**Collaborative Governance in Theory and Practice**, Chris Ansell and Alison Gash

Summary: Authors conduct meta-analysis of 137 articles in existing literature to discern a common language, conceptual framework and lessons learned to make future collaborative governance initiatives more effective.

Research Question: “Is collaborative governance more effective than adversarial or managerial governance?” Very few of the existing studies actually evaluated governance outcomes.

Collaborative Governance: A governing arrangement where one or more public agencies directly engage non-state stakeholders in a collective decision-making process that is formal, consensus-oriented, and deliberative and that aims to make or implement public policy or manage public programs or assets.

- Six important criteria: (1) the forum is initiated by public agencies or institutions, (2) participants in the forum include non-state actors, (3) participants engage directly in decision making and are not merely “consulted” by public agencies, (4) the forum is formally organized and meets collectively, (5) the forum aims to make decisions by consensus (even if consensus is not achieved in practice), and (6) the focus of collaboration is on public policy or public management.

Article Summary:

- Collaborative governance has emerged as a response to the failures of downstream implementation and to the high cost and politicization of regulation. It has developed as an alternative to the adversarialism of interest group pluralism and to the accountability failures of managerialism (especially as the authority of experts is challenged). Trends toward collaboration also arise from the growth of knowledge and institutional capacity. As knowledge becomes increasingly specialized and distributed and as institutional infrastructures become more complex and interdependent, the demand for collaboration increases.
- If some stakeholders do not have the capacity, organization, status, or resources to participate, or to participate on an equal footing with other stakeholders, the collaborative governance process will be prone to manipulation by stronger actors. The problem of power imbalances is particularly problematic where important stakeholders do not have the organizational infrastructure to be represented.
- Given the largely voluntary nature of participation, it is critical to understand the incentives that stakeholders have to engage in collaborative governance and the factors that shape those incentives. Incentives to participate are low when stakeholders can achieve their goals unilaterally or through alternative means. Alternative venues will be particularly attractive to stakeholders when they believe they can achieve their goals unilaterally.
- Collaborative governance, however, often builds on a history of rancor that has institutionalized antagonism. A prehistory of conflict is likely to express itself in low levels of trust, which in turn will produce low levels of commitment, strategies of manipulation, and dishonest communications.
• Effective collaborative leadership is likely to be time, resource, and skill intensive. Where incentives to participate are weak, power and resources are asymmetrically distributed, and prior antagonisms are high, leadership becomes all the more important. The requisite leadership qualities may depend on the precise context.
• Basic protocols and ground rules are critical for the procedural legitimacy of the collaborative process.
• Broad participation is not simply tolerated but must be actively sought.
• Leaders are asking stakeholders to engage in good faith negotiation and to explore possibilities for compromise and mutual gains. But stakeholders often enter into the collaborative process in a skeptical frame of mind.
• Determine the appropriate use of deadlines based on context. Although some authors point to the importance of deadlines because collaborative meetings can be endless, others observe that deadlines may arbitrarily limit the scope of discussion.
• Collaboration often seemed to depend on achieving a virtuous cycle between communication, trust, commitment, understanding, and outcomes. The collaborative process is difficult to represent because of the nonlinear character of interaction.
• Face-to-face dialogue is more than merely the medium of negotiation. It is at the core of the process of breaking down stereotypes and other barriers to communication that prevent exploration of mutual gains. It is at the heart of a process of building trust, mutual respect, shared understanding, and commitment to the process.
• When there has been a prehistory of antagonism among stakeholders, trust building often becomes the most prominent aspect of the early collaborative process and can be quite difficult to cultivate. A time-consuming process that requires a long-term commitment to achieving collaborative outcomes. Therefore, if the prehistory is highly antagonistic, then policy makers or stakeholders should budget time for effective remedial trust building.
• Commitment is closely related to the original motivation to participate in collaborative governance. Stakeholders may wish to participate in order to make sure their perspective is not neglected or to secure legitimacy for their position or to fulfill a legal obligation, etc. By contrast, commitment to the process means developing a belief that good faith bargaining for mutual gains is the best way to achieve desirable policy outcomes.
• Ownership implies shared responsibility for the process. This responsibility requires stakeholders to see their relationship with other stakeholders in a new light, one in which they share responsibility with their opponents.
• Mandated forms of collaboration may be critical where incentives to participate are weak, but mandated cooperation can also disguise the lack of real commitment on the part of stakeholders. Therefore, even when collaborative governance is mandated, achieving “buy in” is still an essential aspect of the collaborative process.
• Collaborative governance is best suited for situations that require ongoing cooperation.
• If prior antagonism is high and a long-term commitment to trust building is necessary, then intermediate outcomes that produce small wins are particularly crucial. If, under these circumstances, stakeholders or policy makers cannot anticipate these small wins, then they probably should not embark on a collaborative path.
• The term “collaborative governance” promises a sweet reward. It seems to promise that if we govern collaboratively, we may avoid the high costs of adversarial policy making, expand democratic participation, and even restore rationality to public management.
A Preliminary Theory of Interorganizational Network Effectiveness: A Comparison Study of Four Community Mental Health Systems, Keith Provan and Milward Brinton

Summary: Inductive study using data on mental health services to determine factors that influence network effectiveness. Found both structural and contextual factors, including network integration, external control, system stability and environmental resource munificence.

Research Question: What, if any, is the relationship between the structure and context of mental health networks and their effectiveness?

Sample: Four U.S. cities with high and low rates of per capita spending on mental health services: Tucson, Arizona ($19.76); Albuquerque, New Mexico ($23.79); Providence, Rhode Island ($52.34); Akron, Ohio ($45.33). Used surveys, interviews, documents and observations from 1991-1992 to collect data from agencies, clients and clients’ families or case managers.

Article Background:
- Existing research on network involvement is limited interorganizational relations analysis
- Previous focus on complex social problems has mistakenly relied on organizational outcomes. If broad goal is overall client well-being, then effectiveness evaluation is dependent upon the network level when services are provided by integrated and coordinated actions of many different agencies.

Findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>City</th>
<th>Factor Analysis Rank of Client Data Perspectives</th>
<th>Core Agency Centrality</th>
<th>Distribution of Influence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Providence</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>1\textsuperscript{st}</td>
<td>Concentrated Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albuquerque</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>Concentrated Influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tucson</td>
<td>4\textsuperscript{th}</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>Dispersed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Akron</td>
<td>3\textsuperscript{rd}</td>
<td>2\textsuperscript{nd}</td>
<td>Moderately Dispersed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Found little relationship between density-based integration and network effectiveness
- When influence over mental health decisions was highly concentrated in a single core agency, client outcomes were highest. When widely dispersed, effectiveness was lowest.
- Concludes that a positive tie between network integration and effectiveness is most likely when integration and coordination occur from the top down, but not when agencies take it upon themselves to integrate their services
- Networks will be effective under structural conditions of centralized integration and direct, nonfragmented external control, but that effectiveness will be highest when the system is also stable and environmental resources are relatively generous
- All forms of network integration are not alike and are likely to have different consequences for overall network effectiveness. Networks integrated and coordinated centrally, through a single core agency, are likely to be more effective than dense, cohesive networks integrated in a decentralized way among the providers in the system
- Centralization appears to facilitate both integration and coordination as well as makes monitoring and control by the core agency easier
Theoretical Contributions:

- **Proposition 1**: Other things being equal, network effectiveness will be enhanced when the network is integrated, but only when integration is achieved through centralization of the network. Networks that are both centrally integrated, through a core agency, and decentrally integrated, through cohesive links among network members, will be less effective than networks that are predominately centralized.

- **Proposition 2**: Other things being equal, network effectiveness will be highest when mechanisms of external control are direct and not fragmented. Low network effectiveness will result when external control is indirect and when strong local mechanisms for monitoring and control are absent.

- **Proposition 3**: Other things being equal, network effectiveness will be enhanced under conditions of general system stability, although stability alone is not a sufficient condition for effectiveness. Networks that have recently undergone substantial change will be significantly less effective than stable ones. The impact of instability on network effectiveness will be greater to the extent that the clients of the network are themselves adversely affected by instability and certainty.

- **Proposition 4**: When a network is embedded in a resource-scarce environment, network effectiveness will range from low to moderate, depending on other network/system characteristics. When a network is embedded in a resource-rich environment, network effectiveness will range from low to high, depending on other network/system characteristics.

**Interorganizational Imitation: The Impact of Interlocks on Corporate Acquisition Activity**, Pamela Haunschild

Summary: Tobit model that explores the role of relationships for managers on boards in relation to acquisition activities versus competing theories interpreting reasoning for imitation.

Sample: Acquisition data on 327 medium and large sized firms (over $35 million in assets in 4 industries from 1981-1990)

Article Background:

- Interorganizational imitation of practices and structures have been debated in organizational learning, strategic choice, and institutional theories.
- To demonstrate that one firm’s practice is the result of imitation of another firm’s practice requires that 3 conditions be satisfied:
  1. A model firm exhibits the practice at time \( t \)
  2. Representatives from the imitating firm are exposed to the model
  3. The imitating firm exhibits the practice at time \( t + x \) where \( x \) is some positive but unknown period of time
- To place in this context, the conditions are:
  1. The model (tied-to firm) engages in an acquisition at time \( t \)
  2. The imitator (the focal firm) is exposed to the model through director ties
  3. At some later time, the focal firm engages in an acquisition
Findings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hypothesis</th>
<th>Reasoning</th>
<th>Outcome</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The number of prior acquisitions completed by firms that are tied to a focal firm through director ties is positively associated with the number of current acquisitions by the focal firm</td>
<td>Director ties provide managers with information from a familiar source</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. The relationship between the number of current acquisitions by the focal firm and the number of prior acquisitions by the tied-to firms will be positive but will increase at a decreasing rate</td>
<td>The number of acquisitions will not be linear when the tied-to firms complete large numbers of acquisitions. Because there is only so much information that can be observed, at some point the impact of additional models should increase at a decreasing rate</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. The number of prior horizontal acquisitions by tied-to firms is positively associated with the number of current horizontal acquisitions by the focal firm</td>
<td>It is unclear whether the focal firm will imitate only the act of acquisition or if they will mimic the same type of acquisition. (horizontal – firms acquire competitors)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3b. The number of prior vertical acquisitions by tied-to firms is positively associated with the number of current vertical acquisitions by the focal firm</td>
<td>Same as 3a. (vertical- when firms acquire their suppliers or distributors)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3c. The number of prior conglomerate acquisitions by tied-to firms is positively associated with the number of current conglomerate acquisitions by the focal firm</td>
<td>Same as 3a. (conglomerate – when firms acquire unrelated firms)</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The relationship between focal and tied-to firm acquisitions is restricted to cases in which the focal and tied-to firms are similar</td>
<td>Testing for omitted variable bias to determine if the relationship still holds when the focal and tied-to firms are very dissimilar</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. The number of current-year acquisitions by tied-to firms is related to the number of current-year acquisitions by the focal firm</td>
<td>In order to prove imitation and not some other factor, the requirement for some time elapse should not hold</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. The number of prior acquisitions by the focal firm is related to the number of current acquisitions by the tied-to firms</td>
<td>If some condition common to both firms is causing the acquisition relationship, than prior acquisitions by the focal firm should be related to current acquisitions by the tied-to firm</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. There is a positive relationship between focal-firm network centrality and the number of acquisitions completed in the current year</td>
<td>Finding this relationship would support a private-information explanation in that firms that are tied to many other firms are simply more likely to have access to private information than firms that are tied to few other firms.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. There is a positive relationship between the industries of the tied-to firm’s acquisitions and the industries of the focal firm’s acquisitions</td>
<td>Finding this relationship would support a private-information explanation related to firms within the same industry</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. The imitation variables are more strongly associated with acquisitions during the later part of the 1980s merger wave</td>
<td>Earlier on, acquisitions occur when they are functional but later on, when many firms are making acquisitions and acquisitions are normative, social processes dominate</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Purpose and objectives**
The study is designed to prove hypotheses based on social network theory precepts. It explores the relative contributions of individual attributes, formal organization positions, network centrality, and network proximity in explaining individual variation in perceptions of work-related conditions in an advertising firm.

**Theoretical framework**
Social Information Processing (SIP) and Social Network Analysis (SNA) theories.

**Data and methods**
The study was conducted in a New England advertising and public relations company. A total of 79 actors were included in a first round of unstructured interviews, and a second round of structured interviews were interviewees had to respond to an affiliation survey (sociometric questions).

**Research questions and hypotheses**
1- Are there empirically distinguishable SIP processes undergirding the impact of network interaction on individual perceptions?

2- Do network factors exercise an effect on perceptions above and beyond that accounted by individual attributes and formal positions?

Hypothesis 1: Network interaction affects individuals' perceptions through two mechanisms: localized social influence based on network proximity and systematic power based on network centrality.

Hypothesis 2a: Expressive network proximity will be a stronger predictor of work-related perceptions than instrumental network proximity.

Hypothesis 2b: Instrumental network centrality will be stronger predictor of work-related perceptions than expressive network centrality.

Hypothesis 3: The rank order of independent variables, from the least to the most effect on work-related perceptions will be as follows: individual attributes, formal positions, and centrality and proximity.

**Independent variables:**
Network-type: Network centrality and network proximity
Formal positions: rank, subunit membership
Attributes: Education, gender, tenure, past work experience
Dependent variables:
Encouragement of risk taking; information access; individual acceptance; job autonomy; inter-departmental conflict.

Results
It confirms hypothesis 1: Advice network centrality and friendship network proximity evidence significant effects.

It confirms hypothesis 2a and 2b, although measures are stronger for centrality (2b) than for proximity (2a).

It confirms hypothesis 3: Network factors shape job-related perceptions, over and above the effects of individual attributes and formal positions.

Significance
The study supports the assertion that informal interaction networks, in channeling social influences as well as control of valued resources, have a significant impact on job-related perceptions, over and above the effects of traditionally emphasized sources of influence such as formal position and departmental affiliation.


The article explores one of the main assumptions/tenets of social network analysis: that proximity of two actors in social networks is associated with the occurrence of interpersonal influence between the actors. This main tenet is the basis of the study of social influence that tries to link the structure of social relations to attitudes and behaviors of the actors who compose a network (as empirically tested in the Ibarra & Andrews article).

Substantive bases of social influence

Different social and psychological studies have addressed the relationships between networks (structures) and social influence. Some claim that attitudes are confirmed and reinforced when they are shared with the comparison group but altered when they are discrepant.

The main issue is how to determine reference groups. Possession of information about attitude or behavior of another actor is necessary for influences.

Studies assume that influence can be found in:
- Solidary relations (e.g. friendships).
- Hierarchical relations (e.g. formal authority).
- Competition through a process similar to mimetic isomorphism.
2 main perspectives in social influence:

- **Structural cohesion** emphasizes the network connectivity present among actors. It defines social cohesion in terms of the number, length, and strength of paths that connect actors in networks.
  - The most restrictive definition is simple adjacency (click-like structures).
  - Relaxed definition incorporates actors that are connected by numerous short connections via intermediaries.
  - Overall idea is that actors are proximate to the extent that they are jointly located in structurally cohesive regions of networks.

- **Equivalence** describes the similarities of actors in terms of their profiles of interpersonal relations. It defines social proximity in terms of the similarity of actor's profiles of network relations.
  - The most restrictive definition defines two actors as proximate when they are structurally equivalent.
  - Relax definition allows definitions of 'equivalent' network environments, in which members are tied to the same types of actors.

Issues in the study of social influence

- Cohesive and equivalent cluster memberships intersect in most networks, and it generates overlap in the underlying social processes.
- Even in cases where actors are not connected by any social network, they may still exhibit a degree of homogeneity as a consequence of common material circumstances (e.g. army lieutenant).
- Consider actors who not only are similarly positioned and mutually visible but who also are joined in a structurally cohesive network.

Statistical models

The paper presents a series of statistical models to approach the study of social influence.

Empirical research on social influence

- Studies have given less attention to experiments, since it is difficult to reproduce social relationships in laboratory settings.
- Instead, studies have used network effects models.
- Most of the studies focus on dyads.
- And organizational studies usually examine one or both of the theoretical perspectives on influence.

Issues of empirical research on social influence

- Limitations when it comes to claim effects in non-experimental and cross-sectional studies.
- Researchers infer in the context of homogeneity and network pattern (possible bias).
- Both perspectives (structural cohesiveness and equivalence) can be flawed if network measure does not include important resources.
- Conformity pressure affect influence model.

The paper addresses the theoretical shortcomings of public (network) management literature when dealing with multiorganizational network management (MNM). The authors present a series of concepts/categories, explain why classical approaches fall short, and propose alternative understandings applied to public interorganizational networks.

*Networks* refer to multiorganizational arrangements for solving problems that cannot be achieved, or achieved easily, by single organizations. Networks offer challenges to classical explanations on single organization and its management. *Public management networks* are led or managed by government representatives.

**What are the critical functional equivalents to traditional management processes?**

MNM identifies some behaviors used in managing networks and when it is best to use them, but it is far from traditional management process explanations such as ‘POSDCORB’, useful to clearly describe what activities are performed at any given time and why they are performed.

The authors proceed to highlight main terms of classical theory useful for MNM:

*Activation* includes the process of identifying participants in the network as well as tapping the skills, knowledge, and resources of these persons. Activation is a critical component of network management because resources like money, information, and expertise can be the integrating mechanisms of networks. Activating the right players with the right resources is the crucial task of governing in cities through coalitions of public and nongovernmental organizations.

*Deactivation* as an important component of network management. Useful to introduce new actors as a means of changing network dynamic, shifting the influence of existing actors, and facilitating fluid leadership roles.

*Framing* is used both during the formation of the network and as a management tool when network effectiveness diminishes or is suboptimal. Framing involves establishing and influencing the operating rules of the network, influencing its prevailing values and norms, and altering the perceptions of the network participants.

*Mobilizing* requires a view of the strategic whole and an ability to develop and achieve a set of common objectives based on this whole. Managers build support for the network by mobilizing organizations and coalitions, and by forging an agreement on the role and scope of network operations.

*Synthesizing* the network by creating the environment and enhancing the conditions for favorable, productive interaction among network participants. The strategies of each network participant and the outcomes of those strategies are influenced by the patterns of relations and interactions that have developed in the network. Synthesizing seeks to lower the cost of interaction, which can be substantial in network settings.
Are approaches to groupware - that is, group development that reaches a mutual understanding and transcends the more immediate and interactive bases of coordination and communications through hierarchy - substantively different from those derived from the applied behavioral science approaches?

Groupware describes interagency task group development for reaching jointly arrived at solutions. This type of groupware produces more immediate and interactive bases of coordination than does hierarchy. Hierarchical approaches are too limited. First, in network management empowerment is based on information rather than on authority. Second, existing organizational structures are dependent variables for network systems.

Social capital to develop groupware. It is essential for groups of disparate representatives to work toward sharing resources held by individual organizations. Important elements of social capital are trust, norms, and operations of the network, which are closely related to the values and objectives of the actors.

Groupware is also developed through negotiations. Negotiations in networks seek consensus only after members have fully explored the issues and interests, and only after significant effort has been made to find creative responses to differences.

**How do networks provide flexibility beyond rapid adaptation or procedural accommodations?**

*Flexibility* is one of the most venerable attributes of networking, based on the need for different institutional frameworks that facilitate mobility of resources, rapid access to skills and technology, efforts to stabilize market or systemic shocks on small organizations, and policing of unfair competition. In network modes of resource allocation, transactions occur through networks of individuals engaged in reciprocal preferential, mutually supportive actions.

The main question is: Do networks reach beyond these standard advantages of flexibility and facilitate *new means* of dealing with political problems, bureaucratic obstacles, and resource deficiencies?

One possible response: There are *bureaucratic* issues that managers can facilitate by achieving flexibility in networks that hierarchies cannot do, or do only with extreme difficulty.

What *resource deficiencies* do network flexibilities plug? Are networks involving governments better than hierarchies at securing multiple resource contributions such as money, human resources, information, technology?

**Networks and public agency accountability**

The issue involves the question of control and the difficulty of establishing accountability in public management networks. Main reason:

- Accountability relationships in multiorganizational networks are quite different from those found in the dyadic linkages of contracting or the bi-level interaction of level of government. Principal-agent theory cannot explain transactions in network settings. There is no obvious principal or
agent, and no exigent authority to steer the activities of the network in harmony with elected officials. All actors seem accountable, but none is absolutely accountable.

Author proposes a shift in the traditional concern of hierarchical accountability to notions of responsibility, responsiveness, and the fostering of democratic ideals. Replace accountability to (concerned with issues of effectiveness and performance) with accountability for, as accountability for results, for setting wise priorities, for targeting, for system modification and design. Accountability for these outcomes is the objective of the collaborative or network.

Assessment of networks should be based on measuring the outcomes and performance of networks to its stakeholders and its stated goals.

**What is the cohesion factor in networks that is the equivalent to legal-rational authority in organizations?**

When people from different organizations are not in legally bounded authority relationships, why would they decide to come to the table, work together on problem clarification and solutions, reach agreement? Literature suggests the importance of trust, common purpose, mutual dependency, resource availability, catalytic actors, and managerial ability.

Explanations of cohesiveness in non-hierarchical non-legally bounded networks:

1- **Trust** plays a major role in cohesiveness. Four trust dimensions: participant motives, competency, dependability, and collegiality.

2- **Program rationale** is understood as the commitment to the whole that holds a network together when traditional methods of coordination and control are not operative.

3- **Mutual dependency** oriented to the availability of resources.

4- **Leadership and guidance** ability within self-managing systems.

**Power and networks**

Network power is the ability to get action by partners or organizations under circumstances where actors are under dual responsibility roles to both organizations and networks. Even in policy networks that are considered horizontal, different actors occupy different role positions and carry different weights within networks.

Network theorists need to know whether power moves hinder the kind of synergistic creativity that reciprocal relationships are purported to produce. Power can be portrayed neutrally, as a property that either prevents or facilitates action.

Collaboration as power sharing: the power to mobilize, the power to organize, and the power to strategize.

**Solutions and results in public management networks**

Networks are a unique institutional form consisting of processes different than the spontaneous coordination of markets or the visible management of hierarchy. But do networks produce
solutions and results that otherwise would not have occurred through single, hierarchical organizations? Addressed by social change thesis.