

**Governance Network Administration:
Understanding the Concept Among Philippine Civil Society Organizations’
Engagement with Government**

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Abstract

Collaborative Public Management (CPM) is seen by Koliba, Meek, and Zia (ed., 2011) as having much in common with the new public service framework espoused by Denhardt and Denhardt (2003) stressing active engagements by government with non-state actors. These different paradigms and concepts all point to the role of the manager in governing multi-stakeholders or networks, characterized by intersecting administrative dynamics. New Public Governance (Morgan and Cook, 2015) on the other hand emphasizes a leadership and value-based governance. Such is the essence of **governance network administration (GNA)**, which blends a range of administrative roles and functions (Koliba, et al. , 2011).

In the Philippine context, civil society organizations (CSOs), specifically the network members of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO, or CODE for short), a multi-tiered organization, have documented stories of citizen engagements with local governments and other partners for reforms towards people empowerment. This experience of engagement was dubbed as the Decentralized Governance and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Regional Development (DG) Project in 2012-2015 under the leadership of CODE.

Guided by Koliba et al.’s (2011) general taxonomy for Governance Network Administration (GNA) Strategies, in viewing CSOs’ work on poverty reduction and development agendas with their local governments in the DG Project (referred herein as the “Project”), this paper, aims to: (1) map out network administration and coordinating strategies adopted by a network organization in their engagements with government; (2) describe the thinking of network or collaborative managers regarding the strategies they have adopted and their effects; and (3) attempt to identify possible predictors that could be tested for effectiveness of administering networking strategies among different stakeholders, such as the government, civil society, or other partners.

An emphasis on purposiveness and multi organization arrangements in the management required in wicked problems such as poverty alleviation has prompted the study to adopt bottom line questions for collaborative public management and network governance research: *What specific GNA strategies have been applied by civil society managers in a developing country like the Philippine, as these CSOs engaged with local governments and other sectors? What are the CSO network managers’ perceived effects of the strategies they have adopted as they coordinate, facilitate, and negotiate multiple players in a public engagement task?* A network approach to management is used as lens in this study because of both vertical and horizontal linkages existing between actors in the poverty alleviation project.

The study employs a qualitative descriptive methodology, not aimed at proving causality. It makes use of secondary data of documented stories of citizens’ engagements with different stakeholders, especially the government, from 2012 to 2015. Key informant interviews and a rapid survey among the CSOs held between late 2017 and early 2018 were used to supplement the information contained in the secondary data sources. The study shows points of consensus and possible sources of tension among CSOs adopting governance network administration, which may serve as bases for hypotheses formulation in future tests of effectiveness.

Keywords: Governance network administration, civic associations, social capital

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A. Introduction

1. Theoretical Underpinnings

a. Centrality of development and democracy in developing countries

The **Development Administration** model of Public Administration focuses on nation-building as well as socio-economic progress especially for developing countries. Fred W. Riggs (1970), a stalwart in development administration, has defined development administration as “organized efforts to carry out programs or projects by those involved to serve development objectives.” In his book, *Development Administration*, Sapru (1994, p.81) revisited the concept of development administration, and says that the primary objective of development administration is to “strengthen the administrative machinery which would bring about socio-economic development”.

Furthermore, Sapru (1994, p. 97) exhorts political reform to precede administrative reform or for both reforms to go alongside each other, “if the goals of development are to be achieved”. Thus, working to change power relations, redistribution of resources and the overall focus of development can and should be part and parcel of a country’s pursuit of development goals. Sapru adds that “how to make the administrative state accountable and responsible is the crux of the problem in developing countries”.

The above arguments point to the importance of public administration systems especially in developing countries to better respond to national development goals, such as poverty alleviation, in bringing about development, while recognizing public administration systems’ intrinsic link with political and social institutions.

However, the government need not be the sole player in bringing about development; instead its relation with other political and social actors, such as the civil society organizations and volunteer groups, need accentuation. Rightly so, the role of the manager and managerial approaches have been the focus of the New Public Management model of Public Administration in years following the Development Administration epoch. However, Denhardt and Denhardt (2007) later proposed an alternative to this earlier administrative model -- the New Public Service model. The model points to the relationship between the state and citizens, whereby the government fulfills its responsibility to the citizens in terms of procedures and rights. In the model, the government assures that procedures follow democratic principles and the rights of individuals are safeguarded. The authors’ argument for a New Public Service is drawn from the following: (1) democratic political theory, as it is basically concerned with the relationship between citizens and the government and (2) alternative approaches to management and organizational design that stem from the more humanistic tradition in public administration. According to Denhardt and Denhardt (2007), this view upholds self-interests as well as the collective self-interests of individuals in society. The New Public Service model thus embraces the entry of volunteers and the third sector in the delivery of public services, promoting the joint sharing of public service in a democratic society.

For developing countries challenged by wicked types of problems³, new approaches to managing such challenges in the realm of public administration have been developed by scholars. Among them is the New Public Governance model by Morgan and Cook (2014). Its context recognizes the existence of and gives premium to addressing challenges and problems in the real world. The production of public goods in the

³ Morgan and Cook described wicked problems as those that cannot be resolved by applying conventional processes. These problems have no clear right answer because the external environment cannot be determined, the multiple factors affecting the issue have no bounds, and the state of knowledge bearing on the problem is unknown (various authors cited by Morgan and Cook, 2014, eds.).

model is in the form of projects, programs, services, and public values, which are created through public values-based leadership and management. The challenges for leadership and management in this model include the agreement on the nature and solution of problems, the forging of vertical and horizontal leadership, and consensus building. Three important variables may be deduced from the New Public Governance model (as contextualized by Morgan & Cook, 2014) as applied in developing countries like the Philippines: *leadership* that presumably deals with vertical and horizontal entities, an expression of *societal values*, and a focus on mutuality of *goals*.

b. Civil society, democracy, and development

With the entry of civil society in the purview of Public Administration as shown above, studies on the former's contribution to development have sparked interest among public administration scholars. They trace the earliest importance attributed to civic associations in cultivating democratic culture to the work of Alexis de Tocqueville. About two decades ago, Putnam (2000) discussed exhaustively the value of voluntary associations to the health and vibrancy of "civil society". This was based on his earlier study on the differences between Northern and Southern Italy where it was shown that "civic traditions help explain why the North has been able to respond to the challenges and opportunities of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries so much more effectively than the South (Putnam, 1993, p. 159). In post-unification Italy, a more important manifestation of the "principle of association" says Putnam was the development of mutual societies (Putnam, 1993, p. 139). The voluntary associations referred to by Putnam were expressions of a practical readiness to cooperate with others in the same predicament to be able to hurdle the challenges of rapid societal change. Herein is implied the corollary importance of agreement on mutual goals. Of the more progressive regions in Italy during the time, Putnam (1993, p. 152) claims that in general, "regions today that are civic are also healthy, wealthy, and industrial". Putnam shows in his study that throughout the period of post-unification in Italy, economic structure and well-being were well aligned with the unchanging patterns of civic involvement.

c. Networks of civic engagement

Where there are norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement, social trust may be expected to arise in complex modern settings. Such networks and trust are also forms of social capital discussed by Putnam and other scholars. North (1990) has said that norms -- one of which he mentions as reciprocity - that underlie social trust, evolves because these lower transaction costs and because these facilitate cooperation. While society may be modern or traditional, or authoritarian or democratic, it is characterized by networks of interpersonal communication and exchange, both formal and informal. Such networks according to Putnam (1993) may be to a large extent, basically "horizontal", or that which brings together agents of equal status or power and power, or "vertical", which often link agents in a hierarchical order.

Putnam (1993, p. 173) has contended that networks of civic engagement are an essential form of social capital: The denser such networks in a community, the more likely that its citizens will be able to cooperate for mutual benefit. Coleman (1990, Ch. 8) again stresses that networks of civic engagement facilitate communication and improve the flow of information about the trustworthiness of individuals.

d. Multi-organizational arrangements and problem solving

Earlier it was mentioned that Development Administration's aim is to carry out development goals and that civil society and other non-state actors have been recognized as an equal actor in development work in the New Public Service model. Robert Agranoff and Michael McGuire introduce collaborative management as "a concept that describes the process of facilitating and operating in multi-organizational arrangements to solve problems that cannot be solved, or solved easily, by single organizations." Thus, by this definition,

collaboration is “a purposive relationship designed to solve a problem by creating or discovering a solution within a given set of constraints” (Agranoff and McGuire, 2003, p. 4). Tracing collaborative management studies and their significance for public administrators, Koliba, Meek, and Zia (2011) find that these studies began with Axelrod’s application of game theory of cooperative behavior (1980), Barbara Gray’s articulation of collaborative processes (1989), and extending into the more recent literature concerning collaborative public management.

The idea of networks often come to play when multi-organizational arrangements such as in collaborative management programs and projects to solve problems are called for as mentioned above. Collaborative management denotes horizontal linkages whereas network management implies both vertical and horizontal relationships among entities as shall be explained later. Network analysis and administration is quite complex as already admitted by scholars who focus on this study. In fact Provan, Fish, and Sydow (2007, cited in Koliba, et al, 2011, who have done an extensive analysis of the literature, conclude that “no single grand theory of networks exists” and that “it is difficult for one single theory to account for all possible variables and combinations of variables”.

e. Network governance research

The concept of a network approach to management appear to match that of the complex nature of wicked problems. This places a premium for studying networks, i.e., vertical and horizontal networks, as current arrangements for implementing and managing development projects, including wicked and complex problems as poverty alleviation, have a multi-organizational and multi-sectoral character. Quoting Borgatti, Everett, & Johnson (2013), Kapucu, Hu, & Sana (2017) explain that networks can be generally defined in sociology, network sciences, and many other disciplines as a set of nodes or actors and relationships between these nodes.

In the field of public administration, **networks** are defined either as “*interorganizational collaboration arrangements or as new governance structures designed to achieve a common goal that cannot be achieved (or that cannot be achieved effectively) by one single organization*” (Agranoff & McGuire, 2001; Koliba et al., 2010; O’Toole, 1997). For Provan and Kenis (2005), “network” is defined more narrowly than is often the case. They see networks as *groups of three or more legally autonomous organizations that work together collectively and collaboratively to try to achieve not only their own goals, but also, the collective goals of all or most network members*. The achievement of common goals is a distinguishing purpose of network structures. Provan and Kenis in fact adopt what Kilduff and Tsai (2003) refer to as “goal-directed,” as opposed to “serendipitous” networks. Despite the differences, most definitions of networks in public administration highlight the importance of collective action, common goals, and relationships between organizations (Provan et al., 2005).

In the field of organization and administrative sciences, according to Provan and Kenis (2005, p.5), a more recent innovative development in the field is the perspective that organizations cannot be taken for granted (see Perrow, 1986) and that *other forms of coordination, such as networks, can equally achieve goals*. From this notion, the authors cite Powell (1990) who said that debates ensued on “whether networks are simply a combination of elements of market and hierarchy, and could, therefore, be placed on a continuum between market and hierarchy, or whether they would be better understood as unique forms of governance in their own right”. They then cite that this literature moved towards treating networks as discrete forms of governance, characterizing them as having unique structural characteristics, modes of conflict resolution, bases of legitimacy, etc. (Raab, 2004, p.6).”

Provan and Kenis (2005, p.6) view ‘network’ as a variable, examining whether different network governance configurations produce different network effects. The authors argue that management has a

critical role for effective network governance, “especially regarding the handling of tensions inherent in each governance form.”

Other scholars who worked on network governance were Isett et al (2011) who added governance networks to two other network research streams - policy network research and collaborative network research. Rethemeyer and Hatmaker (2008) shared that existing policy network research and collaborative network research are related but different. As the authors explain (cited by Kapucu, et al., 2017, p. 1091):

Policy network research focuses on networks involving traditional policy makers such as public agencies and legislative officials, along with nontraditional players such as private entities, interest groups, and nonprofits that have an interest in specific policy domains. Collaborative network research, however, concerns the provision and delivery of public goods and services or the implementation of public programs (Rethemeyer & Hatmaker, 2008).

According to Isett et al., **governance networks** focus on the coordination and governance processes to achieve common goals. For Provan and Kenis (2005), the “network as a form of governance” approach, on the other hand, does treat networks as the unit of analysis. ‘Network’ is viewed as a mechanism of coordination, or what has often been referred to as ‘network governance’.

Reviewing governance conceptualization, Provan and Kenis (2005) referred to studies by organizational scholars (Mizruchi, 1983; Westphal and Zajac, 1995). Provan and Kenis summarize governance concepts in the different sectors as follows:

In the private sector, governance focused on the role of boards of directors in representing and protecting the interests of shareholders (Fama & Jensen, 1983). In the nonprofit context, governance has generally focused on the role of boards of trustees, as representing and protecting the interests of community members or other politically important constituencies (Provan, 1980). In public management, governance refers not to the activities of boards, but mainly, to the funding and oversight roles of government agencies, especially regarding the activities of private organizations that have been contracted to provide public services (Kettl, 2002; Hill & Lynn, 2005). Critical among these sectoral governance concepts is the focus on how to monitor and control the behavior of management, who are hired to preside over the day-to-day activities of running the organization (Fama & Jensen, 1983; Eisenhardt, 1989).

As noted earlier, most of the literature on organizational networks does not explicitly address the issue of governance. Probably the most obvious reason for this is that networks are comprised of independent and autonomous organizations, and thus, are essentially cooperative endeavours. Since networks are not legal entities, the legal imperative for governance is simply not present as it is for organizations, contend Provan and Kenis (2005, p.9). Regardless of the reason, however, Provan and Kenis state that “some form of governance is necessary to ensure that network participants engage in collective, and mutually supportive action, that conflict is addressed, and that network resources are acquired and utilized efficiently and effectively.” They further elucidate that “there is no broad theory on network governance regarding the various forms of governance that might exist, the rationale for emergence of one form versus another, and the impact of each form on network performance.”

Based on a review of the literature on networks, coupled with the authors own extensive observations from research and consulting, Provan and Kenis (2005, p. 10) have identified three basic network governance forms plus a hybrid form. The three basic forms are self-governed, lead-organization governed, and network administrative organization governed (*for more of this, refer to Provan and Kenis, 2005*).

2. Development context

a. Focus on Philippine non-government and state relations

Non-government organizations (NGOs) and people's organizations (POs), dominant players in the civil society sector, are recognized in the Philippine 1987 Constitution (Art. II, Sec. 23). As well, cooperatives (Art. XII, Sec. 1) are respected as partners in development and in promoting the welfare of the nation. Thus Philippine democracy holds in high esteem civil society organizations as enshrined in the current Philippine Constitution which encourages the right of the people and their organizations to effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political, and economic decision-making (Art. XIII, Sec. 16). In fact, Art. XIII, Sec 15 provides that the State should "respect the role of independent people's organizations" as a vehicle for people to pursue their legitimate interests. In addition, Sec 16 protects the right of people's organizations to "effective and reasonable participation at all levels of social, political and economic decision-making."

The return to democracy of the Philippine government after the non-violent people power revolution of 1986 further opened democratic spaces at the lower echelons of government. The Philippine Constitution's aims of people empowerment and citizen's participation in local government were further promoted with the passage of the Local Government Code of 1991. The Local Government Code (LGC) of 1991 likewise considers NGOs/POs to be major partners and stakeholders in local development. Sec. 34 of the LGC directs local governments to "promote the establishment and operation of people's and nongovernmental organizations to become active partners in the pursuit of local autonomy." The Code also encourages joint undertakings among LGUs and NGOs/POs, and even allows LGUs to provide financial and other resources to the latter (Sec. 36).

In addition, the LGC created various local special bodies (LSBs) that are intended to serve as mechanisms where NGOs/POs can participate in the task of governance. These LSBs are the Local Development Council (LDC), Local Health Board (LHB), Local School Board (LSB) and Peace and Order Council (POC). Each of these bodies requires a specific type and number of CSO representatives.

Thus both the Philippine 1987 Constitution and the Local Government Code have recognized civil society organizations as equals and partners of government in the delivery of social services as well as in development policy-making. The People Power or EDSA Revolution of 1986, a testament to volunteerism in action, especially paved the way for the unprecedented growth of NGOs in the country. As prime movers in many social service programs, NGOs in the Philippines have contributed significantly in the areas of children and youth development, provision of health services, strengthening people's organizations for informal settlers, assistance in peace and security programs especially during armed conflicts and disaster response and management, according to the First Country Report on the State of Philippine Volunteerism Report (2012, p. 11).

During the administration of President Benigno Aquino III civil society was viewed as a key partner in promoting transparent, accountable and participatory governance. In this context, the Vigilance to Volunteerism: Program Intensifying People's Engagement in Local Governance (V2V PIPELOG) was conceived by the Department of Interior and Local Government (DILG)/ Local Government Academy (LGA) as a comprehensive strategy for promoting various forms of civic engagement with local government units (LGUs). Generally, the program aims to promote active engagement of CSOs in local governance. Enhanced LGU-CSO partnership in the area of local development is expected to bring about transparent, accountable and participatory governance that gives high regard to the needs and peculiarities of the communities. Specifically, the program will focus on promoting CSO engagement in local governance through research, LGU and CSO capacity-building, policy reforms, volunteerism programs, technical assistance, network

building, and performance evaluation and feedback. Instead of focusing only on local planning as venue for CSO participation, V2V PIPELOG aims to provide a full swing intervention to create conducive venues for CSOs to actively engage in local governance.

In the current administration of President Rodrigo Roa Duterte (PRRD), the strategies to improve governance fall under the *Malasakit* (caring or concern) pillar of the Philippine Development Plan (PDP) 2017-2022. The desired outcome is to enhance the social fabric by making government worthy of people's trust.^[SEP] To ensure that government policies, programs and projects are responsive to the needs of the people, government will actively seek to engage citizens in all aspects of governance.

Specifically, under this Pillar, **sub-outcome no. 4** aims for a: **Citizenry Fully- Engaged and Empowered**. To do this, the PDP 2017-2022 states that *participatory governance* will be promoted through, among others:

- *Establishing mechanisms for citizens to be able to submit complaints on lapses in government services, and proactively negotiate with the government for delegated power of services or programs that would be beneficial to their communities.*
- *Promoting shared responsibility and accountability with civil society in achieving development goals.*
- *Sustaining existing participatory governance initiatives at the local and international levels such as participatory budget partnerships, citizen participatory audit (CPA), and the Open Government Partnership (OGP) initiative with the aim to develop the next PH-OGP Action Plans. Citizen's participatory budgeting councils at the municipal level will be created.*

b. CSO-led decentralized governance and multi stakeholder partnerships

In the Philippine context, civil society organizations (CSOs), especially those managed under the leadership of the Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO, or *CODE* for short), have documented stories of citizen engagements with local governments for reforms towards people empowerment. Such were these CSOs' experiences with the Decentralized Governance and Multi-Stakeholder Partnerships for Regional Development (DG) Project in 2012-2015.

The movements to devolve government services and funding to more local levels of government in the Philippines and perhaps worldwide began in the 1980s and 1990s. Such diffusion of power, particularly devolution, is "based on the assumption that decisions are best made by people and governmental units closer to the problem" (De Vita, 1999, p. 213, cited in Koliba et al., 2011, p.16). In the US., one writer notes that in regionalization, "systems of local government are becoming more diffused or decentralized...becoming more coordinated...more lasting regional approaches emerge as negotiated agreements between players over time" (Miller, 2002, p.4, cited Koliba et al. 2011, p. 17).

B. How Governance Network Managers in a Development Context Think and Strategize: The Research Problem

1. Solving wicked problems

Towards the fulfillment of democratic ideals and faced with persistent societal challenges, the Philippines has adopted an inclusive approach to development since it has started its re-democratization journey. Such wicked problems facing a developing country like the Philippines has prompted the government to adopt strategic interventions that include the entry of non-state actors in solving these problems. The social,

public, and economic challenges facing our country are increasingly viewed as “wicked problems” that lack clearly formulated definitions and ascriptions of cause and effect; addressed through what Lindblom (1959) calls incremental decision making; and are moderated through what Simon (1957) dubs “bounded rationality”.

Scholars cite the persistence of implementation failure, (Koliba et al., 2011, p.15) the increasing complexity and “wickedness” of public problems (Rittel & Webber, 1984), the expansion of information technologies, and even globalization as the precursors of the burgeoning interest in the application of network frameworks to the study of public administration, public policy, and governance structures. In the management of public goods, the New Public Governance model of public administration takes cognizant of the critical role of the leadership in addressing problems. The model tells us that the challenges for leadership and management include the agreement on the nature and solution of problems, the forging of vertical and horizontal leadership, and consensus building. Recognizing such requirements brings us to use the lens of governance network administration, the centrality of finding a common understanding of problems and societal values for addressing these among the public management actors is of prime concern.

It is therefore important to understand how co-actors in development carry out their tasks and how they look at what the effects or outcomes of their strategies for addressing problems are through networking and partnership with other organizations. By using Koliba, et al.’s (2011, p. 201) taxonomy of network administration competencies that are employed by network administrators who draw on their awareness of the complex and complicated situations to shape network structures and functions, we begin in this study the first phase of a long-range task of network analysis for finding decentralized solutions to wicked problems. The study initiates the bigger task of network analysis by first understanding a range of strategies assumed to be where managers of civil society organizations networks are good at. To this end, this study asks: *What specific GNA strategies have been applied by civil society managers in a developing country like the Philippine, as these CSOs engaged with local governments and other sectors? What are the CSO network managers’ perceived effects of the strategies they have adopted as they coordinate, facilitate, and negotiate multiple players in a public engagement task?*

2. The need to focus on governance of networks

Provan and Kenis (2005) further pointed out that more often the issue of governance is not explicitly addressed in organizational networks literature. They say that the reason for this is that the organizations comprising the networks are autonomous, and being “cooperative endeavours”, are considered “not legal entities”. As such, for them, “the legal imperative for governance is simply not present as it is for organizations.” However, while partners in a network may be considered “loosely connected” and without legal entity, the issue of *control* in the management of public goods -- especially when the future network partners come to an agreement of managing common resources for mutually agreed solutions to persistent problems -- becomes even more significant. Before establishing control systems, an understanding of appropriate accountability principles and mechanisms should be had.

Thus, despite the reasons for not explicitly defining governance systems in a network, Provan and Kenis (2005) argue that “some form of governance is necessary to ensure that network participants engage in collective, and mutually supportive action, that conflict is addressed, and that network resources are acquired and utilized efficiently and effectively”. Furthermore, most literature on mechanisms for governance according to Provan and Kenis are generally discussed in terms of specific activities performed for a particular network, rather than in a comparative and broad way. Before discussions can be made on network governance in a comparative and holistic manner -- including various forms of governance that might exist, the rationale for emergence of one form versus another, and the impact of each form on network

performance -- the perceptions of network partners on governance mechanisms such as accountability and other dimensions of management are important to capture. This is needed to formulate guidelines on systems and procedures in a future development project that requires network solutions.

A deep understanding of network governance requires collection of data on multiple networks, yet treating such networks as unit of analysis. In fact, studying both vertical and horizontal linkages is ideal in networking analysis. Again, it is important to get different perspectives from different sectors and from different levels of leadership, based on their experience on networking in finding solutions to persistent problems. This study therefore, also asks: *“What lessons on accountability may be derived from the experience of CSOs in networking to find solutions to local problems that may serve as bases for future exploration?”*

3. Leadership and managers’ role in solving wicked problems

Taking the New Public Governance model’s point of view, the role of managers and the leadership is of paramount importance to problem solving. As Koliba et al. (2011, p. xxviii) even point out,

We are not, however, declaring the “death of the public bureaucracy.” They add, “nor are we suggesting that governing can occur without the state and its institutions. Instead, we believe that the application of networks to questions that are of importance to public administration and policy studies may lead to answers found in reinvigorated, “smarter” roles and functions for the institutions of government. Thinking in terms of governance networks also calls for a deeper examination of the role of the nonprofit and business sectors in providing public goods and services.

Possibly taking lead roles in network governance perhaps in future development projects, public managers need to understand and learn from networking strategies being adopted by other actors in society, including CSOs, and know how they think about their own networking experience, for them to be able to put in place systems and procedures and accountability mechanisms that might lead to effective and democratic governance.

By understanding network managers thinking and perception on their network strategies in engaging with the government and other partners in solving local problems, *what are the possible focus of future studies on networking strategies for network managers learning from civil society organizations’ perception on effects of the strategies they are currently adopting? What are the possible sources of tensions or conflict that need to be managed? What important directions for future policy and research may be pursued?*

C. Significance, Limitations, and Aims of the Study

The study is limited to civil society governance network managers’ perceptions. It does not aim to test causality of any concepts and constructs used, but to capture nuances of the managers’ specific strategies for GNA and their perceptions of the effects of these strategies. Results of the study can serve as a guide for understanding what may be significant in governance networks in the managers’ jurisdiction, in terms of the dynamics surrounding the network, the strategies adopted, and the effects within the development context where the CSOs operate.

The results may also shed light on the actors or players in the network, and in processes of self-reflection and introspection, may aid in identifying what motivates them and possibly in understanding how power and authority are wielded in the network.

These may also help guide network managers when they need to negotiate with other actors or simply facilitate interactions among the network partners. These may also give a sense where the boundaries of governance network are drawn and why.

This study aims to:

(1) map out network administration and coordinating strategies adopted by a network organization in their engagements with government; (2) describe the thinking of network or collaborative managers regarding the strategies they have adopted; (3) attempt to identify possible predictors that could be tested for effectiveness of administering networking strategies among different stakeholders, such as the government, civil society, or other partners.

The study looks at network managers who are responsible for managing or coordinating some aspect of a governance network's operating or policy functions. For public administrators, it is important to focus on managers who will act as agents responsive and accountable to citizens in order to sustain and possibly replicate or upscale gains of a development or societal goal. The results may also be useful to similar CSOs working as network managers or participants in a development project; or elected public officials working and engaging both government and nonprofit organizations; or even network managers of private organizations who are engaged with either government or nongovernment organizations in some volunteer work -- who are all concerned with making good decisions and using their professional discretion to achieve their organization's policy goals or strategic mission.

D. Framing Governance Network Administration in the New Governance Model

This study adopts the network management lens or concept as applicable to the New Governance Model in Public Administration, focusing on the challenges in the leadership and management and in bringing about an agreement on the nature and solution of problems, the forging of vertical and horizontal leadership, and consensus building. Note that prioritizing poverty alleviation and multi-stakeholder partnership are assumed societal values that the overall governance network is seeking to achieve. Three important variables may be deduced from the New Public Governance model (as contextualized by Morgan and Cook, 2014) in the context of developing countries like the Philippines -- *leadership* that presumably deals with vertical and horizontal entities, an expression of *societal values*, and a focus on mutuality of *goals*. The interrelationships of these constructs are illustrated in the analytical framework in Fig. 1 below.

1. Mixed forms of governance: Vertical and horizontal leadership

Guided by the New Governance Model, which implies network management, the study further adopts a conceptual or analytical framework offered by Koliba et al. (eds., 2011) to understand governance networks that conceives of networks "as a kind of participant relationship that is evident in all forms of macro relations: markets, hierarchies, and collaboratives." Mixed forms of governance networks are seen to operate across multiple sectors and in "multiple geographic scales where mixed administrative authorities comprise vertical, horizontal, and diagonal relational ties." This framework is what Koliba and his colleagues dubbed as Governance Network Administration (GNA).

Borderless problems need joint action by different stakeholders, which can bring about creative use of partnerships by public administrators and various stakeholders to jointly address seemingly borderless problems. Collaborative actions allow for both state and non-state entities "to address certain kinds of highly complex problems that appear to be beyond the capacity of sovereign states alone to solve" (Karkkainen, 2004, p. 74, cited by Koliba et al., 2011, p. 20). The partnership allows common agreement on goals, including shared values. In this study, the network of CSOs have governance structures at different levels and engage with local governments and other partners also at different levels.

How do network managers think? What strategies do they adopt and with what perceived effects? This is the crux of this study. The governance network taking shape in a problem-solving development context

needs to be understood and hopefully analyzed and worldviews captured as a means through which to establish management and administrative practices that can contribute to a richer understanding of cross-sectoral relations that are characterized by both vertical and horizontal relations aimed at adopting network solutions to development problems (Koliba, et al., p.34).

2. Facilitation and negotiation to attain mutuality of goals

“Politics can be seen as aggregating individual preferences into collective actions by some procedures of rational bargaining, negotiation, coalition formation, and exchange” (March and Olsen, 1995, p. 7). In this study, it may more appropriately be considered socio-political power assertion. A conceptual framework is needed to account for the fragmented and dynamic confluence of multiple forms of administrative authority that emerge in networked environs (Koliba et al, 2011).

While different directions of relationships emerge in networks, the emerging body of literature pertaining to “collaborative public management” (Agranoff & McGuire, 2003; Bingham & O’Leary, 2008) is very relevant as well, and needs to be woven into network management theory. Collaborative management theory is also adopted in network management analysis *basically to understand of the kind of skills, attitudes, and dispositions needed to foster effective horizontal administrative relationships*.

3. Accountability mechanisms to express values

One major challenge in governance network administration is accountability. Adopting Koliba and companions’ thinking based on a systems perspective, accountability is viewed as representative of the structures that participate within the governance network and guided by the nature of the interdependencies of network participants and their sector characteristics. Network accountability, as a system-level construct is one shaped by the accountability structures of the individual parts of the network. However, these may also come from the socio-political values attached by the participants in the management system they are operating in. The meanings and thinking behind accountability systems from where the participants and the operations of the network come from need to be basically understood.

The areas of concern in this study is represented in the analytical framework below, hinged on the tenets of the New Public Governance (2014).

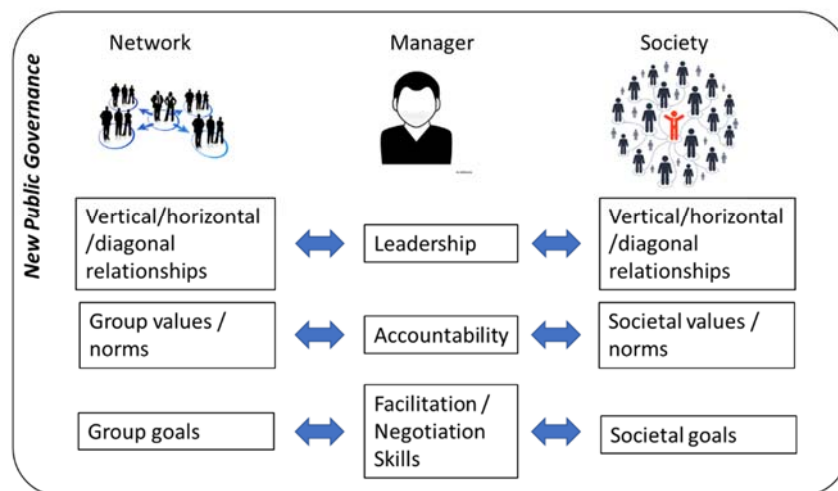


Fig. 1. Analytical framework for the study on network managers governance strategies and attitudes

E. Description of Governance Network Administration Strategies Adopted

The key interviews and the quick survey among the CSOs revealed interesting seemingly neutral strategies that have probably made their work on engaging multi stakeholders efficient and effective. As mentioned above, fragmented and dynamic confluence of multiple forms of administrative authority is assumed to have emerged in networked environments. Since there are multiple partners and stakeholders involved in the local solutions of problems, the multiple organizations involved -- including the network civil society organization, Caucus of Development NGO Networks (CODE-NGO) and its member networks (MN) organizations -- are assumed to represent the voices or stakes of their membership. Hence, some form of socio-political power assertion on the part of the CSO members is expected and can be represented by aggregating individual preferences into collective actions by some procedures of rational bargaining, negotiation, coalition formation, and exchange, as articulated by Koliba and his companions.

Using Koliba et al.'s taxonomy of Governance Network Administration, this study describes the following general findings:

1. The overall *strategies used for governance network administration* by the CODE-NGO as a network (the unit of analysis). Such taxonomy, as can be gleaned from the study, includes a description of the strategies for *coordination*, *facilitation*, and *negotiation* attitudes (i.e., perceptions of such tasks) of the CODE-NGO network manager and those of their member network (MN) managers. As well, the *perception of the MN managers regarding the effects* of the adoption of such GNA strategies are described;
2. A glimpse of the *attitudes of the MN managers' on critical management functions*;
3. A glimpse of their *perceptions regarding their accountability mechanisms*. No differences in hierarchical positions with regard to the structure of accountability mechanisms from the MNs to the CODE-NGO Secretariat (i.e. the MN had autonomy from the CODE-NGO Secretariat in terms of decision-making) were distinguished because of a relatively flat and non-traditional, non-hierarchical structure of the non-government networking organization, based on the responses extracted from the question on the *Oversight* as a coordinating strategy; and
4. Possible predictors of or hypotheses for testing effective governance network administration

The authors felt that there was no need to develop a new taxonomy for Governance Network Administration (GNA) strategies. Guided extensively by Koliba, Meek, and Zia's (2011, Ch.8) strategies in classifying the approaches to GNA, this paper liberally adopts the latter's definition of the networking strategies, and whenever possible, captures the nuances of such strategies as proffered by the respondents. Below are the results of this exploratory study on network managers' strategies in implementing development projects especially geared towards solving wicked problems.

Summary of CSO Managers' GNA Strategies in a Development Context

1. Adoption and perceived effects of adopting GNA Coordinating Strategies

In this paper, the term *GNA strategy*, each of which is described below, is used interchangeably to mean a *function* or *task* of the concerned overall network manager (CODE-NGO), its member networks (MN), or the member base organizations (MBOs) of the member networks.

a. Oversight/Mandating

This strategy refers to the use of classical hierarchical arrangements and regulatory subsystems. For the nongovernment organization network managers, the most common strategy for coordinating **member networks (MNs)** is the conduct of regular meetings and consultations with key players in gaining compliance, instead of the traditional hierarchical arrangements where the head gives orders. The CODE NGO Board meets every quarter or as the need arises, while the general assembly is held yearly. In addition, the CODE NGO Congress is done every two years. What is relevant for this coordination function is that the Board of CODE NGO serves as oversight, the overall network manager, and the ultimate decision maker. This function and approach to coordination appears to be a very crucial role played by the overall network manager. As an oversight tool, the Board makes use of a *Manual of Operations*, alongside its *Annual Strategic Plan*. Some of the respondents said that the MNs have adopted *Good Governance* principles as guide in relating with one another. To summarize, what is significant among the responses of CODE's member networks is the adoption of the following specific tools for an oversight strategy:

- working towards a common agenda
- having strategies to seal commitments
- ensuring common understanding of the work on engaging governments towards poverty alleviation

Perceived Effects

Adopting the *Annual Strategic Plan* as bases for an oversight function over implementing poverty alleviation projects and programs implementation, has resulted in more efficient project implementation of the poverty alleviation project and development projects in general, per the member networks. They also admitted to having a clearer idea of Project objectives and activities to be accomplished. Some of the MN partners, including a local government partner, further explained that having a good oversight made the “systems and processes adopted by a member network manager appear credible” because of “efficient systems and processes”. Other MN managers admitted a strong sense of ownership on their engagement with the local governments on the poverty alleviation programs. A self-assessment by another MN in the Southern part of Luzon also revealed a higher self-esteem felt by the member organizations of the MNs or member base organizations (MBOs) since their capacity for implementing poverty projects has been recognized by the local government as well as by their other partners.

b. Providing Resources

The provision of one or more forms of capital resources (such as funds, staff, equipment, etc.) as inputs into the network is referred to by this coordinating strategy. Most network member managers said that the key resource they have provided in their collaborative programs and the engagement with the government Project is the implementation of human resources development activities (e.g. trainings). For this purpose, the Annual Strategic Plan again becomes relevant as basis for the provision of resources, especially for funding and human resource. This recognition of human resources as an asset of the CODE-NGO network is evident in the built-in capacity building program for its programs and projects. The human resources needed by the networking organizations for its programs and projects are determined prior to implementation. When asked about their important resource, CODE NGO points to the premium it puts on NGO empowerment.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on effects of the shared resources contributed by the NGO networks include clarified objectives and activities and increased confidence in project implementation.

c. Participatory Governance/ Civic Engagement

Several definitions for participatory governance abound, but for this paper, Koliba et al's definition is still used regarding governance network administration. This strategy refers to the use of administrative authority to ensure the participation of selected interests or citizens at large. For this type of coordinating strategy, the common approach adopted by the respondents is the use of open communication and consultation with key players, adopting transparency as a rule, and going a step further, such as "helping with accreditation and certification for those members who could not be accredited" to ensure that more members are engaged in the development work. For *Malayang Kababaihan ng Irosin* (MALAYA KA), a member-based organization (MBO), it is important to always ensure the participation of especially the adversely affected sectors. In case of problematic staff, the MNs turn to the leaders in the higher rung.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on effects of engagement include continued building of linkages and partnerships.

d. Brokering/Boundary Spanning

As a process, this coordinating strategy refers to the development and use of social capital to bridge boundaries. Social capital is recognized as both process and output (Diola, 2009). As output, this refers to new ties that are established. The building and maintenance of linkages, as well as participation in planning and budgeting processes of government especially for its poverty alleviation processes are what the member networks do to continuously build overall social capital for the network. Strategies in building social capital are mainly focused on forging partnerships in key activities. In order to continuously build social capital, some of the MN respondents notably point out the identification of a champion for its advocacy programs. A member network aptly mentions that partnership-building and collaborative work are integral to their development work.

Perceived Effects

An overall effect of building linkages is increased partnership, cooperation, and commitment, in other words, maintaining strength of ties. To further test this effect, some hypotheses are extracted further below when adopting of facilitating strategies in GNA.

e. Systems Thinking

Systems thinking refers to the development of situational awareness of the complex systems dynamics that are unfolding. This strategy is reflected in an approach adopted by CODE and its network through the conduct of strategic planning and organizational assessment to analyze the effectiveness and operability of existing systems. This again links with the Strategic Plan mentioned earlier as the overall guide for operations of the Network. The regular quarterly Board of Directors meeting and occasional special meetings have helped the MNs to think systematically and if needed, issues and concerns confronting the provincial networks or the member-based organization are addressed in meetings conducted specifically for the latter. Systems thinking however starts at the planning stage for CODE NGO. When a project is in its proposal stage, the participating MNs conduct a document or project or program concept review to assess the proposed activity in its entirety.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on effects of engagement include increased efficiency in addressing key issues and problems.

f. Knowledge Management

The conduct of learning and knowledge sharing sessions to discuss the members' experience plus other relevant knowledge gained from the network engagement is what is referred to here. Some of the specific activities in line with knowledge management include peer learning exchange through documentation of good stories and practices. Some MNs also practice developing positive narratives. Other MNs mention active participation of their provincial networks in the capacity building training activities organized by the Regional Network members, especially the Coalition for Bicol Development (CBD). Other knowledge management sharing activities include review and documentation of processes, featuring case studies of good practices. Others pointed out Module Development and Training Materials as their opportunities for knowledge management sharing sessions.

Perceived Effects

As an outcome of knowledge sharing sessions above, the respondents again mention a sense of empowerment and increased capacity for task implementation among key players.

2. Focus on adoption and perceived effects of Facilitating Strategies

This section specifically focuses on facilitating strategies, as part of the overall Coordination Strategies which the network organization CODE NGO as well as its member networks (MNs) have often adopted as network managers. Since a major activity engaged in by governance networks is facilitation, this study opted to focus on this strategy to learn more about CSOs' specific facilitating strategies.

Referring to the use of coordinating strategies to bring actors together and ensure a smooth flow of information and joint actions between actors, adopting a *facilitation* strategy usually relies on incentives and inherent agreements on common norms and standards. As facilitation strategies, coordinative and collaborative activities, particularly through the conduct of meetings are still generally the more common activities. Serving as oversight for its Member Networks, the MNs point out that CODE-NGO has done quite a good job of facilitating discussions especially when it comes up with program or project proposals; when it enters Memorandums of Agreement (MoAs); and when conducting planning and evaluation sessions. Furthermore, respondents find face-to-face and email discussion regarding issues/concerns most useful.

The principle of *subsidiarity* is revealed as the most important guide for governing its network members, especially for the Mindanao Coalition of Development NGO Networks (MINCODE). This network organization also serves as channel for communication and operation of funds. The presence of a Board member that serves as "caretaker" for a particular MN is one proof of a caring relationship the network has developed and has probably helped deepen the quality of ties among its MNs. Another example of such caring relationship is when one of the provincial network member says the member networks call the Board of Trustees a "working Board": that is, each Board Member has an assigned committee to handle and implement tasks assigned to it.

Overall Effects

In general, with the type of engagements mentioned above, the preservation of linkages, increased participation of CSOs in governance, and clarified objectives and resources are cited as outcomes of adopting such facilitating strategies. To add to this, increased trust and respect for the network managers, including the highest level of management in the network itself seem to be engendered by the kind of facilitating strategies adopted.

A more detailed description of facilitating strategies follows below, still adopting Koliba et al.'s taxonomy.

a. Creating a safe space for action

This refers to the creation of an environment for maintaining a safety and comfort level environment for participants, including understanding and planning for individual differences in needs, abilities, fears, and apprehensions. Usually the levelling off among members of the network comes through smoother communication exchange especially through the conduct of regular meetings, consensus building with other CSOs, forging commitments to specific tasks.

Perceived Effects

Because of the smooth exchange of communication through regular meetings and consultation, the member networks think that access to communication with other players is increased, partnerships are strengthened and their commitment also augmented, and finally the creation of a common development agenda they say has been possible.

b. Setting ground rules

Related to number one above, this facilitating strategy involves establishing a foundation upon which the group's communication will occur, creating a safe and predictable environment where the participants can communicate openly, without fear of being criticized by others. When asked about this facilitation strategy, the common themes extracted from the responses are the codification of rules (e.g. code of ethics) and conduct of coordination/facilitation via discussions and orientation sessions to establish mutual understanding of rules.

Perceived Effects

As an outcome of the MN's setting of ground rules, the respondents say their engagements with partners including the government, have increased the credibility of the governance network and its systems.

c. Promoting active listening

This refers to the participant's consideration for and responding to others' comments; being open to dialogue, mindful of the group's cultural background, familiarity with each other, goals for reflection. The common theme among the responses is the conduct of facilitation, particularly the institutionalization of open communication among key stakeholders.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on effects of engagement include increased willingness of key players to build partnerships.

d. Management of disagreements

Being adept at recognizing tension building in the group, and responding to it immediately is what this facilitating strategy means. It entails the giving of criticism but as pertaining to ideas, not people; Management of disagreements also involve handling negative behavior immediately. The respondents indicated that a situation where they practice this during conflict resolution which they usually accomplish by striving towards effective communication through various means such as meetings, team-buildings, and consensus-building.

Perceived Effects

By exercising the above conflict management strategies, conflicts are resolved and linkages are strengthened, manifested through partnership agreements, declaration of commitment, and creation of an evidence-based CSO agenda.

e. Promoting equality

This facilitating strategy refers to how a network manager exercises being an alert observer, identifying signs of a developing hierarchy or divisive factions within the group. This also means not taking sides in a developing debate, recognizing the importance of all members and encouraging their participation equally. The MNs and MBOs stressed on the premium they levy on consensus (and consensus-building), which for them is tantamount to having equality among key players.

Perceived Effects

By adopting the above strategies of engagement, the MNs say they can achieve ownership of the entire undertaking and convergence in the development agenda.

f. Being mindful of power and who has it

This facilitating strategy involves identifying who the opinion leaders are. The strategy also means that if the MNs can spot if their power and authority are dominating the discussion, the MN manager asks them politely to entertain other opinions. To do this, the respondents indicate that they try to bear in mind that nobody is more powerful than another, and that decisions are subjected to voting. Most of all, the respondents indicated that they believe that their member networks (for some their provincial networks) are apolitical.

Perceived Effects

The effect of the engagement with governments adopting such attitudinal strategies mentioned above, is the creation of harmonious environments, notwithstanding occasional healthy debates.

g. Building strength through diversity

The facilitator acts as role model of the values of multiculturalism; he or she integrates diversity throughout the reflection sessions or activities rather than compartmentalizing into special multicultural segments. One expression of adopting this strategy is the integration of gender sensitivity in program and project management.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on effects of engagement for this facilitating strategy is the promotion of equality.

3. Focus on Adoption and Perceived Effects of Negotiation Strategies

Negotiation is another strategy of Coordination, which networks adopt in their governance administration. Aside from facilitation as a coordinating function, the study also focused on negotiation, assumed as an important skill that is developed in collaborative endeavors.

This means engaging in processes of mutual adjustment and agreements, ultimately leading to common acceptance of parameters for resource exchange and pooling of resources and other forms of coordinated action. The CODE-NGO network generally adopts strategies that make use of various communication and collaborative processes in negotiating and bargaining, such as dialogue, coordination, consensus, and consultation. For the MN MINCODE, knowledge on conflict management is considered especially helpful in acts of negotiation and bargaining. On the other hand, guided always by values, such as *speaking the truth*, MNs invoke this as one of the main bases for negotiation and bargaining. In the end, retaining friendships is considered highly valuable by the respondents when negotiating and bargaining with partners. The importance of having an oversight or higher level organization to manage conflict when issues cannot be resolved is again cited. A member network cited that a major challenge it faced in exercising negotiation was the decision to delist one member base network (MBO) because the latter failed to comply with the minimum requirements for members in good standing. MINCODE, a governance network itself, has served as venue for resolving issues that cannot be resolved at the MN level. For *Malayang Kababaihan ng Irosin* (MALAYA KA), a member of a Provincial Alliance of NGOs and POs for Development (PANGOPD), which in turn is a member base organization (MBO) of the Coalition for Bicol Development (CBD), a member network (MN) of CODE, the importance of having an initial bargaining with government before entering into a Memorandum of Agreement (MoA) is cited.

Perceived Effects

When the above approaches are used, the respondents found it easier to secure of LGU support to activities, clarified objectives and activities, increased confidence in project implementation, and further integration of CSOs in governance processes.

Specifically, respondents gave the following replies to the items below, which are described based on Koliba, et al.'s (2011) explanation of specific negotiation strategies.

a. Sensitivity to early interactions

Negotiation is needed at the inception and early period of the Project to set the tone for future interactions and to identify potential areas of conflict. The common responses reveal the use of orientation sessions and courtesy calls, as well as clarification of roles among key players.

Perceived Effects

As a consequence of initial clarification of roles, the engagement among players achieves flexibility, ownership, and healthy debates on issues.

b. Irreversibility

Through possible irreversibility of situations where “bridges may possibly be burned”, MNs are being alerted to such situations or conditions when participants may possibly “walk away and lock the door behind them”. Such are conditions where the need to negotiate is inevitable. To prevent “irreversible damages”, so to speak, the MNs adopt preemptive measures that allow for bringing together like-minded players who share a common understanding of the activity's importance.

Perceived Effects

Consequently, MNs can effectively control the situation and they achieve convergence in understanding the subject matter at hand.

c. Threshold effects

In negotiation, the network managers are aware that small incremental moves can possibly result in large changes in the situation. Averting such major changes, especially damaging ones, necessitates the art of negotiation. Network managers then need to negotiate and indicate threshold levels for decisions or actions. The common theme among the strategies adopted to avert adverse effects is giving importance to provision of updates through regular communication with a point person.

Perceived Effects

The common theme among responses on perceived effects of adopting provision of updates include achievement of desired outcomes.

d. Feedback loops

Referring to established patterns of interactions among actors readily becoming self-reinforcing as product of negotiated decisions, this negotiation skill is actually expressed through the CSOs' institutionalization of regular meetings/field visits and the creation of a communication protocol.

Perceived Effects

As for the effects of the engagement adopting the strategy above for feedbacking, the respondents mentioned the provision of updates or reports on key activities.

4. Attitudes and Views of Governance Network Managers on Critical Dimensions of Management

Below is a summary of the views of each the different views of the network managers from the CODE-NGO membership and partners, depicting their perception and attitude towards selected dimensions of management function. Descriptions are based on Koliba, et al.'s (2011)'s list.

The CSO network managers seem to generally agree on dimensions of network management that could contribute to efficiency of operations. The following are specific dimensions of network management:

a. Managing aims

The NGO network managers working on a poverty alleviation Project with the government recognize that *consensus among partners* regarding goals and development agendas are important, and that *aims need to be properly identified* as to which pertain to the collaborative network and which ones are to be pursued by the participating organization alone. *Differences in opinion* are to be identified and analyzed first before proceeding to work collaboratively.

Specifically, the CSOs seem to **generally agree** on the following:

- Begin a project with the end / goals in mind and clarify these with participants.
- Desire consensus or shared goals among participants before beginning a project/activity.
- Be flexible in accepting additional goals and/or projects while current program or project is ongoing.
- Consciously analyze differences in opinion/ideas before proceeding to work on a project/activity rather than assume everyone will agree to the Project plan.
- Be mindful about levels of aspirations in a network (the collaboration, the participating organizations, the individuals).

- Care about the relevance of the aims of the Project - recognizing which organizational aims can be pursued through the collaboration and which ones may be pursued by the organization alone or with other collaborative networks.
- Deliberately try to identify which of the Project's aims are those that should relate specifically to the collaborative agenda from those that are closely related but not explicitly a part of it.

b. Managing trust

In managing trust, the network managers all agreed that *mutual understanding* and *trust* are important, and that *change in leadership* or tasks need to be communicated to the network members as well as any felt power imbalance needs to be checked and the balance maintained to sustain trust among the members.

Specifically, the managers all agreed that in managing trust, the network members should:

- Consciously make it a point to develop mutual understanding and trust among the member organizations and participants in the network.
- When there is a change in leadership in any task, or a change in assigned tasks, consciously make it a point to discuss such change(s) to the people concerned as well as among the members of the network to avoid misunderstanding and sustain trust among the members.
- During the life of the DG2 project (or any Project of the Network), constantly check on possible power imbalance and you carefully try to shift the balance to sustain the trust gained among the members.

c. Managing cultural diversity and attitudes of members

For the network managers, managing cultural diversity and attitudes of members means that cultural and organization differences are a welcome source of stimulation for the network and such differences need to be managed at the start of the task.

Specifically, the network managers generally agree on the following:

- Consider cultural differences a source of stimulation rather than a source of tension / conflict.
- Consider organizational differences a source of stimulation rather than a resource or a source of tension/conflict.
- Manage cultural differences at the start of the task to be done because of the view that cultural sensitivity is necessary to effectively interact across different communities.

d. Managing knowledge transfer

Sharing knowledge among the participants is generally not a problem because the participants in the network that engaged the government on a poverty alleviation project are ready to share information because they generally believe that participants need to understand what is going on in the Project all the time. In fact, they generally believe that knowledge should be shared so that participants may replicate this knowledge.

Specifically, as network managers, they:

- Share knowledge to the participants because of the belief that they need to understand what is going on in the project all the time.
- Share knowledge to participants and let them replicate it.
- Readily share information to participants.

However, respondents *slightly differ* in attitude towards (not all agree on) adopting networking strategies that might compromise an organization's own development agendas. Consequently, how interpersonal relationships within an organization may be viewed is ambivalent.

For example, the respondents have different opinions when it comes to giving all-out information on agendas and purposes. Some think that these may be concealed and that information on these may be left to the higher management level to explain to the rest of the network members.

Regarding how trust is managed, the network managers also differ in opinion as to the treatment of interpersonal relationships. Some think small wins and smooth interpersonal relationships are more important than attaining huge management goals to the detriment of relationships. Some are risk takers, striving to accomplish tasks even if others don't support them.

Still, notable areas where respondents are *strongly divided* are in the areas of how information and knowledge management are done, which can be potential sources of tension or conflict among CSOs. These include their attitudes towards communication forms that may not be able to accommodate cultural diversity in a collaborative setting. Consequently, the CSOs are divided on whether to care so much about cultural differences. One other strong difference in perception is noted in giving away information, especially when for some CSOs such knowledge may not be helpful or perhaps unwise. Here are the specific statements where the network managers strongly differ in opinion:

- Any form of communication may not be able to accommodate all the cultural diversity present in a collaborative setting, and therefore there is no need to take so much care about cultural differences.
- Since one's knowledge about something cannot be trusted, one does not give away that knowledge.
- Since one enjoys sharing knowledge, it is given away (even though it may be unwise).
- When it helps to manipulate a third party, knowledge is given away.

5. Accountability Frameworks

Network managers' perception towards setting up mechanisms for accountability and the effects of adopting such strategies are described below.

In setting goals, the network managers prefer that these should be as specific as possible rather than broadly defined. In general the CSO network managers said that when engaging the government, the network set goals should be realistic, achievable and well-defined, in other words, more purposive and responsive to felt needs.

Regarding feedback, the network managers agree that exchange of feedback with the participants is important from the initial stage until the later stages of the activity. In their experience most of the network members state that seeking inputs led to improved strategy and stronger collaborative relationships among key players.

As for communicating goals to the network members, most respondents claim to tolerate deviation from goals among key players, except CODE-NGO and MINCODE. Communicating goals to network members led to leveled expectations and stronger partnerships.

With regard to aligning values and creating trust, most respondents claim to offer more services than what is required, except CBD and BMD. Respondents unanimously agree on valuing relationships forged from

the network. By aligning values and creating trust, partnerships are strengthened and common agreement is reached among key players.

F. Sensemaking on Governance Network Strategies Adopted by Civil Society Organizations in Engaging Governments

To propose policy changes in configuring network management in future Programs, Projects, and Activities (PPAs) in any development context, this study adopts Dalkir's (2005, p. 43) integrated model of knowledge management. The first step pertains to taking stock of current practices in network management. The model recognizes a transition from knowledge capture/creation to knowledge sharing and dissemination, where knowledge content is first assessed. *Knowledge capture* is a particularly critical phase in knowledge management in Dalkir's model as it is the "initial stage" of identification and subsequent codification of existing (usually previously unnoticed) internal knowledge and know-how within the organization and/or external knowledge from the environment. See **Fig. 2** below to refer how knowledge capture can be a significant process in the management of change and how to make sense of the results of knowledge capture of current perceptions and adoption of networking strategies by CSO members.

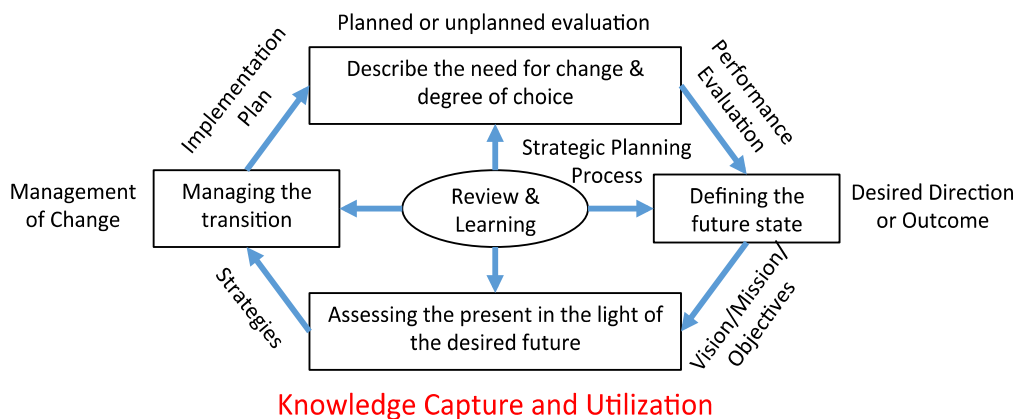


Fig. 2. Knowledge Capture and Utilization

Four key senses regarding the adoption of Governance Network Administration in a development context can be drawn from the study, which validate most of what Koliba and his colleagues have elucidated in their studies.

a. Communicating roles and goals

Achievement of goals is a foremost concern in network management. In the case of the Philippine NGO network managers, being focused on the goals is a major consideration. Koliba and his colleagues (2011, p. 68) cited Charles Perrow (1961, p. 855) who distinguished between “official” and “operative” organizational goals. Official goals are the “general purposes of the organization as put forth in the charter, annual reports, public statements by key executives and other authoritative pronouncements”, while operative organizational goals are the day to day guides for the managers.

It is now commonly observed that policy goals get framed through the lens of different policy actors. Charles Lindblom (1959) first noted in his classic article “The Science of ‘*Muddling Through*’” that the successful attainment of public policy goals may be determined when an agreement between policy actors exists on the proper actions to undertake. Similarly Deborah Stone’s (2002) book *Policy Paradox* is cited by Koliba and colleagues (2011), to describe how goal ambiguity can be a critical feature of the public policy-making process, where this ambiguity brings a certain measure of uncertainty to the participation of a public sector organization (or public official) in a governance network.

Official public goals may be clearly specified in laws and regulations. However, the fact that such laws and regulations may be subject to the interpretation of the individuals charged with enforcing, enacting, and implementing them renders even clearly articulated public policy goals ambiguous. How Hall (1980, p.88) notes this biased articulation is quoted here:

If it [a public sector organization] is staffed by personnel who have values above and beyond simply administering the existing laws ... their own values toward social action or inaction can clearly modify the stated goals of the organization”.

Making sense of the results of the key interviews and rapid survey conducted for this study certainly validate what Koliba and his colleagues (2011) said:

In instances where laws, regulations, and policy directives are clear and those responsible for enforcing, enacting, or implementing them understand and comply with the original intent behind them, we may find some measure of alignment between official public sector goals and their operative goals.

The reason the CSO managers have continued their engagement with the local governments and other stakeholders is because they see an alignment of their organizational goals with what the public sector goals are - that is, poverty alleviation.

b. The governance network as democratic space

In network management, collaborative or horizontal processes especially where policy issues are at the heart of the network PPAs, are a crucial entry point for negotiation. Where there are conflicts in policy positions, the partners in the network are brought to the “polis”, where continuous negotiation of authority between the policy actors may exist (Stone, 2002, cited by Koliba et al, 2011, pp. 71-72). Koliba et al. (2011) have considered governance networks as an important democratic anchorage and public space where network partners may identify and derive common and public goals.

In this study, the CODE NGO and its member networks have engaged the local governments in the DG Project and have perceived and documented and considered their engagements not only with governments but also with other sectors of society to be successful in prioritizing community needs; for some members of CODE, actual inclusion of community members’ articulation of their needs into the local plans have been actualized.

A combination of such GNA strategies adopted by the network has contributed to the success of the DG project on poverty alleviation and community empowerment through more active participation in local

planning and formulation of development agenda processes. What is needed is to perhaps test an actual correlation between the adoption of a particular GNA strategy and its contribution to the actual perceived effects of adopting the strategy mentioned by the respondents.

Civil society organizations are generally founded to serve a social or public need. As conduits through which collective interests may coalesce, this sector's goals are also shaped through a process of "negotiated meaning" between those sharing common interests. In the best cases, nonprofit actors are, overall, in the best position to adapt to changing conditions and respond to emergent needs, new priorities, and altered conditions. The third sector does wield significant power as representatives of certain collective interests and are often engaged to exert influence over the political system. In cases like these, nonprofit governance structures allow for special interests to collectivize power and operate from a significant position of strength. The points of tension within network organizations may remain, but for as long as they operate in a transparent and accountable manner engaging different stakeholders within a public space, chances are they will still attain effectiveness in their development work.

Nevertheless, the fact that some local government partners see the work of CODE NGO members as "credible", gives impetus to the application of the network governance approach as contributing to bringing or even enlarging democratic space.

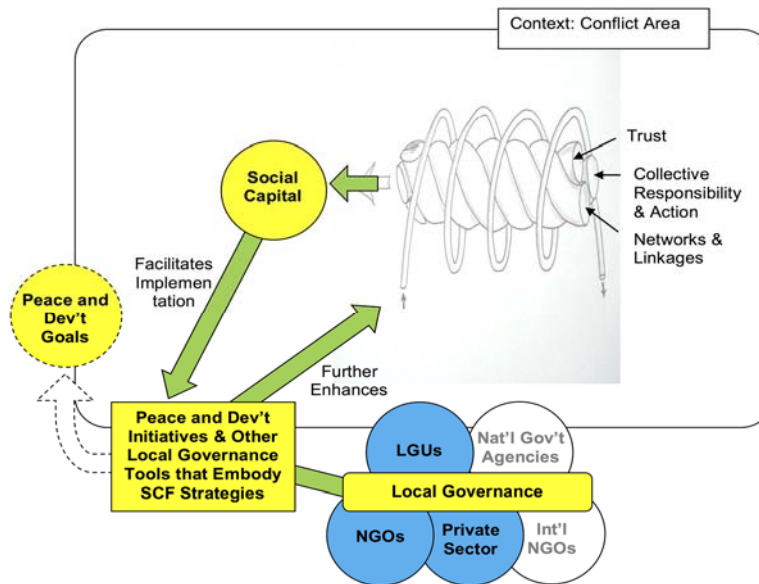
c. Civic associations and social capital

Civic associations are thought to possess social capital. Social capital, referring to trust, norms, and networks of social organizations, can facilitate coordinated action. Social capital has been the subject of extensive study and consideration among scholars. Putnam has argued that building social capital is not easy, but it is the key to making democracy work. It has been shown in several studies on institutions that civic associations, which are thought to carry social capital, are powerfully linked with effective public institutions. Social capital, embodied in horizontal networks of civic engagement, helps augment performance of the polity and the economy, and not the reverse, as Putnam contends. Coleman (1990, p. 302, 304) further explains how social capital facilitates coordinated action.

Like other forms of capital, social capital is productive, making possible the achievement of certain ends that would not be attainable in its absence...a group whose members manifest trustworthiness and place extensive trust in one another will be able to accomplish much more than a comparable group lacking that trustworthiness and trust...

In a study by Diola for example, it was shown that different actors can mediate and facilitate social capital formation in some conflict areas in the Philippines. The following illustration depicts the emerging theory from the study using grounded theory. Applying the model to any other development context, note the important role of various actors in a network who act as mediators or facilitators of social capital in that development context.

Fig 2 . Social Capital Formation in Conflict Areas



Source: Diola, 2009

The study jibes somewhat with Coleman’s contention that with increased use social capital is augmented but diminished with disuse (Coleman, 1990, p. 1990, p. 315). Coleman points out that other forms of social capital can be social norms and networks. In this study, the ingredients of trust formation, norms and reciprocity, and mutual goals and shared values are important considerations for the network managers as they adopt their coordinating and facilitative strategies, the traces of which are figuring in based on the results of the study.

d. Perceptions on Accountability

The civil society sector has indeed played major roles in different development contexts. The results of this study have shown how the network managers in the whole CODE NGO network have perceived their network governance strategies. Although the CSOs have articulated their perceptions on accountability mechanisms, the results also need to be validated and compared with the perceptions and understanding of the other sectors as to the development tasks at hand in the future. Certainly, accountability across the complex inter-sector arrangements need to be negotiated as a “series of trade-offs between the democratic anchorage of the state (and sometimes collective interest groups), market accountabilities (when private firms and corporations are implicated), and administrative accountabilities (introduced below in terms of the vertical or horizontal nature of administrative authorities)” (Koliba et al. 2011).

One principle on the concept of *subsidiarity* mentioned by a member network of CODE NGO needs more probing in terms of the dynamics that has been shaping up as a result of the member base NGOs being guided by this principle of wielding power to the lower levels of management. Certainly, there may be pitfalls to adopting this principle in toto. Public administrators need to learn more from the dynamics.

G. Future Research: Next Steps

This study adopted Koliba et al.'s taxonomy of strategies based on the set of network administration competencies that are employed by network administrators who presumably draw on an awareness of the complexities of development situations that shape network structures and functions. Some possibilities are discussed in Koliba et al.'s main book on Governance Network Analysis, but the empirical results of this initial study on GNAs among CSO network managers reveal possible trajectories of identified possible predictors of effectiveness of network administration strategies as well as possible causal relationship testing among the variables. A corollary qualitative study of this kind will be needed among other sectors in the network (i.e., the government sector and the private sector) to understand further the GNA dynamics and the network managers' perception of effectiveness of GNA structures and processes of a particular network, that would help in designing or reconfiguring future coordinative management systems especially for public policy network management in a particular development PPA.

Proposed Hypothesis for Testing Effectiveness of Network Governance

Based on the results of the rapid survey, the authors recommend that the following dimensions of GNA be tested in the future for policy research in adopting strategies for development projects requiring governance network management:

On oversight/mandating

Hypothesis:

A Strategic Plan (or any document containing guidelines for PPA management) that contains an overall management plan, shared values, and accountability mechanisms adopted by the network system of multiple stakeholders results in a more efficient project alleviation of a Program, Project, or Activity (PPAs).

- a. Participating organizations are likely to adopt systems and processes based on the Strategic Plan guidelines if they have participated and contributed to the formulation of A Strategic Plan.
- b. The PPAs are highly esteemed by the member organizations. They feel a strong sense of ownership of the PPAs where there is a Strategic Plan.
- c. The PPAs are implemented efficiently and effectively by employing a Strategic Plan.
- d. The PPAs have high acceptability among the intended community partners or users of the public goods and services produced by the PPAs when adopting the guidelines under the Strategic Plan.

On providing resources

Hypothesis:

A program that builds the capacities of partner communities for self-governance facilitated and managed by nongovernment and civil society organizations in general are effective in developing a strong sense of community empowerment by the primary beneficiaries of the PPA and in turn boosts the self-esteem of the NGO leaders.

- a. The capacity building program facilitated and managed by NGOs for community partners leads to improved leadership and community planning skills.
- b. An increase in funding resources (more than the past average trends in funding for human resources) provided for nongovernment organizations' capacity building programs results in high-esteem for NGO leaders to actively get involved in collaborative projects with government.

On brokering and boundary spanning

Hypothesis:

Where there is a champion who is in charge of continuous liaison with other stakeholders in the networked PPA increased partnership, cooperation, and commitment or maintenance of ties and open communication among CSOs in general can happen. In other words, a champion or facilitator is responsible for building social capital among the CSO network members who are then open to establishing ties with other sectors in the network.

- a. Trust building activities by the champion leads to willingness to commit to the development task and continue partnership with network members from other sectors towards the development task.
- b. Recognizing a mutually beneficial collective action with the other sectoral stakeholders facilitated by a mediator or champion for building social capital leads to willingness to commit to the development task and continuous partnership with network members from other sectors towards the development task.
- c. Recognizing a mutually beneficial collective action with other sectoral stakeholders facilitated by a mediator or champion for building social capital leads to the development of common development agendas and identification of areas of organization or cultural diversity among the network members.

On systems thinking

Hypothesis:

A strategic planning process that involves all stakeholders from the initial conceptualization of the PPAs, allowing the nonstate actors or the third sector to review project documents in its entirety and which explicitly includes their inputs in the strategic plan, has higher chances of efficient and effective management in addressing key issues and problems identified by the network.

Knowledge management

Hypothesis:

A built-in process of reflection and sharing of experiences among the network partners that includes documentation of processes, writing case studies and developing positive narratives on such experiences in the PPA results in increased sense of ownership and capacity for task implantation among the key players.

On creating a safe space for action

Hypothesis:

More open and face-to-face communication, including a sense of an honest caring relationship built by network managers towards the network members, leads to heightened commitment and willingness to continue engaging and partnership with the network partners in a common development agenda.

On setting ground rules

Hypothesis:

The existence of norms of reciprocity or shared guidelines articulated or communicated by a champion or a facilitator leads to willingness to commit to the development task and continuous partnership with network members from other sectors towards the development task.

On management of disagreements

Hypothesis:

Active identification of areas of mutuality as well as areas of divergence among the network partners leads to a more nuanced or differentiated development agenda for partners in the network that can be more targeted in terms of indicators for effectiveness.

On being mindful of power and who has it

Hypothesis:

Effective facilitation of discussion, where mutual and divergent opinions are discussed openly leads to a sense of belongingness and increased willingness among the members to commit to the development tasks.

On building strength through diversity

Hypothesis:

Recognizing a mutually beneficial collective action with other sectoral stakeholders facilitated by a mediator or champion for building social capital leads to the development of common development agendas and identification of areas of organization or cultural diversity among the network members.

On negotiation strategies

Hypothesis:

Facilitation that is characterized by open discussion and negotiation of positions, where mutual and divergent opinions are recognized and discussed freely leads to a nuanced or differentiated set of agendas, increases expression of belongingness, and increased expressions of willingness among the members to commit to the development tasks.

On threshold effects

Hypothesis:

Participants in the network will only continue to participate actively if they are fully aware of the benefits of the PPA to both the individual and their organization.

Participants in the network will not continue to participate actively if they are fully aware of the risks of the PPA to both the individual and their organization.

On feedback loops

Hypothesis:

Regular communication coming from the overall network managers regarding the status of the PPA increases the likelihood of an effective PPA implementation.

Managing tensions and conflicts

Hypotheses:

1. Being able to handle differences in cultural practices in a collaborative setting leads to success in PPA implementation.
2. Giving information and knowledge on the part of the manager, regardless of the level of accuracy and motivation for giving away such information and knowledge, increases the likelihood of success in PPA implementation.

Accountability frameworks

Hypothesis:

When partners share and align their individual and organizational values with the network's identified values they tend to increase trust in the network members.

Increased trust increases strength of the partnerships, which leads to increased likelihood of effective implementation of assigned development tasks among the network members.

Network members tend to formulate accountability mechanisms around the shared values of the network.

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