the HCI State Team was assigned to each partnership, whose role was to coordinate, deliver and facilitate the HCI program to the team. Figure 3.2 provides a depiction of the way in which the HCI State Team interacted with the two partnerships selected and the relationships between the HCI State Team and the partnerships (A and B). This depiction could be used for any of the remaining partnerships as well, except that the coaches could be from Ball State University as well. In the selected cases, the coaches Sara, Ann and Ashley (all names have been changed) were Purdue's Community Development Extension Personnel.

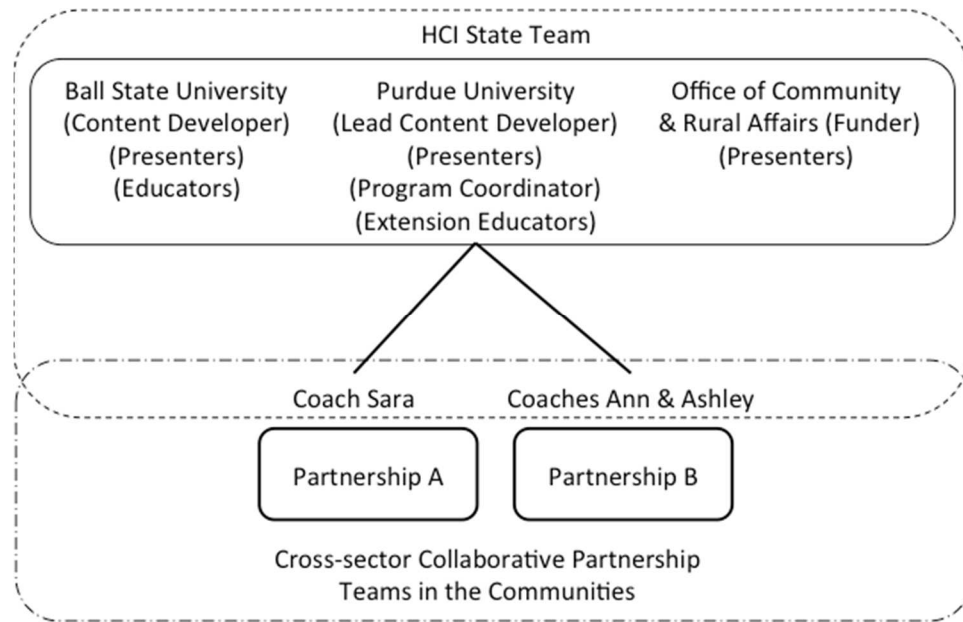


Figure 3.2: Visual Representation of Operational Relationship between HCI Program and Partnerships

#### 3.4.1.2 HCI Program Influence on Partnerships

The partnerships involved in the HCI program followed the HCI program framework, which was organized in three phases: Foundation phase, Building Blocks phase and Capstone Project phase. Each of these phases in the HCI program laid out specific expectations for the partnerships as presented in Figure 3.3.

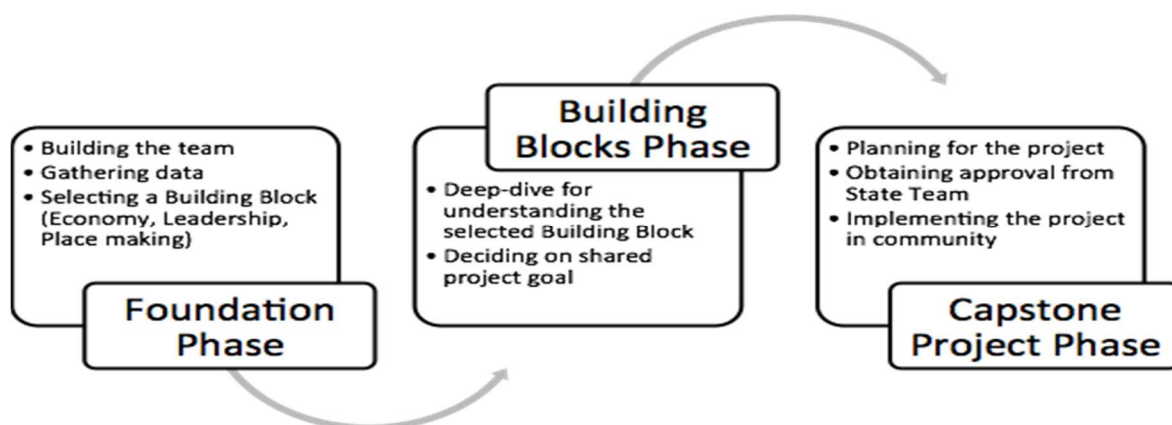


Figure 3.3: Phases and Processes mandated by HCI Program

The partnerships were expected to start the HCI program by establishing their partnership team and learn about their community in the Foundation Phase of the program. The partnership transitioned to the Building Blocks phase once the team selected among economy, leadership or place-making as their focus. In the Building Blocks phase, the partnerships delved deeper to understand specific issues related to their chosen building block. The partnership team then transitioned to the final phase of the HCI program once they developed shared goals around their capstone project. In this last phase, the partnership team was expected to get approval and funding to plan and implement their project.

The HCI program provided specific guidelines and processes for the partnerships. Some such examples included in the curriculum were: the milestones and goals expected from the partnerships in each phase; the process to select team members; the team roles; communication procedures; meeting agendas; and behaviors expected from team members.

In summary, the mechanisms that “made things happen” in both partnerships selected were heavily influenced by the HCI program. It is important to note that the *purpose of this study was*

*to explore and understand the phenomenon of “making things happen” in cross-sector partnerships.* Thus, the unit of analysis was the partnership. This study did not intend to (1) understand how the HCI program was delivered (similarly or differently) in the two partnerships and (2) evaluate whether community-partnerships selected achieved the expectations set by the HCI program. Thus, the following section describes the data collection, generation and analysis methods used for each case separately.

#### 3.4.2 Context of Case Study Partnership A

Community A is a rural community in central Indiana, which has seen population decline, deindustrialization, and lack of employment. These trends have affected the quality of life for its citizens. In the application document for the HCI Program, the Community Foundation’s director expressed the need for a cross-sector partnership that could be established as part of the HCI program to build capacity in the community members to be able to address some of their community’s problems. She believed that through this program they could jumpstart a farm-to-table supply chain project, which would positively impact the community’s economy.

“It is our feeling that the HCI project will bring together all the key members of the community's various entities, so that discussion regarding a comprehensive plan will begin as a result of the development of this project and including the development of just such a food system. The efficient utilization of farmland and the agricultural industry's coordination with regional restaurants, hotels, schools and grocery stores will no doubt indicate to the community just the type of economic development--beyond tourism--that is possible in Community A, and lead to the further development of natural resources into viable, stimulating projects. This should be a catalyst, but also a means by which the entire

Community A is drawn together in a concentrated effort on behalf of everyone here.” –  
Application document

Some of the challenges in the community as identified in the application document were the lack of enough and able stakeholders in the community who are willing to become engaged in such partnerships, and that the county was operating without a Lead Economic Development Officer, who plays a critical role in a community’s economic development.

One of their biggest motives to be part of the program as described in their application document was access to professional expertise that would “enhance the opportunity for collaborative and cooperative efforts among all key players in the community” as they recognized the need to “get local elected officials and community leaders involved in key elements of community development, and bring them together with the other entities integral to the development of any major economic development program.” Community A was selected as one of the fifteen communities that are part of the HCI program. The partnership was on going for eighteen months before I obtained access to study them.

### 3.4.3 Context of Case Study Partnership B

It was the second time that the executive director of Community B’s Economic Development Council (EDC), had submitted an application for Community B to be part of the Hometown Collaboration Initiative program.

One of the issues faced by the community was its geography, which had historically created a barrier to collaboration among the different towns in the community. As explained in the application document,

“As roads have been re-routed, traffic patterns changed, along with large commercial stores moving in, many family-owned stores closed down or have struggled to sustain themselves.



This coupled with the distance between the towns has created an almost island like mindset for many citizens who call one of our seven incorporated towns home. This is all compounded by a “Mason-Dixon Line,” which is essentially divided by US-36. This divide between the north and south industries and school corporations has created friction in the past. There is an educational component that is often missing with our citizens, of the importance of thinking beyond our own towns and seeing the larger picture of economic development from a countywide perspective.”

Another challenge was identified by the EDC Director as an inactive Chamber of Commerce, and he believed that the community lacked resources to support entrepreneurship as well as businesses seeking to expand. Since the community already had a leadership program established and several main street programs to improve place making, the application was written with a strong focus on economic development. As written in the application document, the Director believed,

“Working with HCI will help us position the necessary pieces in place to help grow businesses, services, amenities and culture. We see HCI as a vehicle to begin exploring data on where the county has seen improvement, and to use those areas as benchmarks for creating a comprehensive program that includes other organizational strategic plans and data, that can only result in better collaboration and understanding of the community dynamics... Participation in the HCI will emphasize the importance of a how a business retention program goes beyond increasing employment in the small business and entrepreneurial sectors... We believe the HCI will act as a catalyst for our local elected leaders to see progress in motion, and the importance of how creating a strategic plan for

the entire county can only enhance economic development and quality of life initiatives both already in place and for future progress.”

Community B was also selected as one of the fifteen communities that are part of the HCI program and its partnership was also on going for eighteen months before I obtained access to study them.

### 3.5 Data Generation Procedures

As explained earlier, the interpretivist approach goes beyond just data collection, and includes data generation by the researcher. Creswell (2013) explained that the case-study method of qualitative research “explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system (a case) or multiple bounded systems (cases) over time, through detailed in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information... and reports a case description and case themes” (p. 97). Stake (1995) and Yin (2014) concur with Creswell (2013) that to understand a case, data from multiple sources and perspectives are needed to understand the complexities of case holistically (Yazan, 2015; Baxter & Jack, 2008). These data generation methods include, but are not limited to direct observations, participant observations, interviews, archival records, documentation and physical artifacts (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Patton, 1990; Stake, 2006; Yin, 2014). My epistemological view aligned with Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) for using only qualitative sources for data generation.

According to Yin (2014), documents and archival records are “stable, unobtrusive, specific and broad” (p. 106). Documents such as meeting minutes, emails, agendas, proposals, etc. are extremely useful data sources as they have been generated by participants for ‘sense-making’ around their activities and tasks. For example, a meeting minute document would have specific details about meeting participants, date, location and events that took place during the meeting. If

many such meeting minutes were used as data sources, they would provide longitudinal data. However, these data sources could be incomplete, difficult to access and might be biased on the meeting minutes note-taker (Yin, 2014). For this study, a variety of documents and some archival records were gathered as data sources.

Observations allow the researcher to be an instrument of data generation, where he/she can observe the phenomenon under investigation (Stake, 1995). Thus, many experts have cautioned the use of this technique and called it “highly subjective and unreliable” if it is conducted without specificity towards the research questions (Merriam, 1998 p. 118). However, if observations are conducted systematically, it allows the researcher to “experience” the case (Stake, 1995). Researchers could conduct observations as a “complete participant”, as “participant as observer”, “observer as participant” or “complete observer” (Merriam, 1998 p. 124-125). Both Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) stressed on the importance of taking descriptive and rich field notes, which allow researchers to inform other elements of research, design. For this study, I conducted direct observations (Yin, 2014) of partnership meetings and was an “observer as participant” where, the partnership team members were aware of my observer role and was not expected to contribute to the meeting as a participant.

Interviews are a crucial source of data for qualitative case studies. Stake (2006) explained, “much of what we cannot observe for ourselves has been or is being observed by others” (p. 64). Interviews allow the researcher to understand the phenomenon through the lived experience and perspective of the participant. Yin (2014) categorized case-study interviews as prolonged interviews, shorter interviews and survey interviews. Using semi-structured interviews, where an interview question guide is used to manage the fluidity and focus of the conversation is recommended by several experts (Yin, 2014; Stake, 1995; Merriam, 1998; Patton, 2002). Merriam

(1998) provided strategies on conducting effective interviews. For this study, an interview guide was developed using Patton's (2002) six types of interview questions: experience and behavior questions, opinion and values questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions and background/demographic questions. All the interviews conducted were audio-recorded on a digital recorder and later transcribed to text files.

Yin (2002) recommended using a very organized and "exact planning" (Yazan, 2015 p. 143) for data collection. On the other hand, Stake (1995) believed that "There is no particular moment when data collection begins... A considerable proportion of all data is impressionistic, picked up informally as the researcher first becomes acquainted with the case" (p. 49). My experience was to find a middle ground. Since getting access to the partnerships was not easy, I had to have several informal conversations with informants to get acquainted with the cases. Even after getting access to cases, the process of data collection was fluid and relied heavily on when the informants and participants provided different documents and were ready for interviews and observations. I used a status board (Stake, 1995) to organize the data collection activities, but could not necessarily have an exact plan of when what data source would be collected and analyzed.

As every qualitative researcher is challenged with whether he/she has generated enough data to understand the case and address the research question, Fusch and Ness (2015) explained there are limited guidelines about "how much is enough data" in the field of qualitative research and that the data saturation is an "elastic" concept (Guest et al., 2006 p. 77; Morse, 1995). They acknowledge that every qualitative study is different and the answer is very subjective, thus recommended that instead of focusing primarily on the number of participants as a measure (Burmeister & Aitken, 2012), to think of data in terms of "rich as quality and thick as quantity" (Fusch & Ness, 2015 p. 1409; Dibley, 2011). Thus, for this study, the different techniques and

principles laid out by Fusch and Ness (2015) were applied for both gathering rich and thick data sources and using iterative and exhaustive data coding methods (Guest et al., 2006).

The data collection methods used for the pilot study, lessons learned and impact on main study data collection methods are described in the next subsection.

### 3.5.1 Pilot Study Methods

As described earlier, the purpose of this pilot study was to learn whether the research design and methods were feasible and allow me to make relevant and necessary adjustments to the main study (Kim, 2011). I aligned with Yin's (2014) view to conduct a pilot case study instead of only piloting the data collection instruments as described by Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998). Yin (2014) believed that conducting a holistic pilot case study would "help you to refine your data collection plans with respect to both the content of the data and the procedures to be followed" (Yin, 2014, p. 96).

Thus, I piloted all the data gathering procedures including meeting observations, semi-structured interviews, using a predesigned interview guide, and reviewing any documents provided by the key informant and other data sources such as websites and flyers. Since this was a pilot case study, and its purpose was to inform methodological procedures rather than produce findings, two observations, five in-depth interviews and thirteen documents were sufficient.

Stake (2006) and Yin (2014) stated the importance for a case study researcher to experience the phenomenon being studied through observation and taking descriptive field notes. For the pilot case, partnership meetings were the most important observation sites, since face-to-face meetings were the channels through which the partnership operated. Since this was a "small-scale" case study, I observed only two partnership meetings. The first meeting observed had thirteen

partnership members, while the second meeting had nine participants. The first meeting occurred before the main event of the partnership and the second meeting I attended was after the event was over. Thus, the purposes of the two meetings were different as the first was focused on the last-minute logistics and operations planning for the event, while the second meeting was intended to be a celebration and reflection of lessons learned from the event as planning for next year's event commenced. After I obtained verbal consent from all the partnership team members attending the meetings, I took written field notes. Observation field notes included: who attended the meeting, how the meeting was run, who was leading the meeting, who was engaged, how members participated, the overall level of engagement and general operations of the meeting.

The second method for collecting case data was by interviewing key partnership members and understanding their lived experience of how the partnership operated. Stake (2006), Yin (2014), Creswell (2009) are some of the many experts on qualitative research methods who have suggested developing a "research-question-based set of questions" to assist with the design and focus of semi-structured interviews (Stake, 2006, p. 65). An interview guide, research project script and consent protocol were developed and approved by the Institutional Review Board. The questions in the initial interview guide were organized in categories that aligned with the research questions. Five semi-structured interviews were conducted. Four interviews occurred in a private conference room at a co-working studio and one interview was conducted at the participant's office. All five interviews lasted an average of fifty minutes, were audio-recorded and transcribed by myself. The first version of the interview guide was piloted on two participants. After reflecting, I found the first version of the interview questions to be very specific, close-ended, and did not allow for probing. Revisions were made to the interview guide and the second version was piloted on the remaining three participants. Both interview guides are provided in Appendix A.

The third method by which pilot case data was collected was through analysis of different documents. Specific documents provided by the key informant, were meeting minutes from four meetings conducted between December 2015 till April 2016, emails sent by core team members in June and July 2016, newspaper articles, websites and social media pages about the event and a document that compiled the team's feedback about the event. These documents provided a historical perspective about how the partnership operated.

One of the cautions highlighted by Baxter and Jack (2008) is the overload of data sources and getting "lost" in the data (p. 554). To organize the different data sources, Table 3.2 was created. The purpose of Table 3.2 (below) is to present and summarize the breadth of all the different types of data sources for the pilot study. The first row shows the number and type of participants observed at the two observation meeting sites; the second row provides information about the five interview participants and the last row shows the different types and number of documents collected.

Table 3.2: Data Source Table for Pilot Study

<b>Data Collection Method</b>	<b>Number of Data Sources</b>	<b>Type/Descriptor of Data Sources</b>
Observation 1 Observation 2	13 participants 9 participants	Community members, City 1 employees, City 2 employees, Non-profit partnership, Non-profit land trust, Community college, Local businesses
Interview 1 Interview 2 Interview 3 Interview 4 Interview 5	Key Informant Core Team Member Core Team Member Coordinating Team Member Coordinating Team Member	‘Back-bone’ organization City 1 employee City 2 employee Non-profit land trust Local Business – Service Provider
Documents	13 Documents from December 2015 - July 2016	4 Meeting minutes documents 5 Emails among team members Partnership website Social media pages Newspaper article Team feedback document

### 3.5.2 Pilot Case Study & Lessons Learned

The purpose for conducting a pilot study was to apply the case study methodology including the data collection and analysis procedures on a smaller-scale case study (Kim, 2011). This section discusses the issues that I faced while conducting the pilot study and how the lessons learned impacted the main study.

#### 3.5.2.1 Issues Around Observations

I struggled with taking field notes about variables relevant to the research questions. This was an issue because I was distracted by the content discussed during the meetings around planning and implementing the community event. I was also challenged to find the balance between writing



notes about every conversation occurring in the meeting versus looking for cues such as a team member's behavior or non-verbal communication. This was a challenge because it was difficult for myself solely to take very detailed field notes. I also felt hesitant in "scribbling furiously", to avoid making the participants uncomfortable about having an outsider "observe" their meetings. Yin (2014) suggested having an observation guide that would provide focus for the researcher. Merriam (2009) recommended using "recall and record" techniques to develop rich and descriptive narratives for the field notes. Thus, for the main study, I developed a printed observation guide with each research question on a separate page, so that specific notes could be taken and to allow for easier ways to recall the activities in the observed meetings. This guide also allowed me to visual note-take, reducing the apprehensiveness to "scribble furiously". This is further discussed in the main study methods section below.

### 3.5.2.2 Issues Around Interviews

The questions in the interview guide posed a big issue because some of the questions were very direct, jargon-heavy, leading, close-ended and out of order. For example, the question "Was there a time when there was lack of trust among the members?" led participants to answer monosyllabically like "no/ yes". Probing only happened if the participant answered "yes". Thus, a second version of the interview guide was created to address these issues. An example of this was changing the question "Which ways of interacting with your fellow members have negatively affected or slowed the progress?" in version one to "Can you give an example when you felt frustrated trying to communicate with your team members?" in version two. I also learned that some participants did not understand the questions because the terminology was very academic. Even the second version of the interview guide did not seem to be robust enough. I found that the interview questions were framed around the theoretical framework constructs. Hence, it seemed

as if the data being collected through interviews was “testing” the framework instead of learning about the case. I developed another version of the interview guide, which was focused around understanding how different elements in the partnerships evolved and how the team operated through challenges. This interview guide was informally piloted with peers before using for the main study. This third version of the interview guide is presented in Appendix A.

### 3.5.2.3 Revisions to Main Study Design and Implementation

The lessons learned from the pilot study were applied to the design and implementation of the main study. After the pilot study was completed, I used the preliminary pilot study findings to further strengthen the logic linking to the propositions by developing a matrix that linked research questions, research constructs, construct definitions, preliminary findings and data sources (Yin, 2014). This exercise allowed me to revisit the interview guide and observation protocol for the main study. The interview guide was revised by framing the questions around the partnership’s chronology of activities and asking about challenges faced and mechanisms used to overcome those challenges.

Even though the purpose of this pilot study was not to generate findings (Kim, 2011), I found it a useful, learning exercise to perform preliminary data analysis. Stake (2010) describes qualitative analysis as a process of making sense of the data collected by iterative sorting and interpretation. The data analysis for the pilot study was initiated by performing “micro-coding” on the manually transcribed interview texts, through line-by-line analysis (Strauss, 2003). A visual concept map was developed, to further sort and categorize the codes generated (Stake, 2010; Strauss, 2003). The observational field notes and documents were coded using the categories to “dimensionalize” and providing more evidence around that code category (Strauss, 2003, p. 63).

Finally, these categorical codes were aligned to the research constructs and themes were identified. The preliminary themes identified in the pilot study are presented in Appendix B.

### 3.5.3 Main Study Methods

As explained by Stake (1995), “there is no particular moment when the data gathering begins...picked up informally as the researcher first becomes acquainted with the case” (p. 49). Thus, for explanatory purposes, the main study data collection was categorized in three phases as depicted in Figure 3.4 below. All the methods used and described below followed the guidelines explained in the introduction of this section.

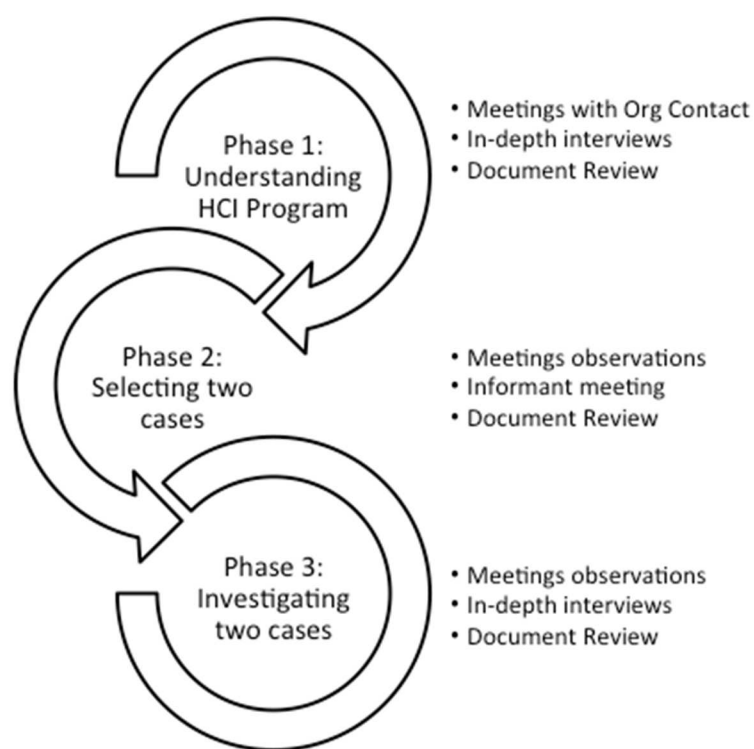


Figure 3.4: Phases of Data Collection

The first phase was an exploratory phase to learn about the Hometown Collaboration Initiative program, which was the conduit of the two community partnerships. The second phase was building relationships with coaches to learn about the different communities involved to then

decide the two partnerships as the study's cases. The third phase was the main and longest phase during which I engaged with the two cases and collected data through various sources. As suggested by Yin (2014) and Stake (1995), different data sources were used to understand these cases. The methods used and data sources gathered in the three phases are presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Data Sources for main study

<b>Phase</b>	<b>Methods</b>	<b>Description of Data Source</b>	<b>Data Collected</b>
Phase 1: Understanding HCI program	Meetings with Organization Contacts	The organizational contacts were the program lead and assistant program lead at Purdue University.	2 Purdue staff members
	Interviews with Developers of HCI program	They were instrumental in developing the HCI program curriculum and funding the program.	3 Purdue staff members 1 Ball State staff members 1 Office of Community & Rural Affairs staff member
	Document Review	HCI program curriculum, year-end report, websites, program improvement notes and images.	50 documents

Table 3.3 continued

Phase 2: Selecting two community partnerships	Meeting observations	HCI state team meetings were conducted via conference calls, comprising approximately 25 personnel from Purdue, BSU and OCRA where updates and operations of the program in community partnerships were discussed.	6 hours of non-participant observation
	Informant meeting	This meeting allowed me to share her design/case selection criteria and solicit options from key informants on which partnerships to select.	8 informants
	Document review	Websites for the list of partnerships to choose from.	10 websites with each having 20-30 web-links to other community data sources.
Phase 3a: Investigating Partnership Case A	Interviews	Partnership team members and coach	8 partnership team members 1 coach
	Meeting Observations	Partnership team meetings	12 hours of non-participant observation

Table 3.3 continued

	Document review	Application, commitment letters, meeting minutes, blogs, photos, team calendar, member directory, session log, HCI program updates, coach's meeting reports, capstone project proposal	65 documents
Phase 3a: Investigating Partnership Case B	Interviews	Partnership team members and coaches	7 partnership team members 2 coaches
	Meeting Observations	Partnership team meetings	6 hours of non-participant observation
	Document review	Application, commitment letters, meeting minutes, blogs, photos, team calendar, member directory, session log, HCI program updates, coach's meeting reports, capstone project proposal	80 documents

### 3.5.3.1 Phase 1: Understanding the HCI Program

During this phase, I wanted to, not only understand the community development program as it provided the context, but also develop trust to gain access for the two partnerships. In addition,

I needed to know whether the partnerships established through this community development program fit the definition for cross-sector partnerships.

#### 3.5.3.1.1 Meetings With Organization Contacts

The first contact with the HCI program leads at Purdue University was established over face-to-face meetings. During the first meeting, both the program lead and assistant program lead provided the history and background of the program. A second meeting was conducted to define research scope, timeline and approach. The two program contacts recommended conducting interviews with the individuals across Purdue University, Ball State University and OCRA to develop a rich understanding of the program and how it is operationalized in the community partnerships.

#### 3.5.3.1.2 Unstructured Interviews

Five in-depth unstructured interviews were conducted to further understand the context of the HCI program. The questions in these interviews were open-ended and exploratory, which then assisted in the inquiry of the main study (Merriam, 2009). The participants for these interviews were, the ‘founders/ program leads’ of the program, who were instrumental in developing the program and operationalize it through funding from the State of Indiana. Each participant had contributed differently to the development of the program and thus provided various perspectives. Three participants worked at Purdue University included the program lead, assistant program lead, who contributed to a majority of curriculum development; and program coordinator responsible for all logistical and program management activities. The fourth participant was the program lead from Ball State University provided expertise on one element of the program; and the fifth participant was the program lead from OCRA, who represented the State’s interests and

regulations. All interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participants' offices. These were unstructured interviews to allow for two-way conversation to further develop trusting relationships. The program coordinator assisted me in recruiting and scheduling interviews with the other participants.

#### 3.5.3.1.3 Document Review

During this phase, I was provided several documents by the program coordinator. These included the HCI program curriculum, the program's first year-end report, and notes from the HCI state team's working days aimed at brainstorming ways to improve the program content and delivery. I also gathered external documents that were available on the program's website which included the list of community partnerships involved, the HCI program elements and press releases about the program. I completed a preliminary read to understand the breadth of the program.

#### 3.5.3.2 Phase 2: Selecting the Partnership Cases

The goal for this phase was to develop trust with the HCI coaches, learn about their role in the community partnerships and use their experience to assist with case selection. The coaches were the bridges between the HCI program and the community partnerships. They operationalized the program into communities. Hence, they served as informants about the ongoing partnerships. They knew about how the partnerships were functioning, and which partnership teams would be more open for me to study them. Each coach represented at least one of the fifteen community partnerships.

##### 3.5.3.2.1 Conference Call Meeting Observations

The HCI state team had bi-weekly conference calls that comprised of approximately twenty-five team members from Purdue University, Ball State University and OCRA. These were



pre-scheduled and lasted about 60-90 minutes. The program leads from the three organizations; the program coordinator and all the coaches from both Purdue and Ball State Universities were members of this meeting. The agenda of the meeting was also predetermined, where the coaches shared updates on each of the community partnerships' progress, the program coordinator shared logistical information or requests and the program leads made closing comments. The program coordinator introduced me in the first conference call that I attended. A total of three conference calls totaling six hours were observed by myself to gain an understanding of the community partnerships' progress.

#### 3.5.3.2.2 Informants Meeting

After developing some trust with the HCI state team, especially the coaches, I was invited to attend a meeting with six Purdue coaches and program leads. The purpose of this meeting was to share my case selection criteria with the coaches and gain their perspective on which two community partnerships would "fit" the criteria. This meeting lasted an hour, during which the coaches explained that out of the fifteen partnerships, six partnership teams had almost completed their capstone project and had reduced their meeting frequency. And five partnerships were in the initial establishment phase. They suggested four partnerships that met the selection criteria. Three of the four partnerships had a Purdue University coach and one had a Ball State University coach. Since I had stronger relationship with the Purdue coaches the list of programs to considered was narrowed to those three. All three partnerships were located at various distances from where I resided. One of the coaches shared that the partnership that she was assisting was struggling with progress and she identified with the research study's construct "stuck in inertia". This intrigued me, and she decided to finalize that as one of the two cases. The other selection was based on

“convenience”, the partnership that was geographically closer to me. By the end of this meeting, I received support and access to study two community partnerships as the cases.

#### 3.5.3.2.3 Document Review

During this phase, I accessed and reviewed the website pages of the different partnerships involved in the HCI program. These webpages included status of the partnership, information about the community such as its local assets, population, their goals, blog posts and community plans gathered by the partnership teams. Each of the fifteen partnership teams had approximately 20-30 different data sources linked to their webpage, which served as more contextual data.

#### 3.5.3.3 Phase 3: Investigating Partnership A and Partnership B

Phases one and two were geared towards understanding the context and selection of cases of the multiple case study research design. It was during the third and last phase where multiple data collection methods were used to gather and generate data about each case separately in order to answer the research questions. These methods included non-participant observations of partnerships’ meetings, semi-structured interviews with partnerships’ team members and analysis of a variety of documents. The methods used for both cases were identical, including use of the same interview guide, same observation protocol and review of similar type of documents.

##### 3.5.3.3.1 Meeting Observations

In order to understand how the two partnerships operated and ‘made things happen’, I had to study the sites where the partnerships were operating. From the updates shared during the HCI state team conference calls and the informants meeting, I learned that for all the involved partnerships, team operations happened during their meetings. I shared the research study details and obtained verbal consent from the team members attending.

For partnership A, I observed four meetings totaling eight hours over my six-month engagement with the partnership. One of the constraints was the travel distance between my location and the partnership A meeting sites. It took at least three hours one-way to commute to the meeting site. Also, there was one month where the partnership team A had only one meeting, and its schedule conflicted with mine. While, for partnership B, I was able to observe two meetings totaling four hours since the partnership team only met twice in six months.

These meetings happened face-to-face, where partnership team members met at a predetermined location at on a scheduled date and time and lasted between an hour to two hours. I acted as ‘observer as a participant’ (Merriam, 1998) at these meetings and did not participate in discussions. An observation protocol was developed as a result of the pilot study, which allowed me to look for cues around certain behaviors, activities, non-verbal communication, and overall attitude of partnership team members in the meetings. Field notes included but not limited to: who was present, who was engaged in discussion, what were they discussing, how were they brainstorming ideas and organizing tasks, who was taking the lead, how was the coach facilitating the meeting, how were decisions being made, what action-items were being discussed, and how were they planning for the next meeting. Field notes were hand written during these meetings, to not distract the team members. They were then typed up with my reflections within twenty-four to forty-eight hours.

#### 3.5.3.3.2 Documents Reviewed

The coaches and HCI state team stored all the documents pertaining to each partnership on a shared drive. The program coordinator and coaches granted me access to the relevant folders on the shared drive. This was useful as I was able review the documents in a chronological order and

got access to most updated documents. For partnership A, I was able to gather approximately sixty-five different documents; while for partnership B, about eighty different documents were collected.

The following documents were gathered separately for each case.

- Application document that the community submitted to participate in the HCI program. This document provided information about why the partnership was needed for the community and listed some initial goals identified by the community.
- Commitment letters that initial partnership team members wrote as part of the application package. These letters provided information about why individual stakeholders/ actors wanted to be part of this partnership.
- Meeting minutes written either by the coaches or team members. The meeting minutes were generated for every meeting and provided details such as attendees, topics discussed, decisions made, tasks identified, roles and responsibilities, and action items for the next meeting.
- Blogs written by coaches or team members. These documents were used to update community members or other stakeholders about the progress made by the partnerships.
- Photos taken during meetings. These captured a static view of a meeting. There were also pictures taken for meeting notes taken on white boards and flipcharts, specifically the brainstorming process.
- Team calendar. This calendar provided the times when the team had scheduled their team meetings.
- Member directory. This directory was a spreadsheet and it listed team member information such as: names, type of sector/ group they represented, their email address and also whether they were part of the core or coordinating teams.

- Partnership session log. This log was a spreadsheet maintained by the HCI program coordinator. It provided information about all the meetings each community partnership had, how long the meeting lasted, which coaches and state team members were present at those meetings, and how many hours the coaches' prepped for those meetings.
- HCI program updates. The partnership updates were verbally provided by the coaches and were noted by the program coordinator as part of the meeting minutes from the HCI state team's bi-weekly conference calls. These updates were only shared among the state team and provided the coach's view on the bi-weekly progress of the partnership they were working with.
- Coach's meeting reports. The HCI state team had developed a form to allow the coaches to reflect on every partnership meeting and record details about that meeting, especially their perspective on: attendance and morale; accomplishments; meeting highlights; recommendations, and additional comments.
- Capstone project proposal. This was developed by the partnership team members and provided information about the capstone project they had selected, their shared goals, and a project implementation plan.

These documents were very important for the two case studies. Since they were similar across both cases and were generated since the start, they provided a historical and longitudinal view of how the partnerships were operating since their establishment.

#### 3.5.3.3.3 Semi-structured Interviews

In order to understand the "lived" experiences (Yin, 2014; Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995) and processes that I could not observe, the interview data collection method was required. The

individuals who had “lived” the partnerships’ experience were its members and coaches. While aspects of the research questions required standard information be collected from each partnership team member, assessing the “lived” experience required a method of interviewing that was flexible, such that the complexities and emerging perspectives of the members and coaches could be captured. Such requirements of interview data align with the semi-structured interview method (Merriam, 2009). For both cases, initial contact to the partnership and its team members was done through the coaches. The coaches assisted me as they used ‘purposive’ sampling to recruit interview participants.

In the case of partnership A, the coach invited me to its meeting and introduced me to the team members present. I was allowed to share the goals for her research and get verbal consent for observation. After the meeting, all the team members present at the meeting agreed to be interviewed and asked me to initiate scheduling the interviews. Since verbal consent to contact them was received, I received access to their email addresses via the coach and scheduled the interviews based on the participants’ availability. Thus, I was able to interview all eight team members (including the coach) that were “active” members at that time. However, access to team members that were no longer involved was not provided.

In the case of partnership B, one of the coaches emailed all the members of the partnership team about this study. Several team members responded to the email and showed interest in participating in the study. I reached out to those individuals and scheduled the interviews around the participants’ availability. This recruitment strategy only generated two participants. So, I attended the partnership meeting and developed some trust with one of the key members of the partnership team. He assisted me by emailing some more team members. Thus ‘snow-ball’

technique was used for recruiting participants in this case. In total, semi-structured interviews with nine participants including two coaches were conducted. The demographics of the participants for both cases are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.4: Demographics for Interview Participants

<b>Demographic</b>	<b>Categories</b>	<b>Case A</b>	<b>Case B</b>
Length of Membership	New Member (Less than six months)	0	1
	Active Members (Including coaches)	8	4
	In-Active Members	0	4
Gender/sex	Women	5	7
	Men	3	2
Sector	Academic (Schools, Colleges, Universities)	1	4
	Local Business/Corporations	3	3
	Government	0	2
	Non-Profit	1	0
	Healthcare	2	0
	Citizen	1	0

In both cases, interviews lasted an average of 55 minutes. Also, some interviews were conducted face-to-face, while some occurred over the phone based on the participant's preference and availability. If interviews were conducted in person, participants were asked to sign a written consent form; for phone interviews, verbal consent was obtained. Participants were asked if the interviews could be audio recorded for the purpose of transcription. All participants consented to this so all interviews were audio recorded. The interview guide developed after incorporating lessons learned in the pilot study was used for the semi-structured interviews. All of the recordings were transcribed and stored on a password-protected computer.

### 3.6 Data Analysis

After conducting data analysis on the pilot study, I developed insight on some emerging pilot themes and on the procedures for case study analysis. These pilot themes were not used as part of the findings for the main study, but rather I utilized them to strengthen some construct conceptualization. Examples of these preliminary themes for research construct 'partnership structure', developed after the pilot study analysis were:

- Partnership structure was not just about a formal role/ set of responsibilities. Even if it was influenced by external factors, it took its own form.
- Based on what the partnership is trying to achieve, the way it is structured can influence the way those goals are achieved. Who has access to what, leading to power and decision-making?
- Partnership structure included the structure for organizing and how things work? "This is how things work here" — constituted structure and affected how goals are achieved.



These preliminary themes were revisited after the main study cases were analyzed. Thus, the pilot study analysis allowed me to complete an introductory conceptualization of data.

At least twenty hours were required to manually transcribe audio files for the interviews. For pragmatic reasons, I hired an external transcription service for the main study. I manually coded all the pilot study data (110 pages) by hand writing codes in the margins of printed copies of transcribed interviews. Since the data sets for both cases in the main study were large, I used nVivo software to store, organize and code the data. I maintained an analysis journal to document all the steps and strategies that were used in the main study.

I was simultaneously organizing the data as the data collection for the main study was occurring. The data source table (Table 3.3) allowed for a holistic view of the entire data set spanning both the cases. All the raw data was transferred to nVivo and organized by Case A, Case B, and HCI program.

I started the main study analysis by “playing” with the data (Yin, 2014). After several iterations of text segmenting (Guest et.al, 2012), I realized that analysis needed to be done at two levels: analysis for understanding the cases and analysis for answering the research questions as presented in Figure 3.5.

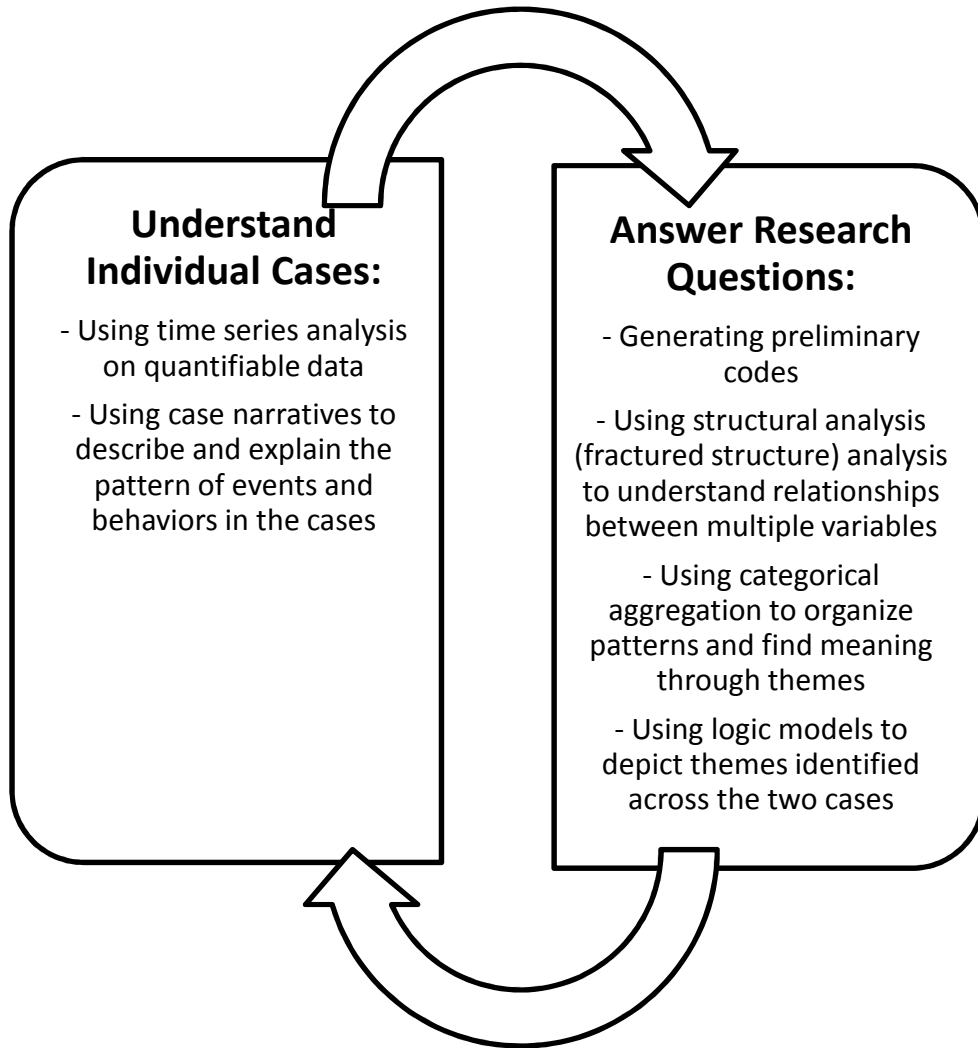


Figure 3.5: Levels of Data Analysis

I conducted analysis at both these levels simultaneously. It was after several iterations of going back and forth and “locating meaning in the data” (Guest et.al, 2012, p. 49), did I realize the differences in these two levels of analysis.

### 3.6.1 Analysis to Understand Individual Cases

Yin (2014) suggested starting data analysis by “playing” with the data by: “(1) putting information into different arrays (2) making a matrix of categories and placing evidence within

such categories (3) creating data displays (4) tabulating the frequency of different events (5) putting information in a chronological order” (p. 135).

#### 3.6.1.1 Time-Series Analysis

Thus, analysis for each individual case started by a chronological arrangement of the documents gathered. Documents such as meeting minutes, coach’s meeting reports, coach’s updates, blog posts, and session logs were organized month-by-month. I found that twenty-four months of longitudinal data had been gathered for each case. This type of chronological analysis of data through different sources allowed me to paint a picture of the different activities, events, behaviors that occurred in each month.

I was able to tabulate frequencies of single variables such as number of team members at each meeting, numbers of meetings per month, etc. Direct interpretation analysis procedure (Stake, 1995) was used on some variables such as decisions made, where I reviewed all the different data sources mentioned to identify when the word ‘decision’ or words that meant decision was made. Those instances were then tabulated for frequencies. Other variables such as team composition and milestones achieved needed multiple sources of data to tabulate. For example, I analyzed the HCI program curriculum and identified major milestones (listed/unlisted) expected by the program. This list of milestones was then member-checked (Stake, 1995) by the HCI program coordinator. I then reviewed the documents month-by-month and performed content analysis (Guest et al., 2012) to find texts that describe achieving these milestones. A tabulation of the frequencies of milestones achieved for that month were then tabulated and presented over a time series of twenty-four months, an example for a six-month period is given in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Example of this time-series (6-month) analysis done for Case A.

<b>Time Period</b>	<b>Number of meetings</b>	<b>Number of meeting attendees</b>	<b>Decisions Made</b>	<b>Milestones Achieved</b>
Month 1	2	Unknown	Decision about core team	Core team established
Month 2	2	19,18	Decisions about survey were made, Decided Community forum date	Community plans gathered and analyzed
Month 3	1 + committee meeting	10	Decided on when survey goes live and discussion on what to include in the survey	Survey went live
Month 4	2	16,Unknown	Decisions about community forum	Community Forum, 700 survey results
Month 5	2	18,19	Decision about marketing HCI was made	None
Month 6	1	15	Decision to eliminate focus on place-making	None

This time-series analysis was conducted for both the cases. Yin (2014) explained that tabulating data collected using qualitative methods into quantitative frequencies allow the researcher to show patterns and trace changes in the chronological flow of that variable, which can further be explained and supported by qualitative data through narratives.

### 3.6.1.2 Collaborative Inertia Analysis

I also used the narrative analysis method to make sense of the different events occurring in the two cases. There was evidence from the simple time-series data that some months had more meetings, more decisions, more milestones, and more team members attending than other months. These patterns allowed me to understand when the partnerships were making things happen and when they were not making things happen. “When the output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible; the rate of output is extremely slow and stories of pain and grind are integral to

successes achieved”, this concept was defined as collaborative inertia (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 191; Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 60). The analysis process was exploratory and emerging in nature as it was able to show patterns regarding the number of meetings occurring every month and the number of decisions and outputs documented in these meetings’ minutes. I used these patterns to operationalize the definition of collaborative inertia provided by Huxham and Vangen (2004, 2005)

Through several iterations of going between the two levels of analysis described above, the ways in which partnership outputs emerged through coded data were through the documented decisions and milestones. Thus, these two variables aligned to the ‘outputs’ construct. It was during meetings that the partnerships’ outputs were generated. Thus, the assumption was made that the rate of output was related to meeting frequency. The HCI program curriculum had expected the partnership teams to meet at least two times in a month. Hence, I used this as a threshold for the analysis. The third element in the definition of collaborative inertia was “stories of pain and grind” (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 191; Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 60). This element was not directly used in the development of the time-series analysis but was analyzed in the interviews and observation field notes. These stories were used to provide explanation to the time-series analysis.

Table 3.6: Collaborative Inertia Operational Definition

<b>Month-by-Month</b>	<b>Rate of Output</b>	<b>Outputs</b>	
Level of Inertia	If at least TWO meetings occurred	If at least one decision was made	If at least one milestone was achieved
Negligible Inertia	If ALL THREE conditions are met		
Low Inertia	If any TWO conditions are met		
Medium Inertia	If only ONE of the condition is met		
High Inertia	If NONE of the conditions are met		

In Table 3.6, I have provided the criteria for when a partnership was operating in negligible, low, medium and high inertia. These criteria emerged iteratively from aligning the patterns found in the time-series analysis and the theoretical definition for collaborative inertia. Thus, if the partnership teams were meeting at least twice a month and had generated at least one decision and milestone, they seemed to be operating in negligible state of inertia. As shown in Table 3.6, if two conditions were met, there seemed to be low level of inertia, if only one condition was met, then medium level of inertia seemed to be present and if no conditions were met, then the partnership teams seemed to be “stuck” in high levels of inertia.

This complex time series analysis (Yin, 2014) was mainly used to depict the fluidity as a partnership team moved in and out of different levels of inertia. Heat maps were created for both cases, which used different colors to visualize the levels of inertia. The purpose of this analysis was not to quantify efficiency (how quickly outputs were generated), effectiveness (how well the partnership teams were meeting the expectations), or to evaluate whether the partnership teams were meeting the milestones expected by the HCI program.

### 3.6.1.3 Narrating or Explaining the Cases

The simple and complex time series analyses, along with the collaborative inertia analysis provided valuable visual trends found in the chronology of events of the two cases. It showed which months the partnerships seemed to be operating in high and low levels of inertia. However, it was through descriptive narration, that these trends were explained (Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). Yin (2014) described that the purpose of this analysis technique was to “build an explanation of the case” (p. 147). This too was an iterative process, where I reviewed field notes and the interview transcriptions to understand how the events described in these sources aligned with the trends emerging through the time series analysis.

Initial narrations were conducted multiple times, through verbal storytelling to peers, advisors and collaborators, or by memo writing. This allowed for data reduction and focus on key events in the story. It also allowed me to process the gaps in the story that needed further explanation and support from the data sources. These narratives were written a couple of times, after which the final narrative was drafted through the lens of storytelling.

### 3.6.2 Analysis to Answer Research Questions

The analysis to answer research questions started with a preliminary coding exercise where two interviews were analyzed, resulting in twenty-six initial codes that were not grouped or aggregated. These preliminary codes and definitions are listed below.

- Community's motivation to join collaboration: Why the community was interested in joining this program
- Individual's motivation: Why the individual was interested in being part of the team

- Initial membership: What the team membership looked like when the collaboration first started? Including number of participants, which sector they represented, etc.
- Change in membership: How the team membership has evolved over time.
- Reasons for change in membership: Reasons that have affected change in team membership
- Enthusiasm: When the members felt enthusiastic/energized
- Expertise: Interviewee's expertise or what they believe is their team member's expertise
- Being stuck in inertia: When team members feel stuck, they have not made progress, they have not met or communicated
- Reasons for Frustration/ discouragement: Why the interviewee feels frustrated or discouraged
- Accomplishment: Deliverables that the team accomplished including anything that the interviewee deems as an accomplishment
- Guidance/ coaching/ training: Importance, lack of, plenty of coaching at various stages of the program
- Coach: Importance, role of, issues with coach at various stages of the program
- Feeling supported: When the team felt supported either by their own team members, the HCI team, the coach, buy-in from the community or their affiliated organization
- Feeling neglected/ unsupported: When the team felt unsupported either by their own team members, the HCI team, the coach, the community or their affiliated organization
- Shared goals: Goals for the collaboration
- Re-evaluating goals/ focus: Re-evaluation of set goals for the collaboration
- External issues: Issues that the team faced from external forces/organizations



- Communication mechanisms: Use of formal and informal communication instruments, such as committees, workshops, seminars, email, etc. and how frequently they are used
- Communication issues: Issues related to communication processes
- Program Issues: Issues related to the process/ expectations/ timeline etc. of the program
- Expectations (lack of direction): What the expectations were for the team members in terms of their roles and responsibilities as well as deliverables/outcomes
- Leadership behaviors: Actions carried out by team members or behaviors described by interviewees that either move the collaboration's progress in one direction or another
- Challenges: Challenges that the team members faced in the past, are currently facing or anticipate facing in the future
- Perceived success: Team members' perception of success for their collaboration
- Decision-making: Discuss process of decision-making and issues related to decision-making
- Roles and responsibilities: Core-coordinating team roles, positional leaders, coaches' roles

These preliminary codes were then aggregated into “bigger buckets” and were used in the structural analysis (Guest et al, 2012) process for both cases data sets. They served as the preliminary structural codebook. Guest et al. (2012) explained that the structural coding method of analysis is used “to identify the structure imposed on a qualitative data set by the research questions and design...The text is segmented based on the questions and responses from participants” (p. 55).

As I was going through this analysis, I also experienced the “lumper-splitter” problem (Guest et al., 2012; Weller & Romney, 1988), where coding can be done at different levels generating a large number of codes because of micro-coding or very few codes because of macro-coding (Yin, 2014). Qualitative data analysis is an iterative process, where the researcher uses different techniques to find meaning in the data (Guest et al., 2012; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2014). For one case study, I used a line-by-line coding technique to then categorically aggregate it into secondary codes; and for the second case, I used the structured codebook and then looked for themes within those bigger buckets.

When the codes for each of the two cases using these different approaches were compared, I found consistency across them. Eight main categories were developed after categorical aggregation of codes: (a) Partnership Structure; (b) Partnership Roles; (c) Partnership Context; (d) Partnership Processes, (e) Partnership Goals; (f) Member Actions; (g) Partnership Outcomes; and (h) Other. These eight categories were consistent for both the cases. I then went back and forth between the micro and macro codes, and the segmented data under these categories to find second order themes. Figure 3.6 depicts a visual map of the several iterations of code development for the partnership structure category.

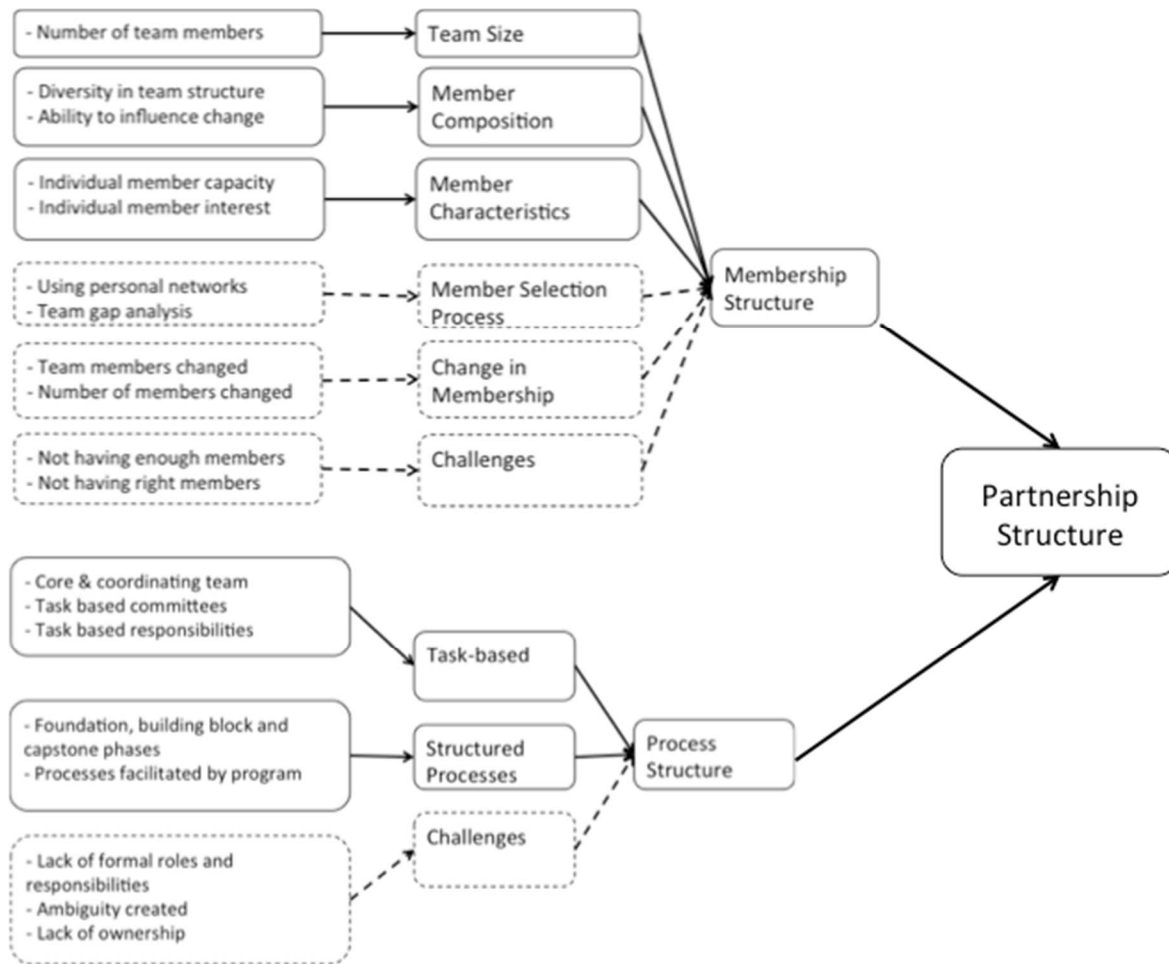


Figure 3.6: Example of Code Development Process

The codes grouped together on the left side of Figure 3.6 were first order codes and were closest to the raw data. These were grouped into second order themes as shown; which were further aggregated under third order themes such as ‘membership structure’ and ‘process structure’. These became elements of the construct under investigation (partnership structure). This process of code development was not linear. Some codes started from the left of Figure 3.6 and some started from the right. Coding was completed when saturation was reached (Fusch & Ness, 2015; Guest et al., 2012).

As this iterative analysis was occurring, I found that participant responses often had more than one variable discussed in a single sentence. For example, one of the codes generated was, “communication is more focused with a doable project”. This had two different variables “communication” and “project goals” and had some relationship between them. I relied on fractured structural analysis method (Guest et al., 2012), as shown in Table 3.7 below.

Table 3.7: Example of Fractured Structural Analysis

<b>Variable: Structure</b>			
<b>Primary Code</b>	<b>Secondary Code</b>	<b>Cross-reference 1</b>	<b>Cross-reference 2</b>
Seem to have plans but could not get implementation.	Process	Process	Challenge
Need for specificity and structure	Process	Outcome	Challenge
Need for stability	Roles	Outcome	Challenge
Needing structure in a plan and how they organize	Process	Process	Challenge
When is the right time to invite new members	Selection process	Process	Change
Change in organizational role	Team size	Context	Change

As shown in Figure 3.6, for the variable ‘structure’ the primary codes were the first codes generated using the raw data. The secondary codes were further categorization. Cross-reference 1 indicated whether reference to another variable or relationship with another variable was identified. For example, ‘need for stability’ was used in context of process and was cross-referenced with the variable ‘outcome’ since, lack of stability was impact the team’s outcomes and it was a challenge they were facing (as shown in cross-reference 2). This fractured structuring process allowed analyzing themes that investigated relationships between the different variables. These

categorizations allowed me to understand the complexity of how change in one variable impacted other variables.

### 3.6.3 Bringing it Together

The analysis from the two levels and approaches were brought together while writing the next chapter. I recognized that the way in which the research questions were written needed two-fold analysis and write up. For example, the research question, “How is the partnership structure created and influencing the implementation of partnership agendas?” needed to be answered by analyzing each case by breaking down the analysis as: (1) What did the partnership structure comprise of? (2) How was it created initially? (3) How did it evolve over time? (4) What did the partnership agenda comprise of? (5) How did these structural elements (and changes in them) influence implementation of partnership agendas?

Since, the purpose of this study was not to compare the two cases, I did not conduct a cross-case analysis as described by Yin (2014). However, I did inform the readers about themes that were similar or contrasting across both cases. The pattern-matching technique as explained by Yin (2014) was the final analysis used to compare the empirical findings from this study to the conceptual framework developed using Huxham and Vangen’s (2005) collaborative leadership definition from their collaborative advantage theory. The purpose of this analysis was to inform the overall themes discovered about the constructs being studied, and the phenomenon being explored.

Golden-Biddle & Locke's (2007) ‘Composing Qualitative Research’ book was used as a guide in this process of putting the different analyses together and writing the findings chapter for this document. The approach of composing responses to the research questions and discussion regarding the implications of the findings are further explained in the chapter to follow.

### 3.7 Quality and Rigor for the Study

Qualitative research has received significant critiques from positivistic researchers regarding its reliability and validity. Over the last few decades, qualitative research has been critiqued for its subjectivity, its ability to be replicated and hence its reliability and its internal and external validity due to its lack of generalizability (Flyvberg, 2006). However, the seminal work by Guba and Lincoln in the 1980s started the conversation to measure rigor for qualitative research through "trustworthiness" (Morse, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). Since Guba and Lincoln's initial introduction of the concept of trustworthiness in qualitative research, several qualitative researchers have used trustworthiness as guidelines and even standards to measure rigor in qualitative research. Trustworthiness has been broken down into four aspects (Recker, 2013 p. 94):

- “Dependability is the extent to which individuals other than the researcher can reach to the same conclusions provided the same observations and data.” For this study, I used interview guides (Appendix A) and observation protocol, and kept detailed journal notes about every design and analysis decision made and the reasoning behind the decisions. These design and analysis procedures have been described in great length in this chapter for the purpose of other researchers trying to replicate this study.
- “Credibility is the extent to which the researcher has provided enough and a variety of substantiated data to support the conclusions.” I conducted a pilot study to inform both methodological procedures and learn pilot emergent themes. One of the lessons learned was having more rigor around developing interview questions that were not validating the conceptual framework used, but to gather data about the cases and let the data inform themes around the conceptual framework using pattern matching analysis technique. Data saturation guidelines such as those provided by Guest et al. (2012) were used to not only

gather enough and multiple sources of data (Merriam, 2009; Stake, 1995), but also perform analysis till code saturation. I used the “showing and telling” method as described by Golden-Biddle & Locke (2007) to provide the readers rich data. In addition, I relied on peers and doctoral committee to guide the research design and analysis process. One such example used was a verbal processing technique that I used with one of her peers, to “make sense” of the data.

- “Confirmability is the extent to which individuals who are in the position to verify the findings, other than the researcher, preferably participants can independently verify the findings.” I relied on member checks at all the stages of data collection and analysis. For example, informal discussions with the coaches and program coordinator helped verify the partnership teams’ progress. I also verified different events and quantifiable data using multiple sources, such as meeting minutes, coach’s notes, session logs, and lastly by member checks. Case study narratives were also member checked by the coaches.
- “Transferability is the ability to generalize any or some findings to other settings and cases.” This was obtained through the research design for the study. Yin (2014) explains that in order to transfer findings, and perform ‘analytical generalization’, the researcher question should be framed around either ‘how’ or ‘why’. For this study, I studied a “how” question. Also, by using multiple case study design and replication logic to select the two cases, allowed me to add more rigor to study the phenomenon of “making things happen” in cross-sector partnerships. I also used rich, thick descriptions (Merriam, 2009) while narrating and explaining the cases to show the complexities in the collaborative dynamics.

Qualitative research is interpretative, context driven, fluid, multi-faceted, explanatory, descriptive, and exploratory in nature. In this study, I took deliberate steps and appropriate verification strategies from design to analysis to maintain this scientific and empirical study's quality and rigor.



## CHAPTER 4. CASE STUDY NARRATIVES AND FINDINGS

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section provides narrative stories of the two case studies, while the second reports findings for each research question separately. The writing structure for the case study write-up follows guidelines from Stake (2005), which recommends the use of storytelling to report case narratives. All names used as part of the narratives are pseudonyms to protect the identity of the study's participants. Golden-Biddle and Locke's (2007) strategies for composing qualitative research such as "showing and telling" and "sandwiching" were used for reporting findings for the research questions. By using the "showing and telling" strategy, I have written the case stories by "showing" the data through participants' quotes and other data sources and then "telling" the theoretical significance of that data. This structure of the narratives to "couple data with theory" is described as sandwiching by Golden-Biddle and Locke (2007, p. 53).

### 4.1 Case Study Narratives

The stories of Partnership A and Partnership B used as case studies are narrated below. As explained in Section 3.4, both of these partnerships were part of the Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI) community development program, which had a state-level team oversee the development and delivery of the program. The State HCI Team assigned coaches to both Partnerships to facilitate, and help deliver the HCI program (as described in Chapter 3). Partnership A was assigned to Coach Sara, and Partnership B was assigned to two coaches, Ann and Ashley. Both the partnerships started with the selection of team members. The HCI program set high-level objectives for the two partnerships. The first objective was to learn about their community in the first phase of the program by conducting a community survey and forum. The next objective was

to make a decision to focus their project towards one of three areas within their respective communities: (a) economic development, (b) leadership development, or (c) place-making improvement (as explained in Chapter 3). The last objective for the partnerships was to develop shared project goals, and then work towards reaching them in their community.

The next two subsections tell the story of each partnership. The stories are organized through the lens of collaborative inertia. As defined earlier, collaborative inertia is a state where “output from a collaborative arrangement is negligible, the rate of output is extremely slow, or stories of pain and hard grind are integral to successes achieved” (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, p. 191). Thus, the stories highlight how partnerships transitioned through different levels of collaborative inertia, and how they “made things happen”.

#### 4.1.1 Story of Partnership A

Partnership A was one of the fifteen established partnerships as part of the HCI program. When I got engaged with it, Partnership A had been in existence for eighteen months. In the following subsections, I describe the way in which Partnership A’s structures and processes evolved to achieve the objectives set by the HCI program as mentioned above, the different obstacles it faced and how it overcame these obstacles. As I narrate the story of Partnership A below, the key members involved and quoted below are: Jane (local non-profit), Andy (local media), Kate (local hospital), Clara (local business), Jack (retired community member), Lisa (public health), David (local bank), Don (local school corporation) and Sara (HCI Coach).

##### 4.1.1.1 Year One: January – May

Partnership A was established in January. The HCI program expected the partnership team to achieve specific objectives as explained in the above section. During this time period (January-May), the partnership had to establish their team and conduct a community survey and forum to

gather input from community members. When I performed a time series analysis of the HCI curriculum, meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports, I found that there was a lot of structure provided by the HCI program and coaches, to the partnership in the first six months. This structure included guidelines on establishing the partnership's team with regards to its size and composition. The meeting minutes showed that an average of 16 individuals participated in meetings during these six months. The original team composition, during these initial months, had representation from most community groups (Figure 4.1), including economic development organizations, business and industry, education, local residents from different socioeconomic groups, nonprofit and voluntary groups.



Figure 4.1: Breakdown of community group membership over the course of the project for partnership A. Number in each bubble represents the total amount of team members from that particular community group.

The HCI program had very detailed expectations documented in the curriculum, which included decision-making and task management processes for conducting a community survey and

forum. Andy, who has been a member of the partnership from the beginning and is the local newspaper journalist, shared the process they followed.

There was a lot of discussion, there were a lot of exercises we went through to identify all of these things, lay them out. A lot of guided discussion, I would say, in the beginning.

All the participants in the interviews shared the importance of having this structure and clarity in expectations. This structure in processes seemed to have assisted the partnership team to accomplish their tasks as they obtained 700 survey responses and had 61 participants at the community forum. The meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports indicated high level of energy in the team as they accomplishing these tasks. Andy, in the interview used the words "really gratifying" to describe these achievements.

#### 4.1.1.2 Year One: May – July

During this time period, the HCI program expected the partnership team to collectively decide whether they were going to focus on economy, leadership, or place-making as their 'building blocks' as explained in Chapter 3. I analyzed the partnership team's decision-making process during this time period using multiple data sources, including participants' reflections during interviews. The analysis showed that the State HCI Team and Coach Sara guided the team to put aside the preconceived notions of project ideas and use all the data the team had gathered about their community for the collective decision-making process. In her interview, Jane shared that Coach Sara encouraged the team to be inclusive in the decision-making process as she quoted Coach Sara "we need to see what everybody else says."

The meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports indicated that the partnership team spent several months to make their selection to focus on one of three 'building blocks'. All participants

in their interviews shared their frustration with this process and compared it to “pulling teeth.” The following excerpt from interviewing Jane, who was a critical member of this partnership, and was responsible for its establishment, depicts the effect of process fatigue during the decision-making process.

The day that we finally ... Cause we kept putting it off to decide on the capstone. Was it going to be economic development or was it going to be leadership? That took two or three, well more than two, several meetings to just determine. Then finally, it was okay everybody who wants to be economic go stand over here, everybody that wants to be leadership go stand over here. And then there were several people who stood in the middle and said I don't know. Then just simply out of defeat we thought okay fine we'll do leadership cause we didn't have one.

When I asked the participants about why the team struggled with this task of deciding between the economy and leadership building block, some reasons stated were team size, behavior of the team members and the ability to decide which option was more important. The meeting-minutes indicated that there were at least fifteen team members attending the meetings during this time. In the interviews, both Jane (Community Foundations Director) and Clara (local business owner) felt that the decision-making had slowed down because of the large number of team members involved. The following quote from Jane's interview shows her frustration with the decision-making process because of the number of opinions from the large number of team members.

When you start asking what we need, when you ask 100 people you're going to get 100 different answers. I think whenever they opened it up and kept opening it up, and opening it up, opening it up well where does it end?

Clara also felt that everybody wanted to give opinions but did not want to develop solutions. “There were so many chiefs and not enough Indians. Do you know what I mean?” This made it more difficult for the team to collectively decide.

David (local financial institution) found the decision-making process to be confusing and ambiguous,

It was a really hard debate between leadership and economy. It was kind of like the chicken and the egg question, right? Where do you focus first?

The frustration with the decision-making process seemed to affect some of the team members’ commitment and interest. Andy (local journalist) recalled this incident to be the team’s first challenge. The following excerpt from Andy’s interview is a rich description of the decision-making process that Partnership A’s team followed during this time period and how it affected the commitment of some team members.

Just because it took so long and maybe they (team) weren't seeing us getting anywhere, or maybe it just wasn't going in the direction that they hoped it would go... After a while, we were really divided between the economy building block and leadership. It was really torn. It was 50/50, I think. We had people who didn't really want to budge off of either side. We ended up going with economy, simply because we are such a poor area here, that we thought that was somewhere that really needed focus. Also, something that we thought at first, we might be able to see results from a little faster than on a leadership track. Really, at one point, we divided the room, and said sit over here if you're for economy, sit over here if you're for leadership. We had a few people who took their chair and sat right in the middle on the line, to show that they were in both camps.

The time series analysis showed that Partnership A had been in a medium to high state of collaborative inertia during this time period as they had not produced tangible outputs such as making decisions or achieving milestones. The analysis showed that they had spent about seven (7) hours over the period of three months, to make the decision to choose economy as their building block as defined by the HCI program.

#### 4.1.1.3 Year One: July – December

Once the partnership team decided on economy as their focus, the data sources indicated that the State HCI Team got involved to provide structure and expertise on economic development. During this time period, the partnership team went back to learning, gathering, sharing, and discussing relevant information about their community's economic development issues. The next task for the partnership team was to decide on a capstone project with economy focus that would be implemented in the community. Meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports indicated that it took the team six months to collectively decide their capstone project. The time series analysis for these six months showed that even though the team was involved in these activities, there were negligible numbers of decisions made or milestones achieved. The analysis also showed that the team had meetings only once per month in October, November, and December. The collaborative inertia analysis indicated that the partnership team was operating in medium-high level of inertia. This was affecting team member attendance as documented in the meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports.

Developing shared goals for their capstone project needed discussion and decision-making processes. The HCI program did not have specific guidelines, but the curriculum documented that the partnership team should be responsible for this task. To understand why this decision-making process took six months, I analyzed several data sources. It seemed that team composition was an

important factor while developing shared goals. The analysis indicated that the partnership team lacked the support and buy-in from their local elected officials, chamber of commerce, and their Local Economic Development Officer (LEDO). The participant interviews and meeting minutes indicated that these stakeholders were important to develop and implement a project with economic development focus. The following excerpt from Jane's interview depicted her frustration with not having an important stakeholder on their partnership team and how she believed this affected their progress.

We invited the LEDO to our table and he could have cared less. He was never involved, didn't care what we did and he invited us to come to his board meeting. We made a presentation; they could've cared less. That's when we had to fall back again.

All the participants in their interviews shared their frustration because of the amount of time they had spent trying to decide the goals for their capstone project, and not having the key community stakeholders on their team. The following excerpt from Kate's interview indicated her perseverance.

A period of about two or three months that each meeting, it was a test, because I didn't really feel like I wanted the prior six months to go wasted by just deciding I'm not going back anymore. This is a waste of my time. I just really wanted to something to be successful. Out of obligation to the time that I had already put in and to the other teammates that were participating as well, I felt like it would have been disrespectful to them and disrespectful to the cause to have not tried to push through when it was so tough.

There were others that were participating at the time and we had two or three end up then dropping off and stop coming. I know one that I had asked out in the public when I saw him at a community event and they said, "Well, how's that going?" I said, "Well, we're



trying to trudge through it now." They were like, "well, you know, I just wasn't getting anything out of that and it just seemed like it was stalling so I just didn't feel like it was worth my time to come." They felt it too. We all did.

The meeting minutes during this time period indicated that team size had reduced. As described above, the lack of progress and lengthy decision-making seemed to affect team size and lack of attendance. My analysis also indicated that a change in communication process managed by Coach Sara also affected the number of team members attending. The meeting minutes and participant interviews showed that Coach Sara kept the core and coordinating team informed of the process through emails and made sure she shared information with only those members who were regularly attending the meetings. Because of this pattern of information flow, in which everyone in attendance was informed at the same time, there were no hierarchies regarding who received the information and who did not. However, there were unexpected consequences of the coach communicating only with those that attended the meetings. As explained by David,

Her communication has mostly been with the people who were, on a month-in, month-out basis, were almost always at the meetings. And then when those people started dropping off, then she was communicating with fewer and fewer people. So from that standpoint, communication has gotten better because there are fewer people.

#### 4.1.1.4 Year Two: January – July

After analyzing the meeting minutes, coach's meeting reports and triangulating them with accounts recalled by participants in their interviews, it seemed that the Partnership A team had spent almost twelve months in an iterative process of collecting data and trying to decide shared goals for their team. The partnership team had documented their capstone project goals in the meeting minutes. The meeting minutes also indicated that the start of the team's second year, Don,

a key partnership team member, stepped in to provide direction and leadership. During this time period, the team was developing the conceptual model for an economic development program for their community and finalizing their capstone project. Jane, the community foundation director, recalled that the team at that time had decided to not wait for the buy-in from their community officials, but rather, “we'd create ourselves ... That's when we decided we were going to create Project A.”

The interviews and meeting minutes indicated that Don was able to provide the vision for the project, and had taken the initiative in developing the majority of documents for Partnership A, including a logo for the team. The team had documented their planning process and upcoming milestones and tasks in the meeting minutes. David remembered how the team had developed focus and were meeting frequently during this time period, “So we were meeting pretty frequently with that. We had a target date that we were going to try to hit so we were working on trying to get that done.”

However, the meeting minutes showed that even though the team spent their time planning, they were not producing many outputs. In her interview, Coach Sara shared that, even though there was a lot of team discussion, they were missing execution.

We always had a hard time really getting it going. I mean, we did a lot of planning, we had a strategic plan, all that kind of stuff, but we still had a hard time getting over that hump in terms of making it happen.

The time series analysis showed that the average number of team members that attended the meetings during this time went down to approximately 6, but these members continued to meet about twice per month.

#### 4.1.1.5 Year Two: July – August

During the interviews, all the participants recalled the major setback for the team. As the partnership team was working persistently towards the development of Project A, Don, their perceived team leader and visionary, lost his job. The team had been working for 18 months toward significant accomplishment with their capstone project, and it suddenly came to a halt. This loss of a critical team member also affected their documentation, as losing the creator and his resources meant losing the documented progress they had made to that point. Coach Sara recalled,

It was really unfortunate, because a lot of his materials he was using to create the products, like the videos for the HCI, the big launch that we were going to do, was taken away from him. It was just a bad deal all around.

David, in his interview, shared how this event deeply affected the team, as all of the documents they had created and all of the progress they had made were deleted.

He (Don) had done a lot of that work and some logo kind of stuff. And we lost a lot of that and plus some other things that he was working on that we had probably, almost certainly, talked about in meetings but we didn't have any of the documentation behind it. It was a big blow for us, just because it kind of took some wind out of our sails.

Jack shared that it was the only time in the process that he felt he was ready to give up:

I'd say at least for me personally that was a huge setback I don't think anybody else will say anything different. It was a time when I was about discouraged enough to say, 'Okay, forget it. Let's cash in our chips and walk away from the table.'

This setback seemed to have discouraged all team members, whose feelings matched Kate's reactions of feeling completely at loss,

All of the work that we had put together from all of our efforts, we felt, was lost because documents that he had offered to compile and do part of the presentation with others being

support roles in the presentation. It was really devastating, to the point where many of us felt like we were just finished, and we just couldn't do anything else.

As a coach, Sara remembered how this affected the team's morale and her own frustration when very few members attended the meetings that followed this event.

The lull happened when we trying to actively plan for the network in terms of the minutiae of how is this meeting going to work... We had a meeting (after this loss), but we only had three people there, so it was really frustrating. Very frustrating to go through all that.

#### 4.1.1.6 Year Two: August

In her interview, Coach Sara recalled how she had to step in to revive the team's morale by showing the team metrics on how far they had come and trying to reduce the ambiguity of what's next, as they processed the loss of a critical team member.

We continued to keep our meeting schedules the way they were. They were the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month, 2-4 p.m. We continued to meet; I continued to work on them. They just came out of it and they started coming to more meetings. I don't know precisely what I did to pull them out of it, but I will say I continued to budge them. I continued to put forth an agenda and be like okay, we're going to accomplish this at this meeting, because we did this, we succeeded in that, now let's do this. Confidently giving them the metrics.

Jack shared with me how he believed that their coach played a critical part in helping the team navigate this rough patch in the process:

That was a point where I think Sara was pretty valuable in helping provide some encouragement that, yes, this is ... We've taken a pretty heavy shot but it doesn't mean we can't move forward. The coach was really called on to do some coaching at that point. I

have to compliment her because I don't think I can easily see where others of lesser skill would not have navigated or help the group navigate that successfully. So I really give her some kudos on that.

All the participants in their interviews shared how the team had to reflect and readjust their expectations. They recalled how some of the more assertive team members, like Jane and Jack, had forced the team to collectively reflect on whether the current team composition had the skills and resources for their project. As Lisa recalled, "Jane called a meeting and said we either consider dropping it or moving forward and decide on exactly what we're going to do."

Andy shared that the team had to not only reflect on their collective capacity, but also acknowledge their limitations as a group:

We saw that we had too few people at that point, to effectively do Project A network, and that made the light bulb come on for us... It became clear after some time that this small group was never going to be able to accomplish that. Once we decided through some difficult discussion, we admitted that we weren't going to get there.

Kate also shared how supportive their coach had been through this process by encouraging the team to reflect on their collective purpose,

Thankfully, with Sara's encouragement, she said, "To go back to some of the roots before we came to this decision, what was it that we still felt like that we needed to accomplish?" If it hadn't been for Sara being there to try to keep us afloat for that short time, I really think we would've become non-existent at this point. It's been a blessing to get a chance to have to rethink the foundation of what our outcome was going to be, because it may have been so weak in the end that it wouldn't have been able to sustain itself because it would have been too big a project.

Clara recalled the particular meeting when the team had reduced down in size and felt lost in their way. In this meeting, she acknowledged her own time and capacity constraints, and recommended that they switch their building block focus from economic development to leadership development in their community.

Okay, well, probably a month and a half ago we were all just sitting around the table and they're just listing everything that each of us have to do. At this point there are only eight of us that are actually really participating fully. I just said, I have way too much going on to take on all of this and I know that for myself. And you know, you're giving me a list of all of these responsibilities and if this is going to be successful then we're going to need more people to do this because I cannot take this on. I don't know about the rest of you but I cannot take this on. And so at that time I proposed... I asked Sara, I just looked at her and I'm like, you know, you guys wanted to do leadership from the beginning and can't we just go back to that? And somehow incorporate some of the ideas that we worked on thus far with this project. She said, yes, and everybody kind of just let out this group sigh of relief like this is much more realistic for a group of our size to take on.

The data indicated that the realization in the meeting became another pivot in the focus of the Partnership A's project, as this change allowed the team to write off previous constraints and losses, and choose a new project and shared goals that were within their scope and capacity. This change in focus seemed to have prompted a change in their ability to produce outcomes towards their program objectives.

#### 4.1.1.7 Year Two: August – December

The coach's meeting reports, meeting minutes and my observation notes indicated that the partnership team seemed to have a burst of energy immediately following the change in project

focus to developing a leadership development program for their community. It seemed that they had developed a renewed sense of purpose. Andy recalled that the team's morale and engagement seemed to have improved, as they seemed to have clear direction.

That gave us a new shot of enthusiasm, and I think since then, has helped us to get energized again. Since that time, we have made some excellent progress on pulling together the leadership program and we've got our calendar set really for next year in terms of each month's lesson and who's presenting and where. It seems like the ball's really rolling again, and I think that that's got everybody excited again.

The meeting minutes showed that only about eight team members had persevered through the difficult incident. In her interview, Kate shared how she believed that collectively facing adversity had affected the team's cohesion.

Initially it was more of a rigid process last year that was very formal feeling, I should say, and that we didn't really feel like we could just speak our minds without offending someone, but this year has been different...We all really felt comfortable to express our likes or dislikes about a particular content of the focus for the group for the day, and that we could get positive or negatives out of that, and then still come up with an additional better plan... I think it was a matter of comfort.

Lisa, explained how her level of engagement increased with the change in project goal, as she felt she could contribute a lot more of her experience and expertise on this topic,

Yeah because that's my area, so and then also I've been through leadership training myself and so I feel like I've been equipped to help provide input with this is what worked well for the program I went through and then so just providing that input. So I feel like I can connect with the leadership one. The economy one, I just couldn't connect very well, but I

was still dedicated to some point because I knew leadership was going to be involved in that as well.

The meeting minutes indicated a noticeable shift in the way the team was operating during this time period, as they seemed to have taken collective ownership of the capstone project instead of relying on the HCI program to provide structure. With respect to the coach's role, Coach Sara shared how her role evolved during this time from being an outsider to an insider, "I still see myself being involved, but I may actually kind of shed the coach role and be more of a team member role".

The meeting minutes showed that from August – December of Year Two, the team had 12 meetings, and had spent 22 hours planning, organizing, and implementing tasks for the capstone project. They also documented the different tasks for the project that were discussed at every meeting, and how the remaining eight members volunteered to take responsibility for those tasks based on their expertise and time availability.

During this time, the roles and responsibilities seemed to have evolved as Lisa shared that some team members like Jack, Jane, and Sara had the core team role, while the rest "are kind of committee, we're there for input and then if they assign us a task, we'll get it done". However, it seemed that there were no assigned roles, but responsibilities were shared based on the tasks, as explained by Clara in her interview,

I don't know that we have defined roles yet. I mean, we each have specific...I mean we really share roles, okay? Because we are taking on the same role on different dates, if that makes sense, you know? As far as some people are developing some curriculum on their own or finding facilitators and then others are just doing organizational tasks. But I think we all have to do each thing. I don't think there's anybody that's gotten out of one thing or another.



She believed that time constraints were the reason why some team members volunteered to take more responsibilities than others,

I think that that's part of it. I definitely think that's part of it. Jack has time on his hands. He's retired. He does a lot still, but he is very motivated in this regard. Honestly we just trust, I think that we trust the group that we're in that the work that we do is going to be relevant when we bring it back.

David shared his concerns about not having formally defined roles,

There's been no accountability for things. I mean, people have been doing things but nobody's really taken ownership of some things. So. It's kind of, we all own it and so therefore nobody's taken responsibility for it until we meet. It's important to all of us when we're meeting but when we get back to our jobs and our lives, it becomes a lot less important.

The meeting minutes indicated that having a plan and deadlines helped the team to get focused. Andy shared that having a smaller team comprised of team members who have been part of this process from the beginning, “made everything quicker, for certain. I think it has helped speed things up. All of us, who are a part of it, have been a part of it all along, so we all understand how we got to this point.”

The majority of their communication, even at this phase in the process, occurred face-to-face at their meetings. However, they did learn from their previous setbacks, as Andy explained,

We kept a strong email network going, so that we're all always in the loop. One new thing that we've just added now that we have some actual materials that we are producing and getting ready to put out to the world, is we've used a Google Drive, file sharing, so that we can all see everything instantaneously and make changes.

The meeting minutes indicated that in order for the leadership development program to be successful, the team needed support and endorsement from the community and their local officials, who had been disengaged from when the team switched gears with their capstone project. In my meeting observations I witnessed how the team developed a consistent message about their project goals to the different stakeholders and officials in the community that were previously engaged in the HCI program. The same consistent message and shared project plan was submitted as their capstone proposal document to the HCI State Team.

The meeting minutes, coach's updates and my informal conversations with the HCI project coordinator confirmed that team had received approval of their capstone proposal, and was awarded state funding from the State HCI Team. They also succeeded in getting community support for the leadership program. They had twelve community members enroll in the leadership program when they launched their program, which was soon after December of Year Two.

In the interviews, all participants shared a consistent description of their vision for success for this program. My analysis of the interviews indicated that one of the reasons for their persistence and perseverance through this process was that all of them wanted to leave their mark as part of the HCI program, and leave a legacy in their community as they launched the community leadership program. As an example, in her interview, Clara expressed, "Success is just helping the community in a way that we're building something for the future for our community, and giving some kind of hope in a time that seems hopeless."

#### 4.1.2 Story of Partnership B

Just like Partnership A, Partnership B was one of the fifteen partnerships established as part of the HCI program. When I got engaged with it, Partnership B had been in existence for eighteen months. In the following subsections, I describe the way in which partnership B's

structures and processes evolved and the different challenges this partnership team faced. As I narrate the story of Partnership B below, the key members involved and quoted below are: Matt (community economic development lead), Emily (local community educator), Patty (local small business), Christy (local entrepreneur), Ben (local corporation), Megan (local college), Jessica (local school corporation), Abby (Matt's assistant), John (HCI state team member), Ann (HCI coach) and Ashley (HCI coach).

#### 4.1.2.1 Year One: January – May

Partnership B was also established in January and started with the HCI program's Foundation Phase as described in Chapter 3. The meeting minutes and other data sources showed that during this time, they met about twice per month and followed the HCI program curriculum, relied on the different activities and processes, as part of the HCI program, for accomplishing initial expected milestones, such as recruiting team members and establishing the structure. Just as in the case for Partnership A, the HCI program provided a lot of structure and guidance on the tasks during this time period, including assignment of two coaches. Matt, who was a critical team member shared with me, that the HCI program provided the process the team had used to recruit team members. It involved having team members identify individuals who represent certain sectors/ groups in the community;

A lot of the direction we got was from Purdue and Ball State. And, okay, this is what a perfect group looks like and let's go out and try to find people that fill this as best as we can. Really, with a lot of guidance from them, we started to say, "Okay, this person would be great," and started going down the list.



Figure 4.2: Breakdown of community group membership over the course of the project for partnership B. Number in each bubble represents the total amount of team members from that particular community group.

I developed Figure 4.3 by using several data sources to depict the team composition in the initial phases, which included members from economic development, industry, education, and local residents. In his interview, Matt recalled how the team composition was aligned to the objectives for this phase, which was to learn about their community from different sources.

The people that we had recruited were very important for the first phase and even the second phase because it was largely gathering input, gathering opinions, looking over data and trying to see, alright, what's this pointing at? In my opinion, we had a very representative group of the county and the region but I don't know if we did that perfectly. It was a very diverse group of people.

To achieve the goals set by the HCI program, the partnership team used the structure provided by the HCI curriculum to develop core and coordinating teams. The meeting minutes

indicated that five team members voluntarily organized themselves to be part of the core team based on their time commitment, interest, and value they brought to the team. The rest assumed the role and responsibilities of a coordinating team member. The meeting minutes showed that during this phase, the average number of team members attending the meetings was ten (10), and the team seemed to be engaged and energized, especially while achieving their goals of conducting a community forum and a survey. Several data sources showed that the partnership team managed to receive approximately 500 survey responses, and around 50 community members participating in their forum.

#### 4.1.2.2 Year One: May- December

The meeting minutes and session logs showed that the team did not have any meetings in the month of May and regrouped in June. The coach's meeting report indicated that after the community forum, Coach Ann had recognized some issues with role clarity in the team.

Every community is unique and we, as coaches, have recognized that we are going to need to revisit roles and responsibilities with our team at the beginning of session.

June meeting minutes indicated that the team spent the first half of the meeting discussing the role of the coach and the role of the team member, as well as ways to improve communication and recruit more members,

The team was establishing guidelines to include a housekeeping/discussion period of 30 minutes before each meeting moving forward, designated a communication coordinator (Matt), had a constructive debriefing of the survey and forum, and established a process to add 10 additional members as coordinating team members and future sub-committee members. Matt and Jessica will prepare new member binders for them to have before the next meeting. The team discussed how they would like to be communicated with and it

was determined email would work best with the subject line ‘Response Required’ and ‘HCI Information’ for those that don’t require a response.

The team assigned Matt to be the point person between the coordinating team and the coaches, changing the flow of information. Previous information flow went from coaches directly to the team. The new pattern had coaches communicating with Matt, who would be responsible to communicate with the rest of the team. It seemed that the change in information flow was made to make communication more effective, and as the point-person, it would be up to Matt to decide what needed to be shared with the rest of the team members. However, Matt and Emily, in their interviews shared that the change had created some clarity issues with regards to roles and responsibilities, and also created a power imbalance. Matt shared his confusion regarding expectations and his own role. He was not sure if they had truly discussed the entirety of his role with respect to that of the coach. Emily felt “out of the loop”, as they had not received much communication during this change.

The HCI curriculum indicated that the objective during this time period was for the partnership team to choose their building-block focus as described in Chapter 3. The meeting minutes showed there were nine (9) team members involved during the decision-making, and they used the information they had collected since the beginning of the process to understand the higher need for both leadership and economic development in their county; and they did not take long to decide on economy as the focus for their building block. When I asked about the participants about their interest regarding this focus, Matt emphasized his preference was economy building block, as it aligned with his parent organization. However, other participants shared that wanted to work on projects that would have involved and developed youth in their county. In order to assist with

the decision-making, the meeting minutes indicated that the coaches asked the team to identify the challenges and benefits of choosing economy as their building block,

What are the concerns/challenges if you select the economy track? The group responded: Will people engage? Are there political agendas? Split between North/South, how to bring people together, Neutralizing the power struggles – get people sitting down at the table, How do we make this a true step towards collaboration? What are some positives? Matt could spearhead as a leader, More people would get involved, Opportunity to get Chamber involved, Leverage grant funding.

Several data sources indicated that the discussion was influenced by Matt's passion for economic development and how his organizational position could be used lead this effort. After the economic development building block was chosen, the team had to decide on their capstone project. The coaches' meeting reports and meeting minutes documented how the coaches guided the team to conduct panel discussions as part of the upcoming meetings, gather more information about the needs for economic development in their county and encouraged them to recruit panelists as new team members.

During this time, the meeting minutes and coaches' updates to the HCI State Team showed that the team was only meeting once a month and was struggling with communication during the planning and organizing of the two panel discussions. The first panel meeting was unsuccessful, as reported by Coach Ashley and Coach Ann,

The HCI team failed to accomplish their homework after several meeting reminders prior to the session. No team member invited their panelists. Some of the team members had panelists decline the invitations but didn't communicate that the greater team and didn't

replace them with new invitations. No communication took place to the coaches either unfortunately therefore no panelists showed up for the session.

The meeting minutes documented that the team was able to organize the second panel discussion more effectively and seemed more engaged in the discussions. However, the coach was still concerned about the team's commitment, as she reported in her notes; "This group continues to struggle with communication, not reading emails, not doing homework."

The team's last meeting of that year was in November. Eight (8) team members narrowed down their focus on developing resources for entrepreneurs in their community,

How to build partnership with Chamber so it doesn't look like it is a competition? How to ask after meeting considering the information and data? Chamber should be 'Nucleus of small business community'.

The meeting minutes and interview transcripts indicated that Matt, having expertise in economic development, played a critical role to guide the team to develop goals for the capstone project. The team had taken almost eight months to develop goals for their capstone project, and was operating in low to medium levels of collaborative inertia. From a team composition perspective, the meeting minutes and blogs indicated that an assumption that they would get support and buy-in from the local Chamber of Commerce, who was currently not part of the partnership team.

#### 4.1.2.3 Year Two (January – December)

With the start of Year Two, the core team focused on building a partnership with the Chamber of Commerce to develop shared goals for the capstone project. In their March blog, they posted their initial project ideas:

- "Creating a supportive environment – more collaboration and less turfism."



- “Establishing an entrepreneur network – pathway for current and new employers to do business; no wrong door policy.”
- “Utilizing Ivy Tech, ISBDC, YEP and others for training and technical assistance.”
- “LEDO revolving loan program to create access to capital where appropriate.”
- “Support youth entrepreneurship efforts through YEP, FFA, WRCTE and PRIDE.”

However, the meeting minutes indicated that the team size was decreasing, and they were struggling to meet frequently. Emily shared that the lack of team meetings affected team morale, “After the community meeting, it just seems like there was larger gaps between the meetings. And then that's when we, in my opinion, we have started to lose momentum. And also in my opinion, lost some, lost some or are quickly losing some, I wouldn't say support, hope, maybe, from some key committee members.”

The team was unable to partner and recruit the relevant stakeholders that represented Main Street organizations and the Chamber of Commerce, as indicated by Coach Ashley’s notes,

The biggest struggle has always been getting the chamber to the table. The organization did have one person show up, but he said he came because "no one else would" He was semi-engaged but lacked enthusiasm for the group. The group will continue to invite and hope the chamber will come forth as a partner with communication and small business networking events and support”.

Coach Ann identified the need for, “Persistence for the group, they are small and need to be aware they need to invite more people to grow their volunteer base to generate support and awareness in the county.”

Christy and Patty recalled that when Matt and Jessica tried to build bridges with the Chamber of Commerce, they were rebuffed. Matt felt that not being able to get buy-in from key community stakeholders had made all team members discouraged and frustrated,

So I think one of the biggest frustrations was just the politics of it because the individuals involved weren't team players, with the chamber, I should say. We knew any kind of change was going to be probably looked upon dis-favorably. We were trying to be very delicate and we spend a lot of time talking about, and skirting around the idea of, how do we do this in a politically amicable way where we're not burning bridges, we're building them? It really is a challenge because a couple of the people that we knew we were going to be, in a sense, tough to go up against and they were going to fight us even for simple things.

The meeting minutes showed that the team was unable to develop and document shared goals. It seemed that one of the reasons for this was not receiving the support and buy-in from key community stakeholders, and not having the right team composition. The team seemed to be operating in high level of collaborative inertia during these months as there were not outputs being documented and the frequency of meetings had reduced. The meeting minutes and coach's reports indicated that many team members had disengaged and had stopped attending meetings. When I asked the participants about the reasons for these behaviors, several participants including Megan expressed their inability to contribute to the partnership,

I don't feel like I'm much help...I've tried to go to the meetings and help them brainstorm and like I said just bring experience to the table as far as doing a collaborative project. So I've had to miss several meetings and I've had to send an "I'm sorry I can't be there" because I just can't leave work and I don't know how many other people are still in the team, I don't

really know where they are in the process right now, cause like I said I haven't been there for the last three or four meetings.

As the team transitioned from low to medium collaborative inertia, the State HCI Team had to intervene by helping the team with brainstorming during development of their project goals. Matt recalls how the HCI State Team helped them think about what goals they can accomplish without the support of key community stakeholders,

We finally got to meet with John from the HCI State Team, and I think he understood the dynamics of the issue pretty well for being an outsider. He made the suggestion of, okay, we're talking about some of the needs, maybe the chamber's not fulfilling those, so what's something that the chamber should be doing that they're not?

After the intervention, the team was able to get clarity and develop some goals for the capstone project. This boosted their energy, sharing in blog post in April of Year Two their progress on the development of goals around their capstone project. Meeting minutes indicated that this energy did not last long, as, during that time, several team members had already disengaged and there were not enough members committed to this particular project. Email correspondences showed that team members were unable to find meeting times that worked for all member schedules. Meeting minutes further showed that when meetings did occur, attendance was low, and there were negligible outputs documented.

The lack of commitment from team members reflected in their meeting attendance, as only one or two members were actively attending the infrequent meetings. This had created discouragement among the few remaining team members like Megan, who expressed,

I think the biggest struggle is just getting everybody together, which seems silly but that seems to be ... but if you don't just ... I don't know. I think it's easy to get frustrated when

only one or two people can show up but we worked with what we had. So we had a couple meetings that there were only three of us there but we just continued, we just did our work anyway and moved forward because if we said "Oh well we're just not going to meet today, and we're going to put it off" then it gets put off. Then the project gets put off.

There was one meeting in May of Year Two, and as Megan shared, only three members attended. There were no meetings in the following month. In the interviews, several participants indicated that even though the goals were decided, team members were disengaged, as they did not know how to plan and implement these goals. I attended the only meeting in July, where four members attended, and observed how one of the coaches helped them brainstorm on getting one portion of the project started.

A smaller group met today with Ashley and worked on the business directory and event logistics. Please see attached for pictures detailing the work we did today. For the business list, we assigned portions of the 500 + businesses listed to the group that was here today to work through their part and make phone calls to each of the businesses after cleaning up their part of the list.

The team had decided to roll out the networking event for local businesses in the fall as their second project goal. However, there were so few team members attending the meetings that they had to postpone the event until they recruited new members, as indicated by the coach's report,

Concern over finding more members who are interested in this project, they feel some existing members may not have interest in continuing to help.

The team membership had dipped so low that Matt asked the State HCI Team if funding could be used to hire personnel in order to help them implement their project. This request was

rejected. Matt and Emily were the only two remaining team members, along with a representative from OCRA and coach Ashley, who attended the August meeting.

The coach's updates to the HCI state team showed that during the meetings, there was, again, confusion about roles and responsibilities.

Both coaches express concerns about the Vermillion community members who are participating in the program. They (partnership team) feel abandoned and not guided anymore by the HCI state team.

When I asked the coaches about the evolution of their roles throughout this partnership, both of them believed that the partnership team members should have been equipped to take ownership of their project by this time, and would not need too much assistance from the coaches. The following excerpt is from one of the coach's interviews that depicts how she views her role and the team's ability during this time frame.

I think the coach's role; I anticipated not being needed (at this stage of the process), although they asked for a coach (to be present) still at this one. I think we can always be there to help with this structure and how the meetings move along and stuff. I think going forward, that they should be able to take it and run with it.

The lack of meetings indicated that the team was struggling with communication and engagement. In September, they had their last meeting for Year Two, during which Matt, Emily, and Abby (Matt's assistant) continued to work on the business directory and writing the capstone proposal document.

Matt submitted their capstone proposal document to the State HCI Team in November of Year Two. The proposal was rejected with a lot of revisions. In a phone conference that I attended, the HCI state team asked Matt and the coaches for more details about how the team was going to

implement the project, as there were concerns about the number of remaining members engaged with the project.

In my interviews, several participants from different sectors felt that the project had become so focused on economic development, that the partnership was no longer considered a cross-sector partnership. They indicated that it had become Matt's project, and other members did not know how to contribute to it. The way the project was described by Emily was, "I think it's an economic development project that will serve the community." Participants shared with me that lack of progress, loss of interest in the topic and other priorities were some reasons why several team members had stopped attending meetings. During this time period, lack of meetings and lack of outputs indicated that the partnership was in a high state of collaborative inertia, which is described by Emily in her interview, "But right now, we're waiting. We're in a waiting stage. I feel like we've been in a waiting stage." Matt shared with me his concern about how they were going to make progress and get unstuck, "That's where I'm at now is just I'm not exactly sure how it's going to happen and who are the people that I'm going to be able to draw from to help me take it to the finish line." As I concluded data generation for Partnership B, it was in a state of high collaborative inertia and had not been able to progress significantly beyond the development of their project goals.

#### 4.2 Response to Research Questions

This study aimed to understand the mechanisms that 'make things happen' in cross-sector partnerships. I wanted to explore how the partnership's structure, processes and partnership members' behaviors influenced the partnership to achieve collaborative advantage. In the following sections and subsections, I have used the findings from both case studies and have

developed analysis that respond to each of the research questions for this dissertation. As I present my findings, I will refer to my observations across both partnerships.

#### 4.2.1 Research Question 1: How is the Partnership Structure Created and How is it Influencing the Implementation of Partnership Agendas?

The analysis of the various data sources, especially the HCI curriculum and the meeting minutes indicated that partnership structure in both cases was created under the influence of HCI program and co-created by partnership team members. Using the iterative thematic analysis process explained in Chapter 3, I found that partnership structure was created through its membership, its processes, its communication structure and goal structure. This is depicted in Figure 4.5. In the subsections below, I have described the emergence of these four themes and their corresponding themes through which partnerships' agendas were created and implemented.

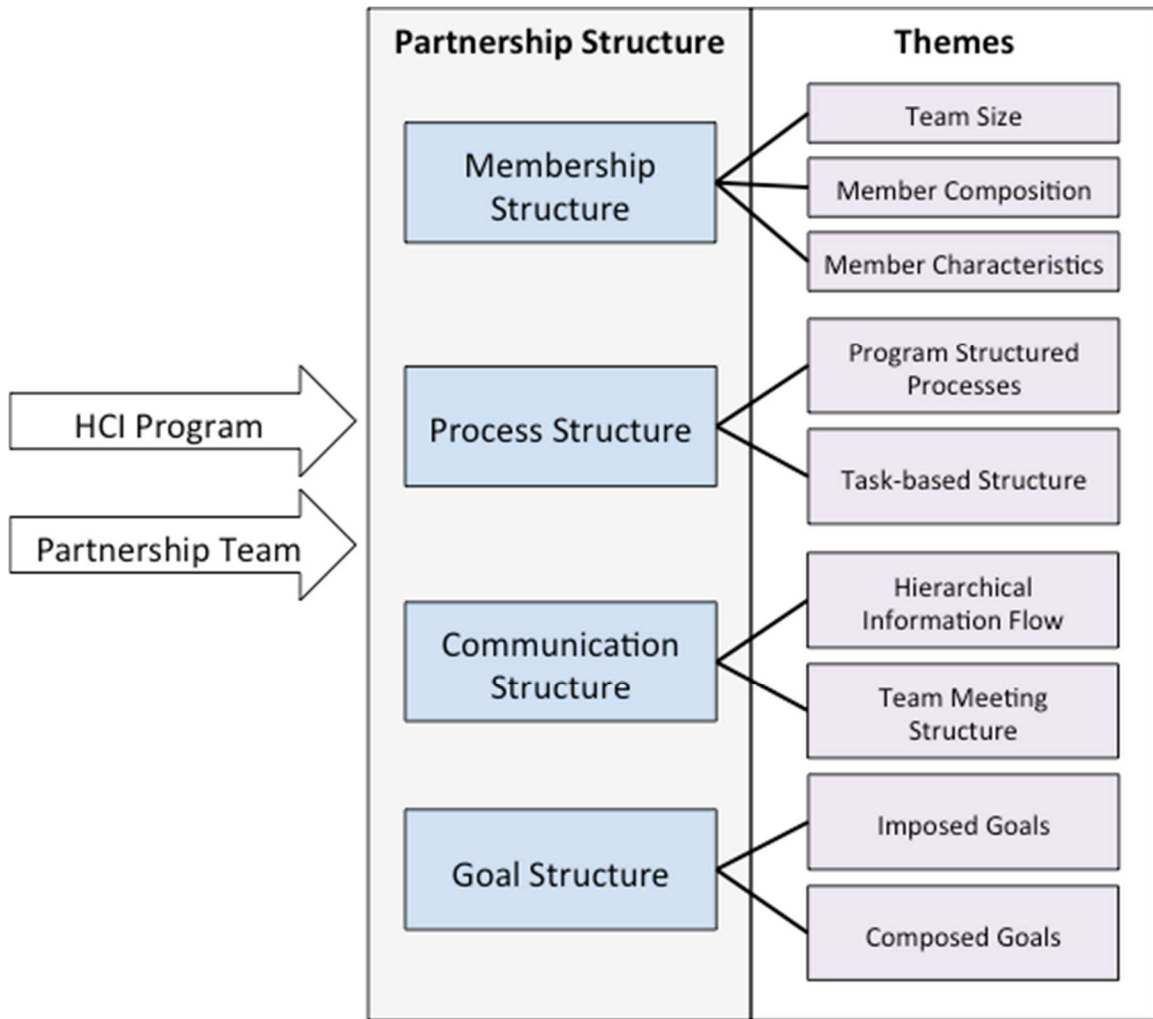


Figure 4.3: Partnership structural elements and emergent themes

The structural analysis process allowed me to categorically aggregate all the data that indicated elements of partnership structure. The first order codes that emerged included ‘number of members’, ‘diversity in team structure’, ‘member skills’, ‘member knowledge’, ‘member interest’, ‘roles and responsibilities’, ‘structure of interaction’, ‘program guidelines’, ‘program expectations’. I then further aggregated these codes to higher-level themes. For example, I found that any codes that were related to partnership members were aggregated to ‘membership structure’. Thus I found that partnership structure was created in four ways, through its membership, its processes, communication and goals. The way in which each of these structural elements



influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas are described in the following subsections.

#### 4.2.1.1 Membership Structure

The first way in which partnership structure was established was through its membership. Membership structure was the organizational structure developed through the partnership members or imposed by the HCI program. It influenced the creation and implementation of agendas through the evolution of the size of the partnership team, composition of the partnership team, and characteristics of the individual team members.

Membership structure influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas through:

- Team size:
  - Having too large or too small of a team affected decision-making and the capacity of the team to implement tasks.
- Team/membership composition:
  - Evolution of membership composition to match the needs of the phase/ goals of the phase
  - Presence or absence of “right” team members
  - Consistency in team composition
- Characteristics of partnership members:
  - Their interest in the partnership
  - The value-add in terms of their capacity and ability to contribute to the partnership

In the next subsections, I have explained how the evolution of the different elements of membership structure (team size, team composition and member characteristics) influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas over time.

#### 4.2.1.1.1 Imposed and Composed Membership Structure

The Hometown Collaboration Initiative Program had a substantial influence on the way membership structure was established and maintained. The HCI program imposed partnership structure by providing specific guidelines on how to select/recruit members, how many members to recruit, what kind of members to select. The meeting minutes and HCI curriculum indicated that this kind of imposed structure led to members using personal networks to identify individuals representing as many community organizations and groups as possible. In the following excerpt Coach Sara shared how she believed that such imposed structure for recruiting members in the initial establishment of the partnership seemed to have influenced the membership structure as the partnership matured.

She (Community Foundation Director) leveraged her network, because there was no open house call for people to join in. She reached out to some folks and got them in. It worked, but I will also admit that most of them have dropped out or have become unengaged. Not that they don't care, but it's time consuming. They have chose to step aside. I think that gets into the practice again of leveraging a network. Those folks are already involved in a lot of things, and not necessarily reaching out to those who are not as involved, but would have a lot of energy and passion to make things happen.

Also, in the following subsections I describe how the HCI program imposed the use of “representation” to develop membership composition. The time series analysis indicated that this membership structure allowed both the partnerships to achieve their goals for the first two phases,

but seemed to have disadvantaged them in the capstone project phase, as they struggled with not having “right” members that could contribute to implementing the capstone project. The data analysis indicated that the partnership teams did not ‘compose’ or develop any new elements of membership structure as they matured out of the initial phases. They seemed to have collectively reflected at times to identify the membership composition gaps. As explained in the case narrative, it seemed that Partnership B was unable to establish new team members and strengthen their membership structure, while Partnership A adjusted their goals instead of their membership to recreate and implement their partnership’s agendas. Thus it seemed that the presence and absence of imposed and composed structures during the evolution of the partnership impacted the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.

#### 4.2.1.1.2 Team Size

The number of members comprising the partnership team was a critical element of the membership structure. In Table 4.1, I provided an average of the number of members attending the meetings in both partnerships. Thus, if there were two meetings in a particular month, I conducted an average of the number of members attending in both the meetings and used that number in Table 4.1

Table 4.1: Average meeting attendance per month for each partnership

24 Months	Partnership A Team Size*	Partnership B Team Size*
January	unknown	unknown
February	14.5	11.5
March	10	12.5
April	13	7
May	18.5	0
June	12	7.5
July	5	10
August	11	13
September	14.5	8
October	7	8
November	unknown	12
December	unknown	0
January	6	3
February	3.5	0
March	5	13
April	6	7
May	4	2
June	6.5	0
July	5.5	4
August	5.5	2
September	5	1
October	5.25	0
November	6	0
December	5.5	0

From this table, it seemed that in both cases, the team size reduced from initial months to the last few months. The data analysis indicated that team size influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas in the following ways.

First, team size impacted the process of making decisions related to selecting their building blocks and selecting their shared goals for the capstone project. When there were a large number of team members involved, it seemed that decision-making slowed down, as it was a shared

decision-making process. Managing the decision-making process by keeping the discussion relevant to the decision was challenging as explained by Clara,

There were initially probably thirty people coming, or more... You know, I think that there were just a lot of people who were vocal and it seemed a lot of people wanted to talk and tell things. You know, may or may not be relevant.

It seemed that smaller team size allowed for faster decision-making. According to Clara, when the team took less time to make decisions, they could move the agenda forward at a quicker pace. She even attributed the success of their project to their smaller team size,

I feel like we are focused on what we're doing and that is definitely helping us and I cannot reiterate enough how I think that the size of our group really affected our ability to get things done." Andy also agreed that decision-making was easier with the smaller number of people and "it has helped speed things up.

Second, data analysis indicated that team size mattered when the shared project goals had to be implemented. Not having "enough" team members (based on their project goals), really slowed down the progress, and in case of Partnership B, made them almost non-functional. Coach Ann indicated that having only three-four team members was not "enough" for the implementation of agendas for such partnerships,

The biggest challenge is the manpower, the resources, because they don't have a number of members to help them carry the event and the directory. They're really limited on those three to four members, who are really helping move that across the finish line. They're really challenged on such a small number of the HCI team members helping them move the event and the capstone project through to completion and making it sustainable.

#### 4.2.1.1.3 Membership Composition

Just like, team size, membership or team composition is another theme that emerged, as I aggregated themes for membership structure. Data analysis indicated that the presence or absence of “right” members, influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas,

... What it seems to come down to is making sure you have *the right players* at the table and thinking about all of the aspects of the community and who do you need to have there to represent.

The idea of “right” members was tied to whether the team had diversity in their membership and whether those team members could be the connectors between the group that they represented and the partnership team, as depicted in Figures 4.1 and 4.2 in sections above. These figures represented the member composition at the initial establishment level. Membership composition influenced creation and implementation agendas in the following ways.

First, I found that, as team size changed over time, and there was a loss of team members, team composition also changed and was associated with that of the remaining team members. The partnership teams relied on guidance and structure provided in the curriculum, to intentionally establish the membership composition in the initial phases of the partnership, because the goal in the initial phases was gathering diverse input about the community. The data analysis indicated that the partnerships used “representation” as a criterion to establish membership composition. The following excerpt is from the interview with Matt in Partnership B, where he explained how initial membership composition was established and why it was important.

The people we had recruited were very important for the first phase and even the second phase because it was largely gathering input, gathering opinions, looking over data and trying to see, alright, what's this pointing at? In my opinion, we had a very representative

group of the county and the region...It was a very diverse group of people so I think that the people that we had involved were important in that decision making process.

Secondly, as the partnership's membership structure evolved over time, my data analysis indicated that membership composition needed to be aligned or adjusted to the goals of the phase they were in. For example, when Partnership B was in the process of developing their shared project goals with the focus of economic development, the meeting minutes and interviews described that, they recognized the need to have the local Chamber of Commerce at the table. In his interview, Matt shared the team's effort of having the 'right' community stakeholders on their team.

We invited the chamber of commerce again, as a reach out because we thought it was important with all the conversations we were having about trying to improve it, that we get them at the table and get their input.

The time series analysis also indicated that as the goals were narrowed down to focus on the economy building block, Partnership B saw a decrease in the team size. As explained in the case narratives, it seemed that some team members were not interested in economy or did not know how to contribute, affecting their engagement with the team. Coach Ann, in her interview, explained how she believed that there was a need to re-adjust the membership composition to recruit new members that were interested and could contribute to that goal,

The team should have been ramped up and rebuilt with the economy focus and it wasn't. Although those (initial) members were very valuable, other team members should have been replaced with the economy focus. The team members that had that place making focus, we could have kept them apprised of what was happening with the economy and then encouraged them to stay informed and then encouraged new team members to come on

that had that interest in economy and that did not happen. That added to the disconnect with members' motivation.

Third way in which team composition affected creation and implementation of partnership agendas was through consistency in team members. Initially, I found that this theme was contradictory to the previous theme of re-adjusting team composition. However, upon further analysis I found that a core set of team members automatically aligned to the changing goals, as they were part of the decision-making process. In Partnership A, this core set included about eight team members, while in Partnership B, the core set had dwindled down to three. This indicated that team size of three might not have been enough to function effectively and achieve goals specific to Partnership A; but team size of eight might have been enough to achieve the goals specific to Partnership B. It seemed that having consistency in membership composition positively affected mutual understanding, trust and stability as explained by Andy.

All of us, who are a part of it, have been a part of it all along, so we all understand how we got to this point. I think that has really helped us lately.

#### 4.2.1.1.4 Individual Member Characteristics

Another way in which membership structure influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas was through the 'value-add' that an individual member brought to the partnership. I called this theme 'member characteristics'. The data analysis indicated that membership structure comprised of members with different characteristics such as members' background, representation, diversity, skills, knowledge, time and interest influenced the creation and implementation of agendas in following ways.

First, a team member's interest and why they initially decided to participate in the partnership influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas. I found that, for



most of the team members that I interviewed, they were volunteering their time to this partnership because they were truly interested in bringing change to their community. There were some team members who were participating because they had some interest, but also because this was part of their job. The following excerpt from a meeting report shows why Partnership A's team members were interested in this opportunity.

Several people said that they often pass on these types of opportunities, but they chose to pursue this because they think it truly represents something that can be transformational for their communities.

As described in the case narratives above, it seemed that there were several reasons why several team members in both partnerships disengaged over time. In the following excerpt from her interview, Coach Ashley shared that as the partnership faced challenges, the only team members that remained engaged were those that were truly interested to see their partnership succeed.

Remaining members have stayed engaged because they want to see the success of the project, because it affects the success of Community B. If we can bring business, they truly want the success of the county. I think those that haven't been engaged, the economy portion and small business just isn't their passion, and you can't expect it to be everybody's passion. I mean, they all want success for the county, so I think it just depends on their level of passion and commitment towards the final capstone.

The second way in which partnership agendas were influenced through the characteristics of its members was through a member's "value-add" or 'what' they brought to the partnership. I found several subthemes that participants used to describe their or their team members' "value-add". These were their experience and expertise, their connections in the community, the resources

they could leverage, and the time they could commit. For example, Clara in Partnership A wanted to be the “voice” of youth in her community as she shared,

I was drawn to HCI, knowing how much our community needs improvement. Whatever I can do as a young person to give some insight seemed important also.

Jane brought her experience of running a previous community leadership program and her community connections to the team, while Jack and David brought their knowledge on planning and finance. While, in the Community B partnership team, the meeting minutes captured,

One of the most interesting perspectives was offered by Nate, employee of local business in town. Nate is the only youth representative on the team, a 23 year old recent graduate of Indiana State University. Nate stated if it wasn't for his Aunt and his Mother's business he wouldn't be in community. The team was very interested in how to capture more people in Nate's generation.

All the participants in their interviews believed that when all team members brought different characteristics and “value-add” to the partnership, there was potential to make things happen, as Emily explained.

Everybody brings something different to the table. Jessica is a principal in the county; so, she's bringing a completely different non-business perspective. Christy and Patty bring the small business aspect. Ben brings the corporation aspect, and the leadership training. We all bring something to the table, something unique. Matt is the total package. He brings the economic development; he has a lot of connections. The connections he doesn't, might not have, I have, because we work in two different worlds in the community. But I think in this sense, leadership is when we're all working together, because then, we are hitting on all cylinders. When everybody's not there, we're skipping, the engine is skipping out.

Several interviews and documents indicated that when team members felt that they could not bring any “value-add” to the partnership, either because of loss of interest, lack of expertise or experience, lack of resources or lack of time, it affected their actions, as in most cases, they stopped attending the meetings, which caused the team size and team composition to change, and seemed to have affected the creation and implementation of partnership agendas. Matt explained this sentiment,

At one point in time, we had 15 or 16 people that were involved with this and were actively coming... think what's happened since we've moved past into this final phase, a lot of them have asked that age old value question, what am I bringing to this? I think a few of them because they're maybe not in jobs that are specifically focused on the economy or something like that they don't necessarily feel like they need to be a part of it, if that makes sense? I know that personally because I've talked to many of them but also I've just picked that up that some of the people that were really involved were people that worked in the schools. One lady in particular is the principal, so really this final phase started when she was going back to school and I think she just had this crisis in a sense of, ‘I can't really devote the time that I was before, and especially because I don't really know what I can add at this point.’

#### 4.2.2 Process Structure

The second way in which partnership structure influenced creation and implementation of agendas was through the presence or absence of having “organization” or structure around processes. The process structure was either:

- Imposed by the HCI program as macro and micro level processes
- Composed by the partnership team as task-based structure

And process structure impacted the creation and implementation of agendas through increase/decrease of ambiguity because of clarity in process structure around expectations/roles/responsibilities.

The HCI curriculum and meeting minutes indicated that the HCI program imposed structure around processes both at the macro and micro processes level. In Figure 3.3, I have depicted both the macro and micro processes imposed by the HCI program, which have been discussed and described in Chapter 3 and the case narratives at the beginning of Chapter 4.

The data analysis indicated that the way in which the presence or absence of these imposed structure processes influenced the creation and implementation of agendas, is by affecting the level of ambiguity and clarity of expectations for the team members. In his interview, Andy shared how he believed that having structured processes reduced the level of ambiguity for the partnership teams.

It being a structured program that's already defined for the most part with Purdue makes it a lot easier for us to get our arms around it and pull it off, than trying to create something from scratch.

By analyzing the HCI curriculum and meeting minutes, it seemed that the program had provided very little process structure for the partnerships as they transitioned to the Building Blocks and Capstone Project phases. Several participants in their interviews shared that lack of “structured” processes created lack of clarity, confusion about expectations and goals. In the following excerpt, Matt explained how lack of clarity in expectations seemed to have affected his team members’ interest to stay engaged with the partnership.

I don't think that the state HCI team, communicated well enough to our team about what was expected. They did at first, but then I think the issue arose that this is a long process,

you're talking a year to 18 months. If there's not a consistent message and not a consistent communication and framework around, okay, we're moving from this phase to the next, what does that mean? What is expected? What's going to be involved? I don't think that, myself being the point person that I was always totally aware of what was going on.

The thematic analysis indicated that the second way in which process structure influenced creation and implementation of agendas was through the absence or presence of structure around task-based roles and responsibilities. Thus, I categorized all the data that described how partnerships established “organization” around the process of “organizing”, as task-based process structure.

The HCI curriculum and meeting minutes showed how during the Foundation phase, the HCI team imposed the task-based structure by directing the team members to self-organize into core and coordinating teams based on the expected responsibilities the members were willing to take. The task-based structure was developed through collective responsibilities, where a group of team members were assigned to tasks or through individual volunteer based responsibility for the task. Only the coach’s role was defined at the individual level. Task-based structure was also created in the form of committees for distributing the survey, planning the forum and communication. As Coach Sara explained in her interview, “if they (team members) were not on a committee, they didn't necessarily have a role beyond simply coming to the meeting, then providing input.”

The data analysis indicated that as the partnership matured, and HCI program provided less structure around tasks, the distinction between such specific core and coordinating team was blurred. The following excerpt from Lisa’s interview depicts this blurriness of specificity in task structure.

I would say that I am part of the core team now, because we've had so much things go on between now and then, I feel like the ones that are left, there's just so few of us, I'd say that we are probably all part of the core team now.

The meeting minutes and interviews also indicated the lack of formal roles as the partnerships moved to their Capstone phase, and it seemed that the teams discussed the upcoming tasks and needs during the meetings and team members volunteered to complete those tasks. In the following excerpt, Andy (Partnership A team member) described this organic and dynamic process of developing structure around tasks.

We, at our meetings, identify what needs to be done. Usually, someone is stepping up to raise his or her hands and say I can do this; I'll talk to whoever I need to talk to and get this accomplished. I can't really think of any instance lately where we've had to ask anybody to do anything. We have the participation and people willing to step up and take on their roles.

By analyzing the interviews and meeting minutes, I found themes that indicated that this kind of task structure impacted sharing of power, as tasks were distributed among all team members. The analysis also indicated that not having formal roles did create lack of clarity in terms of who was responsible for what. An example of this confusion occurred when I observed one of Partnership B's meetings, where one of the team members was expected to facilitate it but was not aware of that responsibility. He even shared this incident in his interview with me, "I was kind of surprised, I showed up to that last meeting, I didn't know that I was running it."

#### 4.2.3 Communication Structure

The third way in which partnership structure influenced creation and implementation of partnership agendas, was through structure and "organization" around communication. Communication structure included structure around:

- The flow of information among team members
- Collaborative spaces, in these cases, face-to-face meetings and;

And, communication structure impacted the creation and implementation of partnership agendas through the way in which the flow of information and meetings were structured.

The hierarchical structure of information flow among the HCI State team, the coaches, and the partnership teams determined who controlled the information and how information was shared across the team members, influencing how agendas were created and implemented. The HCI curriculum and meeting minutes indicated that the HCI program predetermined the flow of information especially in the Foundation phase. The HCI State team communicated with the coaches and the coaches communicated with the core and coordinating teams. Thus, I found that the coach took the role of the connector, as illustrated in Figure 4.7.

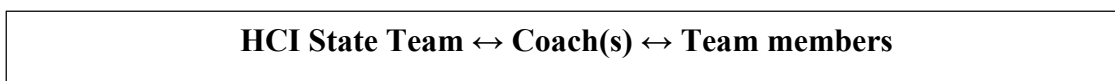


Figure 4.4: Role of the coach as a connector between the partnerships and HCI

The data analysis indicated that this structured and consistent flow kept all the team members updated and did not create hierarchies in the team. Matt, in her interview shares his perspective on this communication structure.

It just seemed like for the first six months to a year or so, we all had a pretty good idea of what was being expected of us and there was always a constant stream of communication.

The data showed that the coaches controlled this flow of information and during the analysis of meeting minutes, I found that Coach Sara in Partnership A and Coaches Ann and Ashley in Partnership B changed these originally established flows. In the Partnership A, Coach

Sara sent email updates (including meeting minutes, meeting agendas and meeting schedules) only to team members that were *actively* participating, as illustrated in Figure 4.8.

**HCI State Team ↔ Coach Sara ↔ Attending members of Partnership A**

Figure 4.5: Role of the coach as a connector in partnership A

David believed that because of this change in structure, many team members who “dropped off” were not kept in the loop and lost interest in coming back to the team.

Several data sources indicated that Partnership B had breakdowns in communication, and the coaches believed that team members were not responding to their emails. They tried to address this issue by developing structure in writing emails to the team, “labeling emails, please read, please respond, please follow-up”, and assigning Matt to be their communication lead, illustrated in Figure 4.9.

**HCI State Team ↔ Coach1 and Coach 2 ↔ Matt ↔ other partnership B team  
members**

Figure 4.6: Role of the coach and team lead as connectors in partnership A

It seemed that this change in structure had created hierarchy and inconsistency in the messaging. Data analysis indicated that power distribution among team members changed as key team members like Emily did not receive pertinent and timely information, even though the purpose of this change in structure was to view Matt as a ‘parser’ of information. Emily expressed



that this flow of information not only put a lot of responsibility on one person, but as an active team member, she felt excluded,

Right now, he's the go-between. And he's gotten a lot put on his plate... And those communications, as I understand, have gone to Matt. There's been a lot of communications I've been left off the list of. So, the communications aren't across the board.

The second way in which communication structure influenced creation and implementation of partnership agendas, was through the presence or lack of collaborative spaces where all collaborative activity occurred. In these two partnerships, I found that meetings were the only space through which their agendas were created and implemented. Thus, lack of meetings indicated lack of progress and transition to higher levels of collaborative inertia. In Table 4.2, I have presented the number of meetings that Partnerships A and B have had each month in twenty-four months, to connect the narratives presented above to the months the frequency of meetings reduced.

Table 4.2: Number of meetings per month for each partnership

24 Months	Number of Meetings for Partnership A	Number of Meetings for Partnership B
January	2	1
February	2	2
March	1 + committee meet	2
April	2	2
May	2	0
June	1	2
July	1	1
August	2	1
September	2	1
October	1	2
November	1	1
December	1	0
January	2	1
February	2	0
March	1	1
April	3	1
May	1	1
June	2	0
July	2	1
August	2	1
September	3	1
October	4	0
November	1	0
December	2	0

The analysis indicated that when meetings did not occur, because they were cancelled or never scheduled, the partnership's activity halted. In the Foundation phase, the meeting minutes indicated that the HCI program imposed structure on the rate and regularity of meetings. These meetings had a planned agenda mandated by the HCI program curriculum, and as Emily recalled,

the coaches in both partnership teams worked with the team members to schedule the meetings in advance.

First meeting in early 2016, went through our calendars and marked on our calendars through the entire year "Every two weeks, HCI," and where. We set all that up.

This kind of meeting structure seemed to have provided team members clarity in what to expect, and it seemed to have affected their motivation to attend meetings. This structure seemed to have reduced as the partnership teams transitioned to the Building Blocks and Capstone Project phases. The meeting minutes showed that Partnership A continued to follow the meeting structure established in the Foundation phase by relying on Coach Sara. But, Partnership B struggled with maintaining this meeting structure. Coach Ann explained,

There was a lot of frequency in the foundation phase, a little less frequency in the building block phase, and then no frequency in the capstone phase.

The meeting minutes and my observation notes indicated that the lack of meetings affected the partnership team's ability to operate since partnership work was only conducted during meetings. In interviews, several participants shared that not having meetings, also affected team members' interest to stay engaged. Emily from Community B partnership team shared the need for a timeline to provide some structure. She expressed her discouragement in a lack of a timeline, and sticking to the timeline.

We had a timeline, but it hasn't been stuck to. And then when meetings were rescheduled, they said, 'No, we're not meeting this week,' instead of sticking to the meeting times that we already had on our calendars, they were scheduled at other times. Well, then folks couldn't make it. We lost some folks that way, because now I had this on my calendar, this other time doesn't work for me, and they've just quit coming completely."

#### 4.2.4 Goal Structure

The fourth way in which partnership structure influenced creation and implementation of agendas was through the absence or presence of “structure” around goals. The data analysis indicated that goal structure was:

- Imposed by HCI program through selection of pre-determined ‘building blocks’
- Composed ‘shared’ goals around capstone project by partnership team members

The first way in which creation and implementation of partnership agendas was influenced was through the imposed goals by the HCI program at the macro level, which included selection of economy, leadership or place making ‘building block’ as their over-arching goal; and at micro-levels, where goals at the meeting level and milestones at the phase level were prescribed. The data indicated that in the case of Partnership B, their ‘economic’ agenda was aligned with the HCI program’s prescription; however, in the case of Partnership A, the team struggled to find alignment to choose a building block as their initial application idea did not align with the focus imposed by the HCI program.

The second way I found through which goal structure influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas was, the way the partnership team ‘composed’ or developed shared goals. Both partnership teams developed very ambitious goals initially, which required large number of resources, team members and buy-in from local leaders. These ambitious goals overwhelmed team members. Both partnerships had to scale down their shared project goals to ones that were “doable”. Partnership A aligned their adjusted goals to their membership structure. These membership-aligned shared goals allowed for development of task-based structure and influenced the implementation of partnership agendas.

#### 4.3 Research Question 2: How Are the Communication Processes Influencing the Creation and Implementation of Partnership Agendas?

The data analysis indicated that partnership agendas were created by a recurring pattern of instructional learning, team discussion and decision-making processes; and partnership agendas were implemented by a recurring pattern of team discussion after decision-making, action planning and action taking processes by team members. These themes are presented in Figure 4.11.

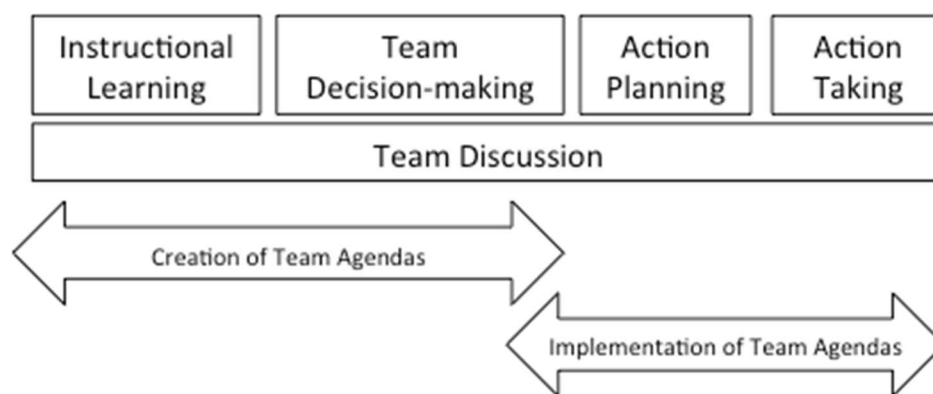


Figure 4.7: Pictorial representation of the five communication processes

The meeting minutes and HCI curriculum indicated that instructional learning processes were specific to the Foundation phase of the HCI program, and through these processes, the team members gathered and learned information about their community. It was through a combination of team discussion and team decision-making processes; partnership agenda was created. It was through action planning and action taking processes, that the partnership agenda was implemented. The analysis of participant interviews indicated that the creation and implementation of agendas was impacted greatly by the decision-making process. The themes that emerged as issues were: team members were in an analysis-paralysis mode and could not make a decision; this analysis-paralysis was a consequence of having too much input and a lengthy team discussion process; the decision-making process was too abstract and ambiguous as the team members did not fully

understand what was expected; and the decision-making process was very time consuming. Thus, the longer it took for teams to make a decision; it seemed to have created frustration and process fatigue among team members.

#### 4.3.1 Five Communication Processes

The analyses of meeting minutes and coach's reports for 41 meetings in Partnership A and for 20 meetings in Partnership B resulted in the emergence of themes around five main communication processes, which influenced creation and implementation of agendas. I also analyzed interview texts and observational field notes to support the patterns and relationships that emerged among these five processes. The following subsection describes each of these processes as related to the two case studies.

##### 4.3.1.1 Instructional Learning Processes

As part of the HCI program, both partnership teams had a majority of meetings in the Foundation and Building Block phases, in which experts from the HCI State team presented on various topics. The content and structure of these meetings where instructional learning occurred has been described in RQ 1 section. I found that instructional learning processes were formal in nature, and included panel discussions that were organized as part of the Building Blocks phase. I observed that these communication processes were one-directional in nature, where the topic presenters or coaches presented the information to the partnership teams in a classroom-learning environment, and relied on Microsoft PowerPoint slides as a medium. Through the instructional learning communication processes, the team learned about the HCI processes, the structure of the program, expectations with respect to goals, factual data about their community, and expertise from panelists.

#### 4.3.1.2 Team Discussion Processes

I observed that instructional learning processes were usually followed by ‘engaging’ discussion among the team members, where they deliberated on topics presented. Team discussion processes also occurred when the team members were brainstorming ideas and alternatives to make a decision, discussing next steps and sharing updates. These communication processes occurred in every team meeting among team members, coaches, and any HCI State team member that was present for the meeting.

#### 4.3.1.3 Team Decision-Making Processes

I observed that the communication process of decision-making always started with discussion among team members, but ended with the team collectively making a decision. However, my findings indicated that there were many meetings in which discussion occurred, but no decision was made. The decision-making process in a meeting relied on democratic and inclusive principles and involved using all the information the team had to make the decision and resulted in either a consensus or majority of votes from the team members. The participants, in their interviews, validated this when they described the decision-making processes for selecting a building block or capstone project.

#### 4.3.1.4 Action Planning

Team members used an action planning communication process to operationalize the decision made by understanding what the next tasks were and how they could be achieved. This process involved discussion and organization of tasks at hand among all the team members present at the meetings. This dynamic process of task-management and roles and responsibilities distribution is explained in detail in RQ3 section.

#### 4.3.1.5 Action Taking

The communication process of taking action involved distributing the tasks among team members. This involved assignment or electing a team member; or team member volunteering to take responsibility for a task based on their capacity and time commitment, and then taking action to complete that task. This process also included team members sharing updates on the progress of their tasks.

#### 4.3.2 Relationship between Communication Processes and Partnership Agendas

The meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports indicated that for both the partnerships, communication primarily occurred through their face-to-face team meetings. These meetings became critical spaces, which served as a conduit for all of the team's collaborative activity that created and implemented the partnership agendas. Emails and "doodle polls" were sometimes used for scheduling of these meetings, if the scheduling for future meetings was not done during a meeting. Thus, meetings were the preferred space of communication. In order to understand the type of communication processes that occurred in the partnership, I analyzed data sources that described collaborative activity during these meetings. A document like a meeting minute depicted a picture of when the meeting occurred, which team members were present, what kind of communication processes occurred during that meeting, what kind of decisions were made and what kind of milestones were achieved. A coach's meeting report presented coach's observation notes on the energy levels in the meeting, any challenges the team was facing. I have presented this meeting-by-meeting analysis in Figure 4.12 below to further depict and explain the patterns that emerged around these five communication processes and their influence on creation and implementation of partnership agendas.



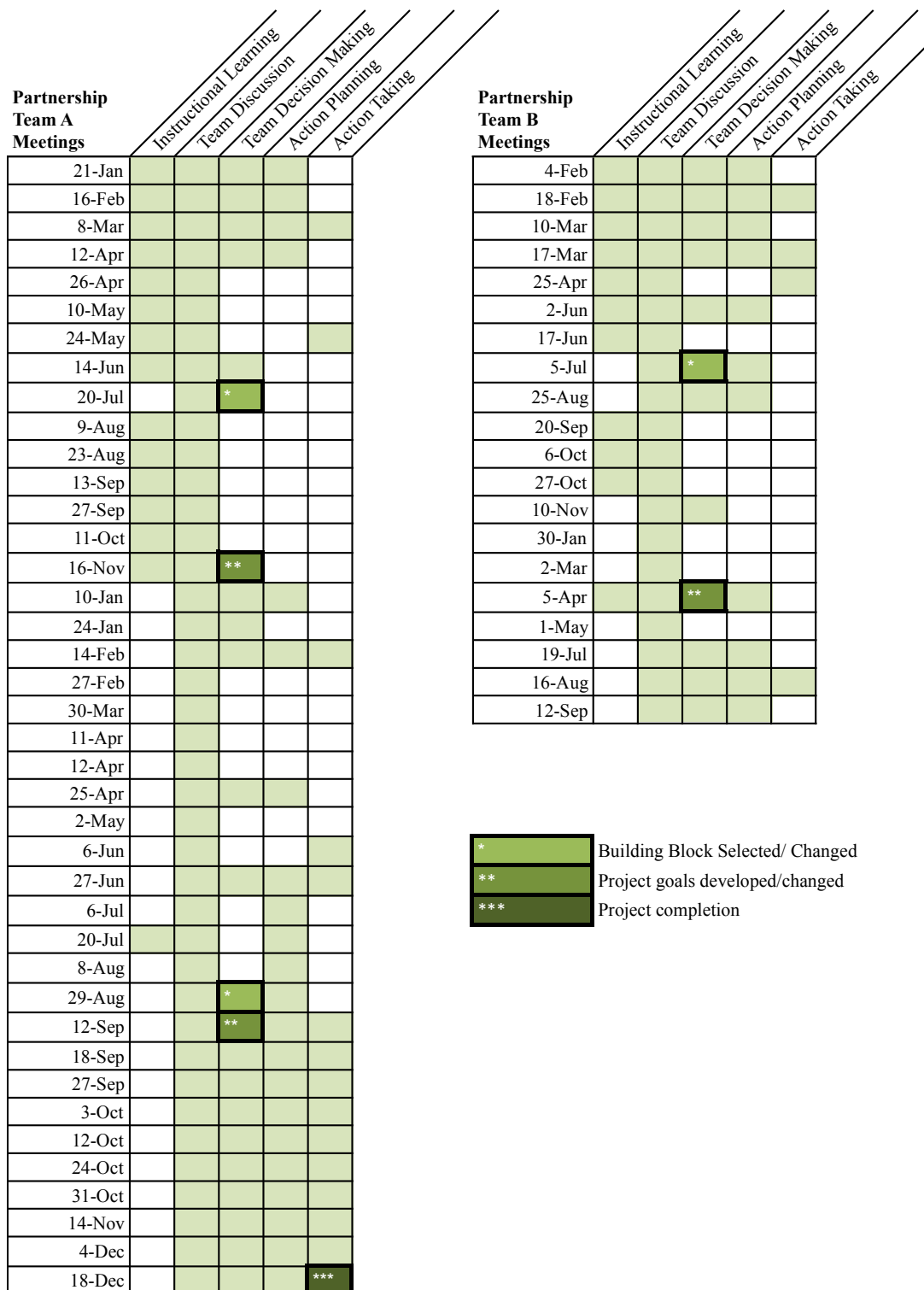


Figure 4.8: Meeting-by-meeting occurrence of communication processes for the partnerships

As seen in Figure 4.12, in both cases, some meetings seemed to have used only a couple of these communication processes, while in other meetings, all five processes were used. The analysis showed that both partnership teams used a similar combination of processes in the initial meetings. As described in the case narratives in the beginning of this chapter, the teams worked toward the HCI program expected agendas, such as developing and distributing the community survey and organizing a community forum, decisions were made, actions were planned, and actions were taken, indicating the five types of communication processes identified. The stage of choosing a building block, then developing shared project goals, involved instructional learning process, and immense team discussion for both partnerships. However, the instructional learning processes ended after the State HCI team completed their “educational” sessions on the three building blocks. During this time frame, the patterns of the communication processes changed across both the cases.

In Partnership A, as described in the case narratives, progress was slow after choosing the economy building block. They made decisions about their capstone project, however, as seen in Figure 4.12, even though action planning was occurring, there was less activity around action taking. Once, they changed their building block focus to leadership and developed shared goals around establishing a community leadership program, they did not rely on instructional learning, and used team discussion, team decision making, action planning and action taking processes in all their remaining meetings.

After choosing economy as their building block, Partnership B’s team meetings revolved around team discussion and a little bit of decision-making around the capstone project. Nine months after selecting economy as their building block, they were able to document their capstone project goals. However, after these goals were decided, as described in the case narratives, the

team meetings either got cancelled or never got scheduled for a couple of months. As seen in Figure 4.12, the team went several weeks and sometimes months without having meetings. When they did have their meetings, the communication processes were focused around team discussion. They made some progress on one of their goals in August-September of year two, but had no more meetings for the remainder of the year. This inactivity really affected the implementation of their partnership agendas, especially since no other collaborative spaces other than meetings were used.

The analysis in Figure 4.12 above indicated some patterns on how the presence or absence of these five processes impacted the creation and implementation of agendas.

- First, I found that both teams received instructional learning at the beginning, but not throughout, because it was not required at all stages of creating and implementing agendas, but rather unique to community development programs like Hometown Collaboration Initiative (HCI), which focus on capacity building within such cross-sector partnerships.
- Second, Partnership A had a lot more meetings; and even if only team discussion occurred in some meetings, the team members' persistence around lengthy decision-making process was apparent in seeing how frequently they met, thus affecting how they created and implemented their partnership agendas.
- Third, (especially in the case of Partnership B) with no other collaborative spaces for communication processes to occur, a dearth of meetings resulted in a dearth of outcomes, and the longer the time between meetings, seemed to have magnified the lack of activity, which negatively impacted the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.
- Fourth, the analysis in Figure 4.12 showed that Partnership A used team discussion, decision-making, action planning and action taking processes together in their meetings consistently for a period of time (September – December of Year 2). This analysis and the

case narrative analysis indicated that the use of all four processes in such recurring patterns seemed to have positively influenced the creation and implementation of Partnership A's agendas.

#### 4.4 Research Question 3: How Are the Key Roles and Responsibilities in the Partnership Influencing the Creation and Implementation of the Agendas?

To answer this research question, I performed thematic structural analysis on several data sources such as the HCI program curriculum documents, the application forms from both communities, meeting minutes, coach's meeting reports, researcher's field notes, and all interview transcripts. This thematic analysis indicated that:

- Formal and informal roles existed in both partnerships
- Responsibilities were "individualistic" in nature (created for a single team member) or collective (for a sub-team or committee) in nature
- Roles and responsibilities were dynamic in nature and changed from meeting to meeting, as they were task dependent.

The thematic analysis indicated that the creation and implementation of partnership agendas were influenced by the manner in which these key roles and responsibilities evolved:

- An important formal role was that of the coach. It seemed that the way the coaches oriented themselves as the partnerships matured, impacted their levels of involvement. I found that the partnership team that had higher involvement from their coach was able to create and implement their partnership agendas; and the partnership team in which coaches oriented themselves as external entities, struggled with creation and implementation of their agendas.

- It seemed that three informal roles emerged in both cases. The way in which these three roles of ‘input-givers’, ‘doers’, and ‘leaders’ evolved with respect to the ability and willingness of team members to switch among these roles to match the task-based needs of the partnership, influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.
- It seemed that having an open, organic and dynamic division of responsibilities (task-based) created shared power distribution among team members, and generated tension if there was lack of accountability and lack of follow-through. Also, it seemed that this kind of dynamic and organic evolution of responsibilities could only be supported if the team had enough members to divide the responsibilities. Thus, the ways in which roles and responsibilities evolved influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.

I have further explained these findings in the subsection below using the data from the two cases.

#### 4.4.1 Formal and Informal Roles

The thematic structural analysis on several data sources such as the HCI program curriculum documents, the application forms from both communities, meeting minutes, coach’s meeting reports, researcher’s field notes, and all interview transcripts indicated that some key roles were formally assigned and three informal roles seemed to emerge in both cases. Formally defined roles included the coach’s role, and the role of State HCI team members, who presented on various topics in the meetings during the Foundation and Building Blocks phases. The partnership team members had formal communications regarding these roles, as they were documented in the HCI program curriculum. The data indicated that informal roles were those that were not defined or assigned to specific team members, but rather, emergent in nature. The team members in both

partnerships identified themselves or others to take on three main informal roles: input giver, doer and leader as shown in Figure 4.11.



Figure 4.9: Formal and informal role types in the partnerships

#### 4.4.1.1 Impact of Coach's Role on Creation and Implementation of Agendas:

The HCI curriculum, meeting minutes and coach's updates showed that the coach's role was a formal position in which the individual who acted as coach was pre-assigned to the partnership team by the HCI program and State HCI team. The coach was a member of the State HCI team and trained to present the HCI curriculum and facilitate partnership team's meetings. The coach was the connector between the State HCI team and the partnership team in the community, acting as both a traditional coach and a liaison with the overarching program. The coach's role and responsibilities were documented in the HCI curriculum, as shown in Figure 4.12.



Figure 4.10: Responsibilities for an HCI coach [Source: HCI program documents]

Through the data analysis, I found that the coaches in both partnership teams played one of the most critical roles in the creation and implementation of partnership agendas as they connected the expectations of the HCI state team and the reality of the partnership teams in the communities.

The data analysis indicated that the way in which a coach viewed their role and responsibilities, influenced the creation and implementation of agendas; and it seemed that the case (Partnership A) in which coach viewed their role to be part of the team, was able to achieve their agendas. This finding is further explained in the following paragraphs.

I found that there were the way coaches from both Partnership A and B viewed their role was different. In Partnership A, Coach Sara believed that it was her job to not only provide guidance, but also help the team with the task management. She believed that the team members did not have the experience of skill-set to do these activities, and she needed to help build that capacity by being heavily involved,

For this group, I found that they really needed guidance, like big-time. It was very difficult to just simply hand off and just say okay, we are going to launch a survey. Your committee needs to figure out where the survey can be located, what materials do we need? They had a really hard time with that, and I don't know if it's because they've never done it before or they weren't quite sure what they were asking of them. It got to the point where we would initiate the phone calls, the conference calls, sending out the email saying okay, where are we with this? *I found with this group that they really needed that coaching to get things done.*

As the partnerships transitioned from one program phase to another, the coach's role continued to exist, but I found that Coach Sara's level of involvement was different than that of the coaches in Partnership B; because of the difference in the way she perceived her own role.

Coach Sara in Partnership A continued to stay highly involved and continued her role as a meeting scheduler and meeting facilitator. When I conducted observations of their meetings, I noted that she would send out meeting agendas prior to the meeting, she took meeting notes; she initiated the meetings and shared the decisions made in the previous meeting and asked for updates on any tasks that were distributed to team members. I observed in one meeting, where she used her connections in the community to get resources on developing a logo for their capstone project. She always concluded the meeting by reiterating any decisions made in the meeting and made sure that all team members had a mutual understanding; and also reiterated any tasks and action items that were brought up and asked for team members to distribute amongst them. When I asked her about her role in the capstone project phase, she said that, "I still see myself being involved, but I may actually kind of shed the coach role and be more of a team member role." She planned to stay involved in that capacity till the end of partnership A's capstone project,

Then in terms of when would I hold back a little bit? I think once we get one year of the community leadership program end, I think that's when I'll start pulling back a little bit, because they know how it operates.

In contrast, Partnership B Coach Ann viewed herself as a neutral facilitator and support. She did not view her role to be one of a hand-holder, or one that influences decisions or gets involved in the task management activities to create and implement partnership agendas. She did not view the role of the coach to be part of the team, and partake in the shared, collective outcomes,



Well, it's not my job to convince them. That's not my role. I'm just the facilitator and I'm a coach so I'm unbiased. Coaches just support the group. The group is actually responsible for achieving their own goals. We just help support them. If anything, we help them keep their eye on the target but the group is actually accountable for their own achievements.

In addition, the data analysis indicated that the level of involvement from the coach influenced the creation and implementation of agendas; and it seemed that the case (Partnership A) in which coach was very involved with the team, was able to achieve their agendas. This finding is further explained in the following paragraphs.

The data analysis of meeting minutes and interviews indicated that one coach was more involved in Partnership B's team operations, while the other coach played an advisory or consultant role. However, they both seemed to view themselves to be an "outsider" instead of a "team member". From analyzing their interviews, it seemed that the perception of their own role for both coaches from Partnership B was influenced by the expectations set by the State HCI team, who seemed to have communicated that the HCI program was a capacity building community development program. Thus, they believed that they had built capacity in the team in the Foundation and Building Blocks phase and should thus not heavily rely on the coach in the capstone project phase.

When I was engaged in research with Partnership B, I observed that only one coach was attending the meetings. In one meeting, I observed confusion among team members as the present coach waited for a team member to initiate and facilitate the meeting. I noted that when team members did not remember what they had discussed in the previous meetings, the coach pulled out her computer and found some meeting notes that she had taken, and we all found that the discussion that was occurring had already happened in the previous meeting. When the meeting

was concluding, the coach asked the team if they still needed her to be there, and I saw that created confusion and panic, as team members quickly responded with a yes. This observation was supported when Coach Ashley shared during the interview that she hoped that the team members would take ownership of their project,

It's just how much support they've needed has varied along the way and compared to other HCI community partnerships, what I understand, and I think this team has needed a lot of support. Which isn't always a bad thing. It's just time-consuming, where some of the other teams, I think, take on the roles more successfully. I think the coach's role, I anticipate not being needed, although I threw that out there (during the meeting) and they asked for a coach still at this meeting. I think we can always be there to help with this structure and how the meetings move along and stuff. I think going forward, that they'll be able to take it and run with it.

Thus, it seemed that the way the coaches oriented themselves as the partnerships matured, impacted their levels of involvement. I found that the partnership team that had higher involvement from their coach was able to create and implement their partnership agendas; and the partnership team in which coaches oriented themselves as external entities, struggled with creation and implementation of their agendas.

#### 4.4.1.2 Informal Emergent Roles

As explained above, three main informal roles seemed to have emerged in both the cases after conducting thematic analysis on several data sources. The manner, in which these three roles emerged and evolved over time to match the task specific needs, seemed to have an impact on the creation and implementation of agendas. The data indicated that these informal roles seemed dependent on the phase of the HCI program and the processes being used in the team meetings. In

the following subsections, I have defined and described these informal, emergent roles by showing case-specific data. I have also discussed some themes that emerged around the evolution of these roles and certain challenges associated with these roles.

#### 4.4.1.2.1 'Input-givers'

The thematic analysis of several data sources indicated that team members that engaged in the informal 'input-giver' role were perceived (by themselves or other team members) as individuals with expertise or experience on a topic, and were willing to share their opinions with the team. Team members took the 'input-giver' role when they were brainstorming ideas, sharing perspectives and providing input on certain options for decision making. For example, Brooke and Dana from Partnership B were 'input-givers' on issues concerning local businesses in the community, "We were the only business on the group. They just wanted our input. They kind of included us in everything in every meeting."

It seemed that the 'input-giver' role influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas because:

- Many team members felt empowered that their input was listened to and valued as the HCI program and coaches had cultivated an environment where team members felt safe to take the role of 'input-giver' and were encouraged to be 'input-givers', especially during the Foundation and Building Blocks phases.
- Several team members that I interviewed shared that they felt engaged when they provided input and even when they listened to other team member share their experiences in the community. By being 'input-givers' and sharing their stories, team members felt stronger connection collectively to the overall goals of the partnership.

#### 4.4.1.2.2 Doers

The thematic analysis of several data sources indicated that the ‘doers’ were individuals who needed assignment of specific tasks and would then go accomplish said tasks. Lynn, from Partnership B, viewed herself as a doer, and shared how she needed direction on her tasks, “I just love to have them give me a project, and I just go with it...I’m more of a worker bee, per se...I like being given direction, and then making sure that that’s followed through with.”

The role of the ‘doers’ seemed to have emerged after decisions were made and the processes of action planning and action taking were used. It seemed that the ‘doer’ role influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas because:

- Most ‘doers’ volunteered for task assignments when they had the capacity in terms of ability and willingness to accomplish the task. In other cases, some team members were assigned a task (when no one volunteered) and took the role of the ‘doer’.
- When team members willingly volunteered to be a ‘doer’, it seemed that they had clarity about the task and knew how to execute it, or had the interest and/or resources such as connections in the community, to execute it. I observed that when there was ambiguity around tasks, or the task was too ambitious, team members were hesitant to be a ‘doer’. In the following excerpt, Andy explained his perspective on how the ‘doer’ role emerged and how this role seemed to have impacted the creation and implementation of Partnership A’s agendas.

It happened organically, the core group of people that we had in the fall, from the beginning, I guess you could say are go-getters in the community, and really have a lot of connections. We, at our meetings, identify what needs to be done. Usually, someone is stepping up to raise his or her hand and say I can do this; I’ll talk to

whoever I need to talk to and get this accomplished. I can't really think of any instance lately where we've had to ask anybody to do anything. We have the participation and people willing to step up and take on their roles.

- Some team members had the 'doer' personality, where they wanted and needed to see action and progress to stay engaged. They seemed to get frustrated when the team took too long to make a decision, as they wanted to "do" the tasks. As Emily noted, a majority of the Partnership B team were also 'doers' in addition to being 'input-givers' and were struggling with direction,

Our group is doers. That's where they're really struggling with the all talk meetings.

What are we doing? They want to see the action.

#### 4.4.1.2.3 Leaders

The thematic analysis of several data sources indicated that team members perceived the role of a 'leader' to be a visionary; someone who could provide direction to the team, especially while making decisions about shared goals. It was during decision making, the role of 'leaders' emerged as some team members used their 'input-giver' role to provide direction to the team. It seemed that the role of a 'leader' impacted the creation and implementation of partnership agendas because:

- The 'leader' provided vision and motivation
- The 'leader' had the ability and willingness to switch between being a 'leader' to 'input-giver' and 'doer'

This was found in Partnership A, when it was going through the process of developing their capstone project goals, Don was perceived as their farsighted leader. He provided the vision for their initial capstone project and developed excitement in the team members about the impact of

their capstone project. He encouraged the team members to stay engaged. In the team's meeting minutes, Don's leadership was recorded,

Don of the core team suggested the group not look at the capstone as the end, though, and focus instead on it being the first in a repeating cycle of projects.

However, when Don was no longer part of the team, as discussed in the case narrative for Partnership A, the "loss of their leader" really affected the team's morale and motivation to stay engaged. It was the time when the team was feeling "lost"; other 'leaders' emerged to re-direct their vision. Other team members, including Andy, perceived Jane and Jack as the 'leaders' when the team was struggling and needed to change the shared project goals. He shared, "I think the two people who've really stepped up the most to lead the group are Jane, and Jack, who has been a real driving force."

I found that when I asked all the team members in the interviews about why Jane and Jack emerged as 'leaders' and what they did that was 'leader-like'; I got similar responses. Both Jane and Jack were assertive and shared honest perspectives. This not only jump-started the discussion, but by being honest, they forced the team to face their challenges and approach their problems realistically. They both had been part of the membership since the start of the partnership, and team members acknowledged their commitment to the partnership. They also had large number of connections in the community and used them as resources for the partnership. Lastly, I found that they were able and willing to transition between being 'input-giver', 'leader' and 'doer' based on what the partnership needed.

In Partnership B, Matt was viewed as the partnership's 'leader'. He also was able and willing to switch his role from 'input-giver', 'doer' and 'leader'. However, the difference between his 'leader' role and the leader roles in Partnership A was that he was viewed as THE LEADER

from the establishment of the partnership. Thus in this context, other team members did not get the chance to emerge as leaders and share the leadership of motivating, encouraging and providing the vision for the partnership. The coaches and the team members allowed Matt to influence the decision-making and goal developing process. This informal power dynamics and hierarchy became formal when the team members and coaches assigned him the role of the lead communicator, as explained in RQ1. This informal but formal role created confusion in role expectations, which is captured in my individual interviews with the coach and Matt,

Coach Ann believed that Matt “needed to identify what he expects of his team members to make this business directory and this capstone project effective and sustainable. Those are things he's going to need to be able to communicate to his team members and to his volunteers.”

Matt, felt these responsibilities were not explicitly shared with him or the team.

“We would go periods of a couple months where we wouldn't hear from anyone (coaches). If that was supposed to be a period where I was supposed to be filling in the gaps, I didn't know that... I don't remember specifically them saying, "Okay, at some point you're going to start running the meetings, you're going to start communicating, be the sole communicator to the group." I don't remember that. I've been kind of surprised, I showed up to that last meeting, I didn't know that I was running it. I don't remember there ever being that conversation that, "Okay, once we decide we're going to pick a building block, it's on you guys," and that's what it feels like, I think. That's what I've heard from most of the group, it just feels like this got dumped on us.”

#### 4.4.2 Relationships Among 'Input-giver', 'Doer' and 'Leader' roles

Through the thematic analysis, I found that the way in which the three roles of 'input-givers', 'doers', and 'leaders' emerged; and evolved with respects to the ability and willingness of team members to switch among these roles; to match the task-based needs of the partnership, influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.

As the partnership teams matured over time, there were some roles that remained consistent, while other roles evolved. The manner in which the roles and responsibilities evolved in both the cases influenced the creation and implementation of their agendas. Team members took the 'input-giver' role when they were brainstorming ideas, sharing perspectives and providing input on certain options for decision making. It was during decision making, the role of 'leaders' emerged as some team members used their 'input-giver' role to provide direction to the team. The role of the 'doers' emerged after decisions were made and the processes of action planning and action taking were used. Miles explained how the action planning in partnership A was dynamic in nature and the 'doers' volunteered to take action,

It happened organically, the core group of people that we had in the fall, from the beginning, I guess you could say are go-getters in the community, and really have a lot of connections. We, at our meetings, identify what needs to be done. Usually, someone is stepping up to raise his or her hand and say I can do this; I'll talk to whoever I need to talk to and get this accomplished. I can't really think of any instance lately where we've had to ask anybody to do anything. We have the participation and people willing to step up and take on their roles.

There were also challenges that the teams faced because of the dynamic and evolving nature of these informal roles and responsibilities. Both partnership teams struggled with the tension between a lot of input-givers, lack of leaders who could be decision-makers and impatient doers resulting in frustration in team members.



Team members in Partnership A struggled with the balance between the role of input-givers and doers. There was a tension between the amount of ‘input-giving’ and “doing”. When they were “stuck” in deciding their building block and capstone project, Steve felt the need for a decision-maker,

I think we've lacked having a leader. I think there are times when we needed someone to just step up and say, "This is what I think you need to do." And then let us, as a group, decide, "Okay, yes, let's do that" or "No, but let's do this instead.

In case of partnership B, Coach Ashley shared similar sentiments about having too many ‘input-givers’, but not enough ‘doers’,

The team members love to collaborate and talk and discuss, and they're all very smart and have a lot of knowledge to share about their area, so there's been great sharing. It's just harder when there are action items to be done.

Christy and Patty were ‘input-givers’ about their knowledge of the local business community but identified their personalities as ‘doers’. They shared how not being to take action affected their engagement,

As a small business owner, you're usually a doer. So, you just want to do it and get it done. So, now, it's to the point where we're just kind of like, another meeting? We are at the point of, “let's just do it”. We know that's not possible. That's where it gets kind of like, "Ugh." It gets too slow and frustrating on our end. We just want it to happen.

#### 4.4.3 Individual and Collective Responsibilities

The creation and implementation of partnership agendas was influenced by the evolving, dynamic and task-based nature of individual and collective responsibilities. As described in RQ1,

the team members self-selected to be part of the core and coordinating teams based on their capacity and responsibilities were collectively assigned to the team members. Figure 4.13 provides an example of the collective responsibilities for the core team as documented in the HCI program curriculum.



Figure 4.11: Core team collective responsibilities [Source: HCI program documents]

However, as the partnership transitioned to the less structured phases, as discussed in RQ1, the teams became responsible to “organize” the “organizing”. As explained in the above subsection, there were informal roles that emerged as needed in both partnerships. I found that the lack of formal roles affected the way in which responsibilities were created and shared among team members in the two partnerships. Task based responsibilities were either volunteered by or assigned to team members either individually or collectively as a sub-group. An example of this is shown in the excerpt from partnership B’s meeting minutes in Figure 4.14 (names have been changed).

Lead Facilitator/Host: Content neutral, manages and guides the group to allow the group and create a welcoming environment; Leads the process using the forum guide—consensus that Jessica will serve this role

Table facilitators: Lead discussions during rounds at their table and remains neutral; encourage full participation; Nate, Amy, Matt, Ashley, Ann.

Table Recorders: Takes official notes of table’s discussion; capture key points and clarify if necessary- Ben + any additional facilitators

Figure 4.12: Task based responsibility example from Partnership B

These responsibilities, both individual and collective, seemed to have evolved over time, in response to the current needs of the partnership agenda. Team members used the process of action planning during their meetings to generate a new list of tasks or homework for the next meeting, which were then individually volunteered for based on the team member’s capacity to follow through. Thus, team members’ responsibilities evolved from collective to individual and were task-based rather than role-based as explained by Clara.

I don't know that we have defined roles. We really share roles, okay? Because we are taking on the same role on different dates, if that makes sense, you know? As far as some people are developing some curriculum on their own or finding facilitators and then others are just doing organizational tasks. But I think we all have to do each thing. I don't think there's anybody that's gotten out of one thing or another.

Evolving and dynamic responsibilities seemed to have impacted the creation and implementation of their partnership agendas in the following ways:

- For Partnership B, not having formal roles, and lack of team members forced the needs of the partnership agenda to be assigned to the three remaining team members as responsibilities. This created a high ratio between the number of task-based responsibilities and the number of remaining team members. It became very challenging for the remaining

team members to take action on this large number of responsibilities, affecting the implementation of their partnership agenda.

- In the case of Partnership A, having eight active team members made the task-based responsibility division easier, than compared to Partnership B. Even though tasks were being completed, there seemed a lack of accountability of who is responsible for what. Steve shared how this kind dynamic task management based on trust and the lack of accountability could become a potential risk if team members do not follow through.

I think there's been no accountability for things. I mean, people have been doing things but nobody's really taken ownership of some things. It's kind of, we all own it and so therefore nobody's taken responsibility for it until we meet. It's important to all of us when we're meeting but when we get back to our jobs and our lives, it becomes a lot less important.

Thus, it seemed that while having this open, organic and dynamic division of responsibilities created shared power distribution among team members; it also generated tension if there was lack of accountability and lack of follow-through. Also, this kind of dynamic and organic evolution of responsibilities could only be supported if the team had enough members to divide the responsibilities. Thus, the ways in which roles and responsibilities evolved influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas.

#### 4.5 Research Question 4: How Are Partnership Team Members Acting to 'Make Things Happen' in the Partnership?

To answer this research question, it was first important to understand the definition of 'making things happen' as it relates to partnership outcomes. Thus, in this section I first provide the meaning of 'making things happen', then sharing the themes identified with regards to

partnership outcomes and explaining the relationship between team member actions and outcomes. Then, the six interrelated ways in which the partnership members acted, as informed by the data analysis, towards positive partnership outcomes is described. The section ends with a discussion on the interrelated nature of these six actions.

#### 4.5.1 Partnership Outcomes/ ‘Making Things Happen’

I defined ‘making things happen’ as developing outcomes which would move the partnership agenda forward towards achieving its goals. After conducting thematic analysis, time-series analysis and collaborative inertia analysis on all the different data sources, I found that every meeting produced positive or negative outcomes that were tangible and intangible in nature. I have represented this in Figure 4.17, and explained in the paragraph below.

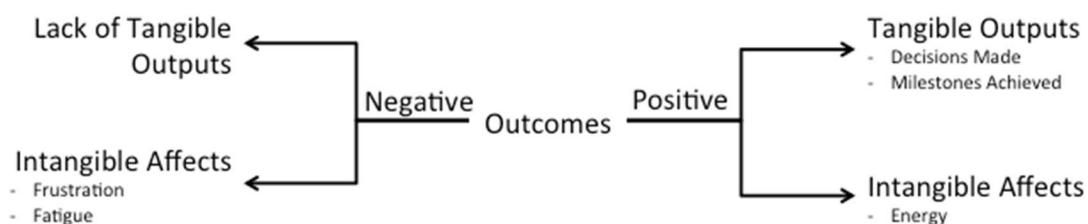


Figure 4.13: Outcome directionality during meetings

As seen in Figure 4.17, the data analysis indicated that outcomes were positive or negative in nature. Also, outcomes documented in meeting minutes were tangible or measurable outputs such as decisions made and milestones achieved; as well as intangible as related to affects on team members such as process fatigue, frustration or energy. It seemed that outcomes were positive if outputs were generated and there were positive effects on team members’ attitudes; and outcomes were negative if there were no outputs being generated and there were negative effects on members’ attitudes towards the partnership. *The different data analyses indicated that the repetitiveness of*

*positive outcomes moved the partnership's agenda forward towards achieving its goals, while the repetitiveness of negative outcomes led the partnership to higher levels of collaborative inertia.*

These patterns can be seen in Figure 4.18, which depicts a month-by-month analysis of the tangible outcomes for both the cases. I developed Figure 4.18 by analyzing the data from both the partnerships' meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports, marked the cell green if there was documentation about achieving a milestone (listed in Appendix C), and a decision about a goal was made, marked the cell yellow if one of the two outputs were generated, and marked the cell red if no output was generated. The documentation for the analysis to generate Figure 4.18 is in Appendix D.

Month-Year	Partnership A Output Level	Month-Year	Partnership B Output Level
Jan-Year One			
Feb-Year One		Feb-Year One	
Mar-Year One		Mar-Year One	
Apr-Year One		Apr-Year One	
May-Year One		May-Year One	
Jun-Year One		Jun-Year One	
Jul-Year One	BB selected	Jul-Year One	BB Selected
Aug-Year One		Aug-Year One	
Sep-Year One		Sep-Year One	
Oct-Year One		Oct-Year One	
Nov-Year One	Capstone Selected	Nov-Year One	
Dec-Year One		Dec-Year One	
Jan-Year Two		Jan-Year Two	
Feb-Year Two		Feb-Year Two	
Mar-Year Two		Mar-Year Two	
Apr-Year Two		Apr-Year Two	Capstone Selected
May-Year Two		May-Year Two	
Jun-Year Two		Jun-Year Two	
Jul-Year Two		Jul-Year Two	
Aug-Year Two	BB Changed	Aug-Year Two	
Sep-Year Two	Capstone Changed	Sep-Year Two	
Oct-Year Two		Oct-Year Two	
Nov-Year Two		Nov-Year Two	
Dec-Year Two	Capstone Completed	Dec-Year Two	

**Legend:**

- Milestone + Decision
- One of two outputs
- No Output

Figure 4.14: Month-by-month summary of the tangible outputs for the two selected partnerships

From Figure 4.18 and the case narratives presented above, it seemed that both partnership teams were generating outputs until the community forums in the April – May of Year One timeframe and both selected their building block focus in July of Year One. During this time, coaches in both partnerships reported the team members to have high energy and enthusiasm, indicating positive intangible outcomes. Coaches' meeting reports indicated:

Partnership A: Energy was pretty high - people were really interested in moving Community A forward.

Partnership B: The momentum is very enthusiastic.

However, after the building blocks were selected, it seemed both partnerships struggled to generate outputs and make decisions about their capstone projects. Every meeting that ended without concrete decisions about the capstone project seemed to have created negative effects such as frustration among team members. All participants in their interviews shared this theme. In her interview, Jane expressed her frustration with the lack of outputs for the time invested,

The frustration is, we've been with HCI it's been what, two years? And we still have nothing to show for it.

It seemed that this frustration amplified as time went by and there were still no outputs. According to most of the participants, the negative outcomes affected several team members to such a point where they discontinued their engagement. An example of this was seen in my interview with Coach Sara,

A small business owner became frustrated with the process. She needed to see action and had to do things. She became frustrated and she dropped out.

The analysis in Figure 4.18 indicated that Partnership A changed their direction in August of Year Two. Since the change in shared goals, the team seemed to have generated significant

outputs at every meeting, as also seen in their meeting reports. Miles, in his interview shared that having outputs seemed to have positively affected his and his team's behaviors,

That gave us a new shot of enthusiasm, and I think since then, has helped us to get energized again. Since that time, we have made some excellent progress. It seems like the ball's really rolling again, and I think that that's got everybody excited again.

In contrast, the data analysis indicated that Partnership B did not generate enough outcomes after the capstone project was decided. Matt believed that the lack of tangible outputs combined with ineffective communication negatively affected their team members' interest to participate,

People just lost interest. To be totally frank with you, it was off their radar long enough to where they started wondering if it (partnership) was even going on still.

Thus, through these analyses, I found a pattern about the effects of positive and negative outcomes on the creation and implementation of partnership agendas. The data analysis indicated that when the team members collectively generated outputs at a meeting, it created intangible energy. This positively affected individual team members' actions towards the outcomes of the next meeting. However, every meeting that lacked collective outputs developed a sense of frustration. If this pattern of no outputs repeated in the following meeting, the frustration aggregated to affect the team members' actions negatively. This cyclic pattern is depicted in Figure 4.19 below.

In partnership B for example, the lack of meeting outputs from May – December of year two seemed to have impacted the number of team members attending their meetings as seen in Figure 4.17, as the team was operating in high level of collaborative inertia.



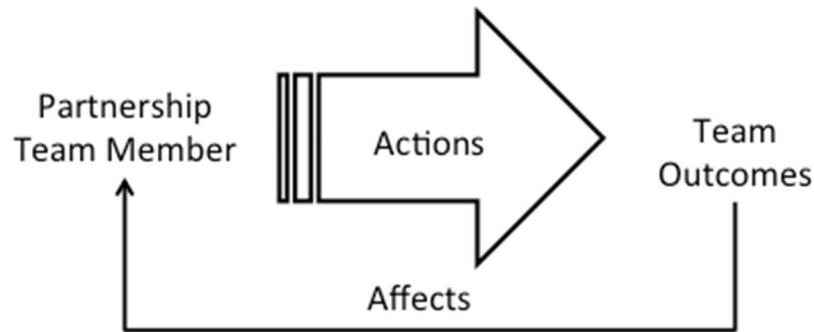


Figure 4.15: Pictorial representation of the cyclical behavior of positive and negative intangible outcomes on team members due to the generation (or lack thereof) of team outcomes.

#### 4.5.2 Actions that “Made Things Happen”

The data analysis of the meeting minutes, coach’s meeting reports, researcher field notes and participant interviews for both cases, informed six ways in which the partnership members acted to develop outcomes that moved the partnership agenda forward. Whether the outcomes of the meetings were positive or negative in nature, in order to ‘make things happen’, team members:

- Kept on persevering and never gave up,
- Showed up to meetings regularly,
- Were engaged in discussions in the meetings,
- Were involved in decision making,
- Reflected intentionally on tasks on hand and the team’s capacity and
- Followed through on their responsibilities. These six actions have been represented in Figure 4.18.

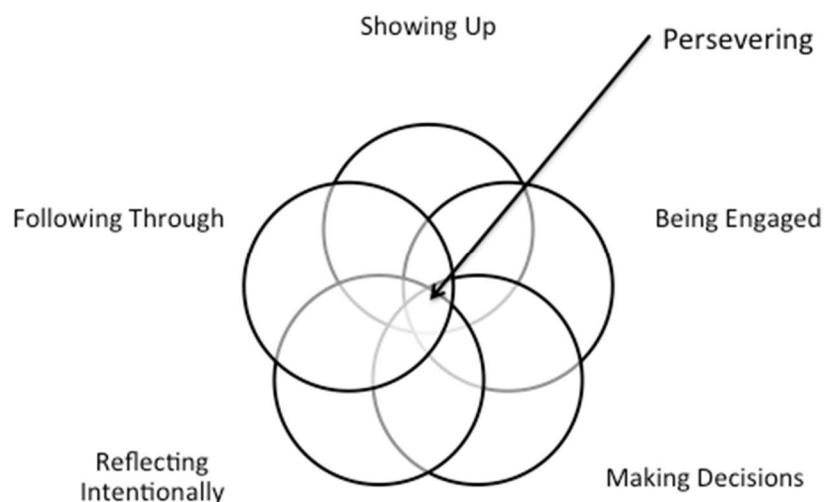


Figure 4.16: Pictorial representation of the overlap between the six interrelated actions that make things happen

The data analysis indicated that the creation and implementation of partnership agendas was influenced by the dependency among the six ways in which the team members acted to “make things happen”. Thus, if team members showed up to meetings, but were not fully engaged, that indicated their interest was wavering. If team members showed up to meetings and did not get involved in the decision-making, they could not fully take ownership of the decision made and follow through. It seemed that if team members could not intentionally reflect on their capacity to deliver, they were unable to manage tasks. Lastly, if team members did not persevere, they typically stopped showing up to meetings. Thus, the data analysis and findings indicated that team members needed to act in all six ways, especially when the team was operating in higher levels of collaborative inertia, to “make things happen” by generating outcomes and move the partnership agenda forward to achieve goals.

In the following subsections, I have described these six interrelated actions by providing supportive data from the two case studies.

#### 4.5.2.1 Showing Up

Jack from partnership A stated,

I define leadership as people showing up. The people with leadership are continuing to work the process and the ones in my opinion of lesser leadership have fallen by the wayside.

In both cases, when partnerships entered higher levels of inertia, the number of team members attending meetings seemed to have reduced. In the second year of the partnership, more than half the number of members stopped attending in both cases, as shown in Figure 4.21. I created Figure 4.21 by performing data analysis on the meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports. It depicts a monthly view of different levels of inertia (as explained in Chapter 3 based on the number of outputs generated and number of monthly meetings) and the average number of team members attending meetings.

Partnership A Monthly Meeting	Level of Inertia	Avg. Number of team members attending monthly meetings	Partnership B Monthly Meeting	Level of Inertia	Avg. Number of team members attending monthly meetings
Jan-Year One		unknown			
Feb-Year One		14.5	Feb-Year One		11.5
Mar-Year One		10	Mar-Year One		12.5
Apr-Year One		13	Apr-Year One		7
May-Year One		18.5	May-Year One		0
Jun-Year One		12	Jun-Year One		7.5
Jul-Year One		5	Jul-Year One		10
Aug-Year One		11	Aug-Year One		13
Sep-Year One		14.5	Sep-Year One		8
Oct-Year One		7	Oct-Year One		8
Nov-Year One		unknown	Nov-Year One		12
Dec-Year One		unknown	Dec-Year One		0
Jan-Year Two		6	Jan-Year Two		3
Feb-Year Two		3.5	Feb-Year Two		0
Mar-Year Two		5	Mar-Year Two		13
Apr-Year Two		6	Apr-Year Two		7
May-Year Two		4	May-Year Two		2
Jun-Year Two		6.5	Jun-Year Two		0
Jul-Year Two		5.5	Jul-Year Two		4
Aug-Year Two		5.5	Aug-Year Two		2
Sep-Year Two		5	Sep-Year Two		1
Oct-Year Two		5.25	Oct-Year Two		0
Nov-Year Two		6	Nov-Year Two		0
Dec-Year Two		5.5	Dec-Year Two		0

Legend:

Negligible Inertia
Low Inertia
Medium Inertia
High Inertia

Figure 4.17: Levels of collaborative inertia for each partnership, month-by-month, highlighting the average number of attendees to monthly meetings

As seen in Figure 4.21, it seemed that the meetings conducted in April of year two and onwards, had an average of five team members attending in partnership A, while in partnership B, an average of two team members were showing up. When team members attended these meetings, it indicated that they were *still interested and committed* to the partnership as shared by Miles,

We still meet, twice a month, for the most part. It's shrunk down to a much smaller group, probably half a dozen people. That's the group that's been there all along, *really committed* to the project.

When the same team members regularly attended the meetings, Clara indicated the *trust levels* among them increased,

Getting to know each other over time sort of allowed us to see what each other's strengths were.

In partnership B, team members stopped showing up to meetings because of various reasons such as loss of interest, changing priorities, conflicting schedules and life events as explained by Matt,

Well, basically we've lost a lot of people...I think a lot of it was this perfect storm of people running into stuff with their own jobs and just not being able to devote the kind of time that they did. Again, it's probably compounded by the fact that they were a little confused on where we were at in the process, too.

The major lack of attendance by team members *halted their team's functioning* as explained by Emily,

Leadership is when we're all working together, because then, we are hitting on all cylinders.

When team members are not there, we're skipping; the *engine is skipping out*.

#### 4.5.2.2 Being Engaged

Partnership members appeared engaged when they were listening to other team members, participating in activities and voicing their opinions. When team members were engaged in the process, it seemed that there were *rich discussions* occurring. The blog post for partnership B described,

The team was engaged and excited as the discussion harnessed around celebrating entrepreneurs and establishing a support system for them.

Also, having engaged team members indicated that the team members *felt safe* to voice their opinions. A new member to the partnership B, Abby expressed her comfort in being able to have a voice,

If I hear something, and I feel like I can contribute, I just go ahead and contribute. I don't feel like I'm necessarily a full-fledged member, but if I can benefit it, I'm going to say it, and I *feel comfortable* saying it with the group that's in there.

Having a team that was engaged with an open mind and listened to different ideas, *empowered* team members and developed *mutual respect*. Clara from partnership A shared her experience of feeling empowered because of team members that listened to her,

You don't really know your value and sometimes you question your value, but then when you get in this group setting where people actually want to hear your opinion and they take into consideration what you think about something *it is empowering*. This group we have now, I think we all feel that way about one another. We all want to hear what the other one thinks about it. That *mutual respect* is, it's just wonderful and I think that it's a healthy dynamic for people and definitely amongst our group.

David recalled how having some highly engaged team members helped *break the silence* and move the discussion forward when other team members were silent.

The three of them in particular would speak up and share, especially in a situation where a question had been posed and nobody was really saying anything. They would share and interject some thoughts or ideas that I think really, kind of, *jump-started us* again. And getting us either back on track or making some progress

#### 4.5.2.3 Making Decisions

Outputs generated included decisions made by partnerships, which had a critical influence on the level of collaborative inertia the partnership was operating in.

Andy from partnership A believed that team members who were interested and cared about the partnership agenda, were more involved in making decisions,

I think that since it's a group of people whose members really care about the community and were willing to work through that difficult time, and that we were not totally inflexible and that we all did see benefit in both paths, I think that was really what helped, is just a willingness on everyone's part to do whatever we thought would have the most positive impact in the end.

When team members made decisions collectively, they seemed to have a higher *sense of ownership* of the shared decision. In the case of partnership A, Kate expressed that it wasn't until Year Two summer, when the team collectively decided on changing their focus from economy to leadership, they "felt like it was *our approach*." In contrast, decision making in partnership B occurred around the needs of a single member. When asked about who made the decision about their project, Christy and Patty shared:

That's probably more up to Dillon, cause it's an economic development project, and *his office* is taking on the brunt of it to get it done." Since this decision-making was favoring one member, the ownership of the project fell on that single member, who felt "it just feels like this got *dumped* on us.

Also, when team members were able to collectively make decisions the partnership agenda moved forward towards achieving the goals. However, as experienced by Clara in partnership A, the inability for team members to collectively make decisions slowed down progress, "and it really took valuable time up talking about things that were not relevant."

#### 4.5.2.4 Reflecting Intentionally

When partnership members intentionally reflected about their capacity and ability to implement goals developed, they were able to consider their limitations, and *re-develop shared goals* to align to their strengths. This action was the *turning point* for partnership A when they were stuck in high levels of inertia. In the interviews, all eight participants from partnership A acknowledged the importance of collective reflection.

Intentional reflecting allowed the team members to *evoke their commitment* to the partnership agenda and strengthened their purpose to persevere. It also allowed team members to have “*realistic*” discussions about their team’s capacity to succeed. Jane recollected that the remaining team members “were determined that we would succeed at something” as they questioned, “What can five of us do? Can five of us pull this off?”

The action of collective contemplation, as Andy emphasized happened through “some *difficult discussion*”. This indicated that the team members felt safe to be *collectively vulnerable* as they “admitted that we weren’t going to get there.”

Through this act of deliberation, the team members also developed *resilience* for future challenges. Kate recognized Coach Sara who “made us really think deeply about what our goals were and also what our frustrations were. And how we can move on, and what mistakes we don’t want to make again.”

In the case of partnership B, *timing* for intentional reflecting became an important factor. By the time the team members recognized that they did not have the capacity to implement the selected project, there were only two team members still attending the meetings. Also, Matt reflected individually, indicating that he was the only team member remaining and still engaged:

What I’m thinking about right now is that, in order for us to take this thing to the finish line, part of our request to the HCI state team originally was to include hiring a part time person



to do a lot of this busy work and behind-the-scenes stuff. When we were told that we couldn't really hire somebody, that's turned everything we were trying to do up on its head.

It's like, okay, now how do we do this?

It was no longer a partnership as Matt described,

I'm not exactly sure how it's going to happen and who are the people that I'm going to be able to draw from to *help me* take it to the finish line.

#### 4.5.2.5 Following Through

Since responsibilities were task-oriented rather than role-oriented in both the cases, the action of following through for the completion of tasks was important for the accomplishment of goals.

Partnership B “did not have clearly defined goals” according to Ben. The lack in direction, created *ambiguity and confusion* as Emily explained, “We're not even sure where we are right now”. This ambiguity *hindered* team members to take ownership and follow through on tasks, as expressed by Abby,

Nothing against anybody, but even in the meeting today, I really don't know my place. I know what I can pick up and do without being told, but I don't know where I fit in. With something like this, you want to make sure that they know their common goals.

Team members also felt that the coaches and HCI state team members did not follow through on their tasks, “We would go periods of a couple months where we wouldn't hear from anyone” as Matt recalled, adding to the ambiguity.

Thus, the lack of follow through affected the team members’ engagement and attendance. Ben explained, “There was no continuity, and no follow through. And so, when you've got a volunteer group, and a long process, it was *hard to stay engaged* without any clearly defined goals.”

Partnership A also had certain times in their tenure where the team could not follow through because of ambitious goals. Andy shared having too ambitious goals and lack of task management became “overwhelming with the small group of people that we had trying to work on it.” Only after taking on a “doable” project, team members were able to take ownership of it and follow through as Andy explained, “it was a lot easier for us to get our arms around it and pull it off, than trying to create something from scratch.”

However, once the goals were re-defined and were clear, the team members from partnership A took ownership of their tasks and followed through. This indicated their *commitment*, as described by Jane,

Commitment. Just whenever we would go to a meeting and it's like oh golly, we need this, or this, or things like a logo, or things like a budget, or things like a plan, Jack said I'll do that. I'll do that. And Clara, I'll do that. The people who are left will just step up no matter what it is. And there's like six or eight of us who sit around the table, saying I'll do that.

This action when repeated also *developed mutual trust* among team members to trust the ability of fellow team members to follow through. Kate recognized the coach's actions to follow through and that it helped move the partnership's agenda forward,

She's been wonderful. All of the questions that we might have about data, she has been great to come back and get additional information for what we might need to help further fuel or thoughts and what we wanted to have by the next meeting.

#### 4.5.2.6 Persevering

When team members did not give up when faced with challenges, they were able to persevere and “make things happen”. According to coach Sara, persevering meant *pushing through the unknown*, “willingness to trust a process...and to continuously invest your time and not

necessarily knowing what the end result is.” She recognized that not all team members were comfortable with the unknown and dropped off due to lack of outputs. This was also seen in partnership B, at a much higher level since only two team members continued to persevere while the majority dropped off.

In the case of partnership A, there were about five-six team members that persevered even when they wanted to give up. Jack recalled his urge to “let's cash in our chips and walk away from the table” but with the “coach’s coaching” and as Kate shared, “the coach’s persistence to refocus,” the remaining team members did not give up. Team members like Kate did not give up because of *peer pressure*,

Out of obligation to the time that I had already put in and to the other teammates that were participating as well, I felt like it would have been disrespectful to them and disrespectful to the cause to have not tried to push through when it was so tough.

In the case of partnership B, Emily also expressed that one of the reasons she had not given up was because she “felt obligated, and out of respect for Matt”.

Having collectively faced adversity, made team members more *resilient* and prepared for ambiguity. Kate reflected that even once they changed goals,

It doesn't guarantee that things will go exactly as we hope and if it doesn't, then we know now that we can actually adapt and still come out with some type of a successful plan. I think it was really good for us to experience that and not just stop any process, but yet we had to step back and rethink, then what's our best approach?

By handling adversity together and developing resiliency also renewed their *determination* to succeed. David felt that even though they “lost some traction”, they persevered by, “kind of digging in” and were “going to keep charging ahead”.



## CHAPTER 5. DISCUSSION

The objectives for this study were to describe the act of collaborating in cross-sector collaborative partnerships and to understand partnership structures, processes and activities performed by members in order to “make things happen” in these types of partnerships. A multiple case study approach, presented in Chapter 3, was employed, which included conducting a pilot case study and investigating two cross-sector partnerships in a community development program. A variety of qualitative data sources were gathered to understand each case separately and in the context of the HCI community development program, presented in Chapter 3. Different and iterative analysis procedures, presented in Chapter 3, were used to find meaning in the gathered data, and answer the four research questions as presented in Chapter 4.

### 5.1 Theoretical Contributions

This dissertation has contributed to the ‘Theory of Collaborative Advantage’ in the field of inter-organizational relationships by expanding the definitions around the concepts of collaborative advantage, collaborative inertia and mechanisms for ‘making things happen’ in cross-sector partnerships. These contributions are listed below and discussed further in the following subsections. From the findings of this dissertation, I have expanded the ‘Theory of Collaborative Advantage’ in the following ways:

- It seems that “making things happen” needs a recurring pattern of positive tangible and intangible outcomes over time that culminates into achieving collaborative advantage;
- It seems that the partnership moves closer or farther from achieving collaborative advantage depending on the level of inertia over a time-period;

- It seems that when at least one of these four issues (lack of clarity, lack of member capacity, lack of collaborative space and lack of decision-making) is present, there is potential for collaborative inertia. Furthermore, if more than one (especially all four) of these issues exists, then it seems there is potential for the partnership to be in higher levels of collaborative inertia;
- It seems that the partnership ‘makes things happen’ when partnership structure transitions from ‘imposed’ to ‘composed’ structure;
- It seems there is a need for alignment between partnership agenda and membership structure to make things happen;
- It seems that consistency in membership structure is necessary to “make things happen” in a partnership;
- It seems there is a need to have “enough and right” members attending collaborative spaces (like meetings) to “make things happen”;
- It seems that collaborative spaces (like meetings) and communication processes, along with team members and their actions, have inseparable and interrelated relationships with one another;
- It seems that the goal-selecting process in inter-organizational partnerships may result in an imminent loss of members due to the voluntary nature of membership. This loss of members seems to negatively impact the partnership structure;
- It seems that the ability and willingness of team members to adapt from one role to another based on partnership needs, positively impacts “making things happen”.

### 5.1.1 Contribution One: Defining “Making Things Happen”

“Making things happen,” indicated *positive outcomes* for a partnership. Findings from this study indicated that every meeting generated either positive or negative outcomes. Outcomes were also tangible (e.g., documented decisions) and intangible (e.g., motivation) in nature. Positive tangible outcomes included decisions made and milestones achieved. Negative tangible outcomes were, thus, lack of decisions or lack of milestones. Though not all meeting had tangible outputs, they did appear to have intangible outcomes.

Findings indicated that the generation or lack of tangible outputs was supplemented by positive or negative ‘affects’ such as energy, enthusiasm, frustration, fatigue. These affects were collective and intangible in nature, but seemed to have an impact on the attitude, behavior, and actions of individual members. Additionally, if a partnership team continued to generate positive tangible or intangible outcomes over time, the team would be “making things happen”, and be able to achieve collaborative advantage. However, the longer the team went in producing negative tangible or intangible outcomes, the team appeared to have a large number of the issues that contribute to higher levels of inertia as discussed in Chapter Four. *Thus, this study indicates that “making things happen” needs a recurring pattern of positive tangible and intangible outcomes over time that culminates into achieving collaborative advantage.*

### 5.1.2 Contribution Two: Expanding the Concepts of Collaborative Inertia and Collaborative Advantage

The corner stone for this study was to understand “making things happen” in cross-sector collaborative partnerships. A vast variety of studies in the field have focused on success factors for partnership performance. There is a general acknowledgment in the literature base about the concept of collaborative inertia and that it exists and it should be ‘avoided’ (Devine, et al., 2010;

Cararasco, 2009; Thomson et al., 2009; Guan et al., 2015). However, the empirical scholarship on collaborative inertia is very limited. For this study, it became apparent that the investigation of the concept of collaborative inertia was critical in the further understanding of the phenomenon of “making things happen”.

Huxham and Vangen (1993) introduced the concept of collaborative inertia to describe a state when the partnerships did not generate many outputs and the general operation of the partnerships slowed down. This concept emerged out of their grounded theory of collaborative advantage, where the concept of collaborative advantage was defined as ‘synergy’ where the partnership achieves ‘advantage’. This advantage could not have achieved through individual partnership members, but only through the collaboration. As explained in Chapter 2, the scholarship on collaborative inertia is limited to acknowledging that it exists. However, to my knowledge, there is *no literature* on operationalizing and empirically exploring the concept and definition of collaborative inertia.

I used the definition of collaborative inertia provided by Huxham and Vangen (2004, 2005) and developed measures using the ability to count outputs and frequency of meetings. I was further able to provide a visual depiction of how the two partnerships transitioned through collaborative inertia. Several authors have assumed the static view of these concepts and have not studied the relationship between collaborative inertia and collaborative advantage. For example, Dalziel and Willis (2015) stated, “it is necessary to avoid collaborative inertia... Theory therefore suggests that various factors contribute to the achievement of collaborative advantage and the onset of collaborative inertia” (p. 434). Thus, there is an assumption that at a particular point in time, the partnership is achieving collaborative advantage or it is in collaborative inertia.



The findings of this study indicated that collaborative advantage can be achieved over time; and that partnerships operate in different levels of collaborative inertia at different times. In Figure 5.1, I have depicted that in the course or tenure of a partnership, it could operate at different levels of collaborative inertia.

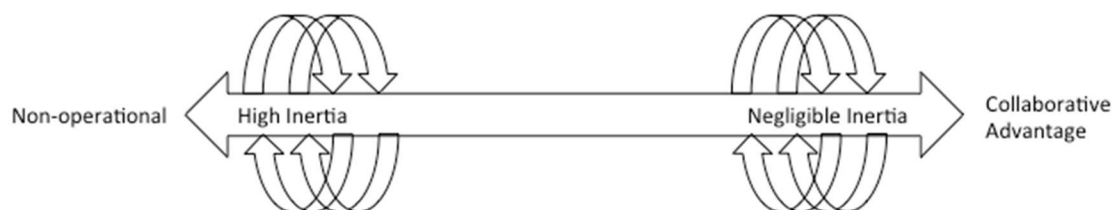


Figure 5.1: Pictorial representation of the collaborative inertia spectrum

The time-series analysis and collaborative inertia analysis explained in Chapter 3 and 4 indicated that collaborative inertia is a range as seen in Figure 5.1. At one end of the spectrum, the partnership could operate in minimum or negligible inertia, and at the other end, the partnerships could be stuck in high inertia, almost making them non-functional. Furthermore, I found that a partnership does not seem to stay at one level of inertia throughout its tenure, but seems to transition between different levels of inertia. These transitions between levels seemed to indicate that collaborative advantage is achieved after a partnership continues to *operate in low-negligible levels over time*. Similarly, it seemed that if a partnership continues to operate in medium-high levels of inertia over time, it would become non-operational. These findings validated these concepts, but provided further clarity on the temporal relationships between them. *Thus, this study indicates that the partnership moves closer or farther from achieving collaborative advantage depending on the level of inertia over a time-period.* This theory has been supported by Guan et al. (2015) study, which also used Huxham and Vangen's (2004, 2005) definition of collaborative inertia, and categorized it by strong and or weak. They further explained that strong inertia allows

for exchange of ‘complex’ knowledge and resources, but can impact performance, while weak inertia was favorable for transfer of diverse knowledge.

### 5.1.3 Contribution Three: Issues that Lead to Collaborative Inertia

I found that in both case studies, when the partnerships were in low-medium-high levels of collaborative inertia (as described in Chapter 3 and explained in Chapter 4), at least one of four issues were present: lack of clarity, lack of member capacity, lack of collaborative space, and lack of decision-making. These four critical issues seemed to have contributed to transitions to higher levels of inertia and are depicted in Figure 5.2.

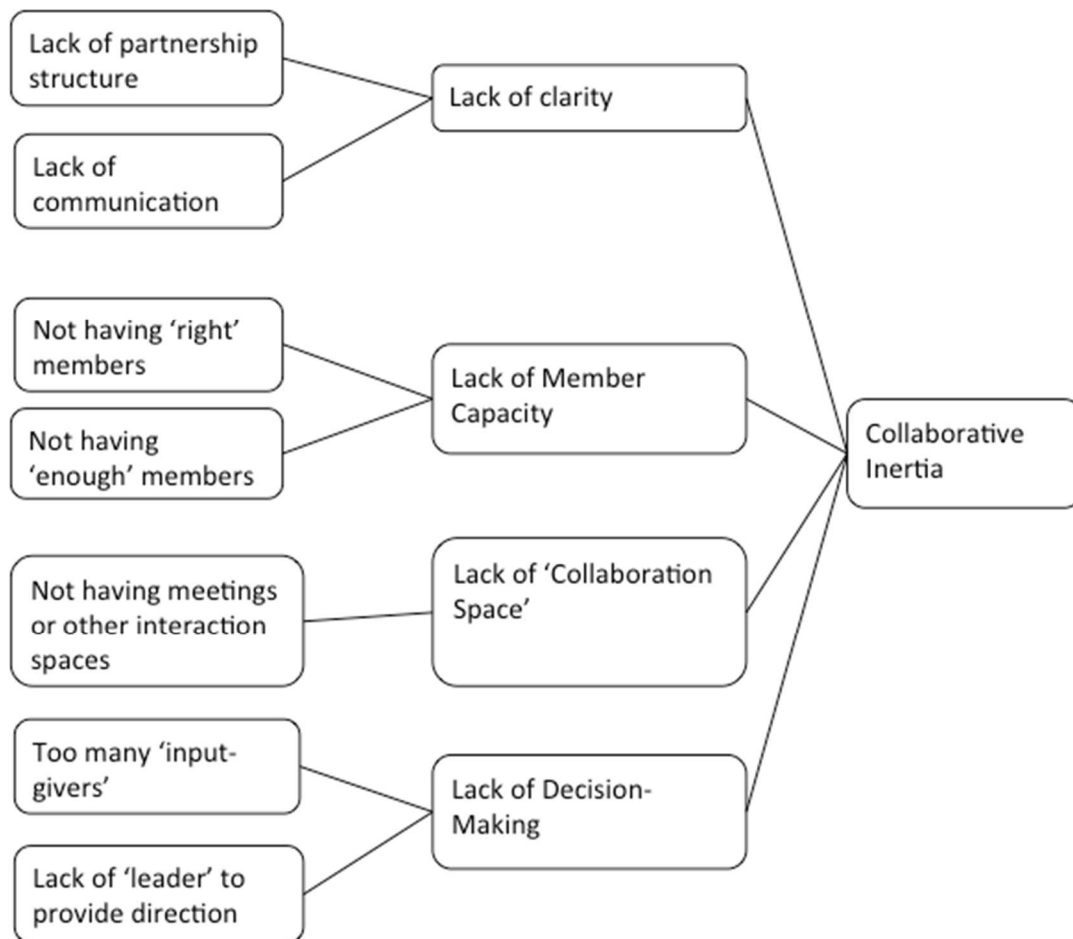


Figure 5.2: Critical factors leading to collaborative inertia

Figure 5.2 was created by using the themes that emerged around challenges or issues that members faced when the team was either transitioning to higher levels of collaborative inertia or was ‘stuck’ in medium-high levels of inertia. As presented in Figure 5.2, the themes around lack of clarity were changes in partnership structure, and lack of communication. With respect to member capacity, themes about not having the right members, or/and enough members emerged. Losing partnership members due to lack of interest or other contextual factors contributed to the lack of member capacity. Additionally, I observed that partnerships needed a space (physical or digital) that allowed collaborative activity to occur. The thematic analysis indicated that if these spaces did not exist, partnerships transitioned to very high levels of inertia. For example, a lack of meetings among partnership members often resulted in no collaboration. Lastly, it seemed there was a continued pattern of no decisions made, the partnership moved from lower to higher levels of inertia over time.

I found very few empirical studies that investigated the concept of collaborative inertia. Dickson et al. (2018) studied collaborative capacities and defined collaborative inertia as ‘barriers to collaboration’, which included loss of control, transaction costs, role ambiguity, competition, conflicts of interest and familial links. Li and Rowley (2002) studied partner selection strategies for new partnerships using inertia models different from Huxham and Vangen’s (2004, 2005) framework, and suggested that partners selected other partners based on previous relationships and lessons learned through factors of inertia. For example, if an organization has previously struggled with inertia with a particular partner, it will use that inertia as part of their partner selection criteria.

The ‘state’ of collaborative inertia is defined as one with negligible output, lower rate of output, and stories of pain and grind (Huxham & Vangen, 2004, 2005). From their fifteen years of action research, Huxham and Vangen (2004, 2005) attributed collaborative inertia to a variety of

factors not limited to: “disagreement about the purpose of a partnership... insufficient shared values... insufficient shared goals... weak commitment to working together... poor levels of trust... poor levels of accountability... poor communication... clashes in organizational cultures...” among others (Dalziel & Willis, 2015, p. 435).

*Thus, this study indicates that when at least one of these four issues is present, there is potential for inertia. Furthermore, if more than one (especially all four) of these issues exists, there is a potential for the partnership to be in higher levels of inertia.*

#### 5.1.4 Contribution Four: Making Things Happen Through Partnership Structure

Evidence from this dissertation have expanded the definition by indicating that other structural elements outside of just membership structure comprise a partnership’s structure. Also, the evolution of these structural elements, such as size and composition of the membership team, characteristics of team members, structured phases and processes that partnerships go through, roles and responsibilities to develop structure around tasks, the structure in which communication occurred including the hierarchical flow of information, and the structure that was established through goals, seemed to have influenced ‘making things happen’ in partnerships.

The first research question investigated how the partnership structure was created, and how it influenced the creation and implementation of partnership agendas. The findings indicated that partnership structure was comprised of structural elements relating to membership, processes, communication and goals. These elements suggested that the original scope and definition of structure offered by Huxham and Vangen (2000) could be expanded. The original definition for structure of a collaboration was focused on the “organizations and individuals associated with it and the structural connections between them” (p. 1166).

Each of these structural elements influenced “making things happen”. For example, membership structure was found to be changing with respect to the number of members and type of members as the partnership matured. This change in (and sometimes lack of) membership structure affected the partnership teams with respect to not having ‘enough’ members and not having ‘right’ members to create and implement agendas. Another example was the dynamism in process structure, which created ambiguity in terms of roles and responsibilities. Thus, the dynamic nature of partnership structure created the issues of lack of clarity, lack of capacity, and lack of collaborative spaces, contributing to higher level of collaborative inertia.

#### 5.1.4.1 Imposed and Composed Structure

I found that the creation of partnership structure was established and maintained by both external and internal entities. Partnership structure during the initial phases was “imposed” by the HCI program: an external entity. However, over time, the structure transitioned from imposed to composed, which seemed to have a positive impact on mitigating collaborative inertia.

In the case of Partnership A, as the partnership matured, team members were able and willing to take ownership of the different elements of the partnership structure, such as:

- Developing structure around shared goals based on their current membership capacity
- Developing structure around their tasks
- Taking ownership of their meeting frequency and meeting agendas

This “ownership” led to the partnership structure being composed by the team members, and away from the imposed structure of the HCI program. In the other case study, I found that this transition from “imposed” to “composed” partnership structure did not occur. Results indicated that in the case of Partnership A, where the transition was observed, the partnership was able to

achieve its goals. Likewise, in the case where the transition did not occur, that partnership was in a high level of collaborative inertia.

*Thus, this study indicates that partnerships make things happen when partnership structure transitions from 'imposed' to a 'composed' structure, shown in Figure 5.3. In this study, this transition was manifested when partnership members were able and willing to take ownership of said partnership structure.*

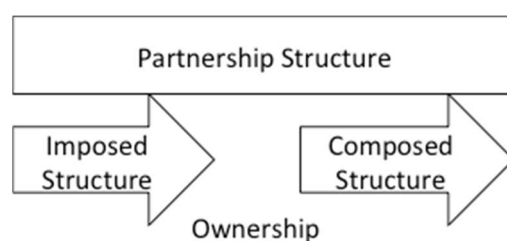


Figure 5.3: Structural change from imposed to composed within the partnership requires ownership from the team members

#### 5.1.4.2 Consistency and Fluidity in Membership

This research also identified a need for alignment between membership structure and partnership agendas in inter-organizational partnerships. In the collaborative advantage theory, Huxham and Vangen (2000) discussed open structures versus tight structures. Open structures allowed for any individual/organization in the community to participate and have access to the partnership's agendas. Conversely, tight structures were more controlled, and only key actors would have access to the agendas. Open structures also allowed members to "dip in and out" of the membership, while members in tight structures were obligated to participate. The context of this study indicated that the partnerships in both two cases operated under a hybrid structure, wherein members were selected through personal networks rather than open calls. Also, some members were obligated to participate as part of their commitment to the partnership, while others

participated voluntarily. This type of hybrid structure posed challenges to meet the changing partnership agendas. *The study indicates that there is a need for alignment between partnership agenda and membership to make things happen.*

Furthermore, the partnerships used intention to establish their teams initially to recruit individuals from different groups in the community to align with the initial partnership agenda of “collecting community data”. However, as the partnerships matured, their agendas changed to “developing and implementing shared goals”, the membership no longer aligned with the new agendas. Both partnership teams struggled with not having the “right” members, and not having “enough” members to meet the needs of developing and implementing shared goals. Thus, it seemed that when the members’ capacity, including their interests, did not align with the needs of the partnership agenda, it created the lack of member capacity issue, and resulted in an increase in collaborative inertia. This example implied that as partnership agendas changed over time, membership needed to adjust in conjunction.

*This study indicates that consistency in membership was necessary to “make things happen” in a partnership.* In addition to misaligned membership and agenda, high turnover observed in the partnership members posed challenges, especially in Partnership B. Conversely, findings from the Partnership A case study showed that the team members who took the partnership to the finish line were involved and committed from the beginning of the partnership. Even though the size and composition of membership changed over time, there was a core set of members that were consistently involved in the partnership’s agenda. Thus, it seemed that both adjustment and consistency of membership, were simultaneously critical to making things happen in these inter-organizational partnerships.

In Figure 5.4 I have depicted the themes about tensions between fluidity and consistency in membership structure, as well as the need to align membership structure to partnership agendas. In the case narratives, I described how Partnership A combatted this tension by readjusting their shared project goals to align with the capacity of members that were consistently present and were able to achieve those goals, while how Partnership B was unable to find alignment as shared goals were not adjusted, nor was it able to adjust membership.

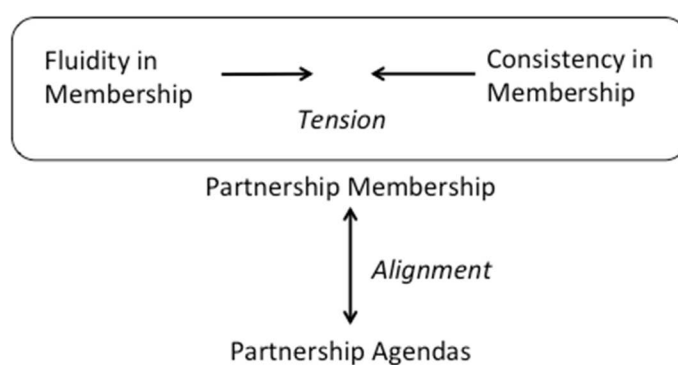


Figure 5.4: Tension between fluidity and consistency in membership

#### 5.1.5 Contribution Five: Making Things Happen Through Partnership's Communication Processes

“Collaborative spaces” include any type of physical or digital spaces that enable communication processes and allow for partnership members to conduct collaborative activity toward operating, advancing, and sustaining the partnership's goals (Jacklin-Jarvis, 2013). This study indicated the critical need for these collaborative spaces, as they were conduits of outcomes, and thus necessary for partnerships to survive and avoid becoming non-operational.

The only collaborative spaces for the observed partnerships were face-to-face meetings. It was during these meetings that the partnerships' agendas were discussed and carried out. It seemed that if meetings did not occur, the partnerships immediately transitioned to high levels of inertia,



as lack of meetings resulted in lack of outcomes. This was seen in the case of Partnership B; where the longer the team went between meetings, it seemed that they were operating in higher levels of collaborative inertia. It was challenging for partnership B to transition to lower levels of inertia, as the data indicated that lack of meetings had other compounding consequences, such as loss in team members' interest in the partnership's agendas, and the resulting decrease in membership.

Another relationship identified in this study was between team members, collaborative spaces, and outcomes. If meetings were scheduled, but there were not "enough and right" team members at these meetings, it seemed that the production of outcomes decreased. This was also observed in the analysis of Partnership B's data. *Thus, the study indicated that there was a need to have "enough and right" members attending these collaborative spaces to "make things happen"*.

I also found that the presence or absence of five key communication processes occurring in these meetings seemed to impact the creation and implementation of partnership agendas. Since the context for this study was a community development program, one key communication process observed was instructional learning. The findings indicate that creation of partnership agendas occurred using instructional learning, team discussion, and team decision-making processes. It appeared that the implementation of partnership agendas occurred through team discussion, team decision-making, action planning, and action taking. It seemed that when all four of these processes occurred consistently at every meeting, the partnership team was able to reach their goals sooner, as the data indicated that the team members were motivated to "make things happen" and had clarity in action planning and action taking.

Collaborative Spaces	Collaborative Processes	Team Members	Collective Actions	Outcomes
—				Negligible Outputs
+		—		Negligible Outputs
+	—	+	—	Slow Rate of Outputs
+	+	+	—	Slow Rate of Outputs
+	+	+	+	High Rate of Outputs

Figure 5.5: Relationship between outputs and collaborative variables

*Consequently, the study indicates that collaborative space, and the communication processes identified, along with team members and their actions, and partnership outcomes seem attributable to each other.* In Figure 5.5, I have provided a visual representation of the effects and relationships between collaborative spaces, collaborative processes, team members, their collective actions, and outcomes as synthesized from the study's findings. I created this figure by aggregating the themes and analysis for research questions two and four. A '+' indicates presence and '-' indicates absence of the (part/full in case of processes and actions) variables. The figure shows: when the outcomes were negligible, when the rate of outputs generated was slow, and when there was a high rate of outputs as dependent on the absence or presence of variables.

Summarizing the discussion, and as represented in Figure 5.5, my findings indicated that when meetings did not occur, all collaborative activity halted, resulting in no outcomes. If meetings did occur, but there were not "enough or right" members present (Partnership B), outcomes were

still negligible. It seemed that when the right processes (explained in Section 4.3) were enabled in the meetings by “enough and right” members (through their collective actions explained in Section 4.5) the number of decisions made and milestone achieved in each meeting were higher (as seen in Figure 4.18).

#### 5.1.6 Contribution Six: Making Things Happen Through Balancing Member Roles

Roles and responsibilities allow organizations to manage tasks and provide structure (Compton, 1997; Thompson, 2004). I found that, in this context of inter-organizational partnerships, roles and responsibilities were task-oriented instead of being aligned to member’s expertise or experience (expertise-oriented). In addition, roles were classified as either formal (positional) or member. Member role responsibilities were individual or collective in nature and were developed from meeting to meeting based on the tasks identified. Team members, depending on their capacity to follow through, volunteered for these task-based responsibilities. This dynamic nature of task-based responsibilities seemed to impact distribution of control and accountability in terms of follow-through. Thus, formal roles were limited in this arrangement to only one: the coach’s role. Instead, roles emerged informally and as needs arose for those particular roles.

##### 5.1.6.1 Orientation of the Positional Roles

I found that, in the context of these partnerships, formal or positional roles were associated with external entities, specifically the community development program and funding organizations. Huxham and Vangen (2000) explained that positional roles in collaborations are external organizations, such as funding agencies, in which the role is assigned to designate legitimacy. An example of a positional role was that of a convener or facilitator, who “critically affects the ability of other group members to enact their leadership roles” (Huxham & Vangen, 2000 p. 1168). Within the scope of the inter-organizational partnerships studied as cases, the coach’s role was a formal,

positional role, who was “looked up” to by team members for a variety of activities, such as guidance, coaching, facilitating, leadership, organizing, and communication. Team members especially relied on the coach when the transition from “imposed” to “composed” structure did not occur. These positional roles provided structure to reduce uncertainty in the process of creation and implementation of partnership agendas. *However, the findings indicated an additional tension, depicted in Figure 5.6, forms when team members are trying to transition from imposed to composed structure, and seems to hinge on whether the positional role gets integrated into the team or serves as a ‘figure-head’ advisory role.*

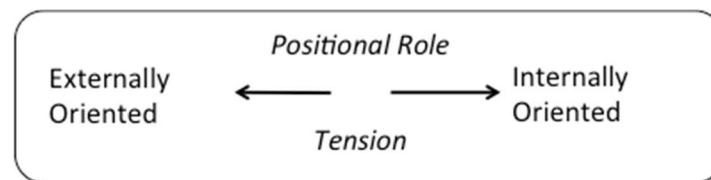


Figure 5.6: Tensions between positional roles in cross-sector partnerships

When the positional role of the coach evolved to be externally oriented, as seen in Partnership B, the coach’s role was viewed (by the team) as an external support function, in which the coach served as an advisor or consultant. When the coach’s role evolved to becoming an integral team member, and continued to be a boundary spanner for multiple resources, the role was internally oriented. Finding balance between these two orientations for a positional role, such as the HCI coach, seemed to have caused tension not only for the coaches, but also for the team members. In Partnership A, the coach’s role evolved to becoming more internally oriented. The findings showed that a higher degree of coach involvement indicated higher levels of perseverance in team members, allowing them to make things happen. In Partnership B, the lack of

communication created ambiguity around not only the orientation of the coach's role but also seemed to impact the team's ability and willingness to take ownership to compose structure.

#### 5.1.6.2 Balancing the Emerging Roles

The study showed that informal roles were emergent and not permanent in nature. Team members took up the role of 'input-giver', 'doer', or 'leader' when a certain process was being used, and when the need for that role emerged. When a majority of team members became 'input-givers', decision-making seemed to have slowed down, creating a need for 'leader(s)' to guide the team to a decision. Once the decision was made, the need for 'doers' seemed to have emerged to implement the partnership agenda. The study indicated that an imbalance of these roles manifested as two types of tension.

*The first type of tension, seems to be generated when there is an imbalance in the role of the 'leader' versus other team members while making decisions; when there is a truly democratic decision-making process, versus when the 'leader' is solely making the decision. I have depicted this tension arising from the decision-making process in Figure 5.7.*

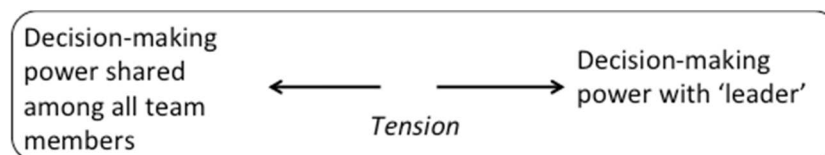


Figure 5.7: Tension arising from the decision-making process

When decision-making involved all team members, the study's findings indicated the process seemed to have slowed down if there were conflicting views among the 'input-givers', seen in the case of Partnership A. It seemed that the Partnership A's democratic process of decision-making affected loss of members who were not interested in pursuing the goal that was

selected by the group. On the other hand, the decision-making in Partnership B was influenced strongly by a single ‘leader’. The outcome seemed similar to Partnership A, where team members that were not interested in the goal selected faded out of the partnership. Thus, even though two different decision-making methods were used, the results indicated that there were similar outcomes with regards to dissatisfaction or disinterest in the selected goal.

*Thus, the study indicates that the goal-selecting process in inter-organizational partnerships may result in an imminent loss of members due to the voluntary nature of membership. This loss of members seems to negatively affect partnership structure.*

It seemed that the two decision-making methods also had divergent affects on ownership. When the decision-making was shared among team members, the findings indicated higher ‘shared ownership’ and commitment from the remaining members. Conversely, there seemed to be less ‘shared ownership’ among members when goal was influenced by the ‘leader’, as the ‘responsibility’ fell on the leader.

*The study indicated that the second tension occurred when team members did not switch roles from being an input-giver to a doer, which seemed to have resulted in not having enough ‘doers’ to implement the agendas (Figure 5.8).*



Figure 5.8: Tension between informal team member roles

An imbalance in input-giving versus doing was observed when team members were more interested in providing input and opinions but did not want to take ownership of the agenda and

tasks associated. The study showed that this imbalance seemed to have caused the issue of lack of member capacity, contributing to collaborative inertia. Within the study, partnerships in both cases were challenged with this imbalance. Partnership A was able to overcome this challenge as they had a consistent core member group who were able to adjust their role from 'input-giver' to 'doer' to implement their shared goals. However, Partnership B was an extreme example, where only the 'leader' and one other team member were 'doers', and the majority of the members were unable to switch their role from 'input-giver' to 'doer'. *Thus, this study indicates that the ability and willingness of team members to adapt from one role to another based on partnership needs facilitated "making things happen".*

#### 5.1.7 Contribution Seven: Making Things Happen Through Collective Actions

Huxham and Vangen (2000) identified three exemplary categories of activities that partnership members carried out to "shape and move agendas forward" (p. 1169). They suggested that "in order to cope with, or build on, the constraints or possibilities dictated by structures, processes, or other participants", the individual team member 'managed power and controlled the agenda', 'represented and mobilized the organization they represented', and 'enthused and empowered those who can deliver the partnership's goals' (Huxham & Vangen, 2000, p. 1169-1170). However, the findings from this study suggest that team members in inter-organizational partnerships acted in six ways that "made things happen".

There were two differences in Huxham and Vangen's (2000) framework and the findings from this study. First, the three types of activities described by Huxham and Vangen (2000) were developed using an "individualistic" lens, where an individual member tried to shape and implement the partnership agenda. However, in this study, the six member actions were "collective" in nature, where team members collectively, and as a consistent group, showed up to meetings,

were engaged in team discussions during meetings, participated in decision making to develop shared goals, reflected intentionally when they faced challenges, and persevered through by trusting the process and followed through on their responsibilities.

Secondly, Huxham and Vangen (2000) identified these three categories by analyzing and aggregating the different “leadership tasks” performed by individuals in partnerships. In this study, I found that the six actions identified occurred at the individual meeting level. Thus, the level of analysis for this study was different from that of Huxham and Vangen’s (2000) study.

*Thus, the findings from this study indicate that activities that “made things happen” occurred repeatedly over time and at a “collective” level among ‘consistent’ team members.*

#### 5.1.8 Contribution Eight: Reflective Handles for Collaborative Capacity in Cross-sector Partnerships

The purpose of this study was to understand mechanisms that make things happen in cross-sector collaborative partnerships. This dissertation contributed to a deeper understanding of the actions of partnership members, as well as different elements of structure, process, and participants that seem to influence “making things happen” to achieve collaborative advantage.

Using all the layers of analyses and findings from both the case studies, I have developed Figure 5.9 and presented a model of reflective handles for collaborative capacity in cross-sector partnerships. This is a pictorial representation of the complex relationships between the different mechanisms that ‘make things happen’ in cross-sector partnerships. I have presented the themes that emerged from this study, and are not exhaustive in nature.



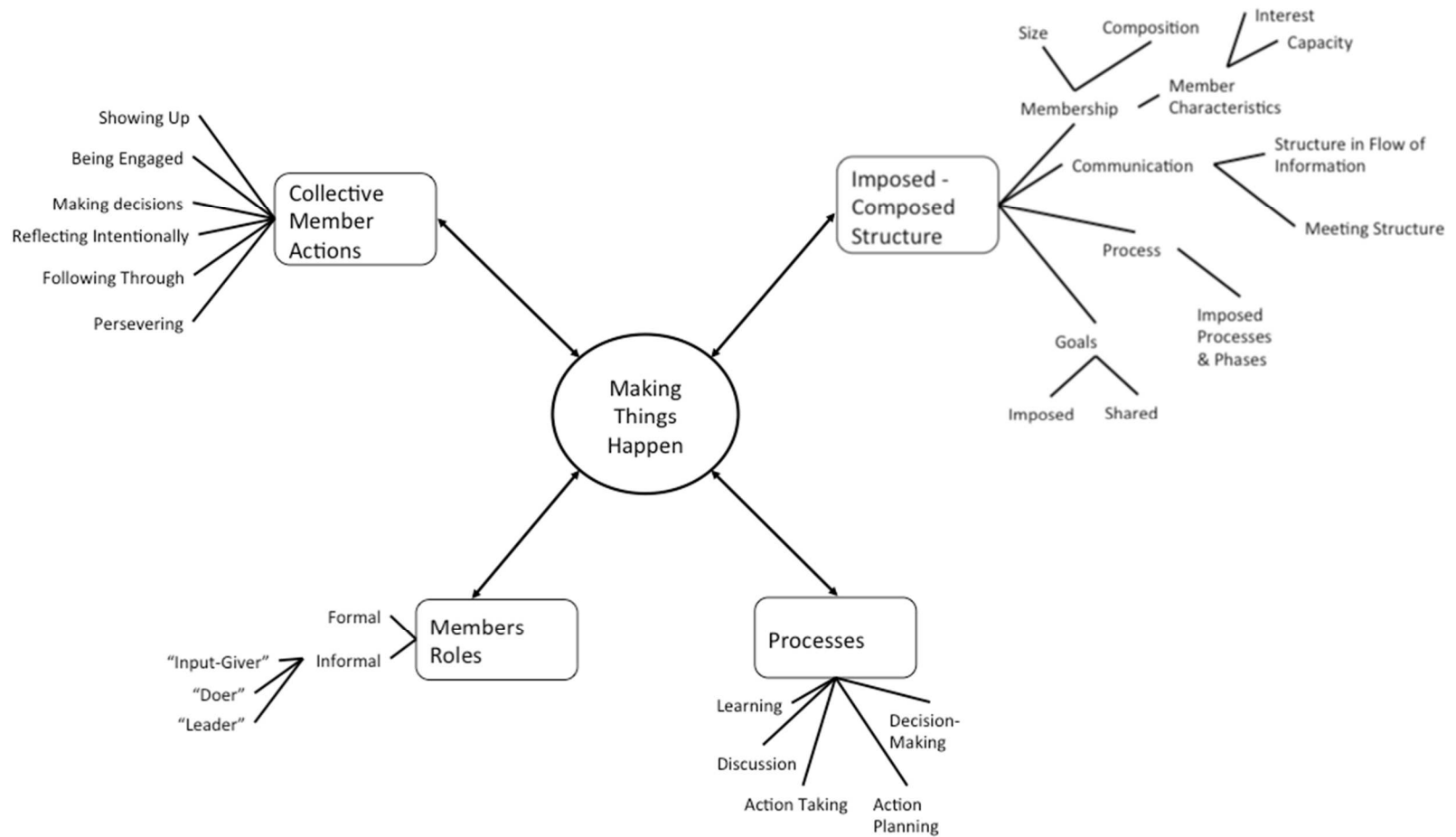


Figure 5.9: Model of Reflective Handles for Collaborative Capacity in Cross-Sector Partnerships

Huxham (2003, p. 420) provided “handles for reflective practice” that describe the theory of collaborative advantage. Hibbert et al. (2010, p.15) described these handles as,

These are formulated as conceptualizations of collaboration practice which focus the user’s attention on aspects of practice situations that have to be managed, but which expect the user to formulate the managerial action in the light of their own circumstances and competencies.

I have situated the handles in Figure 5.9 in the same context as Huxham (2003). My study has contributed richer and deeper meanings to the handles identified by the authors of the Theory of Collaborative Advantage, which have been described and discussed in Chapters Four and Five.

Collaborative capacity has been defined in the community development and coalition literature as “conditions needed for coalitions to promote effective collaboration and build sustainable community change” (Foster-Fishman et al., 2001, p. 242). This definition captures the spirit of the contributions discussed in this dissertation as this study indicated that each of the elements of partnership structure, communication processes and members’ actions seems necessary to facilitate “making things happen” in such cross-sector partnerships. There were some similarities of the handles for collaborative capacity in Figure 5.9 with the elements of organizational capacity in the collaborative capacity framework in coalitions developed by Foster-Fishman et al.’s (2001). However, even though, there was some validation of theoretical concepts, the caveat was that, the context of cross-sector partnerships is different from community coalitions. Thus, the study’s findings (Chapter 4) and the model presented in Figure 5.9 contribute to the concept of collaborative capacity in cross-sector partnerships.

## 5.2 Practical Contributions

This dissertation provides several contributions to the practitioners who are involved in such cross-sector collaborative partnerships. These practitioners are not only the partnership team

members, but also the partnership managers/ facilitators or coaches as in the case of such community-development programs. These practice-oriented recommendations are derived from the holistic understanding of mechanisms that made things happen in two cross-sector collaborative partnerships. These strategies are developed to address the four issues identified earlier that contribute to high levels of inertia. Thus, before I discuss the strategies, I urge practitioners to be *mindful and pay attention to any indicators that imply lack of clarity, lack of collaborative space, lack of members' capacity and lack of decision-making*.

### 5.2.1 Cultivate Your Collaborative Space

Every inter-organizational partnership has some space, whether it is physical like face-to-face working/ committee meetings, or digital online platforms that enable partnership members to interact, have discussions, make decisions, plan and organize for the partnership agendas. Identifying your partnership's collaborative space will allow you to then establish some shared structure. In the two case studies for this dissertation, the partnerships used meetings as their only collaborative space. I observed that when a meeting was postponed or cancelled, activity slowed down. The inactivity amplified as time went by and team members could not meet. This really affected not only the progress of the partnership, but really impacted team members' motivation and interest to stay engaged. Hence, establishing some protocols and procedures around collaborative spaces is critical. One way that Partnership A did this, was *scheduling these meetings in advance*, so that they were on everyone's calendar, and chances of conflicts were minimized. Secondly, they *never cancelled a scheduled meeting*, even when the team was going through a challenging time, or when it seemed that they were not making progress. Thirdly, have one team member be *formally responsible* for the collaborative space. In the case of Partnership A, the team members were very clear that their coach was responsible for scheduling and planning logistics

for the meeting. Not having a point person created confusion in Partnership B's team members, on who was responsible for scheduling the meetings, resulting in several meeting cancellations and months during which they never met. Lastly, *develop meeting agendas* or any protocols that keep the collaborative activity focused to the goals of the project. For Partnership A, the coach was the scribe for meeting minutes and developing the agenda for the next meeting, based on the decisions made and actions planned in the previous meeting. However, this strategy should be balanced with making sure that the collaborative spaces are not over structured and controlled by a single member; so that there is room for collective creativity, problem-solving and knowledge-sharing.

### 5.2.2 Trust the Process, and Require Decisions

From understanding both case studies for this dissertation, it was apparent that the process from establishing the partnership team to achieving collaborative advantage is long and time-intensive. I observed that both partnerships struggled with ambiguity related to developing shared goals and agendas. There is uncertainty and a level of messiness when the partnership teams were making decisions around choosing their focus and their project goals. The process was not linear as well, as both partnership teams went back and forth on their decisions. When I asked team members of both partnerships about their frustrations, it was clear that they struggled with ambiguity and process fatigue, especially when there were no decisions being made.

Firstly, partnership team members need to be *prepared to deal with uncertainty*. For some team members, this process is new and different from what they are used to. They are working towards solving complex problems with a variety of cross-sector perspectives, which can get overwhelming. One strategy that the coach in Partnership A used was to keep reminding the team what they were working towards, and how far they had come. Breaking down the unknown into

more manageable pieces allowed team members to focus on the task at hand. Secondly, *use the ambiguity to listen, learn, and question*. Team members in both partnership, were excited and engaged in the first phase of the HCI program, because they were learning about their community through each other's experiences and stories. This was very empowering as team members shared, actively listened and cared about each other's experiences. Questioning was important after listening and learning, because *questioning allowed for collective reflection* on whether what was being shared was relevant to the partnership's goals and whether it could be used for decision-making. Without questioning, the discussion became aimless and generated ambiguity. Also, questioning provided clarity in understanding regarding the expectations, scope and boundaries for the partnership. The period when team members were "mulling" and "sharing" was important in the co-creating process. Thus, listening, learning and questioning have an undercurrent of creativity and innovation (Innes, 1999; Guan et al., 2015; Obstfeld, 2005). Lastly, the partnership team members should *require decision-making at every meeting*, even if it starts with eliminating unworkable options and ideas. Not having outputs, including lack of decisions made, contributed to the frustration around progress in both the partnership teams studied. Decision-making and task planning, when done together, really forced the partnership to move forward. Partnership A team members used the strategy to "summarize" their meeting by allocating the last five minutes of the meeting to confirm whether all team members understood and agreed with the decision(s) made and who was responsible for the tasks associated with that decision. This strategy allowed development of mutual understanding, reduced any ambiguity and made team members accountable for their tasks.

### 5.2.3 Gauge Partnership Team Capacity

Most organizations are highly structured around roles and responsibilities that align with the organization member's skills and expertise. One of unique features of the two partnerships studied in this dissertation was that they were operating without formal roles. This created confusion in Partnership B, but also created a level of equality in the sharing of responsibilities among team members in Partnership A.

To operate with such flexibility and reduce confusion, partnership teams need to understand and organize team members' responsibilities based on their capacity. When team members were selected/recruited to be part of the partnership, in the context of the dissertation, they used "representation" as their criteria. Thus, team members selected had the capacity to provide input about the community based on the perspective of the organization/ sector/ under-represented group they represented. However, when they had to make decisions about their focus on economic development, leadership development or place-making in their community, not all members had the skills, knowledge or expertise in those topic areas. This made decision-making a more challenging process as the team members did not feel confident in their ability to make the decision. Also, when the shared project goals were developed, the team members lacked the capacity to develop project plans and use project management techniques to implement their project. Thus, the first strategy I recommend is to not only recruit team members using the 'representation' criteria, but also allow them to self-assess what their skill and knowledge-based capacities are and how they can contribute to the partnership. Also, throughout the process, use team reflection tools to assess if the team has the "right" members in terms of skills and expertise and "enough" members to implement a shared goal. Likewise, mechanisms need to be put in place to recoup from changes in structure. Partnership A team members constantly "checked-in" with each other during their meetings to reflect whether the goal/agenda they were working on could

be realistically be implemented with their current team capacity. Another strategy they used was to make sure that the team member responsible for certain tasks had the time and skill capacity to follow-through and offered additional help or resources if needed. This made team members feel supported. Lastly, Partnership A team members also engaged in building their team's capacity. Team members actively volunteered to assist other team members with tasks, so they could learn how to do that task themselves in the future. One team member from Partnership A shared how she went to city hall meetings with another team member to learn how to interact and share their work in these city hall meetings.

#### 5.2.4 Read the Room

This dissertation identified the presence of four issues that contributed to high levels of collaborative inertia. These four issues were observed repeatedly in the data when both the partnerships were “stuck” in medium-high levels of inertia. Thus, I recommend watching for these issues using a subtler approach of “reading the room” or a more direct approach by using “assessment tools” like focus groups, group reflection surveys, or discussions. Using these four issues as indicators of the onset of collaborative inertia would allow practitioners such as partnership managers or even team members to intervene and help address the issue immediately. I also found that there was pattern in which these issues emerged. In Partnership B, lack of clarity was the first issue. When it was not addressed, it spiraled into lack of decision-making. This affected members' interest and motivation and created a lack of member capacity, resulting in cancellation or rescheduling of meetings. Thus, all four issues were present and it became very challenging for the remaining team members to address these issues. Addressing one issue at a time is much more manageable than trying to address all four issues simultaneously.

### 5.3 Limitations of the Study

The field of inter-organizational relationships is vast and very fragmented in terms of the terminology, theories and methods used because of its inter-disciplinary nature. This posed a challenge for me as a researcher, trying to locate the appropriate discipline in which to situate this study. Also, getting access to cross-sector partnerships that included institutions of higher education as key partners was a challenge for me, which impacted the change in scope for this dissertation. Limitations of this study are discussed in the remainder of this section.

First, there was limited empirical work in the field of inter-organizational relationships conducted to understand the concepts and phenomenon being investigated in this dissertation, which affected the overall research design of this study. I was unable to replicate methodologies or theoretically validate the research design.

Secondly, the communities where these partnerships were established were about a 2-3 hour drive each way for me. The seven hours of commute to and back from the community Partnership A was a challenge, as I did not have the time availability or funding resources to support the travel expenses. Thus, I could not attend and observe every single meeting for Partnership A.

Third, Partnership B was in high levels of inertia, and was inactive for a couple of months during my data collection phase of research. I was unable to conduct observations when the meetings were cancelled and never rescheduled.

Fourth, Partnership B had only two team members that were active, during the data collection phase. I was able to address this issue by interviewing one new member of the team and four members that were no longer participating to get their perspective on the operations of the partnership. In the context for Partnership A, I was not given access to team members that were



no longer active, limiting the understanding to the perspectives of only those that were still active, and not getting a chance to understand why some of the inactive members stopped participating.

A fifth limitation was missing documents such as meeting minutes and coach's meeting reports. This created an incomplete data set, for example, when I was trying to understand the number of members at each meeting in the twenty-four months of the partnerships' tenure. Not having these documents also broke the 'story chain' as I was trying to understand the chronological set of events. I had to rely on other sources of data and even do member checks to address some of these limitations.

Lastly, this study was very large and complex in terms of the number of variables, constructs and relationships being investigated. This limited my ability to investigate each of those elements in depth and provide a richer understanding of the variables and their influences on "making things happen".

#### 5.4 Directions for Future Research

Through this study I have contributed to the understanding of "making things happen" in cross-sector partnerships, by expanding the theory of collaborative advantage and operationalizing the concept of collaborative inertia. These contributions and the exploratory nature of this dissertation allows for several future research opportunities.

Future research should continue to investigate this topic by replicating this dissertation's study in a variety of contexts, using different types of cross-sector partnerships and also with a larger number of cross-sector partnerships. Future research should also validate the original and expanded definitions of "mechanisms that make things happen". There is a need to understand and breakdown the complexity of collaborative dynamics described in this dissertation. Thus, future research needs to individually examine each construct in this study (structure, processes, members,

actions, outcomes, goals) empirically by investigating on-going partnerships to further understand how each construct evolves over time, and its influence on collaborative advantage.

Future research should include more studies that operationalize collaborative inertia using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. Qualitative approaches will allow for richer understanding of the factors that contribute to collaborative inertia. Quantitative or mixed methods studies can be used to develop graphs and charts for more sophisticated visual depiction of how partnerships transition between levels of inertia.

Diagnostic tools and frameworks can also be developed as part of future research using the four issues identified that contribute to collaborative inertia. An example of this would be developing a diagnostic survey for the team by using the four issues and the responses to this survey can then be further validated using Factor analysis. Future research can also examine patterns among these four issues, allocate weighted values depending on which issues are more critical or which combination of issues has higher contributions to collaborative inertia. Holistic intervention models should also be developed and evaluation methodologies can be used to examine if certain interventions are more favorable to addressing specific issues that contribute to collaborative inertia. A caveat is that context matters and future research should address the role of contextual factors.

Future research should explore different tensions discussed in this dissertation such as those that arise between the need to keep the decision-making democratic and shared among all team members and the need to speed up the process by having one team member influence the decision-making. Interviews with experienced partnership managers can be used to examine how these tensions can be navigated.

Future research should investigate the concepts of “right” members and “enough” members to address the needs of such cross-sector partnerships by reviewing other literature bases such as team/group dynamics literature. If there is literature on these concepts in those fields, those theories and concepts should be applied to the context of inter-organizational relationships.

Future research should review literature on role of digital spaces and technologies as they relate to collaborative spaces in cross-sector partnerships. This includes understanding not only how online collaborative tools are used for sharing resources, but also study cross-sector partnerships that solely operate through online digital spaces. Future research should also investigate and develop best practices on designing digital collaborative spaces for such partnerships. In this dissertation, there was only one primary collaborative space used, which was team meetings. Future research can explore how such partnerships can use and design multiple collaborative spaces so as to mitigate the risk of cancelled meetings. The use of digital collaborative spaces such as Google Drive allowed Partnership A in this dissertation to develop shared power structure as all active team members had access to all the resources. Thus, future research should also explore the effect of digital collaborative spaces in cross-sector partnerships on structure and power distribution.

This dissertation also contributed to the concept of building collaborative capacity in cross-sector partnerships. Future research should continue to explore and interrogate this concept investigating other types of inter-organizational partnerships in different contexts.

## 5.5 Conclusions

To conclude, this dissertation identified cross-sector collaborative partnerships as an area with substantial opportunity to better understand how individuals and groups can come together to solve complex community problems. This dissertation, through a qualitative multiple-case study

approach, identified mechanism through which collaborative advantage can be achieved during the post-implementation phase of these partnerships. Furthermore, the study also uncovered issues that contribute to collaborative inertia. In both cases, this study contributed to further understanding the relationship between collaborative advantage and inertia and how that influences “making things happen”.

This study contributes significant knowledge to the mechanisms (e.g., partnership structure) that influence the potential of partnerships. Knowledge of these mechanisms will provide insight into the development of progress indicators for partnership managers to watch for when monitoring partnership performance. In addition, the new understanding of these mechanisms provided in this study provide guidance for the development of prescriptive interventions to provide a necessary “shock” to a partnership experiencing significant collaborative inertia. The study also provides direction for future research in several areas, including the expansion of the use of qualitative multiple-case study approaches to obtain deeper understanding of the causes and remedies for collaborative inertia, as well as understanding the impact of interventions throughout a partnership. Through its theoretical, methodological, and practical contributions, this study provides a new basis on which collaborative cross-sector partnerships can be designed and understood. Hopefully, this work will lead to more substantive and lasting impacts for communities that undertake this complex, dynamic work.

## REFERENCES

- Alimo-Metcalfe, B., & Alban-Metcalfe, J. (2005). Leadership: Time for a New Direction? *Leadership, 1*(1): 51–71.
- Andrews, R. & Entwistle, T. (2010). Does cross-sectoral partnership deliver? An empirical exploration of public service effectiveness, efficiency, and equity. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory 20*(3): 679–701.
- Ansell, C., & Gash, A. (2008). Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice. *Journal of Public Administration Research & Theory, 18*(4), 543-571.
- Armistead, C., Pettigrew, P., & Aves, S. (2007). Exploring leadership in multi-sectoral partnerships. *Leadership, 3*(2), 211-230.
- Bachmann, R., & Zaheer, A. (2008). Trust in interorganizational relations. In S. Cropper, C. Huxham, M. Ebers, & P. Smith Ring (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of inter-organizational relations* (pp. 533-554). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Barringer, B. R., & Harrison, J. S. (2000). Walking a tightrope: Creating value through interorganizational relationships. *Journal of Management, 26*(3), 367–403.
- Bass, B. M. (1985). *Leadership and performance beyond expectation*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M. (1990). *Bass & Stogdill's handbook of leadership: Theory, research, and managerial applications*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Bass, B. M., & Avolio B. J. (1994). *Improving organizational effectiveness through transformational leadership*. London, UK: Sage.
- Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report, 13*(4), 544-559.

- Beebe, L. H. (2007). What can we learn from pilot studies? *Perspectives in Psychiatric Care*, 43(4), 213-218.
- Bendell, J., & Murphy, D. F. (1999). Business, NGOs and sustainable development. (Discussion Paper No. 109), United Nations Research Institute For Social Development, Geneva, CH.
- Berardo, R., Heikkila, T., & Gerlak, A.K. (2014). Interorganizational engagement in collaborative environmental management: Evidence from the south Florida ecosystem restoration task force. *Journal of Public Administration and Research Theory*, 24(3), 697–719.
- Boulding, K. (1956). General systems theory: The skeleton of science. *Management Science*, 2(3), 197–208.
- Brownie, S. (2007). *From policy to practice: The New Zealand experience in implementing partnership-based local development policy* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). Charles Sturt University.
- Bryman, A. (1984). The debate about quantitative a question of method qualitative research: or epistemology? *The British Journal of Sociology*, 35(1), 75–92.
- Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Middleton Stone, M. (2006). The design and implementation of cross-sector collaborations: Propositions from the literature. *Public Administration Review* 66(s1), 44–55.
- Bryson, J. M., Crosby, B. C., & Middleton Stone, M. (2015). Designing and implementing cross-sector collaborations: Needed and challenging. *Public Administration Review*, 75(5), 647-663.
- Burmeister, E., & Aitken, L. M. (2012). Sample size: How many is enough? *Australian Critical Care*, 25(4), 271-274.

- Buys, N., & Bursnall, S. (2007). Establishing university–community partnerships: Processes and benefits. *Journal of Higher Education Policy and Management*, 29(1), 73–86.
- Carrasco, V. (2009). *Building collaborative capacity across institutional fields: A theoretical dissertation based on a meta-analysis of existing empirical research*. (Doctoral dissertation). ProQuest Dissertations and Theses.
- Chrislip, D. D., & Larson, C. E. (1994). *Collaborative leadership: How citizens and civic leadership can make a difference*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Coleman, J. S. (1990). *Foundations of Social Theory*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Compton, W. D. (1997). *Engineering management: Creating and managing world-class operations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Connelly, D. R. (2007). Leadership in the collaborative interorganizational domain. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 30(11), 1231-1262.
- Contractor, N. S., DeChurch, L. A., Carson, J., Carter, D. R., & Keegan, B. (2012). The topology of collective leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 23(6), 994-1011.
- Cook, K. (1977). Exchange and Power in Networks of Interorganizational Relations. *Sociological Quarterly*, 18, 62–82.
- Creswell, J. (2014). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed method approaches* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Cropper, S., Ebers, M., Huxham, C., & Smith Ring, P. (2008a). Introducing inter-organizational relations. In S. Cropper, C. Huxham, M. Ebers, & P. Smith Ring (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of inter-organizational relations* (pp. 3-21). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.

- Cropper, S., Ebers, M., Huxham, C., & Smith Ring, P. (2008b). The field of inter-organizational relations: A jungle or an Italian garden? In S. Cropper, C. Huxham, M. Ebers, & P. Smith Ring (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of inter-organizational relations* (pp. 719–738). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Cropper, S., Ebers, M., Huxham, C., & Smith Ring, P. (2011). Packing more punch? Developing the field of inter-organizational relations. *International Journal of Strategic Business Alliances*, 2(3), 153-170.
- Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. M. (2005). *Leadership for the common good: Tackling public problems in a shared-power world*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Crosby, B. C., & Bryson, J. M. (2010). Integrative leadership and the creation and maintenance of cross-sector collaborations. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 21(2), 211-230.
- Crotty, M. (1998). *The foundations of social research: Meaning and perspective in the research process*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Culpan, R. (2009). A fresh look at strategic alliances: research issues and future directions. *International Journal of Strategic Business Alliances*, 1(1), 4-23.
- Cummings, T. C. (2007). 2006 Presidential address: Quest for an engaged academy. *Academy of Management Review*, 32, 355–60.
- Cunliffe, A. L. & Eriksen, M. (2011). Relational Leadership. *Human Relations*, 64(11), 1425-1449.
- Dalziel, R. & Willis, M. (2015). Capacity building with older people through local authority and third-sector partnerships. *Ageing & Society*, 35(2), 428-449.
- Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.) (1998). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.



- Devine, A., Boyd, S., & Boyle, E. (2010). Unraveling the complexities of inter-organizational relationships within the sports tourism policy arena on the island of Ireland., In G. Gorham & Z. Mottiar (Eds.), *Contemporary issues in Irish and global tourism hospitality* (pp. 200-224). Dublin, IRL: Dublin Institute of Technology.
- Dibley, L. (2011). Analyzing narrative data using McCormack's lenses. *Nurse Researcher*, 18(3), 13-19.
- Dickinson, H. & Glasby, J. (2010). Why partnership working doesn't work: Pitfalls, problems and possibilities in English health and social care. *Public Management Review*, 12(6), 811-828.
- Dickson, G., Milne, S., & K. Werner (2018). Collaborative capacity to develop an events portfolio within a small island development state: the Cook Islands. *Journal of Policy Research in Tourism, Leisure and Events*, 10(1), 69-89.
- Dill, W. R. (1959). Environment as an influence on managerial autonomy. In J. D. Thompson, P. B. Hummond, R. W. Hawkes, B. H. Junker, & A. Tuden (Eds.), *Comparative studies in administration* (pp. 131-161). Pittsburgh, PA: University of Pittsburg Press.
- Doody, O., & Doody, C. M. (2015). Conducting a pilot study: Case study of a novice researcher. *British Journal of Nursing*, 24(21), 1074-1078.
- Drath, W., McCauley, C., Palus, C., Van Velsor, E., O'Connor, P., & McGuire, J. (2008). Direction, alignment, commitment: Toward a more integrative ontology of leadership. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(6), 635-653.
- Eckerle Curwood, S., Munger, F., Mitchell, T., Mackeigan, M., & Farrar, A. (2011). Building effective community-university partnerships: Are universities truly ready? *Michigan Journal of Community Service Learning*, 17(2), 15-26.

- Elmuti, D., Abebe, M., & Nicolosi, M. (2005). An overview of strategic alliances between universities and corporations. *Journal of workplace Learning, 17*(1/2), 115-129.
- Evan, W. M. (1965). Towards a theory of interorganizational relations. *Management Science, 11*, 217–30.
- Fairhurst, G. T., & Uhl-Bien, M. (2012). Organizational discourse analysis (ODA): Examining leadership as a relational process. *The Leadership Quarterly, 23*(6), 1043-1062.
- Firestone, W.A. (1993). Alternative arguments for generalizing from data as applied to qualitative research. *Educational Researcher, 22*(4), 16-23.
- Fligstein, N. & McAdam, D. (2012). *A Theory of Fields*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Flyvbjerg, B. (2006). Five misunderstandings about case-study research. *Qualitative Inquiry, 12*(2), 219–245.
- Friedrich, T. L., Vessey, W. B., Schuelke, M. J., Ruark, G. A., & Mumford, M. D. (2009). A framework for understanding collective leadership: The selective utilization of leader and team expertise within networks. *The Leadership Quarterly, 20*(6), 933-958.
- Fusch, P. I., & Ness, L. R. (2015). Are we there yet? Data saturation in qualitative research. *The Qualitative Report, 20*(9), 1408-1416.
- Galaskiewicz, J. (1985). Interorganizational relations. *Annual Review of Sociology, 11*, 281– 304.
- Geyskens, I., Steenkamp, J., and Kumar, N. (2006). ‘Make, ally, or Buy: A transaction cost theory meta-analysis. *Academy of Management Journal, 49*, 519–43.
- Golden-Biddle, K., & Locke, K. (2007). *Composing qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Goleman, D., Boyatzis, R., & McKee, A. (2002). *Primal leadership: Realizing the power of emotional intelligence*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business School Press.

- Gray, B. (1985). Conditions facilitating interorganizational collaboration. *Human Relations*, 38, 911–36.
- Gray, B. (1989). Negotiations: Arenas for reconstructing meaning. Unpublished working paper, Pennsylvania State University, Center for Research in Conflict and Negotiation, University Park, PA.
- Gray, B., & Wood, D. (1991). Collaborative alliances: Moving from practice to theory. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 27(1), 3–22.
- Green, G. P., & Haines, A. (2002). *Asset building & Community Development*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guan, J., Yan, Y., & Zhang, J. (2015). How do collaborative features affect scientific output? Evidences from wind power field. *Scientometrics*, 102(1), 333-355.
- Guba, G. & Lincoln, Y. (1998). Competing paradigms in qualitative research: Theories and issues. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (193-220). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Guba, E. G., & Lincoln, Y. S. (1981). *Effective evaluation: Improving the usefulness of evaluation results through responsive and naturalistic approaches*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Guest, G., Bunce, A., Johnson, L. (2006). How many interviews are enough? An experiment with data saturation and variability. *Field Methods*, 18, 59-82.
- Guest, G., MacQueen, K. M., & Namey, E.E. (2012). *Applied thematic analysis*. Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Gulati, R. (1995). ‘Social structure and alliance formation patterns: A longitudinal analysis. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 619–52.

- Hardy, C., Lawrence, T. B., & Grant, D. (2005). Discourse and collaboration: The role of conversations and collective identity. *Academy of Management Review*, *30*(1), 58–77.
- Hesse-Biber, S., & Leavy, P. (2004). *Approaches to qualitative research: A reader on theory and practice*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Higgins, M., and Gulati, R. (2003). Getting off to a good start: The effects of upper echelon affiliations on underwriter prestige. *Organization Science*, *14*, 244–63.
- Hiller, N. J., Day, D. V., & Vance, R. J. (2006). Collective enactment of leadership roles and team effectiveness: A field study. *Leadership Quarterly*, *17*, 387–397.
- Hodge, G. A. & Greve, C. (2007). Public–private partnerships: An international performance review. *Public Administration Review*, *67*(3): 545–58.
- Hodgkinson, G. (2001). Facing the future: The nature and purpose of management research re-assessed. *British Journal of Management*, *12*, S1-S80.
- Holloway, I. (1997). *Basic concepts for qualitative research*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Science.
- Huxham, C., & Vangen, S. (2000). Leadership in the shaping and implementation of collaboration agendas: How things happen in a (not quite) joined-up world. *Academy of Management journal*, *43*(6), 1159-1175.
- Huxham, C., & Vangen, S. (2004). Doing things collaboratively: Realizing the advantage or succumbing to inertia? *Organizational Dynamics*, *33*(2), 190-201.
- Huxham, C., & Vangen, S. (2005). *Managing to collaborate: The theory and practice of collaborative advantage*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Idemudia, U. (2008). Conceptualising the CSR and development debate: Bridging existing analytical gaps. *Journal of Corporate Citizenship*, *29*, 91–110.

- Inkpen, A. C., and Beamish, P. W. (1997). Knowledge, bargaining power and the instability of international joint venture. *Academy of Management Review*, 22(1), 177–202.
- Innes, J. E. (1999). Evaluating consensus building. In L. Susskind, S. McKernan, & J. Thomas-Larmer (Eds.), *The consensus building handbook: A comprehensive guide to reaching agreement* (pp. 631–675). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Innes, J.E. & Booher, D.E. (1999). Consensus building and complex adaptive systems: A framework for evaluating collaborative planning. *Journal of the American Planning Association*, 65(4), 412-423.
- Intrilligator, B. (1992). Establishing interorganizational structures that facilitate successful school partnerships. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco.
- Jacklin-Jarvis, C. (2013). Collaboration for children: leadership in a complex space (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). The Open University, Milton Keynes, UK.
- Jamali, D., & Keshishian, T. 2009. Uneasy alliances: Lessons learned from partnerships between businesses and NGOs in the context of CSR. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 84(2), 277–295.
- Jariath, N., Hogerney, M., & Parsons, C. (2000). The role of the pilot study: A case illustration from cardiac nursing research. *Applied Nursing Research*, 13(2), 92-96.
- Johnson, R. A., Kast, F. E., and Rosenzweig, J. E. (1964). Systems theory and management. *Management Science*, 10(2):367–85.
- Kale, P., Singh, H., & Perlmutter, H. (2000). Learning and protection of proprietary assets in strategic alliances: Building relational capital. *Strategic Management Journal*, 23(21), 217–237.

- Kale, P., & Singh, H. (2009). Managing strategic alliances: what do we know now, and where do we go from here? *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 23(3), 45–63.
- Kelly, B. (2007). Methodological issues for qualitative research with learning disabled children. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, 10(1): 21-35.
- Kern, T., & Willcocks, L. (2000). Exploring information technology outsourcing relationships: Theory and practice. *Journal of Strategic Information Systems*, 9(4), 321–350.
- Kim, Y. (2011). The pilot study in qualitative inquiry: Identifying issues and learning for culturally competent research. *Qualitative Social Work*, 10(2), 190-206.
- Knoke, D., & Chen, X. (2008). Political perspectives on inter-organizational networks. In S. Cropper, C. Huxham, M. Ebers, & P. Smith Ring (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of inter-organizational relations* (pp. 441-472). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Koschmann, M. A., Kuhn, T. R., & Pfarrer, M. D. (2012). A communicative framework of value in cross-sector partnerships. *Academy of Management Review*, 37(2), 332–54.
- Kotter, J. P. (1985). *Power and influence: Beyond formality*. New York, NY: Free Press.
- Kuhn, T. (1970). *The structure of scientific revolutions* (2nd ed.). Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.
- Lameman, B. A., El-Nasr, M. S., Drachen, A., Foster, W., Moura, D., & Aghabeigi, B. (2010). User studies: A strategy towards a successful industry-academic relationship. In *Proceedings of the ...Proceedings of the International Academic Conference on the Future of Game Design and Technology* (pp. 134–142).
- Lancaster, G. A., Dodd, S., & Williamson, P. R. (2004). Design and analysis of pilot studies: recommendations for good practice. *Journal of Evaluation in Clinical Practice*, 10(2), 307-312.

- Larson, A. (1992). Network dyads in entrepreneurial settings: A study of the governance of exchange relationships. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 37, 76–104.
- Levine, S., and White, P. E. (1961). Exchange as a conceptual framework for the study of interorganizational relationships. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 5, 583–601.
- Li, S. X. & Rowley, T. (2002). Inertia and evaluation mechanisms in interorganizational partner selection: Syndicate formation among US investment banks. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45(6), 1104-1119.
- Litwak, E., and Hylton, L. F. (1962). Inter-organizational analysis: A hypothesis in coordinating agencies. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 6, 395–426.
- Lomi, A. (2000). Density dependence and spatial duality in organizational founding rates: Danish commercial banks, 1846–1989. *Organization Studies*, 21, 433–61.
- Lomi, A., and Pattison, P. (2006). Manufacturing relations: An empirical study of the organization of production across multiple networks. *Organization Science*, 17, 313–32.
- Lund-Thomsen, P. (2008). The global sourcing and codes of conduct debate: Five myths and five recommendations. *Development and Change*, 39(6), 1005–1018.
- Mayntz, R. (2004). Mechanisms in the analysis of social macro-phenomena. *Philosophy of the Social Sciences*, 34(2), 237–59.
- Mead, N., Beckman, K., Lawrence, J., O'Mary, G., Parish, C., Unpingco, P., & Walker, H. (1999). Industry/university collaborations: Different perspectives heighten mutual opportunities. *Journal of Systems and Software*, 49(2-3), 155–162.
- Mehra, A., Smith, B. R., Dixon, A. L., & Robertson, B. (2006). Distributed leadership in teams: The network of leadership perceptions and team performance. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(3), 232-245.

- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco, CA: Sage.
- Merriam, S. B. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B. & Huberman, A. M. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded sourcebook* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Morse, J. M. (1995). The significance of saturation. *Qualitative Health Research*, 5(2), 147-149.
- Morse, J. M., Olson, K., & Spiers, J. (2002). Verification strategies for establishing reliability and validity in qualitative research. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 1(2), 13–22.
- Mowery, D. C. and Nelson, R. R. (Eds.) (2004). *Ivory tower and industrial innovation: University-industry technology before and after the Bayh-Dole Act*. Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University Press.
- Murrell, K. L. (1997). Emergent theories of leadership for the next century: Towards relational concepts. *Organization Development Journal* 15(1), 35-42.
- Myers, I. B., & McCaulley, B. H. (1985). *Manual: A guide to the development and use of the Myers-Briggs type indicator*. Palo Alto, CA: Consulting Psychologists Press.
- Nonaka, I. (1991). The knowledge-creating company. *Harvard Business Review*, 6, 96–104.
- Nooteboom, B. (1996). Trust, opportunism and governance: A process and control model. *Organization Studies*, 17, 985–1010.
- Nooteboom, B. (1999). *Inter-firm alliances: Analysis and design*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Northouse, P. G. (2013). *Leadership: Theory and practice* (6th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Obstfeld, D. (2005). Social networks, the tertius lungens orientation, and involvement in innovation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 50(1), 100-130.



- Oliver, C. (1990). The determinants of interorganizational relationships: integration and future directions. *Academy of Management Review*, 16, 241–65.
- Osborne, S., Chew, C., & McLaughlin, K. (2008). The once and future pioneers? The innovative capacity of voluntary organisations and the provision of public services: A longitudinal approach. *Public Management Review*, 10(1), 51-70.
- Osborn, R. N. & Marion, R. (2009). Contextual leadership, transformational leadership and the performance of international innovation seeking alliances. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 20(2), 191-206.
- Ospina, S. M. & Foldy, E. G. (2015). Enacting collective leadership in a shared-power world. J. Perry & R. K. Christensen (Eds.), *Handbook of Public Administration* (3rd ed.) (pp. 489-506). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Ospina, S. M., & Hittelman, M. (2011). Thinking sociologically about leadership. In M. Harvey & R. E. Riggio (Eds.), *Leadership Studies: The Dialogue of Disciplines* (pp. 89-100). Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar Publishing.
- Ospina, S. M. & Uhl-Bien, M. (Eds.) (2012). *Advancing Relational Leadership Research: A Dialogue among Perspectives*. Charlotte, NC: Information Age Publishers.
- Ostrom, E., Parks, R. B., and Whitaker, G. P. (1974). 'Defining and measuring structural variations in interorganizational arrangements' *Publius*, 4(4), 87–108.
- Ouchi, W. G. (1981). *Theory Z: How American business can meet the Japanese challenge*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Oxley, J. E. (1999). Institutional environment and the mechanism of governance: The impact of intellectual property protection on the structure of interfirm alliances. *Journal of Economic Behavior and Organization*, 38, 283–309.

- Park, S. H., & Luo, Y. (2001). Guanxi and organizational dynamics: Organizational networking in Chinese firms. *Strategic Management Journal*, 22, 455–77.
- Parkhe, A. (1993). 'Messy' research, methodological predispositions and theory development in international joint ventures. *Academy of Management Review*, 18(2) 227-268.
- Parmigiani, A. & Rivera-Santos, M. (2011). Clearing a path through the forest: A meta-review of interorganizational relationships. *Journal of Management*, 37(4), 1108-1136.
- Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pearce, C. L., Conger, J. A., & Locke, E. A. (2008). Shared leadership theory. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(5), 622-628.
- Phillips, A. (1960). A theory of interfirm organization. *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 74, 602–13.
- Powell, M. & Dowling, B. (2006). New Labour's partnerships: Comparing conceptual models with existing forms. *Social Policy and Society*, 5(2), 305-314.
- Prescott, P. A., & Soeken, K. L. (1989). The potential uses of pilot work. *Nursing Research*, 38(1), 60-62.
- Provan, K. G., & Kenis, P. (2008). Modes of network governance: Structure, management, and effectiveness. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 18(2), 229–252.
- Provan, K. G., and Milward, H. B. (1995). A preliminary theory of interorganizational network effectiveness: A comparative study of four community mental health systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 40, 1–33.

- Provan, K. G., Fish, A., & Sydow, J. (2007). Interorganizational Networks at the Network Level: A Review of the Empirical Literature on Whole Networks. *Journal of Management*, 33(3), 479–516.
- Ranson, S., Hinings, B., & Greenwood, R. (1980). The structuring of organizational structures. *Administrative science quarterly*, 1-17.
- Rao, H. (2002). 'Interorganizational ecology', in J. A. C. Baum (Ed.), *The Blackwell companion to organizations* (pp. 541– 556). Malden, MA: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Recker, J. (2013). *Scientific research in information systems: A beginner's guide*. Berlin, GER: Springer.
- Rein, M., & Stott, L. (2009). Working together: Critical perspectives on six cross-sector partnerships in southern Africa. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 90(s1), 79–89.
- Ridgeway, V. F. (1957). Administration of manufacturer-dealer systems. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 114, 464–83.
- Rittel, H. W. J. & Webber, M. M. (1973). Dilemmas in a general theory of planning. *Policy Sciences*, 4(2), 155-169.
- Sampson, H. (2004). Navigating the waves: The usefulness of a pilot in qualitative research. *Qualitative Research*, 4(3), 383-402.
- Seidman, I. (1998). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences* (2nd ed.). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Seitanidi, M. M. (2008). Adaptive responsibilities: Non-linear interactions across social sectors. Cases from cross sector social partnerships. *Emergence*, 10(3), 51–64.

- Seitanidi, M. M., & Crane, A. (2009). Implementing CSR through partnerships: Understanding the selection, design and institutionalisation of nonprofit-business partnerships. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 85(s2), 413–429.
- Selsky, J., & Parker, B. (2005). Cross-sector partnerships to address social issues: Challenges to theory and practice. *Journal of Management*, 31(6), 849–873.
- Smith Ring, P. (2008). Theories of contract and their use in studying inter-organizational relations: Sociological, psychological, economic, management, and legal. In S. Cropper, C. Huxham, M. Ebers, & P. Smith Ring (Eds.), *The Oxford handbook of inter-organizational relations* (pp. 502-519). New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Staber, U. H., Schaefer, N. V., and Sharma, B. (Eds.) (1996). *Business networks: Prospects for regional development*. Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter.
- Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Stake, R. E. (2006). *Multiple case study analysis*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Stake, R. E. (2010). *Qualitative research: Studying how things work*. New York, NY: The Guilford Press.
- Stiglitz, J., & Wallsten, S. (1999). Public-private technology partnerships: Promises and pitfalls. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43-73(1), 52.
- Stock, R. M. (2006). Interorganizational teams as boundary spanners between supplier and customer companies. *Journal of the Academy of Marketing Science*, 34, 588–99.
- Storper, M. (1997). *The regional world: Territorial development in a global economy*. New York: Guilford Press.
- Strauss, A. L. (1987). *Qualitative analysis for social scientists*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

- Stuart, T. E., Hoang, H., & Hybels, R. C. (1999). Interorganizational endorsements and the performance of entrepreneurial ventures. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 44, 315-349.
- Stuart, T. E. (2000). Interorganizational alliances and the performance of firms: A study of growth and innovation. *Strategic Management Journal*, 21, 791-811.
- Sullivan, B. N., Haunschild, P., and Page, K. (2007). Organizations non gratae? The impact of unethical corporate acts on interorganizational networks. *Organization Science*, 18, 55-70.
- Takahashi, L. M., & Smutny, G. (2002). Collaborative windows and organizational governance: Exploring the formation and demise of social service partnerships. *Nonprofit and Voluntary Sector Quarterly*, 31(2), 165-185.
- Thomson, A. M., Perry, J. L., & Miller, T. K. (2009). Conceptualizing and measuring collaboration. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 19(1), 23-56.
- Thompson, L. L. (2004). *Making the team: A guide for managers* (2nd ed.). Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson.
- Tilly, C. & Tarrow, T. (2007). *Contentious Politics*. New York, NY: Oxford University Press.
- Todeva, E., & Knoke, D. (2005). Strategic alliances & models of collaboration. *Management Decision*, 43(1), 123-148.
- Trist, E. (1983). Referent organizations and the development of inter-organizational domains. *Human Relations*, 36(3), 269-284.
- Turcotte, M.-F., & Pasquero, J. (2001). The paradox of multistakeholder collaborative roundtables. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 37(4), 447-464.
- Uhl-Bien, M. (2006). Relational leadership theory: Exploring the social processes of leadership and organizing. *The Leadership Quarterly*, 17(6), 654-676.

- Uzzi, B. (1997). Social structure and competition in interfirm networks: The paradox of embeddedness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 42, 35–67.
- Van de Ven, A. H. (1976). On the nature, formation, and maintenance of relationships among organizations. *Academy of Management Review*, 1, 24–36.
- Van de Ven, A. H., & Johnson, P. E. (2006). Knowledge for theory and practice. *Academy of Management Review*, 31(4), 802-821.
- Van Teijlingen, E., & Hundley, V. (2002). The importance of pilot studies. *Nursing Standard*, 16(40), 33-36.
- Van Tulder, R., Van Tilburg, R., Francken, M., & Da Rosa, A. (2014). *Managing the transition to a sustainable enterprise*. London, UK: Earthscan/Routledge.
- Van Tulder, R., Seitanidi, M. M., Crane, A., & Brammer, S. (2015). Enhancing the Impact of Cross-Sector Partnerships. *Journal of Business Ethics*, 1-17.
- Vangen, S. & Diamond, J. (2016, September). *Researching leadership for collaborative advantage*. Paper presented at the 3rd Collective leadership workshop: Methodological challenges in collective leadership research, New York, NY.
- Vangen, S., & Huxham, C. (2003). Enacting leadership for collaborative advantage: Dilemmas of ideology and pragmatism in the activities of partnership managers. *British Journal of Management*, 14(s1), S61-S76.
- Vangen, S., & Huxham, C. (2006). Achieving collaborative advantage: understanding the challenge and making it happen. *Strategic Direction*, 22(2), 3-5.
- Vangen, S., & Huxham, C. (2012). The tangled web: Unraveling the principle of common goals in collaborations. *Journal of Public Administration Research*, 22(4), 731-760.

- Vangen, S., Hayes, J. P., & Cornforth, C. (2015). Governing cross-sector, inter-organizational collaborations. *Public Management Review*, *17*(9), 1237-1260.
- Von Bertalanffy, L. (1951). 'General systems theory: A new approach to unity of science' *Human Biology*, *23*, 303–61.
- Warner, M., & Sullivan, R. (2004). *Putting partnerships to work: Strategic alliances for development between government and private sector and civil society*. Sheffield, UK: Greenleaf Publishing.
- Weberg, D. R. (2013). *Complexity leadership theory and innovation: A new framework for innovation leadership* (unpublished doctoral dissertation). Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ.
- Weiss, E. S., Anderson R. M., & Lasker, R. D. (2002). Making the most of collaboration: Exploring the relationship between partnership synergy and partnership functioning', *Health Education and Behavior*, *29*(6), 683–98.
- Weller, S., & Romney, A. (1988). *Systematic data collection*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Wettenhall, R. (2003). The rhetoric and reality of public-private partnerships. *Public Organization Review*, *3*(1), 77–107.
- Whetten, D.A. (1981). Interorganizational Relations: A Review of the Field. *The Journal of Higher Education*, *52*(1), 1-28.
- Wilson, E. J., Bunn, M. D., & Savage, G. T. (2010). Anatomy of a social partnership: A stakeholder perspective. *Industrial Marketing Management*, *39*(1), 76–90.
- Williamson, O. E. (1975). *Markets and hierarchies*. Cambridge, MA: The Free Press.
- Wernerfeld, B. (1984). 'A resource-based view of the firm. *Strategic Management Journal*, *5*, 171–80.

- Wasserman, S., & Faust, K. (1994). *Social network analysis: Methods and applications*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Wohlstetter, P., Smith, J., & Malloy, C. L. (2005). Strategic alliances in action: Toward a theory of evolution. *Policy Studies Journal*, 33(3), 419-442.
- Yazan, B. (2015). Three approaches to case study methods in education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake. *The Qualitative Report*, 20(2), 134-152.
- Yin, R. K. (2002). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (5th ed.). Los Angeles, CA: Sage.
- Yukl, G. A. (2006). *Leadership in organizations*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson/Prentice Hall.



## **APPENDIX A. INTERVIEW GUIDES**

### A.1 Initial Interview Guide for Pilot Study

This guide provides different categories of interview questions. It also provides examples of questions that might be used for the semi-structured interviews.

The interview will start with the study script (attached). The interviewer will confirm if this is still a good time for the interviewee and remind that the interview will take about 45-90 minutes, the interviews will be audio recorded and that participation is voluntary.

#### **A) Background Example Questions (To be sent prior to the interview)**

1. When and how did you get involved in ‘XYZ’ partnership?
2. Briefly describe your role and responsibilities as it relates to this partnership.
3. What goals would need to be achieved to make this partnership a success?
4. How is this partnership structured with regards to roles and responsibilities?
5. Please list what communication tools/ processes (email, meetings, phone calls, etc.) are used by partnership members when:
  - a. Partnership goals had to be decided:
  - b. Updates have to be shared:
  - c. Decisions have to be made:
  - d. Daily operations have to be managed:
  - e. Problems have to be solved:
  - f. Conflicts have to be managed:

#### **B) Role/responsibility Example Questions**

1. Can you describe how all the roles for this partnership were created? (Probe – how were you involved in the creation of these roles?)
2. Please share an example when there might have been a misunderstanding due to lack of clarity in the defined roles and responsibilities.
3. Please walk me through any training provided to you to prepare you for your role.

#### **C) Communication & Trust Example Questions**

You had listed different ways through which partnership members interact for various activities.

4. Which ways of interacting with your fellow members has been most effective to move the partnership forward? (Probe – Could you provide examples?)
5. Which ways of interacting with your fellow members have negatively affected or slowed the progress?
6. Was there a time when there was lack of trust among the members and what was done to change that?
7. How welcoming is the environment for all members including you to share your ideas openly with others? (Was this always this way? What changed?)

#### **D) Partnership Agenda Example Questions**

8. Can you describe the process that is used to set meeting agendas? (Probe – Do all your meetings have a planned agenda? Who can/ cannot participate in creation of the agenda?)
9. In what ways are members getting equal opportunity to participate in creating agenda items?
10. Can you give me an example of how the items on the agenda are prioritized? (Probe - How are members voicing their opinion to shape the agenda?)
11. Can you give me an example when there might have been conflict while planning the agenda for a meeting; and how it was resolved?
12. Can you describe how the meetings are run? (Probe – How do you stay on the agenda/ is there is facilitator?)
13. Can you give me examples of any specific leadership activities you use to progress the partnership goals?
14. Can you give me examples of any specific leadership activities that you have witnessed your fellow members use to progress the partnership goals?

## A.2 Revised Interview Guide for Pilot Study

This guide provides different categories of interview questions. It also provides examples of questions that might be used for the semi-structured interviews.

The interview will start with the study script (attached). The interviewer will confirm if this is still a good time for the interviewee and remind that the interview will take about 45-90 minutes, the interviews will be audio recorded and that participation is voluntary.

1. When and how did you get involved in Riverfest partnership?
2. Briefly describe your role and responsibilities as it relates to this partnership.
3. Can you describe how all the roles for this partnership were created? (Probe – how were you involved in the creation of these roles?)
4. Please share an example when there might have been a misunderstanding due to lack of clarity in the defined roles and responsibilities.
5. The way the roles are defined, is there a need for more/less structure? Why?
6. What kind of training/ orientation was provided when you started this role? How did you prepare for this role?
7. What goals would need to be achieved to make this partnership a success? Who decided these goals? Have they changed over time? How have you contributed to creating these goals?
8. What are all the different ways you interact with your team members? Do you interact with some more than others? Why/ when?
9. Which ways of interacting with your fellow members has been most effective to move the partnership forward? (Probe – Could you provide examples?)
10. Can you give an example when you felt frustrated trying to communicate with your team members?
11. How does the team get out of analysis-paralysis to make decisions?
12. How trusting is this group/partnership members? How much do you trust in their abilities to deliver?
  - a. Can you provide an example when you could not trust a team member? How was that addressed?

13. How welcoming is the environment for new members? How receptive is the team of new ideas?
  - a. Can you provide an example when yours/ someone else's ideas were rejected?
14. Can you describe the process that is used to set meeting agendas? (Probe – Do all your meetings have a planned agenda?)
  - a. In what ways are members getting equal opportunity to participate in creating agenda items?
  - b. Can you give me an example of how the items on the agenda are prioritized? (Probe - How are members voicing their opinion to shape the agenda?)
  - c. Can you give me an example when there might have been conflict while planning the agenda for a meeting; and how it was resolved?
15. Can you describe how the meetings are run? (Probe – How do you stay on the agenda/ is there is facilitator?)
16. Can you give me examples of any specific leadership behaviors you use to progress the partnership goals? (How have you stepped in to achieve the goals?)
17. Can you give me examples of any specific leadership behaviors that you have witnessed your fellow members use to progress the partnership goals?
18. What practices have created frustration in your team?
  - a. Can you give an example of instance(s) when the team struggled because of lack of structure/ lack of or ineffective communication or lack of or ineffective leadership?

### A.3 Final Interview Guide for Main Study

I want to know the story of this community:

- 1. Let's start with how did it all begin?**
  - a. Probe - How did you get involved? Why did you get involved?
  - b. Probe - How were things organized? (how did you start working together)
    - i. Probe - Tell me about your meetings.
    - ii. Probe - Did specific roles emerge because of this?
- 2. What do you remember as being most useful as your group started this process of working together? Why have you been successful so far?**
  - a. Probe - Can you tell me anything or any story specifically?
  - b. Probe - What has helped your group to get this far?
- 3. Tell me about a time during your journey with HCI that was difficult for you all, and how you collectively persevered.**
- 4. Tell me about how the team operates in the present?**
  - a. Probe - How have those changed/evolved now (roles/meetings/who is involved,etc)?
  - b. Have any communication processes changed? How? Why?
- 5. What are the end goals for HCI OC? Does the group have a common understanding of its end goals? How did the group come to this common understanding?**
  - a. Probe - What helped the most when you were going through this process?
  - b. Probe - What was most challenging at that time?
- 6. What or who has been instrumental for the group to achieve its goals?**
- 7. What keeps you motivated to continue being engaged? (you felt included/empowered/supported)**
  - a. Probe - How have you felt as a team member?
- 8. In what way(s) do you feel supported in the work you do with HCI? Who or what makes you feel this way?**
- 9. In what way(s) do you feel discouraged in the work you do with HCI? Who or what makes you feel this way?**
- 10. What challenges is the group facing or you foresee? (Are they same or evolved?)**
- 11. How do you define leadership in this setting?**
- 12. Can you describe what success would look like for this group?**

## APPENDIX B. THEMES FROM PILOT STUDY

Structure for the partnership can be defined in different ways such as:

- Issue/cause/problem domain initially drives the motivation to form the partnership and needs to be strong for it to drive the creation of shared goals and shared vision and commitment to continue on-going collaboration.
- The workings of an on-going partnership can be categorized into planning, execution and evaluation phases. Thus, the members involved, the structures, processes and activities differ in these phases.
- Structure can be defined in different ways: the way the members roles and responsibilities are structured, the way interactions between members are structured, the way meetings are structured, the way feedback collection is structured and the way the digital or physical space to collaborate is structured. Thus, structure could be thought of as the way of organizing.
- Partnership has “funding organization(s)”, “backbone organization”, and “supporting organizations”. A funding organization usually provides funds or sponsorship for resources needed for the members and activities for the partnership. The backbone organization is typically responsible for managing and coordinating all the activities for the partnership. The supporting organizations provide expertise and targeted resources and services to the partnership. Members are either part of the core team which involves the planning and decision making or support team which provides expertise and targeted resources and services.
- The backbone organization is
  - Structure and strategy developer by guiding the team to overarching goals,
  - Facilitator by providing impartial listening and allowing sharing of ideas
  - Information manager by taking notes, organizing ideas and agendas, planning next steps and communicating relevant information to members
  - Organizer by planning and coordinating meetings
  - Decision maker by providing focus on relevant conversations and diffusing conflict among members
- Team composition dynamics (why team is successful at working together) such as:

- Whether team members are committed to the cause
- What expertise (knowledge and skills) do they bring to the team
- Professionalism
- How long they have worked together leading to increase in trust and understanding of individual personalities; low turnover
- Roles they play (core versus support)
- Autonomy in their tasks

#### Communication Processes

- Both, the meeting structure such as agenda, who is involved, who facilitates, etc. and the type of activities involved such as brainstorming/sharing ideas, understanding the whole picture, problem-solving, providing updates, providing accountability, decision-making, prioritizing tasks, social interaction and collecting feedback for continuous improvement are crucial.

#### Leadership activities by members

- “Everyone has equal status at the table”
- Appreciate and trust expertise that every member brings to the table
- Trust that members will follow-through
- Do not feel micro-managed
- Have autonomy to make decisions about personal tasks
- Members feel safe to contribute
- Have understanding of both the big picture (interdependence between tasks) and smaller tasks (independent responsibilities)

#### Collaborative advantage attributed to factors such as:

- Role and activities of the backbone organization
- Commitment to cause/ problem
- Support from parent organizations towards the individuals to be empowered to make decisions and utilize resources
- Intentional reflection on continuous improvement of collaborative practices
- Role and structure of meetings
- Team composition and dynamics

## APPENDIX C. HCI PROGRAM GOALS/OUTCOMES

<b>Program Phase</b>	<b>Program Expected Goals (From Curriculum)</b>
Foundation Phase	1 - Building HCI team 2 - Locate existing strategic plans in the community 3 - Community Capitals 4 - Working on survey questions and selecting date to send survey out? 5 - Survey distribution 6 - Selecting date for community forum and location 7 - Implementing community forum 8 - Selecting building block
Building Blocks Phase	9 - Deep dive on selected building block 10 - Developing shared capstone project goals
Capstone Project Phase	10 - Planning for capstone project 11 - Submitting capstone project proposal document for review by state team 12 - Obtaining approval on proposal document and receiving funding 13 - Implementing and completing capstone project



## APPENDIX D. COLLABORATIVE INERTIA DATA AND ANALYSIS

### D.1 Partnership A

Time Period	# of meetings	# of participants	Decisions Made	Milestones Achieved
Month 1	2		Decision about core team	Core team established
Month 2	2	19,18	Decisions about survey were made, Decided Community forum date	Community plans gathered and analyzed
Month 3	1 + committee meetings	10	Decided on when survey goes live and discussion on what to include in the survey	Survey went live
Month 4	2	16,?	Decisions about community forum	Community Forum, 700 survey results
Month 5	2	18,19	Decision about marketing HCI was made	None
Month 6	1	15	Decision to eliminate focus on place-making	None
Month 7	1	? core team call	Decision to choose economy	Economy Building Block chosen
Month 8	2	15,18	none	None
Month 9	2	26,14	none	None
Month 10	1	?	Decision about which direction to go was made	Decided between BRE and CREST
Month 11	1	?	none	None
Month 12	1	?	none	Some time in Nov and Dec they have decided the Project concept for capstone
Month 13	2	7,5	decisions about strategic planning for capstone project	Determined vision and mission for project
Month 14	2	3,4	Decisions about strategic planning for capstone project	Determined goals for project

Month 15	1	10	none	None
Month 16	3	7,4,7	Decisions about business directory made, planned for an event for Aug 8th	None
Month 17	1	4	none	None
Month 18	2	8,5	Loss of team member so, decisions about Aug 8th event made (postpone event) and reviewed project logo and business directory list	None
Month 19	2	5,6	none	None
Month 20	2	6,5	Decision made to switch gears from economy to leadership, started planning	Changed focus to leadership and pursue community leadership program (CLP), decided CLP schedule
Month 21	3	5,5,5	Decisions about CLP made	Sessions finalized and cost finalized
Month 22	4	6,5,6,4	Decisions about CLP made	Communication strategy finalized, brochure made, logo finalized and letterhead finalized. Capstone application submitted
Month 23	1	6	Decisions about CLP made	None
Month 24	2	6,5	Decisions about CLP made	Received and reviewed applications for CLP program [ START OF CLP and finishing HCI CAPSTONE]

## D.2 Partnership B

<b>Time Period</b>	<b># of meetings</b>	<b># of participants</b>	<b>Decisions Made</b>	<b>Milestones Achieved</b>
January 2016	1	0	None	None
February 2016	2	11, 12	Survey tool created, survey launch date selected, decision on how to distribute survey	Gathered 6 community plans

			decided, community forum date/time/location selected	
March 2016	2	12, 13	Decisions about forum were made including roles and responsibilities, format/design of forum	Completed community capitals and assets chart, survey was distributed
April 2016	2	61	Decisions about the forum were made	Community Forum implemented
May 2016	0	0	None	None
June 2016	2	11, 12	**decisions about communication process and recruiting new members was made, not related to outputs/milestones, they could not choose a building block	None
July 2016	1	14	Decision to select economy was made	Selected economy building block
August 2016	1	16	Decisions about panel discussion (to aid the selection of BRE or CREST pathways)	None
September 2016	1	14	Economy packet homework	None
October 2016	2	9, 16	None	Panel discussion for CREST
November 2016	1	12	None	Selected Focus on CREST (Entrepreneurship) within Economy Building Block
December 2016	0	0	None	None
January 2017	1	10	None	None
February 2017	0	0	None	None
March 2017	1	17	None	None
April 2017	1	11	Made decisions to narrow down options for capstone project	Selected capstone project - Partnership center - Building business directory, create social media presence, provide networking and educational events.
May 2017	1	5	None	None
June 2017	0	0	None	None
July 2017	1	6	Decisions on capstone application	None

August 2017	1	5	Decisions on capstone project planning	None
September 2017	1	3	None	None
October 2017	0	0	None	Submitted capstone application
November 2017	0	0	None	None
December 2017	0	0	None	None

## VITA

Priyanka received her Bachelor of Computer Engineering from the University of Mumbai in 2006, and her Master of Computer and Information Technology from Purdue University in 2008. She began her Ph.D. studies in January 2012 at Purdue University. Between her degree programs at Purdue, Priyanka was employed at Whirlpool Corporation for more than 3 years as a project and change manager. During her Ph.D. program she interned with USAA, where she worked in the organizational effectiveness department.

While at Purdue, Priyanka served as a graduate instructor and graduate teaching assistant for courses in the Computer and Information Technology department and the Technology Leadership & Innovation departments, respectively. In addition, she served as the graduate assistant for the Purdue Technical Assistance Program for the Technology Leadership & Innovation departments. She was also selected as an American Association for Advancement of Science Emerging Leaders In Science and Society (ELISS) Fellow in 2015. In addition, she received the Purdue Polytechnic Institute Award for Graduate Student Leadership in 2015, and the Susan Bulkeley Butler Center for Leadership Excellence Leadership in Action Award in 2016.

Priyanka has been employed as the Measurement and Evaluation Lead for the Purdue Center for Regional Development since May 2017.