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ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION:
A MIXED METHODS STUDY

PATRICIA GREER

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Ph.D. in Leadership and Change Program
of Antioch University
in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

May, 2017

This is to certify that the Dissertation entitled:

ELEMENTS OF INTERORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION: A MIXED METHODS
STUDY

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Dedication

I dedicate this dissertation to my Dad, Lyle, who always believed in me; to my Mom, Jean, who was a role model for a strong woman; my Mother-in-Law, Anne, who would be so proud to tell everyone I earned my PhD; and to my Father-in-Law, Dave, whose passing sent me on this journey of self-discovery and challenges. I miss all of them terribly.

Abstract

Interorganizational collaboration is a process used by committed stakeholders within a problem domain to solve ‘messy’ or complex issues. Joint identification and resolution of complex problems is achieved through an iterative process, using elements for success: committed members, resources, time, communication, trust, shared goal, defined process, and collective identity. This study utilized an exploratory sequential mixed methods process as a practical approach, resulting in richer data and increased understanding of the phenomenon of collaboration. The guiding research problem explored which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success. The research population was comprised of collaboration experts and the participants in 46 collaborations that submitted applications to receive the Colorado Collaboration Award in 2013 and 2014. The research focused on the following questions: what elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts, how did subject matter experts and survey respondents describe successful collaborations, what collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success, and how did survey respondents and focus group participants describe their collaboration’s efforts to achieve collective identity and success? The results of the study identified dimensions of success: collective identity, the development of relationships that bring value to communities, and despite challenges and differences, the building of something wonderful together. A new model for developing collective identity was justified. This dissertation is accompanied by the author’s MP4 video introduction. This dissertation is available in open access at AURA: Antioch University

Repository and Archive, <http://aura.antioch.edu/>, and OhioLINK ETD Center,
<https://etd.ohiolink.edu>

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Chapter I: Introduction

Interorganizational collaboration (collaboration) is a unique process where the stakeholders validate the problem, create the structure and processes for the group, and provide resolutions or solutions by using resources, expertise, and experience supplied by the stakeholders from different organizations. Implementing this process takes a considerable number of resources and should only “be considered when the stakes are really worth pursuing” (Huxham & Vangen, 2005, p. 13). Collaboration is not the best or only process for every problem or issue but is an option when the problem is “across sector,” interdisciplinary, complex, or unsolvable by one organization. Eliminating food deserts for inner cities, decreasing repeat teen offenders, increasing the options for elderly people to stay in their homes, or implementing multiple recreational uses in a popular area are examples where collaborations may yield unique and long-term solutions. The roles this option plays are increasing because complex issues or problems require imaginative solutions developed by stakeholders.

Although the practice of collaboration is growing, going through the process may not result in better cooperation, communication, or problem resolution, and it often may fail to solve problems or issues. Unsuccessful collaborations result when the group is unable to develop a shared goal, design a process, create a collective identity, and apply shared leadership (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Koschmann, 2012). Hibbert and Huxham (2010) discussed these challenges as differences in contexts, authority, and processes among the participants. Often the members wanted to solve the problem or design a unique solution but were hampered by the lack of a structure or unifying plan or strategy to move toward any solutions.

Considering these challenges, one may ask, “What is the allure of collaboration?” Although the time spent can induce great frustration, it may also be a time when the participants

feel inspired by the increased use of resources, learning, and energy generated by solving complex problems (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Collaboration also provides an option to solve complex problems or issues that are unsolvable by any one organization or entity. Being a member provides empowerment and offers membership in a group that, despite the challenges, has solved a messy problem for their community. When the efficient use of resources is employed in dealing with an issue and a more holistic way is added, the process may be worth all the time and effort it takes to be successful. In addition, the members have developed as a group and now have the advantage of building additional relationships in the community that may afford them more available options when additional problems or issues require resolution.

Collaboration is used when it is necessary to have the knowledge and experience of multiple people to understand the complex problems, provide information or knowledge, and work together to provide solutions (Feast, 2013). It is a unique process where stakeholders communicate, jointly validate the problem, create a goal, and contribute resources and experience while building trust and a collective identity. Because each person as a stakeholder cares about the problem or issue, the outcome is jointly owned and supported, increasing the opportunity for implementation of the final solution.

Successful collaborations have some common elements. These include shared vision, identified goals, open and frequent communication, commitment, trust, interested stakeholders, shared risk, access to resources, collective identity, time, and defined processes (Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Koschmann, 2012; Mattessich, Murray-Close, & Monsey, 2001). Are these elements essential to success solving problems? This dissertation research looked at the critical elements of collaboration. It identified the development of initial and emergent elements, including the creation of a collective identity. With the increased requests for collaboration and a

high failure rate (Mattessich et al., 2001), there is a need to understand the role played by each element in constructing successful results. This study contributed to the body of knowledge by looking at the initial and emergent elements of collaboration while examining the formation of collective identity because of its role in perceived success. The addition of quantitative and qualitative research about elements added richness to this scholarship. A new model of the development of collective identity was created and justified.

Summary of Existing Research in Collaboration

Collaboration is a unique and valuable process. Stakeholders, as members, validate the problem, design the process to identify options, and conclude by generating the final solution or resolution of a complex problem (Feast, 2013). Because of stakeholder involvement, there is a commitment by affected people to the process, which may not occur when policy makers, administrators, or other bureaucrats conceive solutions to complex issues. Also, opportunities exist within the process to identify diverse ideas, information, resources, and options that are sustainable, innovative, holistic, and created by stakeholders (Prins, 2010). Finally, learning occurs within a collaborative because of information sharing and co-creation of knowledge (Murphy, Perrot, & Rivera-Santos, 2012). The learning takes many forms: acquiring the ability to collaborate, absorbing understanding about other individuals and organizations in the problem domain for future partnerships, and viewing the issue or problem from multiple perspectives.

This section summarizes the extensive existing research: the elements, processes, and uses. Beginning with Gray's (1989) work, many articles and books discuss the role of collaboration in problem-solving processes and issue resolution. Huxham and Vangen (2005) examined the theory and practice of collaborative advantage, based on themes identified from collected writings and real world experience. Crosby and Bryson (2010) situated their research in

the use of collaborations to resolve public problems, combining policy entrepreneurship and leadership in cases where shared power creates hurdles and complexity. Looking at the difficulties in addressing social challenges, Chrislip and Larson (1994) discussed the role of collaborative leadership in assisting officials and citizens attempting to solve messy community challenges. While evaluating collaborations that met the requirements for validity and relevance, Mattessich et al. (2001) found only a few fulfilled the initial mission, providing the researchers with some understanding of the inherent difficulties with this model.

Collaborations are unique because of differences in purposes, goals, commitment of stakeholders, available resources, culture, time, and communication styles. Because of this uniqueness, adaptive strategies work more effectively than prescriptive processes (Thomson, Perry, & Miller, 2009). Available literature identified the same elements of successful collaborations: shared vision or goal, group defined process, effective communication, trust, collective identity, adequate resources, sufficient time, and commitment. The works indicated each of these elements contributes to goal attainment.

Collaboration operates in the problem domain (Gray, 1989), so necessarily the participants or stakeholders have some knowledge of the problem being unraveled. Issue identification is the starting point for communication, leading to trust building and finally achieving the creation of a collective identity (Bunniss, Gray, & Kelly, 2011). Veal and Mouzas (2010) posited that when collective identity is formed, the members commit to the process and to other members. They are more likely to offer resources and to implement the result. With a collective identity, there is a greater probability there will be a positive outcome (Bunniss et al., 2011). Feast (2013) concurred and discussed that when collective identity is present “communication as knowledge integration was reported in situations where partial sentences or

simple sketches communicate seamlessly: participants finish each other's sentences and are on the same 'wavelength'" (p. 222). Also, this element allows the participants to overcome the challenges connected with different perspectives, different values, and biases (Veal & Mouzas, 2010).

There is a creative tension between self-interest and collective interest in collaboration. This friction can provide innovative or unique solutions, or it may cause a challenge that participants are unable to overcome (Swartz & Triscari, 2010; Thomson et al., 2009). During the progression, the participants are "working together, often by choice, to create something new" (Swartz & Triscari, 2010, p. 329), with the possibility of differences of opinion on direction or focus. Roles, positions, power allocation, or politics of the home organization for each member can interfere with creating a shared identity. "It is not surprising, then, that when a collaboration's goals conflict with the autonomous goals of the individual partner organizations, identities are at stake, and it is likely that the individual partner organizations will trump collaborative missions" (Thomson et al., 2009, p. 27). Attaining a collective identity, therefore, allows members to overcome these challenges and place the needs of the collaboration ahead of the needs of the home organization.

Significant barriers to successful collaboration exist. Within the group, the first step is for the members to agree that a problem exists. Once that occurs, the situation can be properly framed, and any political, bureaucratic, or legislative hurdles that may impact potential solutions can be considered (Veal & Mouzas, 2010). Other barriers may include: uncommitted members, scarcity of resources, time constraints, insufficient funding, or unavailable (or inadequate) equipment. Narrow windows of opportunity may cause a significant challenge because a compressed timeframe may not allow the development of trust or collective identity formation

(M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). Lack of decision-making ability and low tolerance for uncertainty are other barriers, both affecting the number and quality of viable options that are explored (Nowell, 2009; Veal & Mouzas, 2010). If fewer stakeholders are included, less diversity of opinions, ideas, and experiences will be included, again limiting the options (Prins, 2010).

Communication, a critical first step in this context, is “a shared understanding among each other” (Mulder, Swaak, & Kessels, 2004, p. 141), leading to the development of trust (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). It develops through “attention to informal connection and member relationships; and developing trust, respect, and understanding” (Perrault, McClelland, Austin, & Sieppert, 2011, p. 282). Sense (2005) posited the understanding and open conversations lead to personal and collaborative learning, necessary for generating options leading to positive outcomes.

Co-creation of knowledge and co-learning are outcomes of the knowledge transfer during member discussions and conversations (Murphy et al., 2012). Andersson (2009) theorized that options for resolving the problem or issue are developed through co-learning flowing from discussions that encourage “collaborative and adaptive forms of learning” (p. 341) and may be viewed as “a series of collective action problems” (p. 343). The relationships and interactions of the participants provide the basis for learning and application (Edmondson, 2002; Tillema, 2006; van Winkelen, 2010). There may be learning benefits outside the members, including increased capacity of the home organizations due to knowledge transfer and increased participants’ skill sets, including how to collaborate (van Winkelen, 2010). Collective learning emerges from successful relationships, committed participants, effective communication, and shared understanding (Bunniss et al., 2011; Mulder et al., 2004; van Woerkom & van Engen, 2009).

Successful collaborations require “considerable time commitments and patience” while effective processes are developed (Perrault et al., 2011, p. 286). Procedures help members move forward by providing group endeavors with structure. When members struggle to move forward, the member-created process provides a road map. An important component of the process is developing a conflict resolution strategy for the presence of inevitable conflict (Clarke & Fuller, 2010; Crosby & Bryson, 2010; Olivera & Strauss, 2004; van Woerkom & van Engen, 2009). The need to manage conflict constructively among fallible human beings makes process creation an important element. The process provides the structure to hold an interorganizational collaboration together and provides options to dissolving when conflict occurs.

In summation, available studies suggested that collaboration is created using certain essential elements needed for success. However, gaps in the literature exist related to the lack of mixed methods research, which elements are needed for success, and the process through which collective identity is developed and sustained. This study addresses these gaps through the design and implementation of an exploratory sequential mixed methods study that examined the presence of the described elements, the creation of a collective identity, and stakeholder perceptions of successful collaboration.

Purpose of the Study

This research explored the development of collective identity, critical elements of collaboration, and perceived successful collaboration. The critical elements for successful collaborations committed members, resources, and time (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Koschmann, 2012). There is a need to understand what roles each of these elements play. Some literature is available, but limited mixed methods research exists to help understand their roles in fostering the success of collaboration.

Problem Statement and Research Questions

The guiding research problem focused on which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how one element, collective identity, is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success. Following the literature review, four research questions emerged for my dissertation study. The guiding research problem involved which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success. My proposition was that collective identity is created through the interactions of the elements of collaboration, beginning with committed members, time, and resources, and is strengthened through communication. When collective identity of the group develops, the perception of success is higher.

The questions studied for the dissertation research were as follows:

1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts?
2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?
3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success?
4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success?

Research Methodology

Since collaboration is situated in a problem domain (Gray, 1989), it is contextually constructed (Emerson, Nabatchi, & Balogh, 2011). Because of that, the success may not be predictable even when all elements are present. Due to its adaptive nature, collaboration is complex, and no one quantitative or qualitative measure can explain it (Thomson et al., 2009).

This complexity led to an examination of multiple elements, and the use of a research approach that is mindful of the adaptive and pragmatic nature of collaboration. Each of the research constructs are briefly discussed in Table 1.1.

Table 1.1

The Research Position and Approach of This Dissertation

Research position	Approach	Researchers
Ontology	Pragmatism	Creswell and Clark, 2011; Morgan, 2014
Epistemology	Constructionism/ Pragmatism	Frels and Onwuegbuzie, 2013; Whetsell, 2013
Paradigm	Constructionism/ Pragmatism	Creswell and Clark, 2011; Datta, 1997; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, and Turner, 2007; Morgan, 2014
Methodological Approach	Mixed methods, concurrent with equal status	Creswell and Clark, 2011; Greene and Caracelli, 1997; Johnson et al., 2007; Morgan, 2014
Type of Research	Exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory elements	Creswell and Clark, 2011; Faherty, 2008; Schwandt, 2007
Theoretical Frame	Social Identity Theory, Collective Identity Theory, Collaboration Theories	Bedwell et al., 2012; Gray, 1989; Hardy, Lawrence, and Grant, 2005; Huxham and Vangen, 2005; Koschmann, 2012; R. Kramer, 2006; Stümer, Simon, and Loewy, 2008; Thomas, Mavor, and McGarty, 2012; Thomson et al., 2009

Note. Compilation of research constructs with supporting literature.

Ontology is the study of reality or the nature of reality and is an element of a worldview (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). Pragmatism offers multiple viewpoints through individual and numerous experiences (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Dewey's stance of pragmatism afforded the opportunity to look at both the nature of the world and the perceptions of the people and provided value to both because of the pragmatist emphasis on experience (Morgan, 2014). This research contains multiple perspectives of collaboration and how to achieve perceived success.

Epistemology describes the relationship between the researcher and subject being researched and how the former will gain knowledge from the study (Creswell & Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998). This investigation was developed according to the theory of constructionism, with models and concepts used to display the experience of the participants in an attempt to provide new information and explanation of why collaboration succeeds (Schwandt, 2007). The derived data and conclusions drawn added to the model of successful collaboration and used the words from the participants to make sense of the experience. The research paradigm, or philosophical intent, is also constructionist in nature and is based on pragmatism.

The research followed a mixed methods approach, which is also pragmatic in nature. Mixed methods research is used more frequently, and, among some researchers, is now being identified as the “third major research approach or research paradigm” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 112). This study identified emergent elements through member relationships and interactions and established how experience is used to build knowledge in collaboration (Frels & Onwuegbuzie, 2013). The pragmatic basis for this research means the structure of this research contained practical design decisions (Datta, 1997). The collected data was based on practicality, or what information was needed to answer the research question (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

Pragmatist research focuses on the what and the how of the problem. Collaboration exists to solve problems, and pragmatism can be used to analyze problem-solving (Morgan, 2014). A pragmatic approach to this research study used comparisons, qualitative context, and historical perspective (Whetsell, 2013). This understanding and action described the contextual and social nature of collaboration.

This research design is an exploratory sequential mixed methods (Creswell & Clark, 2011) design with equal status assigned to quantitative and qualitative data. When deciding on a methodological approach, one critical question is whether the approach provides acceptable outcomes to significant problems, instead of simply reframing already accurate or corroborated results (Whetsell, 2013). Because of the complexity of collaboration, mixed methods research was chosen over either a quantitative or a qualitative approach alone.

Quantitative research is based on positivism while qualitative is based on constructivism or interpretivism. Both methods of research try to explain human behavior in their context or environment (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed methods research continues the emphasis on knowing in context while combining different views in a study. Mixed methods research may increase understanding because the design includes several methods by which to view human interaction in a particular context or occurrence (Greene, 2012).

The types of research analyses included descriptive, narrative, and textual analysis for multiple views of the same event (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The three types of analysis were consistent with the different views using mixed methods research. Descriptive statistics “summarize, condense, or describe one or two variables at a time” (Faherty, 2008, p. 6) and illustrate or portray the data in a study. Inferential statistics is a method where qualities of a random group of people are used to infer actions of a larger population. Written material can be analyzed as part of the textual analysis in a study (Schwandt, 2007). Content or factor analysis was a part of the textual analysis and used in this research to review historical data in the form of retained applications.

The theoretical frame focuses on collaboration theory and social identity frameworks, and the research is exploratory in nature. The narrative and descriptive analysis was performed on

historical data, expert interviews, and applications, with the results used to create a survey. The survey was designed to obtain qualitative and quantitative data. The quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed and used to create structured questions for a focus group. Finally, a focus group and interviewees reviewed the results of the survey to provide context. The data were integrated at the data interpretation stage, with the research outcome of achieving in-depth knowledge of the elements of a perceived successful collaboration as well as any predictive ability of collective identity in successful collaboration.

Research Population

The research population consisted of selected participants who applied as members of self-identified collaborations for the Colorado Collaboration Award in 2013 and 2014. The idea for this award began in 2009, when a group of program directors from Colorado considered how to increase the number of successful collaborations in their state. Based on a model from the Lodestar Foundation, the group proposed an annual process to recognize collaborative efforts, financially reward an outstanding example, and increase the knowledge and information about the power and process of collaboration. The purposes of the award are threefold. First, there is recognition of an outstanding collaboration. Second, information is obtained about this type of work being done in Colorado. Third, information is acquired for purposes of providing a model for other groups to use in their collaboration efforts. There were 90 different collaboration applications for consideration for the award in 2013 and 2014. After reviewing all applications, selection criteria rules were designed to include successful collaborations. These criteria were based on the number of years in existence (two to 30 years), the number of member organizations (two to 40 members), and different types of community needs and cause areas. Participants in the 46 selected interorganizational collaborations constituted the research

population. This population provides delineation, because these participants are all associated with the Colorado Nonprofit Association, the agency that assists with the award process. The population also represents a limitation on the larger number of collaborations in the nonprofit sector.

Significance of the Study

Using three phases, this study followed exploratory sequential mixed methods research design. Many projects found in the literature used qualitative data as the basis for their inquiries. This study provided not only qualitative data, but also quantitative data.

This research study provided an understanding of the elements of successful collaborative efforts. Because collaboration is situated in a problem domain and used for complex problems or issues (Gray, 1989), there is a need for a practical and contextual methodology to understand what works (Datta, 1997). Based on the desire to have a complete understanding of the elements, the methodology chosen was the exploratory sequential mixed methods design (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Phases 2 and 3 were based on data collection and analysis from the previous stages. The quantitative and qualitative data was assembled and analyzed, with interpretations completed at the end of each phase and then, again, holistically, after the completion of all phases (Creswell & Clark, 2011). This exploratory sequential mixed methods design is oriented in real world practice and offers a pragmatist view.

The exploratory sequential mixed methods design used a narrative and descriptive analysis of secondary, historical data to identify the elements of collaboration. Experts, who were also practitioners, were interviewed, providing additional insight and clarity. Following the analysis of the secondary data and interviews, a survey instrument was prepared and administered. After analysis of the resultant information, one focus group and two interviews

were held to provide deeper insight into the collaborative process, using the survey results as a catalyst for discussion. The interpretation of the entire study was undertaken holistically, utilizing the accumulation of data derived from all sources.

As part of the quantitative data analysis, descriptive statistics were run to obtain frequency and percentage data for each element. Limited correlational analysis and regression analysis were also run to measure the relationship and strength between the presence of collective identity and the perceived success of the collaborative process. The focus groups and interviews validated the findings from the survey process and provided a deeper meaning of success, relationships, and the value of collaboration.

Relevance to practice. I currently assist or participate in organizations that are establishing collaborations, both internally and externally. Because of this research, I obtained additional knowledge about the critical elements and utilized that knowledge to increase the probability of perceived success.

Contribution to the field. There is a demand to address complex issues that no one person or organization has the knowledge to solve. Also, there are significant opportunities for long lasting, meaningful solutions through the involvement of stakeholders in the practice, for the additional knowledge of the problem and the support for implementation of the solution.

Unfortunately, collaborations often fail. This study identified constituent elements needed for a successful collaboration process. The outcome of this study equips groups of involved stakeholders with knowledge of how to maximize successful collaboration through the intentional implementation of each element. The analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data supports the formation of, and emphasis on, specific parts of the process. Through this

understanding of where to focus and prioritize, and where additional energy and time will yield the best results, the number of successful collaborations is expected to increase.

Finally, with further clarity about the critical elements, conversations can occur about what type of social organization—increased communication, committee, coalition, collaboration, strategic alliance, joint venture, or merger (Backer, 2003)—promotes issue resolution or problem solution. As Huxham and Vangen (2005) noted collaboration takes time and resources. It may not be an option for all problems and issues. If other social processes, such as cooperation or partnerships, will result in positive outcomes, those processes should be used, saving collaboration for unique, complex issues. This study contributed additional information about its complexity as a focused endeavor and added clarity about the type of problem suited for collaboration.

Contribution to theory. As a scholar-practitioner, I have related the research to my education, experience, and professional practices to identify themes about the phenomenon of collaboration (Rubin & Rubin, 2005). I have done this to contribute to the body of knowledge and to add precision in predicting outcomes (Dubin, 1978).

Gray (1989) described the process of resolving complex problems in an iterative manner as collaboration. Gray and Wood (1991) refined the description to include “antecedents to collaboration, the process of collaboration itself, and the outcomes of that process” (p. 13). This research study focused on the elements of the process, and as an outcome of the study, added predictive elements and provided additional research on the development of collective identity through increased knowledge and reflection. “The enterprise of knowledge generation and critical reflection, in both its professional and scholarly forms, is devoted to answering questions about the nature of human beings and human systems organizations, groups, families,

communities, and societies and their experience, behavior, patterning, and evolution” (Bentz & Shapiro, 1998, p. 66). I addressed questions about the elements of collaboration and focused on the development of collective identity.

My second contribution to the theory involves using an exploratory sequential mixed methods research design to study the elements of collaboration and development of collective identity as a predictor of a successful outcome. Mixed methods research provided the voices and context from the people in this study and minimized researcher bias and interpretation while providing insight into the validity and legitimacy of the data (Creswell & Clark, 2011). In my review of the literature, I found few mixed methods studies. Because of the complexity of collaboration, using mixed methods provided data to increase the breadth and depth of its understanding (Creswell & Clark, 2011). Because of the exploratory sequential design, the qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed sequentially, using the connecting strategy for mixing the results from the data collection (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The results were reviewed for relevance and relationships to assist in understanding the finding from this study and adding knowledge to the theory.

Contribution to positive social change. With increased requests for collaborative problem solving and a consistent high failure rate (Mattessich et al., 2001), there is a significant need to understand the role played by each element in those efforts that have proven successful. This research study added to the body of knowledge by looking at the elements of collaboration and focusing on the development of collective identity and its role in successes.

With the knowledge of what each element contributes, there is an opportunity for more intentional collaborations to be successful. As one mechanism for solutions of problems, collaboration is uniquely suited to provide a process for social change by working outside of

traditional organizational structures. Collaboration is used for those problems situated in problem domains of inequity and injustice. Having this tool allows communities to overcome existing obstacles such as health care inequities, to provide education opportunities to migrant children, or to redevelop in low-income urban areas in a manner that does not displace residents.

Collaboration also has the potential to provide access to water or oil without causing impacts to indigenous populations. Positive social change can occur as the result of successful collaboration.

Research Limitations

Limitations included the number of cases and subjects, the lower than expected number of respondents, focus solely on collaborations in the primarily nonprofit community in Colorado, affiliated with the Colorado Nonprofit Association. Another limitation of the research was the lack of generalizability of the findings to collaborations in general because of the specific nature of the population and sample group. Because of the low number of survey respondents, the correlation and regression analysis results are offered for understanding of attributes of this study only and are not generalizable.

Key Terms

The following definition was used for this research: Collaboration occurs when interested stakeholders in a shared problem domain with a complex problem or issue bring together individual and organizational resources, experience, time, and expertise to create shared group norms and processes which provide trust, problem resolution, and collective identity which, in turn, result in successful collaborations.

Outline of Chapters

This dissertation consists of five chapters and is outlined as follows:

Chapter I provides an overview of the existing research on collaboration. An overview of the research position is provided, followed by a discussion of the use of exploratory sequential mixed methods research design. An overview of the research population is provided. The contributions of this study to the field, theory, and positive social change is provided, with some limitations of this study identified.

Chapter II contains a review of the existing literature on specific areas situated in the broader arena of collaboration. The first area explores the extant literature. After identifying what collaboration is, the review turns to its uses. As Huxham and Vangen (2005) discussed, its use should be for particular types of complex and larger problems and issues. The review then explores its elements. The focus builds to a discussion of collective identity as part of social identity theory and one of the emergent elements. Models are provided for the initial and emergent elements for a perceived successful collaboration and the development process of collective identity. Finally, an analysis of the importance of this phenomenon is supplied.

Chapter III focuses on this dissertation's research design and process. There is a discussion of the use of mixed methods, the development of the research questions, and a discussion of how the research design fits the research questions. The use of mixed methods for this dissertation is explained and substantiated. Following that discussion, the research design and process is laid out, including the problem, questions, survey instrument development, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

The research population is defined. The ethical considerations of this project are identified, including researcher bias and positioning, protections for the participants, and the process for the review of historical data. Research limitations of this study are offered and discussed.

Chapter IV provides the findings from the execution of all three phases of the research design. This chapter contains a discussion of the participant information for each phase. Following that, a discussion of the research findings and results for each research question is offered. An integrated discussion on how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success ends the chapter.

Chapter V consists of the discussion and interpretation of the findings against theories of collaboration and collective identity and extant research on interorganizational collaboration, as well as a summary of key findings. A model for the development of collective identity is offered. The chapter closes with a discussion of the implications for scholarship and leadership practices, recommendations for future research, reflections on the research process, and the researcher's conclusions.

Conclusion

Interorganizational collaboration is an iterative process in which stakeholders, using their resources, expertise, and experience, create the processes and offer solutions to an identified problem. Because solutions are developed through stakeholder involvement, there is a commitment to participate, which may not be apparent if solutions are imposed.

A summary of the extensive research on collaboration is offered, including articles and books, on the unique nature of collaboration as a vehicle to solve problems. The term collaborative advantage was offered by Huxham and Vangen (2005). Crosby and Bryson (2010) situated collaboration in the public problem realm, while Chrislip and Larson (1994) provided the option for collaboration to use in addressing social challenges. Mattessich et al. (2001) discussed the difficulties with collaboration that results in only a few fulfilling the initial mission.

The purpose of the study was to explore processes in collaboration: the development of a collective identity, the correlation between the development of a collective identity and critical elements, and perceived successful collaboration. The critical elements include a shared goal, a defined process, collective identity, effective communication, and a solution (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005; Huxham & Vangen, 2005; Koschmann, 2012).

The guiding research problem focused on which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success.

Four research questions were used:

1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts?
2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?
3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success?
4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success?

These questions framed the research and analysis of the results.

Because collaboration is both complex and adaptive, an exploratory sequential mixed methods research process was used (Datta, 1997). The research population consisted of participants from 46 interorganizational collaborations that applied for the Colorado Collaboration Award in 2013 and 2014.

This study has relevance to practice because of the need to understand how to develop more effective collaborations. It contributes to the field through adding not only additional

knowledge about the process of developing effective collaborations, but also some insight into when to use collaboration as the chosen process. The contribution to theory includes more knowledge about the role of collective identity in success, the development of collective identity, and the role relationships and community play in success.

Contributions to positive social change are offered. Finally some limitations of this research are identified.

Chapter II: Critical Review of the Theory, Research, and Practice

In this study, I investigated the role of specific elements in accomplishing successful collaboration, and because of the predictive role of collective identity, a model for its development is offered for consideration. As part of preparing for this dissertation, I reviewed current literature about the following topics regarding collaboration: elements, success, uses, and collective identity. The reviewed literature included published books, peer-reviewed journal articles, and additional on-line resources. Because collaboration is adaptive and complex, I also included the voices of practitioners in this review to add richness and practical views. This literature review provides an in-depth exploration of foundational research on collaboration and its elements, such as building trust, collective identity, and other factors linked to success. The focus of this dissertation is the development of collective identity as a critical emergent element during the development and processes of collaboration. In order to do justice to the important role of collective identity, I started at the beginning of the collaboration process and explained all the required elements. Following this literature review I explain how this research enhances existing scholarship and increases knowledge about the elements of collaboration, specifically the development of collective identity.

Many articles and books are written on the topic of collaboration, identifying its importance to solve messy problems when there is a need for involvement of multiple stakeholders. Among the researchers and authors are Gray (1989), Huxham and Vangen (2005), Crosby and Bryson (2010), and Chrislip and Larson (1994), who studied aspects of and uses for collaboration. Even with this significant research and literature available, the success rate of collaboration is often low (Backer, 2003; Mattessich et al., 2001). Confusion exists about what is collaboration and what are its essential elements. Perhaps collaboration is regarded as a recipe of sorts, where just following the steps will lead to success. According to the work of Thomson et

al. (2009), collaboration is achieved through adaptive, rather than optimizing strategies, which underscores the lack of prescriptive recipes for success. Heifetz (1998) postulated adaptive problems require innovation and a sense of purpose, solved through adaptive processes. Collaborations are complex, and adaptive strategies are necessary because of the differences among multiple stakeholders in their goals, opinions, personal reasons to be involved, communication styles, available information, experiences in the problem domain, level of commitment, available time, and other variables. However, there are consistent elements found in the literature that are important for success in collaborations, including collective identity, trust, shared goal, defined process, communication, committed members, time, and resources.

Are these the necessary elements? The literature indicates these are elements for successful collaboration. Do these elements contribute to success equally or is one element a higher predictor? The literature is clear on the point that the presence of collective identity leads to a higher success rate (Stümer et al., 2008). While collective identity is critical to a successful collaboration, there are gaps in the literature about the iterative and adaptive process in its development. This dissertation offers a model of collective identity development for increasing the number of successful collaborations.

What Is the Nature of Successful Collaborations?

The literature review is presented in several sections. First, the question of what is collaboration is explored. Following this, the challenges of collaboration are identified, followed by a discussion of outcomes. Each element is examined as an element that emerges out of the member interaction, or an element required at the start of collaboration. Lastly, consideration is paid to the importance of collective identity.

Collaboration definitions. Because many of the terms used have multiple or different common definitions, the following working definition of collaboration is used for this research. Collaboration occurs when committed members, in a shared problem domain with a complex problem or issue, bring together individual and organizational resources, including experience, time, and expertise, to create a common goal and to develop group norms and processes, which provide trust, collective identity, and problem resolution.

According to this definition, collaboration is a process created through shared knowledge, effort, and commitment. It results from a request by the stakeholders and concludes with a unique outcome (Thomson & Perry, 2006). No step-by-step manual can be found that ensures effective collaboration every time since each collaboration contains distinctive and transient qualities due to the goal, context, and the stakeholders who create the norms and processes (Thomson & Perry, 2006). Rummel and Spada (2005), in their empirical study, described collaboration as members doing the work of solving the problem together and working toward the shared goal after its development and with shared responsibility for the solution. Collaboration is adaptive. Collaboration is a process that consists of “a host of political, legal, socioeconomic, environmental, and other influences” (Emerson et al., 2011, p. 20).

Problem domain considerations. The problem domain encompasses all factors and constraints of a problem, which may include economics, politics, education, health disparities, access challenges, and the differing viewpoints of stakeholders (Gray, 1989). These problems may include crime, public health, or environmental issues that need cross-sector representation to resolve (Koschmann, Kuhn, & Pfarrer, 2012). Most of these problems span multiple boundaries, including organizations, politics, geography, and sectors. The solutions require multiple stakeholders who understand the existence of the problem and provide their collective

experience, knowledge, and commitment to create solutions together (Feast, 2013). Cankar and Petkovšek (2013), in their meta-analysis, contended that collaboration forges links among different types of companies, public sector institutions, and organizations to tackle challenges and create opportunities.

Collaboration will not succeed without interested or committed members within the problem domain. These committed members provide the time, communication, resources, experience, and perspectives and work collectively on problem identification and solution (Dietrich, Eskerod, Dalcher, & Sandhawalia, 2010). According to a discussion with E. O. Murphy (personal communication, April 22, 2015), collaboration will only work with committed members who bring needed skills and abilities. New communication, ideas, and information are necessary because solutions to complex issues or problems do not arise from the same information or ideas used in the past (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). The committed members, who do not accept the status quo, supply and create the new information, leading to the generation of new ideas and solutions (C. MacLennan, personal communication, March 31, 2015).

Because collaboration operates in a problem domain, it encompasses all the factors and constraints of a problem (Gray, 1989). Operating in this domain adds complexity, because of organizational barriers and increased political and power challenges. Working in the problem domain also provides an advantage because the committed members provide access to a diverse range of resources, ideas, and knowledge. Through information sharing, stakeholders create knowledge-in-context as part of the collective action with discourse, artifacts, and interpretations (Jensen, 2009).

Complexity and collaboration. The character of collaboration is iterative and changes through the continual addition of information, ideas, and conversations. Because of the continual

additions, the collaboration adapts within the boundaries of the problem as defined by the members throughout the process (Thomson et al., 2009). The members define and create the most relevant issues in their context by employing emerging knowledge, technologies, ideas, and resources in this dynamic process. The resultant complex adaptive structure arises from continuing discussions and the sharing of information (Fenwick, 2012). Complexity in collaboration emphasizes relationships, not things, and complex adaptive structures are built through communication amongst the members, often with input from the larger community.

Within collaboration, there is the need to define, discuss, and incorporate diverse views, perspectives, and experience due to the differences among the participants (Van den Bossche, Gijsselaers, Segers, & Kirschner, 2006). These differences are critical sources of diversity of thought (J. Leyba, personal communication, March 30, 2015). To hold these difficult discussions, psychological safety, group cohesion, and group conversation need to exist (Edmondson, 2002; M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011; Sense, 2005; Van den Bossche et al., 2006). Casual conversations build the foundations and construct a safe environment in which members may offer their ideas to the group (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). When the foundations exist, space is created to build trust, express diverse ideas, explore approaches, generate ideas, and challenge group norms (Sense, 2005). Learning of the group transpires with the addition of new information preceding novel or innovative ideas or solutions. With this social groundwork in place, the members have reduced risk and uncertainty and benefit from the experience and expertise of all members (Dietrich et al., 2010).

When the members are from different professions, there is added complexity inherent in the differences in professional languages, levels of responsibility in the problem domain, and viewpoint of the problem domain (Fenwick, 2012). Often, there is a need to build capacity

through the creation of a culture for stakeholders to participate in collaboration, using a process model for change (Erakovich & Anderson, 2013). If the capacity exists, it may benefit from the emphasis on the shared values within the problem domain. These shared values are often not the norm in collaboration. What may be the norm are difficulties with language, resulting in members' lack of understanding, leading to challenges or difficulties in the development of the safe space. More time is needed to create the social foundation so all stakeholders can safely participate.

Challenges in collaboration. Another frequent challenge to collaboration is the lack of established hierarchy, structure, or order, causing disorder, confusion, and power imbalances among the participants (Andersson, 2009). No one person is in charge nor has the ability to make all the decisions. As Perrault et al. (2011) described in their case study research, in addition to the other basics of collaboration, there is a requirement for equal individual power, plus independence for all participants to fulfill their responsibilities to other members of the group and their home organizations. The members promote group cohesiveness when the power is equally shared and individual commitment to participate is sustained, even when there may be unequal member benefit (Andersson, 2009; Nowell & Harrison, 2011). Successful collaboration is challenged by the tension among self-interest, the interest of the group, and their organizations. The greater the tension or difference, the less likely collaboration will result (Thomson & Perry, 2009). The lack of hierarchy gives rise to challenges when establishing norms and a defined process with a group of participants newly brought together. When the potential for unequal benefits and differences in interests exist, there are difficulties when building collaboration.

The lack of an organization structure does not support the needed maintenance of communication, coordination, mutual support, aligned efforts, and cohesion (Dietrich et al., 2010). Often, intermittent or virtual meetings generate complications in sustaining these behaviors. Using artifacts such as memos, emails, meeting minutes, and other physical manifestations of agreements are necessary to solidify the communication and coordination (i.e., reminding stakeholders of information, progress, or decisions). When the stakeholders are not in meetings, these artifacts provide a way to retain and express information appropriate for communication and coordination (Jensen, 2009). As an example, a memo may be an artifact, transmitting and clarifying the information on what occurred face-to-face. Within a socially constructed boundary, there is a need to support and sustain communication and group cohesion. Without the support provided by an organizational structure, additional effort is required to maintain and build the socially sustained boundaries that form the collaboration structure (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010). Boundaries are constructed through artifacts, such as agendas or charters, access to ideas, reports, and information, and informal communication and formal dialogue on a frequent basis (McGreavy, Hutchins, Smith, Lindenfield, & Silka, 2013).

Collaboration contains uncertainty. Will conversations occur to begin the process? Can a process be established to move forward? Are all members committed enough to the goal or to spending the time to identify options and move to outcomes? There is no guarantee of a positive result, nor will members or their organizations always realize their optimal outcome. This uncertainty is further exasperated by imposed time constraints; inadequate time may result in failure. Members need to accept uncertainty as part of the process since the emergence of ideas and adaptive processes occur over time (Holmesland, Seikkula, Nilsen, Hopfenbeck, & Arnkil,

2010). As J. Leyba suggested, sometimes it takes years to get to a solution, but allowing the time results in a sustainable outcome (personal communication, March 30, 2015).

Uncertainty implies dynamic processes and difficulties in predicting and influencing what occurs next. Uncertainty, while uncomfortable, results in the emergence of new ideas, information, and knowledge, shaped by the internal diversity of the members. Without adequate time to form relationships and develop and discuss options, while accepting the uncertainty, there is a risk of an unsuccessful collaboration. When members are uncomfortable with uncertainty, there may be a rush to define a suboptimal outcome, one not created by diverse ideas and exploration. This emergence takes time and results in uncertainty for the members, yet is essential for the generation of ideas and options.

Theoretical frameworks. Collaboration operates in a problem domain with members who represent different viewpoints and organizations. How can collaboration arise from a dissimilar group of members? There are multiple ways to view the joining of people in collaboration by using theoretical frames. For this research three theoretical frames were used: social identity theory, collective identity theory, and collaboration theory. Each of these theories provides a lens or perspective about the process and the challenges for the members in constructing effective collaboration.

Identity theories. Personal identity is the place to begin when discussing identities. Personal identity entails self-perception of one's individual and unique assets and the personal relationship one has with other people. Human nature moves people to develop a personal identity and a positive social identity. When an individual self-classifies with a group, self-categorization as a member occurs, resulting in a psychological feeling of belonging (Hogg, 2001). Holding group membership means the perceived similarities among members increases

and shapes the characteristics that define the group in a specific context (Hogg, Cooper-Shaw, & Holzworth, 1993). Group membership imposes behavior, and the members evaluate one another by first forming and then upholding group norms (Hogg et al., 1993).

A collaboration is a small interactive group that was started around a problem or issue. As the group formation begins, either members have group membership or they become part of an out-group, or those who do not identify with the group (Hogg et al., 1993). If most members identify with the group membership, the group norms and behavior examples will be respected and followed. As the group becomes more important, the strength of feeling membership increases. This is of particular importance in collaboration, since group membership is one component of a socially constructed boundary, defined by the acceptability of the actions of members (McGreavy et al., 2013).

Social identity theory contributes a basis for understanding one's identities, salience of identity, group identification, categorization, discrimination, and cohesiveness (R. Kramer, 2006). This theory describes how people connect to others and what might drive individual behavior in social settings. R. Kramer (2006) discussed social identity as an essential component in the creation of social capital, based on “individuals’ willingness to contribute to the creation and maintenance of social capital” (p. 26). Thomas et al. (2012) posited that social identification, along with the perception of injustice and collective efficacy, leads to collective action and critical outcomes of collaboration. Social identity requires a personal feeling of belonging to a social group. The creation of social capital depends on social identity (SI), which motivates people to participate in collective behavior during the process.

There are four processes encompassing SI formation within group processes. These processes include social categorization, SI awareness, social comparison, and a search for

uniqueness or psychological distinctness (McNamara, 1997). In a social context, where relationships form between representatives of salient groups, individuals will go through these four processes to experience themselves as members. Each member determines her or his purpose in collaboration and the similarities or differences among members. The member evaluates relative status, regarding power or influence such as community standing or position in an organization, separating the members into the in-group (influential) and the out-group (less influential). Finally, the members maximize their uniqueness to compare favorably to the in-group. Each member has an individual identity or individual sense of who she or he is as a unique person. Each member also has a collective identity or the feeling of belonging a person has with a group.

Social identities are important to understand because they affect members' perceptions, motivations, and behaviors during the collaboration process (Stoner, Perrewé, & Hofacker, 2011). There is individual identity, including how members interpret themselves as unique individuals, and collective identity, or how members interpret themselves as members (Stümer et al., 2008). Identity is a jumbled mess: complicated, malleable, and changeable: an important element to the success of collaboration.

Collective identity theory describes the process by which group members identify with group membership, including its "norms, values, and interests" (Stümer et al., 2008, p. 6). Collective identity, as part of social identification, shapes how each member behaves and contributes resources, information, and time, based on the sense of how each connects to the group, the other members, and internally. With collective identity, the members of the group switch from individual self-interest to collective interest, creating the context where goals, ideas, and resources are shared (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005; Veal & Mouzes, 2010).

Koschmann (2012) discussed collective identity as the course of action to deal with the diversity found in interorganizational collaborations and to positively affect the ability of members to provide resources voluntarily, debate options, and make decisions. Collective identity defines the willingness of participants to “engage in collective behavior” (R. Kramer, 2006, p. 30), such as developing a shared goal, spending time in conversations and dialogue, and working through conflicts and difficulties. Shared social identities of each member provide the initial step in the process of fostering collective identity of the group. When the collective identity is developed, the members act without a sense of “me” but with a feeling of “us” (J. Leyba, personal communication, March 30, 2015).

Theories of collaboration. There are multiple theories of collaboration. Using case study research, Gray (1989) and Gray and Wood (1995) discussed the importance of collaborative alliances to solve organizational and societal problems such as resource dependence and political, institutional, and other cross-boundary challenges. Gray and Wood (1995) challenged researchers to develop a general theory of collaboration that recognizes the incompleteness of other models. After reviewing multiple case studies, Chrislip and Larson (1994) developed a theory of collaborative leadership and a measure of effectiveness. Their theory includes five measures: context, structure, members, process, and results (Chrislip & Larson, 1994). After examining successful collaborations and incorporating their practice experience, Huxham and Vangen (2005) advanced a theory of collaborative advantage and considered themes of collaborative practice: advantage and inertia, aims, purpose, structure, trust, power, and identity. Using a quantitative study designed from empirical and theoretical literature, Thomson et al. (2009) developed a model of collaboration with five key dimensions: governance, administration, organizational autonomy, mutuality, and norms. Bedwell et al.

(2012) employed a multidiscipline conceptualization and conceived an integrative approach model of collaboration with four main themes: collaborative process, emergent states, collaborative behaviors, and contextual factors. These theories provided the basis for this research, and the elements of successful collaboration are discussed in subsequent sections of this review. Figure 2.1 illustrates how these theories interrelate.



Figure 2.1. Relationship of social identity and collective identity theories, illustrating the cornerstones of each collaboration theory and acknowledging the role of identity theories.

Social identity theory provides a basis to understand how committed members begin the process of making cognitive changes as they develop a sense of belonging to the collaboration. Collective identity theory offers a lens through which diverse members create a context to think as a group and develop trust, providing them with the reassurance to discuss conflict and purpose. Collaboration theories suggest diverse interpretations of requirements and processes for successful outcomes. These selected theories provide understanding of the adaptive and complex spirit of collaboration for purposes of this dissertation. In summary, collaboration emerges from

the participation of two or more social entities engaged in an adaptive process to achieve a shared goal, resulting from a complex problem (Bedwell et al., 2012).

The Unique Nature of Collaboration

Collaborations pose challenges different from common approaches to problem resolution, such as bringing people together in teams or within one organization. During its development, the members frequently interact for an indeterminate period, conveying diverse interests, information, and needs, with no common organizational affiliation for structure (Dibble & Gibson, 2013). Both internal and external challenges exist. Internal challenges found within the collaboration may include conflict because of differences in cultures, values, power, and orientations, as well as internal difficulties in generating the needed collective identity. External challenges may include politics, resources, cultural, and regulatory challenges. Hardy et al. (2005) discussed how external challenges make it difficult for collaborations to achieve compelling results. Members who fail to recognize or balance stakeholder concerns, needs, or requirements may fail in producing collective actions or outcomes. It is difficult to balance the collective interests with the individual or organizational interests, which often contributes to failed collaboration (Thomson & Perry, 2006). As Ales, Rodrigues, Snyder, and Conklin (2011) posited, the goals and interests of the organizational partners should agree with the goals of the collaboration. The goals or outcomes should not substantially influence the basic fundamental operations of the organizational partners, such as creating options for goods and services identical to those of the organizational partners. Thomson and Perry (2006) summarized the complexity of collaboration by discussing the antecedents as multilayered: resource scarcity and need for resolution of the issue, stakeholders who have access to needed resources, high

interdependence amongst the stakeholders in the problem domain, and any previous attempts to collaborate that failed.

Within the collaboration, members must come to an agreement that there is a problem or issue even before outlining or framing the problem or issue (Veal & Mouzas, 2010). Veal and Mouzas (2010) discussed challenges due to bureaucratic restrictions or legislative hurdles in some communities. Limited decision-making ability by the members of the collaboration may create difficulties (Nowell, 2009). Members need tolerance for the process and the ability to continue conversations when answers are not immediate and time is required to foster thoughtful and inclusive outcomes (Holmesland et al., 2010). If the selection of the members results in a small number or only members who share similar viewpoints about the initial problem, there is a danger of limiting ideas and conversations, leading to unsuccessful collaboration or less optimal outcomes (Prins, 2010). Other internal and external challenges include the necessity to develop a temporary structure, lack of a shared history resulting in additional time demands, and any changes in the members from the organizational partners, which can cause disruption in the process (Dibble & Gibson, 2013). Other differences amongst the members may be rooted in culture, structure, and hierarchy of their organizations and the length of time each member spends in the collaboration. These differences may cause potential difficulties in communication and the building of relationships.

Dibble and Gibson (2013) continued their discussion by providing four themes for adjustment to internal and external challenges, from less to more complex and increasing in time, effort, and the amount of modification required of the members. These four themes are depicted in Figure 2.2. Each theme describes a strategy for members of the collaboration to consider when encountering the challenges, given the need to pursue options instead of ending the

collaboration. These strategies include the following: retreating or temporarily ignoring the behavior, rather than working to resolve; resolving or working together or possibly negotiating changes; reconfiguring or rearranging tasks, reassigning tasks, or adding additional tasks to members; or developing new structure or strategy (Dibble & Gibson, 2013). Each of these strategies allows the members to continue the process, instead of ending it.

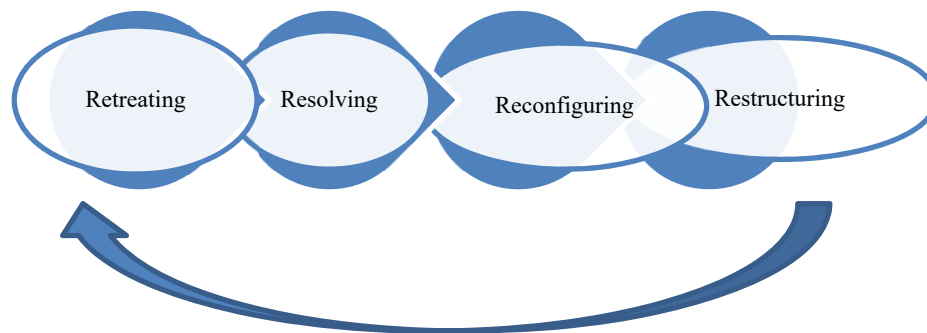


Figure 2.2. Steps of adjustment moving from the least time intensive and complex strategy to the most time intensive and complex strategy, moving toward a solution or resolution. Adapted from “Collaboration for the Common Good: An Examination of the Challenges and Adjustment Processes in Multicultural Collaboration,” by R. Dibble and A. Gibson, 2013, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 34, pp. 764–790.

The adaptation needed to continue may require employing different strategies. These strategies are available during the life of the collaboration whenever the process stalls.

Challenges to the process continue during collaboration. Communication breaks down, outside forces create barriers to solutions, members meet the requests of their organizations at the expense of the collaborations, no shared goal is created, or imposed timeframes create impossibilities for any outcome. Other challenges, which create outcome barriers, include differences in professional language and organizational culture, inability to make and implement decisions, and lack of member accountability for the process. Additional challenges to the success of the collaboration may include members withholding needed information as well as a

general lack of understanding of the concerns or needs of other members or organizations (Getha-Taylor, 2012), indications of a lack of collective identity.

Members of cross-cultural and cross-sector collaborations face additional challenges, such as differences in cultures, languages, and customs, as well as the ability to provide resources (Emerson et al., 2011). Cross-sector member challenges include differences in mission, economic emphasis, and core values (Erakovich & Anderson, 2013). There are many challenges to overcome to get to real outcomes through collaboration, even with those that are not cross-cultural or cross-sector.

The challenges are numerous in collaboration. Communication issues, identification with the group by the members, external pressures, diversity in the group, and operating in a problem domain without the benefit of organizational structure create different trials for the members who are in search of a solution to a messy problem that crosses boundaries. While there are strategies that move collaboration forward, the members are the biggest impediment, when there is a lack of identification with the group itself, the lack of a felt need to solve the problem, or the inability to overcome the diversity inherent in the membership.

Outcomes of collaboration. An outcome of a successful collaboration is the identification of a reasonable solution or resolution to a complex problem that spans the organizational or political boundaries of the members. Outcomes are generated based on what the stakeholders characterize as important in the context of the problem domain (Fenwick, 2012). Some outcomes transcend the collaboration itself: learning and the creation of a new social formation.

Learning may occur at the stakeholder, group, supporting organization, or societal level (Crosby & Bryson, 2010; Kleinsmann & Valkenburg, 2005; Nowell & Harrison, 2011). This

learning follows the co-creation and co-learning developed among the members. Murphy et al. (2012) discussed how knowledge is transferred among members because of group discussions about the problem, problem domain, options, and the resulting development of appropriate solutions. Due to the shared cognition grown and fostered by building on other members' contributions, a new social foundation for the members is built from this co-creation (Swartz & Triscari, 2010; Van den Bossche et al., 2006). Learning is created through the discussions occurring in the collaboration (Andersson, 2009). Discussing, evaluating, and analyzing possible options and solutions can take the form of action strategies, with resultant learning (Andersson, 2009). Through the relationships and interactions of the individuals, learning and the application of learning ensues, both internal and external. (Edmondson, 2002; Tillema, 2006; van Winkelen, 2010).

Not only is there increased knowledge of the members, but their organizational capacities may also increase due to knowledge transfer among the members, and members learning how to collaborate (van Winkelen, 2010). Successful collaboration includes the learning experienced by members, through sharing information in the member-designed process (Järvelä, Järvenoja, Malmberg, & Hadwin, 2013). Cross-sector organizations may also utilize collaboration as one method to achieve organizational goals, learn about the problem domain, and obtain an inclusive resolution to complex and changing problems (Ales et al., 2011). The collective and individual learning of the members is enhanced by the construction of shared knowledge about the problem domain. The formation of better services and products for communities is one important outcome of developing shared knowledge and capabilities within public-private collaborations (Cankar & Petkovšek, 2013). Cankar and Petkovšek (2013) explained other advantages for collaboration,

including creativity, innovative thinking, and a faster response to changes in the organizations and within the problem domain.

Outcomes beyond the identification of resolution or solution options occur with effective collaboration. Outcomes include learning by the members, co-creating knowledge, learning how to collaborate, building relationships, establishing a new social foundation, and sharing knowledge. The emergent learning goes beyond the members to extend to people outside of the collaboration, but within the problem domain, members of home organizations, and members of the broader community.

Importance of Collaboration

The collaboration process serves as both knowledge creation and complex problem resolution. Crosby and Bryson (2010) discussed how cross-sector collaboration provides an option to resolve complex issues and provide for the needs of an economy of decreasing resources through sharing knowledge, maintaining enthusiasm, building identity, and developing alignment. Emerson et al. (2011) suggested knowledge “is the currency of collaboration” (p. 16); committed members understand, explore, and reconstruct information and data to create it. Challenges and enablers co-exist in the acquisition of knowledge essential to the process. Challenges include accommodations for the different levels of expertise, lack of information and authority, shortage of time, and lack of incorporation of external evidence from the problem domain. Enablers include champions for the process, a manageable structure, and participation by experts and members (Friberger & Falkman, 2013). Relationships formed during the collaboration process provide a platform to build the knowledge critical to success.

Effective collaborations meet both the interests of home organizations and the needs of the members. Effective collaborations are built on member relationships, through the social

capital formed through conversations and dialogues. These communication practices continually change based on the interactions between the members and member contacts at their home organizations (Hardy et al., 2005). Because of the tension between the needs of the members and home organizations, communication is critical to negotiate and mediate the competing requirements. If the members cannot successfully meet their obligations to both, often the formation of the collective identity suffers, followed by the decline in the success of the collaboration.

Building successful collaboration includes (a) understanding the role of conversations that develop social capital and build a collective identity and (b) moving members through joint and private construction of information and knowledge (Hardy et al., 2005). Collective identity increases individual engagement in the group and moves collective behavior towards common options. Social capital is collectively owned by the members and is an accessible resource for them (R. Kramer, 2006). Several attributes of successful collaborations are built collectively by the members, including relationships, social capital, emergent communication, and collective identity.

Mizrachi, Rosenthal, and Ivery (2013) theorized about interorganizational collaboration and recognized there are multiple reasons for the increased need, despite the identified challenges to success and the number of failed collaborations. New government programs now require public, private, and nonprofit organizations to unite on or coordinate to increase the effectiveness of combined services. The growth in the nonprofit sector, due to the increased needs of their current or potential clients and to changing governmental roles and responsibilities, leads to the need to maximize available resources and number of services. Increased diversity of ideas, increased specialization, integrated networks, and effective use of

resources are required to provide the services. Integration of public, private, and nonprofit organizations necessitates different networks, processes, and types of cooperation or collaboration that often brings increased complexity. Collaboration can play important roles in meeting each of these increased needs because of the ability to utilize diverse ideas, maximize resources, and provide a platform for knowledge sharing and implementation in a problem domain in communities.

Additional reasons for collaboration include service integration, attitude or behavior changes, strategic partnerships, problem-solving, planning, political action, or social change (Mizrahi et al., 2013). All these reasons, individually or collectively, form the catalyst to begin collaboration. In each case the balancing act of trade-offs or consequences for the different levels of interest in the outcome (personal, organizations, members, people affected by the issue, or the broader community) should be evaluated for collaboration efficacy before the decision is made to undertake it (Mizrahi et al., 2013). Because of the increased need to bring diverse voices together and deal with the complicated community or societal issues, community leaders need to evaluate multiple strategies to determine which best suit the needs of their situations. Collaboration has many advantages to its use, but it takes time and incredible effort.

There are advantages. “Collaborative advantage relates to the desired synergistic outcome of collaborative activity suggesting that advantage is gained through collaboration when something is achieved that could not have been accomplished by any organization acting alone” (Vangen & Huxham, 2003, p. S62). This ability to address complex problems and issues within a specific problem domain can be an outcome of bringing together resources and expertise from public, private, and nonprofit organizations (Vangen, Hayes, & Cornforth, 2014). However, such an outcome is not guaranteed, which is part of the uncertainty. Innes and Booher (1999) agreed

and stated: “the most important consequences may be to change the direction of a complex, uncertain, evolving situation, and to help move a community to higher levels of social and environmental performance” (p. 413). This outcome occurs because members have worked together to define and validate the problem, develop a long-term and inclusive process, and support solutions within the problem domain (Innes & Booher, 1999). Collaboration is difficult, and the outcomes reflect this. Because of the increased need to understand and implement effective collaboration, this study added to the body of knowledge about the necessary factors to accomplish successful outcomes.

Elements of Collaboration

This study investigated the elements of successful collaboration, with specific consideration of collective identity and the internal process of its development. Each element adds value to the process, and without them, the probability of success decreases. This section begins by identifying the essential elements (drawn from the literature) required to start collaboration, such as committed members, time, and resources. Members develop the emergent elements inside the collaboration framework. The elements of trust, shared goal, defined process, and emergent communication are examined. The discussion of collective identity and its development as the central construct for the research conclude the discussion.

For purposes of this research, the following elements are identified as essential for successful collaboration. These elements are divided into two categories. The first category defines the initial elements required to begin the process of collaboration and, as stated, include communication, committed members, time, and resources. The second category contains elements that emerge through member interactions and comprise a collective identity, trust, shared goal, defined process, and communication. Communication is required to start the

informal and formal conversations at the beginning of collaboration; it becomes an emergent element as changes occur and relationships grow. These elements are characterized as essential in successful collaboration based on the following reasons: (a) multiple authors identified each of these elements as required for successful collaboration, (b) research conducted on the individual elements demonstrates the necessity of their inclusion in this research, and (c) in my experience. As scholar-practitioner in this area, I have reflected on what made the difference between successful and unsuccessful collaborations. These elements were found when the process resulted in successful collaboration and not found when unsuccessful.

The initial elements set the context for the development of emergent elements in the process. Through the development of the emergent elements as an iterative process, collective identity is formed. Collective identity is recognized by the behavior and communication changes of the members when the members identify as a group, both internally and externally, using language such as “we” and “us” when conversing about the collaboration (Koschmann, 2012). Once collective identity exists, members develop shared commitment to each other and the goal and mission, thus increasing the probability of perceived success. Figure 2.3 illustrates the progression of these elements moving towards collaboration.

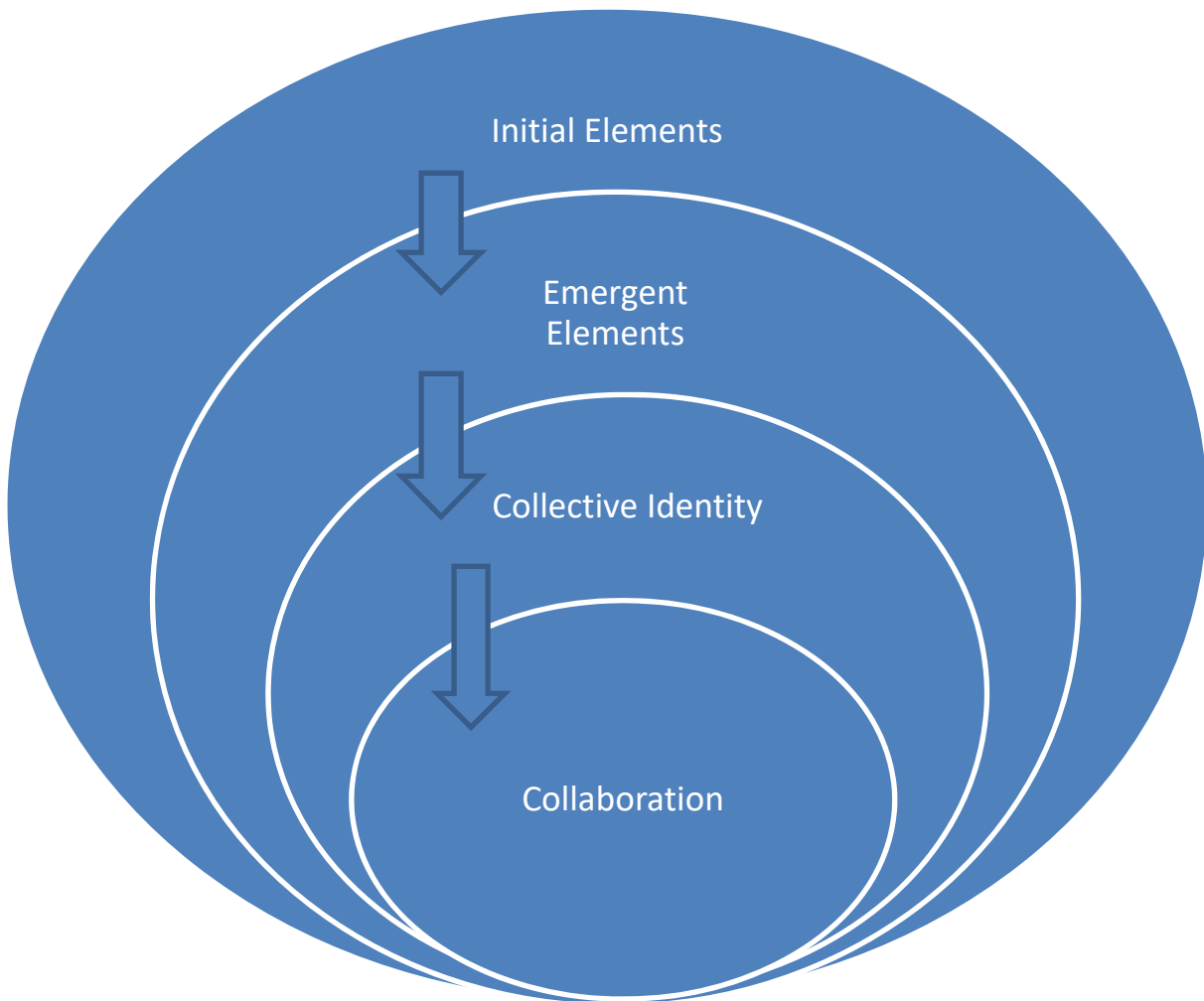


Figure 2.3. Elements of collaboration moving to effective collaboration, demonstrating the development of collaboration through the presence and interaction of each identified element.

Figure 2.3 illustrates the process of collaboration, beginning with the initial elements and through interaction creating collective identity, followed by collaboration. Each of the identified elements will be described below, beginning with the initial elements, followed by the emergent elements, and concluding with collective identity as the central construct of this study.

Initial elements provided for collaboration. Successful collaboration requires the development of constructs within the boundary or space. The initial elements needed include committed members, time, and resources.

Committed members. The identification and inclusion of committed members are critical for effective collaboration. In the literature, members may be identified as stakeholders, participants, partners, parties, or collaborators (Emerson et al., 2011). This research used the term *committed members* to refer to the commitment of the individual to the collaboration. Emerson et al. (2011) reflected that the importance of membership is the combination of commitment, the expertise of each member, and the access to information and resources provided by each organization. J. Leyba expressed the need for members to be involved and personally committed to resolving the problem (personal communication, March 30, 2015).

Huxham and Vangen (2005) posited critical membership considerations, including who the member is as a person, how the member is involved in the problem domain, and how the member will be participating in the collaboration. There is agreement about the need for the members to be stakeholders and that the selection of the members can affect the success. Membership may include representatives of all interested or affected groups. Conversely, a question to be asked is if potential members who are included have the power to affect positively the outcome (Huxham & Vangen, 2005). Two concerns exist about member selection: 1. will potential members be overlooked because of concerns about their organization, relative position in the community, or stated or public position on the problem or issue? and 2. conversely will potential members be included for the same reasons, regardless of their concerns or knowledge in the problem domain? There is a practical need that members reflect a relevant diversity, yet too many members may influence the outcome of successful collaboration. Available resources, ideas, and diversity are limited if the number of members is low. There is no optimal number of members identified in the literature. Consideration for membership includes the ability to implement outcomes or provide needed resources. Sometimes the opportunity is offered to

members with greater access or larger amounts of resources, while overlooking strong candidates with better or more information (Purdy, 2012).

The selection of potential members may be difficult. The list of desirable traits for successful collaboration includes commitment, willingness to engage in early conversations, willingness to listen to new information and ideas, and a mindset of listening, communicating, and collaborating (C. MacLennan, personal conversation, March 31, 2015). It is important to consider if their organizations support the members, with not only the time, effort, and commitment, but also the implementation of decisions. Organizations and individuals need to have sufficient ability, capacity, and interest in participating in the process and contributing to collaboration created outcomes (Ales et al., 2011). If all interested, organizational or individual stakeholders are not asked to participate, political disadvantages may exist, either through lack of commitment to the outcome or questioning of the legitimacy of the process. Sometimes the home organizations choose members who will represent the interests of the home organization, instead of the interests of the collaboration. Political choices may interfere with procuring a member who may be willing or qualified, or selected because of political connections or agreement with a predetermined outcome.

There are additional qualifications to consider. Does the potential member have a commitment to resolve the problem, ability to provide resources for collaboration, and the skills to engage in communication? Has the potential member demonstrated the competence and courage to make decisions independent of the organization if deemed best for the outcome? Does the potential member have the ability to deal with uncertainty and risk, or the lack of organizational structure? If potential members have these skills and abilities, the outcome of the collaboration has the potential to be successful.

Two fundamental reasons exist to choose members: they are committed to the problem or issue and they demonstrate the capacity to be part of the collaboration all the way to creating the outcome. Gray (1989) posited member capacities include the ability to make changes or have influence, the power to mobilize, organize, strategize, and to provide and manage information within the problem. Members should also have the authority to make or block decisions and have the expertise and knowledge needed as part of the collaboration (Purdy, 2012). Harper, Kupermine, Weaver, Emshoff, and Erickson (2014) discussed the ability to have members who can leverage resources.

Commitment to the group affects the motivation to contribute energy, ideas, and resources and to provide more for the collective good. Members need to have both the interest and the capacity to participate in collaboration (Ivery, 2007). When committed members already understand the interconnected quality, if present, of the problem or issue, they are most likely to collaborate because they address the problem instead of people (Thomson & Perry, 2006). When there are several people to consider for membership, the people having the capability to be committed members should be selected first.

Time. Successful collaboration takes time. Lack of time presents a challenge since establishing communication practices, developing relationships, and defining a process is not easy and takes time. If there are imposed time constraints, it may not be practical or possible for the selection of committed members, formal and informal communication, member defined process, or relationships to develop. If there is a deadline or the process or a timeline is driven by outside agencies or organizations, there may not be enough time to succeed. Large amounts of time are necessary to develop effective relationships, define the process, and build trust (Thomson & Perry, 2006). In fact, the biggest cost for an effective collaboration is the time and

member energy to discuss, define, build, and implement all the elements addressed in this chapter (Thomson & Perry, 2006).

There may be real or imagined barriers to ultimate outcomes, including time. Adequate time for the collaborative process creates a real barrier since time constraints for the completion of the process may interfere with members' trust building, communication, and development of the collective identity (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). Thomson and Perry (2006) considered the need for sufficient time to be critical due to the emergent and non-linear nature of the process, the understanding that grows through interaction, and the evolution of collaboration. Because collaborations are fragile and operate in a temporary structure, time pressures result in ineffective or collapsed collaborations (Thomson & Perry, 2006). Purdy (2012) determined that a longer length of the collaborative process enhances effectiveness due to greater participation. Erakovich and Anderson (2013) found the benefits received increased when enough time was provided to overcome the inefficiencies present in beginning the process. Time is built into many of the steps and is necessary for successful outcomes.

Resources. Crosby and Bryson (2005) theorized that cross-sector collaboration is an important option to solve complex issues, especially when there are decreasing resources. One of the strengths of this approach is the ability to leverage existing resources from many organizations or members to resolve an issue or solve an existing problem. The members operate in the problem domain and invest resources (time, expertise, and materials) to develop outcomes (Thomson & Perry, 2006). Coordination among the members is fundamental, particularly with respect to first providing and then maintaining the flow of resources (Durugbo, Hutabaret, Tiwari, & Alcock, 2011). Collaborations need resources to be effective and implement outcomes. Resources may include, among others, supporting the following: providing paper for notes,

hosting of meetings, creating and maintaining meeting minutes, travel, and provision of adequate funds to implement solutions (Purdy, 2012).

Other resources may include the ability to collect and share information, provide meeting records, allow more time by one or more members to be away from their organizations, office space, money, in-kind or technical expertise from a non-member used by the group (Purdy, 2012). Emerson et al. (2011) stated required resources might include funding, time, support from home organizations, skills, and expertise to support outcomes. Through collaboration, the resources may be identified, leveraged, and distributed as shared resources. This sharing of resources may be instrumental in providing legitimacy and equitable outcomes as seen by the stakeholders (Emerson et al., 2011)

Greater funding, as a resource, is linked to improvement and sustainability of the collaboration (Harper et al., 2014). Ales et al. (2011) contended that collaboration includes significant costs, human and financial. These costs include the on-going funding required during the process, in-kind contributions, and cost for the implementation of the outcome. Even though members identify options to use scarce resources effectively, there are required resources and costs connected to the outcomes. Resources, beginning with available time for each committed member, and moving to money, commitment, and other identified costs for the outcome, is a critical element in effective collaboration.

Emergent elements developed during collaboration. With the assets of communication, committed members, resources, and time assimilated into the collaboration, the next elements emerge through the development of relationships among members within the socially constructed boundary (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010). The emergent elements are communication, trust, shared vision or goal, defined process, and collective identity.

Communication. At the beginning and during the life of collaboration, communication is a fundamental element in successful outcomes. Communication begins before or at the time the members come together, whether in person, via email or some other mechanism (Hamilton, 2010). By initiating a reason for people to sit down together, communication occurs and collaboration begins over time as the members become more familiar with each other. “Familiarity breeds *content!* [not contempt]” (Greer, 2012, p. 27).

Communication is necessary to construct the relationships among a shared understanding, defined process, trust, and creation of a collective identity among the members (Mulder et al., 2004). Perrault et al. (2011) considered the initial emphasis and attention paid to developing the informal connections to be a requisite for a successful collaboration. As the result of communication and conversation, an open relationship is created where trust and understanding occur naturally (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). Because of these conversations, personal and collaborative learning may occur (Sense, 2005).

Within collaboration, different knowledge, views, perspectives, and experience are present. Therefore, a process to examine and then incorporate the differences in the outcome is required (Van den Bossche et al., 2006). This process occurs only when psychological safety, communication, group cohesion, group conversation, and a credible process are present and utilized (Edmondson, 2002; M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011; Sense, 2005; Van den Bossche et al., 2006). To generate the ideas and learning, members build their capacities through conversations in order to arrive at a shared understanding within the scope of the goal (Mulder et al., 2004).

Types of communication in collaborations. The initial communication patterns and practices move into informal conversations, formal dialogue, conflict, and connection, required for the continuing support of collective identity and the collaboration. As has been identified,

communication is the first step to building collaboration (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011). According to Clampitt and DeKoch (2011), “translating collaborative potential into actual collaboration requires proper communication and transparency” (p. 132). Before members can proceed, the connection is needed, and that connection begins with communication (van Zwanenberg, 2009). Communication can be challenging throughout the collaboration when there are differences in organizational goals and missions (Clampitt & DeKoch, 2011). Since the communication amongst the members or stakeholders is not supported through an organizational structure or contractual agreement, it is an even more critical element (Thomson & Perry, 2006). The development of collaboration structure begins through generalized conversations that connect the members to the central issue or problem and particularized conversations that connect the members to one another.

Generalized conversations are informal or formal conversations and include discussions about the importance or existence of the problem and any resource, time, or political restraint on solutions. These conversations allow members to advance relationships while validating the problem, establishing group rituals and norms, developing the shared goal or outcome, creating a collective identity, and pursuing the outcome. Types of conversations continually shift while members undertake the tasks of the collaboration.

Particularized conversations aid members in understanding and building their relationships. Through these conversations, roles and responsibilities are determined for each member. It is also at this point that accountability among members is established, along with equal voices. Jensen (2009) emphasized the importance of language in social interaction, particularly face-to-face, as a mode of information exchange, which advances the relationship ties between the members. The language used in these conversations can portray levels of respect

and humanization among members. The relationship ties designate the status, authority, roles, and responsibilities of the members. Roles within collaboration include who has the authorization to speak on behalf of the members, who will attend different meetings, or who is responsible for making and keeping artifacts such as memos, emails, meeting minutes, and who will maintain any record of agreements made by the members. The process of developing a collective identity, group norms, and responsibilities advances through particularized conversations to help define the scope of the collaboration and the interdependence of the members (Hardy et al., 2005).

The members integrate two types of construction as part of the communication. First is common construction, where members discuss issues and attain general agreement from all members. Second, members engage in private construction when conflicting and debating communication is required to make sense of the key issues. Common construction allows the group to go forward; private construction provides the divergent thinking needed for problem or issue innovation while ensuring stakeholder concerns and interests are included (Hardy et al., 2005). Group cohesiveness is built and maintained or minimized through communication.

The styles of talk in collaborations provide the emotional energy necessary for members to make a decision, take a risk, or move into action (Hardy et al., 2005). The styles of talk may be either cooperative, with listening and participating in positions held by others, or assertive, where there is clarity about dissenting or differing views held by other members (Hardy et al., 2005). When members emphasize similarities, mutual affiliations, and shared interests in conversations, cooperative talk has occurred. Through cooperative talk members define differences and provide a basis for accomplishing innovative and holistic solutions in place of compromising solutions.

Role of communication in constructing socially sustained boundaries. Emergent communication is essential to develop and maintain relationships. It also performs a central task in developing and maintaining collaboration's social boundary. Within the specific context of collaboration, a boundary develops through communication (McGreavy et al., 2013). The socially constructed boundaries allow the space for construction of decision-making processes of complex issues (McGreavy et al., 2013). Members from the different organizations exchange information, work together, develop processes, and exchange information that results in sustaining the boundary.

At its core collaboration is a social process where members build a group through communication, thoughtful actions, and inclusion of ideas, resources, and experiences (Vila-Henninger, 2015). Creative tension exists between a boundary that firmly holds the members within its sphere and a boundary that is permeable so communication, ideas, and actions can flow between the group and outside of the boundary. Group members define permeability where the needs differ at points in time. These socially sustained boundaries restrain and allow members to communicate, make decisions, and take action, while defining the norms and rituals (Watson & Foster-Fishman, 2012). The strength of the socially sustained boundary is dependent on the depth of commitment to the group by the members (Vila-Henninger, 2015).

Emergent communication performs many functions. It creates understanding, builds relationships, creates social boundaries, and starts the act of building trust. Without communication, collaboration is impossible.

Trust. Trust is an emergent element for effective collaboration and develops over time (Getha-Taylor, 2012; Gupta, Huang, & Yayla, 2011; Hamilton, 2010; Perrault et al., 2011;

Senge, Lichtenstein, Kaeuter, Bradbury, & Carroll 2007; Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Vangen et al. (2014) discussed trust as particularly critical when the collaboration is not mandated because the members may feel less urgency to go through the process. Building trust within the group is an iterative process, and, as discussed by Perrault et al. (2011), trust develops because there is a consistent demonstration of respect and understanding by the committed members. Trust is exhibited in multiple behaviors, including benevolence or mutual dependence, willingness to participate in conversations, demonstrated respect, and predictable actions. These dealings build trust iteratively, supporting the collaboration process (Getha-Taylor, 2012). The actions of the members establish trust, and no single action is more critical than humanizing and respecting other members.

Over time, as discussions are held and relationships are among the committed members, trust grows (Emerson et al., 2011). Although trust is a consequence of members demonstrated reliability, predictability, and engagement, its presence leads to innovation and knowledge development (Emerson et al., 2011). Within collaboration, experiencing predictable member behavior continues to build both member relationships and the degree of trust. J. Hill Nichols stated succinctly that trust is necessary to have productive conflict and to allow members an opportunity to provide input so better solutions can be developed (personal communication, March 23, 2015). This open environment occurs when members know the conflict will not escalate or damage the relationships because there is trust.

Building trust is foundational in building the social capital of group cohesion and shared goals and is of practical importance in an interorganizational collaboration not held together by one organizational hierarchy (Gupta et al., 2011). Three separate processes linked to trust development affect the strength and viability of relational practices. Le Ber and Branzei (2010)

identified these three processes as relational attachment, partner complacency, and partner disillusionment. The questions that determine the strength and viability of trust include the following: how strong is the attachment between the members; how much do the members care about one another as partners; and how much does a participant trust another participant's behavior? These processes are dynamic, changing, evolving, and reforming throughout the collaboration and determine the level of trust and group cohesiveness (Le Ber & Branzei, 2010). Social capital built inside the structure creates opportunities outside the structure by extending the trust and relationships to other organizations and community members.

Members of successful collaborations denote building trust as an important aspect of managing difficult conversations, differing interests, and conflicting ideas during the process (Vangen & Huxham, 2003). Trust emerges from interactions between members of the group and adapts with time, additional interactions, and successful conflict resolutions. By developing trust through consistency of actions, the creation of a group culture of mutual respect and trust adds strength to the collaboration and increases the strength of the collective identity. The foundation of trust generates the platform for the member discussion of the shared goal.

Shared goal. The importance of the creation and role of a shared goal in collaboration is emphasized throughout the literature. Although the collaboration is typically formed around a problem with a preliminary goal, the members have not internally validated or approved this goal. The goal or vision develops on the foundation built by the elements of communication, committed members, time, and resources. The idea of a shared goal is rarely achievable until communication has started, with time provided to develop relationships and resources, such as meeting times and spaces set and in the calendar.

Senge et al. (1994) defined a shared goal as the means to develop a sense of commitment to members of a group, create the shared idea of the future, and create the guiding norms and practices to achieve the vision. Chrislip (2002) continued the discussion of the notion of a shared goal as a future created over time with attributes of inspiration and member alignment. This developed goal needs to be so compelling that members will continue its pursuit despite the challenges to achieve it. As an experienced collaborator opined, at first the members need a sense of connection to achieving an outcome in the problem domain, a belief an outcome can be accomplished, and they need to define and seek a common goal (C. MacLennan, personal communication, March 31, 2015).

The members use dialogue to construct individual and team understanding of the problem and to form the foundation to develop a shared goal. First, however, the members in the collaboration must affirm or modify a problem to own it. Second, the members must demonstrate their willingness to participate in the process. Third, the members must create the shared goal that is compelling (Bunniss et al., 2011; Clarke & Fuller, 2010; Edmonson, 2002; Prins, 2010). J. Leyba observed that a shared goal provides a sense of commitment and allows members to connect in a fulfilling way (personal communication, March 30, 2015). Without the shared goal for motivated members in the collaboration to work on, there is little chance to achieve a successful outcome. “Creating a shared vision of the future is a powerful vehicle” (Austin, 2000, p. 74), one that assists the committed members to visualize, mobilize, and act.

Huxham and Vangen (2005) discussed the shared goal as a purpose for the members to achieve in collaboration. It is during the development of this shared purpose that outside factors from the home organizations or political environment may have significant influence. Personal causes, clash of values, use of peripheral information, power differences, or members who lack

long-term commitment about the problem or issue will cause significant challenges to establishing and moving towards the shared goal. External organizations may exert environmental power that may influence the ability of the group to define its goal or vision. If the collaboration is government sponsored, the goal or vision may come from the governmental organization, and members may be unable to use their expertise and information to construct their own goal.

Ivery (2007) observed that rarely do collaborations mirror the processes and outcomes found in the literature. Members of participating organizations do work to accomplish a common goal or vision; however, member capabilities and participation may vary from the ideal found in the literature. Continuing with this idea, Ales et al. (2011) observed that for the achievement of successful outcomes the members need to develop the shared goal. This goal or vision must be unique; contain a realistic outcome, or outcomes; and have the support and commitment of all the members (Ales et al., 2011).

Developing the shared goal by members of the collaboration is a critical element for successful outcomes due to member contributions. The collaboration serves multiple people and organizations. Benefits are necessary to continue working, and members must understand that the benefits might be unequally distributed to members and to supporting organizations (Andersson, 2009). The shared goal may have a positive outcome in the problem domain yet may provide differing benefits. The shared goal provides energy to the process and supersedes competition among the members or their organizations. The creation generates a deeper collective identity by going through the process of deciding and defining the shared goal. The element of shared goal moves the collaboration forward to action.

Defined process. Another vital element is the defined process, which offers a configuration for the members. Petri (2010) stated, “First and foremost, interdisciplinary collaboration is described as a process” (p. 75). The defined process provides the structure of governance for the members: communication frequency and modes, sharing of responsibility, and the methods for making decisions (Vangen et al., 2014). The structure and process of the collaboration help determine the quality and frequency of shared information since the expectations and deadlines are built as part of the process (Durugbo et al., 2011). When the next steps towards the shared goal are unclear, when conflict arises, or outside pressure is applied to the members, the defined process provides the structure to move the collaboration forward. Because the members usually do not belong to the same organization or entity, the process provides the structure to address the problem without an organizational hierarchy (Gray, 1989).

Having a defined process is indispensable because it offers temporary governance and structure for the collaboration. Thomson and Perry (2006) contended that the members have choices: how decisions are framed and decided; who can make decisions; what actions can be taken; what information is provided and distributed; and who benefits, and how, from the outcomes of collaboration. This overview describes some components of the process. Emerson et al. (2011) examined these processes as procedural arrangements that “encompass the range of process protocols and organizational structures necessary to manage repeated interactions over time” (p. 15) and result in norms and rules. The results of the arrangements are found in artifacts such as memos, charters, rules, by-laws, and emails (Emerson et al., 2011). Ales et al. (2011) commented that the structure and the supported processes should maximize the ability of the collaboration to accomplish the goals. The acceptance of the structure by all members is essential. More importantly, the process provides equality among members while maintaining

enough flexibility to uncover or notice good ideas while building a sense of community (C. Maclennon, personal communication, March 31, 2015).

Vangen et al. (2014) posited what should be considered as part of a defined process in cross-sector, inter-organizational collaboration. These requirements are a good basis and include the following:

stakeholder inclusion (how, when, and in what capacity stakeholders may be involved in the collaboration); means of *decision-making*: distribution of, or imbalances in *power* (how to deal with such); the extent to which the relationships between potential members are characterized by *trust or distrust* (how to deal with trust-related issues); distribution of *resources*; the extent to which stakeholders have similar or divergent *goals* (what motivates potential partners to be involved); whether or not there is a designated *lead* organization and where the issues of *accountability* lie. (Vangen et al., 2014, p. 4)

Thomson and Perry (2006) advanced the idea that potential members need to have the skills to make joint decisions about the rules that include how to make decisions. Söpper (2014) set forth the need to establish both governance and planning as part of the process to regulate, coordinate, and incorporate shared attitudes, group norms, values, and informal and formal practices within the collaboration. All these are necessary pieces of the defined process.

While establishing and maintaining the defined process, members may need to adapt and adjust since the members do not have the overall supporting structure of one organization (Dibble & Gibson, 2013). Both internal and external steps, such as frequency and mode of communication between members, are added to the defined process to adjust to the lack of organizational structure. When the collaboration is cross-cultural and there were significant challenges amid the initial design and maintenance of the process, cultural differences aid through adding different thoughts and options. These challenges also hold true for differences between organizations, especially when the collaboration is cross-sector. Dibble and Gibson (2013) theorized that cultural heterogeneity might allow the members to establish the defined

process better to react to internal and external challenges due to these diverse thoughts and options. Because members usually spend a shorter time in collaborations than in their organizations, members may ignore potential conflict by focusing on how to leverage the heterogeneity for the benefit of the project without addressing the cultural differences. The defined process may include conflict resolution to support the members and their agreement on the ultimate resolution or solution (Clarke & Fuller, 2010; Crosby & Bryson, 2010; Olivera & Strauss, 2004; van Woerkom & van Engen, 2009). Since people are the members, conflict is very likely to occur and, with it, the need to manage conflict for positive movement.

The defined process allows the members to move forward even when differences are not resolved. Perrault et al. (2011) discussed the challenge of bringing together members from separate organizations to create a new structure bound by a member-defined process and to use pooled resources. The defined process promotes developing relationships among the members, each bringing resources, experience, and expertise, to develop collaboration without a formal structure or organizational hierarchy (Vangen et al., 2014). Because the members have developed a process together to support a shared goal, the collective identity deepens with a positive outcome of their efforts. The identity shifts to the collective group results in behavior change and produces a product or artifact, the defined process.

Collective identity. Collective identity is a social identity construct that plays a role in how people behave, how they demonstrate their commitment to the other members and the goal, how they interpret connections to others, and how they choose correct behaviors during the collaboration. De Cremer and van Knippenberg (2005) asserted that when collective identity forms, individuals move from self-interest to the collective interest of the group. It is at this point participants demonstrate their commitment to the group and offer resources (Veal & Mouzes,

2010). Individual and collective identities occur simultaneously and cause a transformation in how the member perceives himself or herself.

Collective identity refers to a broad construct that includes the extent to which people perceive themselves as members of a group and how they include themselves in that group. Ellemers and Rink (2005) contended that the individual's emotional involvement and group commitment are part of this process. Identification with the group can be beneficial or detrimental and may have effects on behavior and performance of individuals and the broader group. Collective identity relates to willingness to participate in the member-created collective behavior, the level of commitment to the mission, and willingness to take part in meeting the shared goal (R. Kramer, 2006). Figure 2.4 illustrates the building of collective identity from the individual to the collective identity of the group.

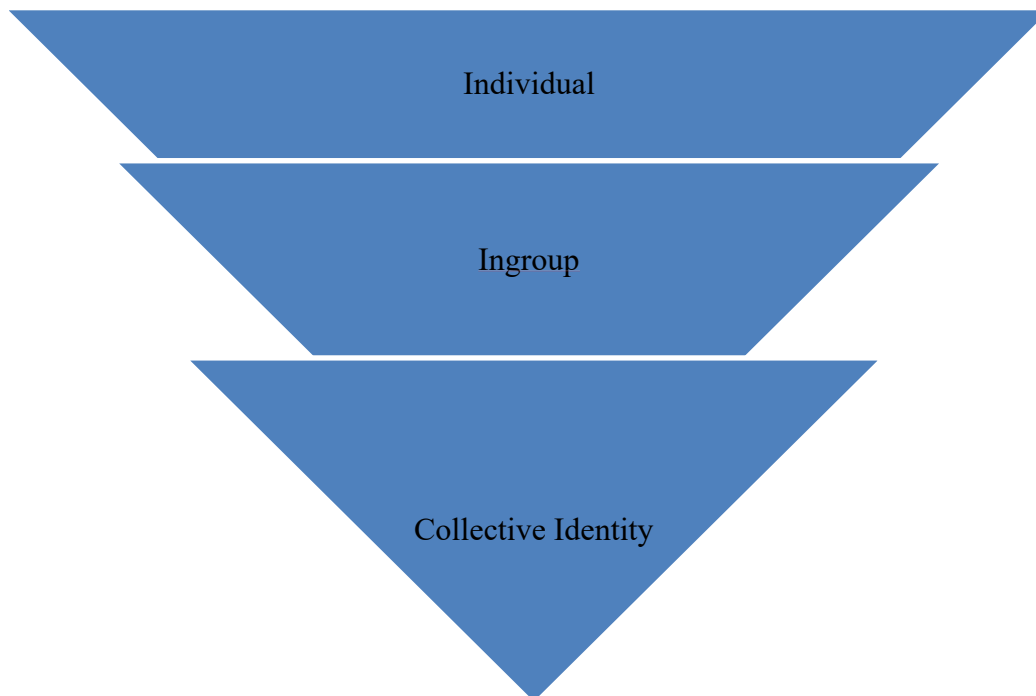


Figure 2.4. Building on individual identity. Demonstrating the movement from an individual identity up to collective identity within collaboration. Adapted from “Social Identity and Social Capital: The Collective Self at Work,” by R. Kramer, 2006, *International Public Management Journal*, 9, pp. 25–45.

Collective identity formation begins with informal and formal communication, carried through group rituals, followed by the development of group norms, and solidified by the creation of the shared process and goals. All the initial elements are required to begin collaboration. The emergent elements build on one another and complete the formation of collective identity. At the cognitive level collective identity is reinforced and strengthened through increased commitment to the group processes, completion of the shared goal and defined process, and continual informal conversations and formal dialogue. After the formation of collective identity, the probability of issue or problem solution increases in the collaboration (Bunniss et al., 2011). When collective identity is attained, communication among members of the group changes and becomes more fluid. The shared ideas need less discussion because the integration of knowledge has occurred among the members (Feast, 2013). Jensen (2009) agreed that discourse and dialogue in the problem domain within the context set by the members lead to collective identity.

A benefit of this significant change is the new space that is created where the members can listen and learn from each other (Oborn & Dawson, 2010). Koschmann (2012) discussed collective identity as “a communicative phenomenon that is subject to continual alternation by organizational members” (p. 81). Collective identities continue to change and stay dynamic because of the constant infusion of different information, new ideas, evolving context, group- developed knowledge, and outside influences. With the importance of collective identity in collaboration, it becomes central to understand how to develop it.

Development of collective identity. Collective identity development begins with communication, both informal conversations and formal dialogue. Planning, convening the group, and carrying out many other actions precede member communication. The early

conversations serve several purposes: to determine why the collaboration exists, to foster new relationships, and to move conversations into dialogue. J. Hill Nichols stated that the members need to determine why the collaboration exists and incorporate the reason into their being, so that they move forward and do not take wrong turns (personal communication, March 23, 2015). The initial communication begins the process to build a connection with the other members and to the purpose of the collaboration.

The informal conversations and the formal dialogue need some beginning structure before any defined process develops within the group. At this point the role of group rituals becomes critical. These group rituals are imposed or organic and span from simple to complex. Group rituals include simple practices such as specific start times, greetings and closing practices, the length of the meetings, and location of the meetings (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010). The more complex group rituals consume more time and are more elaborate in the process, which may consist of honoring each member for what the person will contribute to the collaboration, communicating what resources are offered, or sharing resumes or biographies in a formalized manner. Group rituals are part of celebrating small and significant successes that bolster member commitment, energy, and connection to the other members and the purpose.

Group rituals. Group rituals serve multiple purposes in building collaboration. The activity of a ritual provides stability while promoting change (Smith & Stewart, 2011). Group rituals can begin the transition to a different social structure and can transform the roles individuals complete with attached obligations and duties. Group rituals build and reinforce a socially constructed boundary through repeated interactions in which members can discuss tensions, conflict, and ideas, while sharing information and building knowledge (Goss, 2008). These interactions are comprised of shared physical location, knowing the why or focus, social

solidarity based on member obligation, and collective vibrancy or energy in the group by assimilating those who do not work together (Goss, 2008). Group rituals bring members with diverse and potentially conflicting ideas and contributions together into a community (Islam & Zyphur, 2009). Group rituals mark the transition of individuals in the problem domain to a group of members who are conversing about an issue or problem with the intent of finding options and solutions.

Smith and Stewart (2011) discussed organizational group rituals as purposeful behavior that moves towards an objective or a desired outcome. The routine of group rituals is a precursor of commitment (Smith & Stewart, 2011). In collaboration, there is a need to produce a member-driven, non-hierarchical structure with the intention of moving to a positive outcome. Participation in the group rituals signifies member commitment to the process and strengthens the member cohesion. Because of its repetition, group rituals strengthen communication by increasing predictability of the behavior, yet facilitating change, and managing some anxiety over uncertainty. Repeated group rituals also act as one process to “build shared meanings, generate solidarity, and reinforce them through social engagement” (Smith & Stewart, 2011, p. 118). The use of group rituals during collaboration is a critical step towards the development of collective identity.

Group rituals give rise to the group norms created and supported by the members. The group norms involve actions such as managing relationships and setting the standard for courtesy and practices when the members interact. These group norms contain behaviors, communication processes, creativity, reciprocity, and cooperation for the members (Elster, 2006; Teh, Baniassad, van Rooy, & Boughton, 2012). Group norms are behaviors developed through repeated interaction to guide the collaboration and support the shared *why*, the goals and outcomes, and

modification upon review or necessity (Campano, Ghiso, & Welch, 2015). These interactions and norm development take time and member dedication to the process and are necessary for shaping future behavior (Morgeson & Hofmann, 1999). When power inequities or differences in cultural and organizational diversity exist, group norms advance trust and equity among members (Campano et al., 2015). Group norms add to the creation of the collective identity through defining accepted behaviors, constructing an environment of equity among members, and honoring member self-interest.

Through repeated interactions, the members follow the behavioral norms and share in-group rituals, which construct a socially sustained boundary containing the collective identity (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010). The boundary is permeable, with the ability to allow information, knowledge, and resources, and other components to flow internally and externally. Meaning, understanding, learning, and sharing are anchored in the boundary by the purpose or why of the collaboration and member dedication to that purpose. Within the boundary, members are equal, trust is formed, and a safe place is created for conflict and conversation to occur without damaging the identities of the group members or their collective identity. Group expectations are established within the boundary by members who group-identify, leading to group norms and shared expectations used to evaluate social behavior within the group.

Conversation and dialogue. Within the informal conversation and formal dialogue, two types of communication assist in the development of collective identity: one that produces generalized membership ties by identifying with the group and one that produces particularized ties that identify with the tasks.

Within collaborations, multiple identity issues exist because of the different interests of members and, potentially, conflicting interests (Beech & Huxham, 2003). How the members

identify themselves and each other at the individual, group, organizational, and interorganizational levels will affect their ability to develop relationships. There are opportunities for conflict, change in one's self-identity and continual reevaluation of self-identity and the identity assigned to other members (Beech & Huxham, 2003). Identification is critical to the commitment to collective work, motivation, and internalization of group norms that affect the success of collaborations (Ellemers & Rink, 2005).

Members hold multiple identities with differing levels of inclusiveness and identify differently depending on the stage or progress of collaboration. These identities influence outcomes and member-decisions. A strong collective identity results in the support of a group decision instead of decisions that benefit individual organizations. A stronger organization identity helps the member support the organization over the needs of the collaboration. With the reiteration of collective identity, commitment increases. With the emphasis on organizational identity, the member decreases actions towards the shared goal. Collective identity assists members by focusing their energy internally to the collaboration rather than externally to their organizations.

Collective identity can be examined through the “constructive effects of conversations in which the members describe themselves as a collective,” and “the language in use among the members avoids the need to assess the degree of convergence across the minds of individuals” (Hardy et al., 2005, p. 62). Through conversations the members construct the problem, define the process, and create the framework to move forward to joint action and potential solutions (Hardy et al., 2005). Collective identity, as part of the social identity of the members, is a significant step toward collective action (Thomas et al., 2012).

The committed members engage in a conversation and dialogue process as a step in the formation of collective identity, as illustrated in Figure 2.5.



Figure 2.5. Discursive approach to developing collaboration collective identity. Illustration of the steps to forming collective identity because of discursive process. Adapted from “Discourse and Collaboration: The Role of Conversations and Collective Identity” by C. Hardy, T. B. Lawrence, and D. Grant, 2005, *Academy of Management Review*, 30, pp. 58–77.

After the formation of collective identity, a holding space for difficult conversations exists. Group members can discuss and settle differences in viewpoints and resolve conflict that would otherwise threaten effective collaboration (Hardy et al., 2005). Collective identity increases individual engagement in collective behavior and decreases the likelihood of conflicts due to differences (R. Kramer, 2006). There is a benefit to understanding there may be disparities in viewpoints, information, and resources contribution level. When collective identity is present, conversations are held about those differences because of the equality established among the members. With the foundation of collective identity, members contribute time, energy, and emotional involvement and are more likely to gain support from their organizations for decisions made in the collaboration (Hardy et al., 2005). Members receive emotional benefits from working in the framework by receiving respect and support from the other members (Stümer et al., 2008). The more benefits received because of the contributions, the more members are willing to participate over the longer periods often needed to develop options and recommend outcomes (Mizrahi et al., 2013).

Summary of emergent elements. There are numerous critical aspects of collaboration contained in the development of collective identity. Collective identity occurs after other elements of collaboration have taken place and, in general, continues to develop and strengthen during the time of the collaboration. The foundations for the creation of collective identity include the initial elements of communication, committed members, time, and resources, which lead to the development of emergent communication, defined process, emergent trust, and a shared goal. Collective identity becomes critical for the successful outcome of collaboration because the group of committed members now look internally, instead of externally, within the problem domain, to identify the options. This internal focus provides the basis for frank discussion, innovation, idea generation, respect, diversity of thought, and commitment to each other, while working towards the resolution or solution. Collective identity is a critical element and may distinguish collaboration from a cooperative effort within the problem domain. Cooperative efforts are reasonable approaches; however, collaboration contains the co-creation of knowledge, development of collective identity, and the designing of options, resolutions, and solutions.

The process of developing collective identity begins with committed members, and, over time, several actions are required to complete the initial evolution: understanding why the collaboration exists, developing and practicing group rituals, internalizing group norms, and engaging in informal communication and formal dialogue. Collective identity adapts through the members defining a process and creating a shared goal. The strength of the collective identity increases and is reinforced as the members define processes and establish the shared goal. These activities often produce shifts and behavior changes. This activity occurs within a socially sustained boundary, as a permeable barrier for ideas, information, resources, and other

requirements to pass into and out of the collaboration. Figure 2.6 shows the model of collective identity development based on the literature (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010).

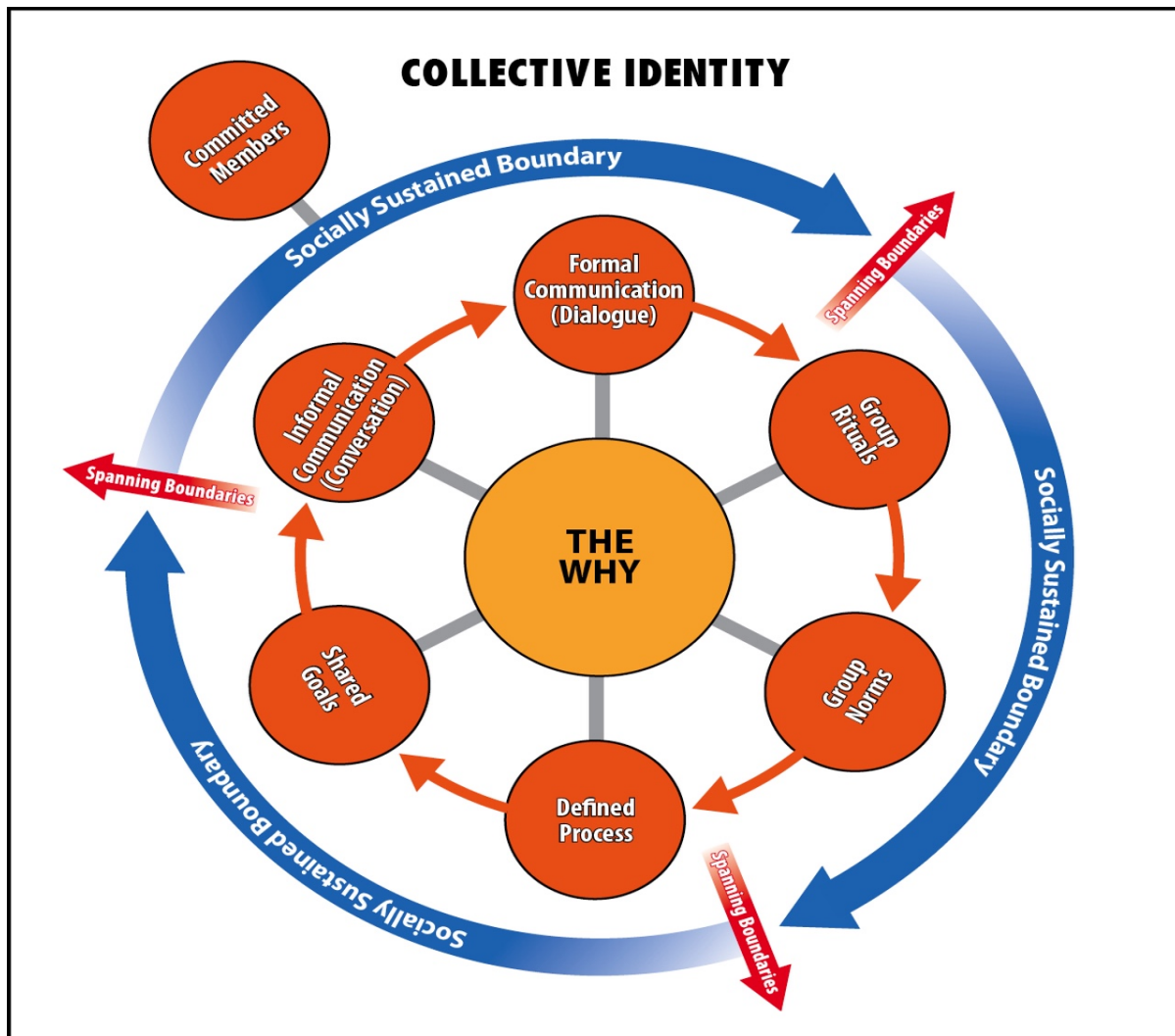


Figure 2.6. Model of collective identity development. The development and strengthening of collective identity in a socially sustained permeable boundary. Adapted from “Enacting Language Games: The Development of a Sense of ‘We-ness’ in Online Forums,” by A. Fayard and G. DeSanctis, 2010, *Information Systems Journal*, 20, pp. 383–416.

Collective identity continues to emerge throughout the life of the collaboration. The development of collective identity is iterative and requires time. The strength of the collective identity comes from the members and the strength of identification with the collective group.

Collective identity is also adaptive because it is based on a unique set of factors and constraints: the members, problem, problem domain, resources, communication patterns, available time, and other special aspects of the unique collaboration. The uniqueness of collective identity makes it difficult to replicate; this may explain the high percentage of collaborations that fail. Collective identity is a critical emergent element that leads to successful collaboration.

Conclusion

Collaboration is a complex process, situated in a particular context, with adaptive practices utilized for success. The adaptive processes include the elements identified in this review. These elements are brought into the collaboration or are emergent through the interactions, conversations, and dialogue among members of the collaboration. The essential elements that are needed at the beginning of the collaboration include communication, committed members, time, and resources. Elements also emerge within the socially sustained boundary as an outcome of interactions. These elements are emergent trust, shared goal, defined process, emergent communication, and collective identity. Members create collective identity through engaging in informal conversations and formal dialogue, participating in practices leading to the development of rituals, and internalizing norms. Collective identity strengthens when the members increase trust and successfully conceive a shared goal and defined process. Trust is created through the actions of the members exhibiting reliability, predictability, and engagement. The shared goal emerges through member interaction. The defined process also emerges and serves as the temporary structure for governance and operations for the collaboration. Adjustments are made to continue movement towards the outcome. Each of the adjustments, retreating, resolving, reconfiguring, or restructuring, is a specific strategy entailing available time, resources, and commitment on the part of the members to continue the

collaboration. These strategies are iterative over the lifespan, given member commitment to continue.

Figure 2.7 illustrates a model for the process of successful collaboration, based on this literature review, showing the initial elements, emergent elements, and the adjustment strategies. This model shows the complexity and the process required for successful outcomes.

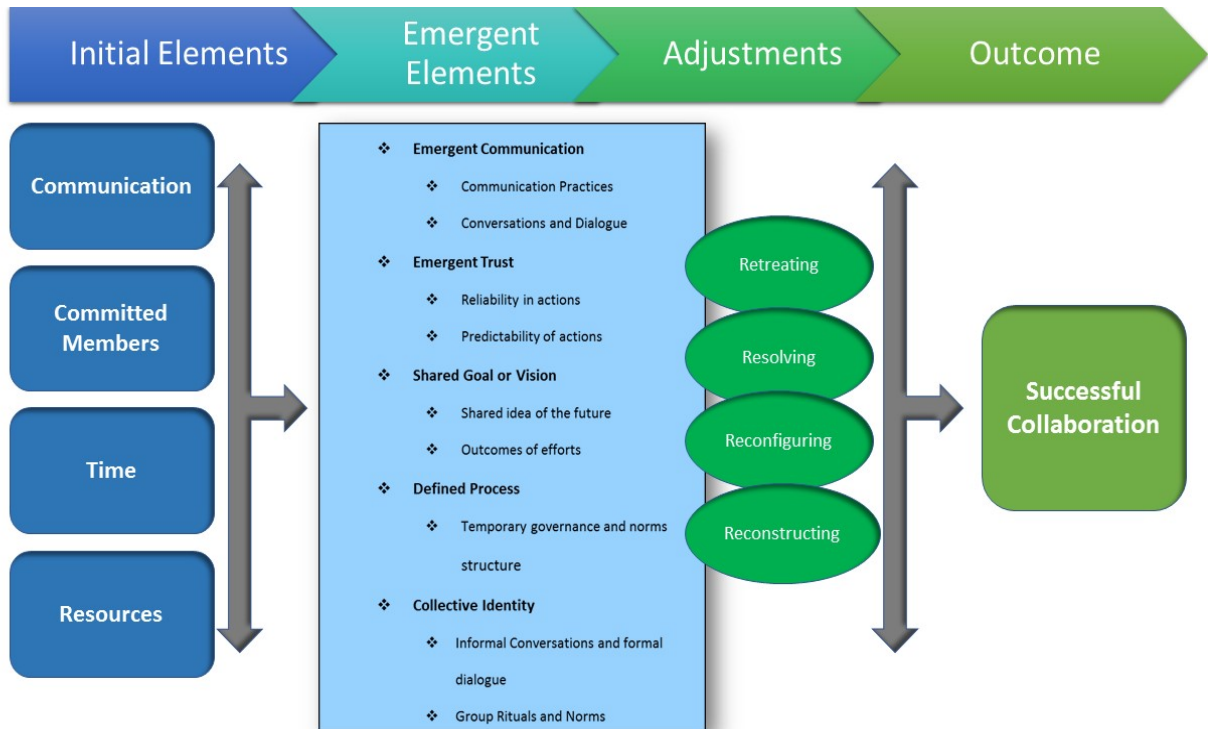


Figure 2.7. Process of successful collaboration. The model for successful collaboration based on the interactions of all elements within the socially sustained boundary.

Collaboration is complex, and a complex system needs precise direction and the ability to adapt to new information and ideas added to the system (Fenwick, 2012). The elements of effective collaboration provide the direction and adaptability that, when present, allow options to be generated and an outcome and solution achieved.

Chapter III: Methodology/Guiding Research Questions and Research Procedures

The process of collaboration is not predictable, nor does it necessarily lead to successful outcomes. The characteristics of successful collaborations the primary focus of this research. These included collective identity, trust, shared goal, defined process, communication, committed members, time, and resources.

Research Problem and Questions

The guiding research problem focused on which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success.

The research questions for this study include the following:

1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts?
2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?
3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success?
4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success?

Mixed Methods Research Design

Because collaboration is adaptive, not prescriptive (Thomson et al., 2009), there is complexity in the process, and no one quantitative or qualitative measure can explain it. The challenging nature of creating successful collaborations also means the study of the collaboration process is not easy, nor straightforward. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) posited that mixed methodology is used to “study what interests and is of value to you, study it in the different ways

you deem appropriate, and use the results in ways that can bring positive consequences within your value system” (p. 30). Mixed methods provided the opportunity to look at collaboration elements from different viewpoints.

The research approach for this study was mixed methods. The use of mixed methods research is increasing and becoming “recognized as the third major research approach or *research paradigm*” (Johnson et al., 2007, p. 112). Using mixed methods research adds to the scholarship related to the development of collective identity. This research is contextually pragmatic because of the realistic design decisions made within the constraints of the research setting (Datta, 1997). The specific data collection processes, interviews, narrative analysis, surveys, and focus group were based on practicality and the realistic context of past collaborations (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The qualitative methods brought forth individual voices and experiences to explore the phenomenon of collaboration. The quantitative method explored the characteristics of collaboratives, particularly the development of collective identity as they relate to success.

In the language of mixed methods, this study was a QUAL -> QUAN (qual) -> qual design. This mixed methods study used an exploratory sequential design in three phases. Phase 1 consisted of two connected actions. The first was the narrative analysis of the Colorado Collaboration Award applications. Simultaneous to this narrative analysis, three recognized experts in collaboration were interviewed. The themes and language from Phase 1 were used to design the survey instrument that was administered in Phase 2. Phase 3 ended the data collection with a group of selected survey respondents participating in a focus group to discuss and make meaning of the survey findings. Through this sequential process the qualitative data shaped or transformed the quantitative data (Palinkas et al., 2011). Using mixed methods to address the

research questions was needed due to the complexity of elements that affect the collaboration processes and outcomes (Shneerson & Gale, 2015). This mixed methods approach provided richer data, including comprehensive insights, depth, and breadth, that would not have been possible using a monomethod approach (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Greene, 2012).

Creswell and Clark (2011) reviewed what decisions are necessary when considering mixed methods research, including how the qualitative and quantitative portions of the research relate. Creswell and Clark (2011) referred to the individual quantitative and qualitative portions of the study as strands, or “a component of the study that encompasses the basic process of conducting quantitative or qualitative research” (p. 63). Strands are prioritized, timed, and interrelated in a series of study design decisions. Each of these decisions is explained, as follows.

The first decision is whether the relationship between the qualitative and quantitative strands of the study is independent or interactive. The strands were interactive in that the design of one strand was dependent on the results of another strand (Creswell & Clark, 2011).

The second decision concerns the prioritizing of the qualitative and quantitative strands. For this study the qualitative and quantitative methods in Phase 1, the analysis of the application data and the interviews, and Phase 2, the collaborative participant survey, received equal status. Phase 3, the qualitative focus group and interviews, validated and explained the results of Phase 1 and Phase 2.

The third decision relates to timing, or the time between the implementation and completion of Phase 1 (qualitative), Phase 2 (quantitative), and Phase 3 (qualitative) strands (Creswell & Clark, 2011). There are options for when the data is collected and analyzed: concurrent timing, sequential timing, and multiphase combination timing (Creswell & Clark, 2011). For purposes of this research study, the concurrent and sequential timing was used for the

phases. Phase 1 had two concurrent qualitative data analysis processes, a review of Colorado Collaboration Award narrative application data and interviews with experts in collaborations. Both Phase 2 and Phase 3 were sequential, and the data collection and analysis from each phase informed the design and analysis of the next research phase (Creswell & Clark, 2011). The analysis of Phase 1 data informed the design of the Phase 2 survey instrument development and distribution. Phase 2 survey data results informed the Phase 3 focus group data collection.

The fourth decision was about when to combine the interpretations of the qualitative and quantitative strands. When using the exploratory sequential design, the mixing of quantitative and qualitative data analysis was done through the strategy of connecting, using the analysis from one strand to inform the next phase of the research (Creswell & Clark, 2011). For this research the interpretations were made at the end of each phase and again holistically after data collection and analysis completion for all three phases.

Population and Sample

The research population included experts in collaborations and selected members of collaborations that applied through the Colorado Nonprofit Association for the Colorado Collaboration Award in 2013 and 2014. A total of $n = 61$ participants were included in this research. The study includes three phases that are described in detail under Research Process. Briefly, Phase 1 included interviews ($n = 3$) and reviews of application narrative data ($n = 90$). Phase 2 included survey development, distribution, and data analysis ($n = 46$). Phase 3 included a focus group plus two interviews with collaboration members that responded to the survey ($n = 5$). The sample size and specific population and sample characteristics of each sub-sample are discussed as part of the details for each phase.

Variables Related to Research Questions

This research focused on elements of collaboration. For purposes of the research, these elements were operationalized, based on a review of the literature as well as Phase 1 interviews. A working explanation was developed for each element, and was used in all three phases of this research study. Table 3.1 explains each element.

Table 3.1.

Working Explanations of Each Element of Collaboration

Element	Explanation of Element
Committed members	Members with commitment to solving the problem, ability to provide resources, adequate communication skills, and the ability to be comfortable with uncertainty and the lack of an organizational structure
Time	Adequate time to overcome inefficiencies at the beginning of the collaboration, develop relationships, have interactions to develop emergent elements, and create relevant outcomes
Resources	Required both before, during and after the collaboration to include adequate time, legislation, funding, commitment, staffing, and supplies and properties needed in the collaboration process and implementation of outcomes
Communication	Information conversations, formal dialogue, discourse, discussions, virtual and in person, that result in the transmission and exchange of information and ideas, leading to shared understanding
Trust	An iterative process of consistency of words and action leading to consistent respect and understanding by others
Shared goal	A sense of connection and willingness to achieve a commonly held outcome by members
Defined Process	The member-developed course of actions to move the collaboration forward, including decision-making, information sharing, and conflict resolution.
Collective Identity	The state where members perceive themselves as a group member, which results in higher commitment, participation, and ability to work within a socially constructed boundary

The first elements (committed members, time, and resources) are brought into the collaboration and referred to as initial elements since these characteristics are needed to begin the

process. The other elements emerged within the boundaries of the collaboration: emergent communication, emergent trust, shared goal, defined process, and collective identity.

Initial elements within the collaboration. The initial elements brought into the collaboration are committed members, time, and resources. Committed members understand the problem domain, and have adequate communication and relationship skills; balance loyalty to their organization or coalition and collaboration; and offer time, energy, resources, and required effort. Time has an internal and external component in the collaboration. Adequate external time is needed for the members to form relationships and engage in conversation and dialogue. Resources, or resource availability, is the final pre-collaborative characteristic. It entails having materials, expertise, power, and political influence to initiate and facilitate the collaborative.

Emergent elements for collaboration. The emergent elements created within the collaboration include defined process, communication, shared goal, trust, and collective identity. The defined process occurs when members decide on methods for sharing information and communicating and the frequency of meetings, processes of decision-making and conflict resolution, scope and goal or vision creation, and norms and rules. Communication that develops during the collaboration includes frequent and open dialogue and discourse involving in-depth and thorough discussions, facilitating understanding and relationships. A shared goal is a mutual understanding of the collaboration's purpose. Trust emerges, over time and through communication, resulting in the sense of consistency of the actions, honesty, and integrity of other members. The element of collective identity begins through member-defined rituals, conversations, and dialogue. Collective identity continues to emerge and strengthen through successful emergent communication, defined process, shared goal, and trust. Each of these elements was explored during the research process.

Research Process

The research process consisted of three phases, as illustrated in Figure 3.1. Phase 1 was qualitative and included two steps. Step 1 consisted of interviews ($N = 3$). Step 2 included a review of all applications ($N = 90$) and content analysis ($N = 46$). Step 2 included content or factor analysis ($N = 46$). Phase 2 consisted of three steps; Step 1: survey instrument development; Step 2: survey administration, and Step 3: quantitative and narrative analysis. Phase 3, a focus group ($N = 3$) and two interviews ($N = 2$), was informed by Phase 2 and concluded the research.

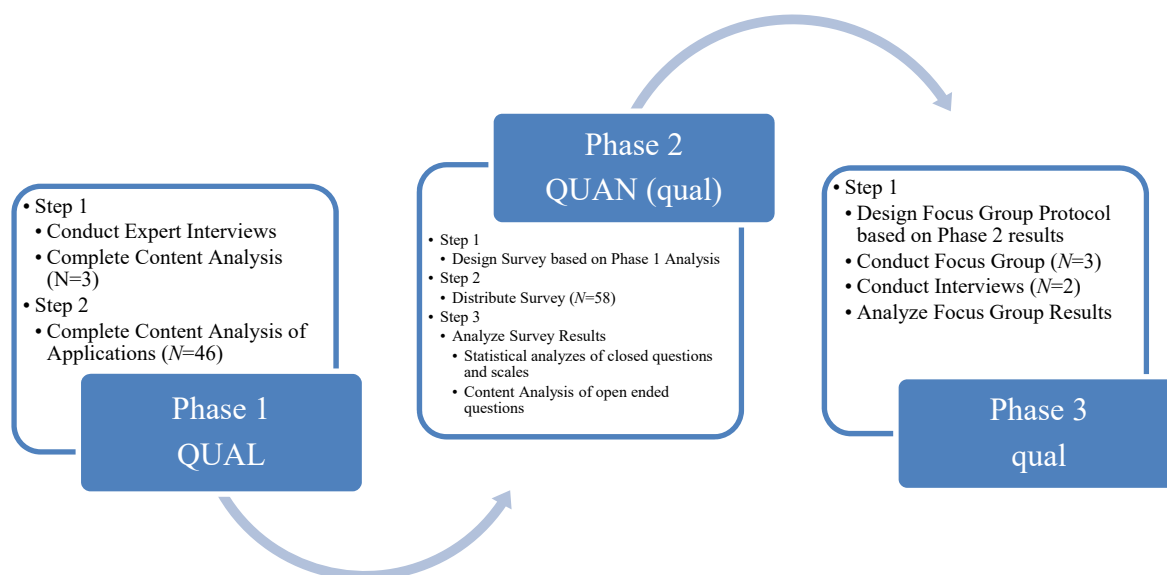


Figure 3.1. Phases of study. Research design and techniques.

The following section discusses the process followed in the three phases.

Phase 1: expert interviews and application analysis. Phase 1 consisted of two concurrent qualitative data collection and analysis processes: interviews with subject matter experts and analysis of secondary data. The interviews were used to understand perceptions and experiences of collaboration experts. The narrative data analysis led to insight and language

related to the eight elements. Narrative data were coded to fit the eight elements and the concept of success. The application data were used to select participants and add language to describing the elements. All Phase 1 data and analysis informed survey development for Phase 2.

Phase 1—Step 1: subject matter expert interviews. Three subject matter expert participants were selected after recommendation from Dr. Carl Larson, one of my committee members and an expert on interorganizational collaboration. Each expert had a minimum of 15 years' experience in the area. The areas of experience included collaboratives managing children and health in county governments, improving children's health and wellbeing, building healthy communities, and developing policy for growth, transportation, aging, and disability. This broad range provided for multiple examples, disciplines, and reasons for collaboration.

After selection, each expert received an email containing an introduction by Dr. Carl Larson, an explanation of the research, and a request for an interview. Once the expert agreed to participate, interviews were scheduled. An interview protocol was created so the interviews were uniform with the same questions (see Appendix A). The interviews were active; both parties jointly shared and built experiences and meaning (Schwandt, 2007). The interviews were taped and transcribed, and member checking was conducted. Transcripts were returned by the three experts ($n = 3$).

Content analysis identified words and terms for each of the elements. The interview data provided the opportunity to augment or corroborate the elements and their definitions as identified from the literature (Elo & Kyrgäs, 2008). The interviews were used to identify language and terms used in practice and facilitated content analysis of the Colorado Collaboration Award applications in Phase 1—Step 2.

Coding was keyed to the study concepts—thoughts on what led to successful collaborations and the eight elements. At the conclusion, the terms and phrases derived from the narratives served two purposes. First, verbiage and terms identified by experts as practitioners were used to review the data in the applications in Phase 1—Step 2. Second, identified terms and verbiage were used as the base of statements developed for the survey as discussed in Phase 2. Finally, the experts provided insight about successful collaborations, including the development of collective identity. The results of this factor analysis were captured in the consistency matrix (Appendix B), and provided data for Research Questions 1 and 2.

Phase 1—Step 2: application data analysis. Applications from the Colorado Collaboration Award process for years 2013 and 2014 were reviewed. The executive director of Colorado Nonprofit Association, the holding agency for the Award process, was provided the overview of this research and asked for access to the database. The executive director approved access and provided the passcode. The applications were accessed via a password for the protected digital database.

There were 90 collaborations that applied for the 2013 or 2014 award. The collaboration receiving the award each year was chosen by a group of volunteer evaluators. Each application was scored on the depth of collaboration, significance of the impact of the work, innovation, ability for replication, effective community engagement, and the meeting of collaboration best practices (Mattessich et al., 2001). Collaborations had members from nonprofits, public and private sectors, and citizens' groups. For example, collaboration award winners included entities focused on the removal of the non-native plant and trees to increase watershed health, and one which provides services for youth and their families at high risk of drug abuse and violence.

For this study, all applications were read initially to understand practices, relationships, and engaged activities. A manual data entry form was developed for the relevant data copied from the narrative portion of the applications ($N = 90$). The application data was processed to identify (a) year formed, (b) name, (c) reason for formation, (d) structure, (e) mission, purpose, and goals, (f) planning, and (g) challenges and opportunities. The categories were required for the Award data. (See Appendix C.)

Selection for an in-depth analysis of the narrative application data was based on the number of years in existence (2–30 years), the number of member organizations (2–40 members), and different types of community needs. A chart was developed with the name of the collaboration, the year of formation, information about the collaboration elements, including collective identity development.

After becoming familiar with the collaborations and their activities, three rules were established to select collaborations to continue to include in the study. These rules required that the selected organizations (a) had a minimum of two and a maximum of 40 partners for interaction with other members, and (b) had been in existence a minimum of two and a maximum of 30 years to ensure historical memory about the development of collective identity. In addition, the selection was shaped by the fact that I did not want only government agencies to be represented. After application of these rules, there were 46 collaborations in the final study group. The final group of collaborations covered a range of topics including energy assistance, health care access, education, land use, and environmental concerns, creating a diversity of issues and problems. Finally, the collaboration locations represented different geographic areas in Colorado. The list of the collaborations can be found in Appendix D.

After identifying the 46 collaborations, content analysis was completed. A table was built to collect terms and words associated or related to each of the elements and the concept of success. The resultant document described the general understanding of the elements by practitioners (Jarvis, 1999). The content analysis identified the words, phrases, and ideas related to the elements. The application data analysis showed evidence of all eight elements of collaboration. These results were combined with the words and terms derived from analysis of the narrative from the interviews with experts (see the Consistency Matrix, Appendix B). The content analysis of the interviews and applications led to the statements for the survey instrument and provided data for Research Question 1.

Phase 2: survey. Phase 2 was the development, administration, and analysis of a survey to members of the coalitions that applied for the Colorado Collaborative Award in 2013 and 2014. The targeted sample for Phase 2 was the 46 collaborations sampled in Phase 1. The collaboration contact members were asked to respond to the survey and forward the survey link to five additional people who were active in their collaboration to create the potential sample size of 276. The actual sample was $n = 58$ with a response rate of 21%.

Phase 2 had three steps. Step 1 was the design of a survey instrument, which included both qualitative and quantitative questions. Survey results addressed Research Questions 2, 3, and 4.

Preliminary statements addressing each element and the concept of success were developed from the Phase 1 narrative words and phrases. There were multiple iterations of the statements and reviews by lay persons and subject matter experts, leading to the final survey statements. The goal was to collect data to measure the eight elements of collaboration as well as

aspects of collaboration success. Additional statements were developed related to perceived collaborative success.

The survey also collected collaborative and respondent demographic data and included open-ended questions. A question about interest in participating in the post-survey focus group was also included in the survey. Following the initial design of the survey instrument, it was reviewed by the members of the Survey Research Group as part of Antioch University's Ph.D. in Leadership and Change program. The survey was revised based on feedback from this review.

After incorporation of the feedback, the next revision was ready for the pretest. People knowledgeable on the collaboration topic were asked to pretest the survey. Each of the selected pre-test respondents had extensive working knowledge of collaboration through his or her work in this area. The survey instrument was revised and finalized based on this feedback (see Appendix E for a copy of the survey instrument).

The final survey instrument contained three or four statements about each element, except for the collective identity concept, a primary focus of this study, which was measured by seven statements. The statements had a 6-point response scale, ranging from *strongly disagree* to *strongly agree*. Several open-ended questions related to perceived success, collective identity, and suggestions for improving their collaborations were placed on the survey to gather data on perceptions of the development of collective identity within the collaborations. Demographic application data was included in the survey database to identify other relationships between variables, such as the age of collaborations, the number of members, and other possible elements for collaboration success. The survey instrument was developed in Survey Monkey®, an electronic and self-administered survey.

Phase 2—Step 2 was the process of distributing the surveys. The surveys were sent out electronically to each collaboration's contact ($n = 46$). The contact participant was asked to fill out the survey and to distribute the Survey Monkey® link to five other participants of the collaboration, based on the perceived active involvement ($n = 58$). Using the Colorado Nonprofit Association's email provided credibility, legitimacy, and support for the project.

Since the participants lived throughout the state of Colorado, electronic delivery of the survey was time and cost effective. Each participant received direction for filling out the survey instrument as part of the survey itself. Participants were asked to complete the survey instrument using the supplied link. Multiple follow-up reminder emails were sent subsequent to the initial email. Phone calls were made to the contact person after three email reminders had been sent.

The risk of participating was minimal, and participants were told they had the option not to fill out the survey. They were also given the Antioch Ph.D. in Leadership and Change IRB representative's contact information as well as an email contact for the researcher.

Phase 2—Step 3 was the analysis of the survey data. The survey data were analyzed with descriptive and multivariate statistics and content analysis of the open-ended question responses.

The descriptive analyses included means, standard deviations, and percentage distributions for the elements, perceived success, and collective identity development. Regression analysis was run using perceived collective identity success, a combination of statements about collective identity and success, as an outcome measure with the average scores across the items for each element of collaboration as independent or explanatory variables.

Content analysis was employed on the open-ended survey data concerning the development of collective identity internal to collaborations. A coding process based on themes

or concepts described in the development of collective identity was developed and used. The results of the survey analysis were used to develop the focus group questions.

Phase 3: focus group. Five participants were selected to join the focus group, based on their willingness to participate as denoted on the survey. The goal of the focus group was to validate, comment on, make meaning, and add insight to the narrative analyses and survey results. After analyzing the survey data, four questions were developed (See Appendix F), and a focus group protocol was designed. The protocol consisted of the questions and focus group process rules to assist with the smooth running of the focus group.

Consent documents were developed, distributed by email or snail mail, and returned signed and dated to the researcher. For ease of attending, the focus group was held via GoToMeeting and taped so transcripts could be generated and observed behavior noted. Due to a scheduling issue, only three respondents could participate in the focus group. Two additional individuals were interviewed, using the same format as the focus group.

Following the end of the focus group and interviews, transcripts were generated. Because the focus group and interviews were taped, it was easy to review for additional input beyond just the words used, such as changes in tone or inflections. Any other behavior was noted as additional input. The transcripts were analyzed for the elements of collaboration, using content analysis particularly related to the development of collective identity. Any behavior or voice change was noted in the context of the words and terms.

Integrated Analysis

After the focus group data were analyzed in Phase 3, an integrated analysis of Phases 1, 2, and 3 data was completed and reported in Chapter IV.

Limitations of the Study

There were limitations to this study. Mixed methods research is difficult due to the need to understand and apply both qualitative and quantitative research. In this study the phases were designed to be sequential and equal. Using mixed methods resulted in a more time consuming study. Since one phase informed the next, it was necessary to complete analyses from each phase before moving on to the next phase. The use of interviews was helpful, yet even with a script there were variations in the responses that may have meaning implications for the analyses. There were some challenges with the recorder, making the member checking more critical for clarity. Chosen quotes for analysis may have a different meaning to the researcher than the interviewee.

The reliability of the survey data is a limitation. The response rate is covered in more detail below. Survey respondents may not have given correct responses because of the nature of the research and the desire to minimize any issues within their collaboration or difficulty with recalling what happened in the past. There were some non-responses to the questions, and more people started the survey than completed it. That may cause possible bias. There may have been some variations in how the respondents understood each question, and the difference between responses, such as strongly agree and agree.

The focus group and interviews also had limitations. The participants were limited to one per collaboration. Twelve out of the 22 respondents who volunteered for the focus groups were from two collaborations, limiting the ability to have only one person per collaboration participate. It was difficult to get people who committed to participate. This difficulty resulted in two individual interviews and one focus group being held and limited the ability to generalize the results.

The participants for this study came from collaborations that had submitted applications for the same award, potentially causing similarities in responses, due to the participants' high interest and award selection criteria. The number of collaborations ($n = 46$) was low compared to the number of possible collaborations that could be surveyed for this study. Of the 46 collaborations in the sample, 20 had one or more members respond to the survey. The number of women was higher than the number of men in nonprofits, creating a possible gender bias. All participants were in Colorado, so the results may not be generalizable to collaborations in other geographic areas. The lag between the application submittal and this study (two to three years) potentially decreased the number of responses and the number of participants who may not remember some of the processes in the survey instrument.

One of this study's limitations was the lack of participation in the survey. Although the coordinating organization for the Colorado Collaboration Award sent out the survey three times, the total participation with the number of collaborations was 43%, or 20 out of 46 collaborations. An incentive for participation was added the third time, resulting in a few additional respondents.

After the third mailing, permission was given to call the contact person. During this process, it was found that several the contact people had left their organizations. There were contact detail errors, but, when possible, the correct information was used. The reasons for non-participation included being too busy, participation in the collaboration only to help apply for the award, and lack of interest. Additional people completed the survey after receiving the phone call or message.

The contact person was asked to send the survey out to five additional people, for a possible $N = 276$. A total of 58 people responded, or 21%. Two collaborations contributed additional respondents ($n = 9$; $n = 17$), 45% of the respondents, skewing the results towards these

two collaborations. This high rate of response from these two collaborations may be indicative of a greater interest in the topic or cohesion between members of these collaborations (Groves, Presser, & Dipko, 2004).

The survey participation rates may be indicative of the fluid and temporary nature of interorganizational collaborations (Dibble & Gibson, 2013). As Huxham and Vangen (2005) observed, collaborations are complex and formed around short term goals. If the group formed around the application for the award, there is a higher probability of lower participation. Since the respondents came from collaborations that applied in 2013 and 2014, there was also a possibility of people leaving collaborations, or the disbanding of collaborations. Even though a Google search was conducted on the name of the collaborations, it was difficult to ascertain which were active or disbanded due to attainment of the goal or lack of participation. The Colorado Collaboration Award was discontinued in 2015 after the steering committee determined the goal to increase the profile of nonprofit collaboration was met.

Chapter IV: Research Findings and Results

Chapter IV presents the results of this mixed methods research study. The guiding research problem focused on which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success.

The objective of this study was to address these four research questions:

1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts?
2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?
3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success?
4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success?

The data for this research were collected sequentially in three phases, as discussed in Chapter III, and depicted in Figure 3.1. This chapter describes the study respondents and the findings and results for each research question. An integrated analysis follows the phase-by-phase discussion.

Respondents

The respondents for each phase of this study were experts in collaboration or members of collaborations that applied for the Colorado Collaboration Award in 2013 or 2014.

Phase 1—Interviews and Colorado Collaboration Award applications. Phase 1 consisted of a content analysis of Colorado Collaboration Award application information and three interviews with experts in collaborations. All three experts interviewed for this study were

male, and had been active in the collaboration field for many years, either as consultants providing guidance to multiple groups or as members of collaborations. Questions were created for the survey instrument from the literature review, application narratives, and interviews to assess the level of agreement or disagreement for the elements of collaboration and perceived success.

Phase 2—Survey respondent demographics. A total of 58 participants responded to the majority of questions in the Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration Survey. Table 4.1 shows the distribution of respondents and non-respondents for key collaboration selection criteria. The majority (67%) of the collaborations contained 6–20 partners. Responding and nonresponding collaborations had a similar distribution for number of partners. Almost three-fourths (72%) of the collaborations started working together between the years 2008 and 2011. Responding and nonresponding collaborations had a similar distribution for the year the collaboration began. The majority (70%) of collaborations included partners from nonprofit, government, private, and other types of organizations. Survey respondents were more likely (80%) than nonrespondents (61%) to include the wide mix of nonprofit, government, private, and other types of organizations in their collaboratives.

Table 4.1

Collaboration Respondent and Non-Respondent Characteristics Frequency and Percentage Distributions for All, Respondent, and Non-Respondent Collaborations

Variable	Total N = 46	Respondent N = 20	Non-Respondent N = 26
Number of Partners in Collaboration			
<= 5	9 (20%)	4 (20%)	5 (19%)
6–10	20 (43%)	9 (45%)	11 (42%)
11–20	11(24%)	5 (25%)	6 (23%)
21+	6 (13%)	2 (10%)	4 (15%)
Year started for Collaboration			
2012 and after	3 (7%)	2 (10%)	1 (4%)
2008–2011	33 (72%)	14 (70%)	19 (73%)
Before 2008	10 (22%)	4 (20%)	6 (23%)
Type of Partners			
Nonprofit	4 (9%)	1(5%)	3 (12%)
Nonprofit + Government	7 (15%)	1 (5%)	6 (23%)
Nonprofit + Private/Corporate	3 (7%)	2(10%)	1(4%)
Nonprofit + Government + Private/Other	32 (70%)	16 (80%)	16 (61%)

Phase 2—Survey respondents’ demographics. Survey respondents self-reported that 82% felt they were *fairly* or *strongly active* in their collaboration. The majority (71%) of the respondents were women. A high 88% were 35 years of age or older. Most (72%) respondents had advanced degrees, with 52% masters, 6% professional, and 14% doctorate degrees. (See Table 4.2)

Table 4.2

Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Survey Participant Demographics (N = 49)

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	35	71.43%
	Male	14	28.57%
Age Range in Years	Under 35	6	12.24%
	35–50	22	44.90%
	Over 50	21	42.86%
Education Level	Some college or technical training	2	4.08%
	Bachelor's degree	12	24.49%
	Master's degree	25	51.02%
	Professional degree	3	6.12%
	Doctorate degree	7	14.29%

Phase 3—Focus group respondent description. Five respondents from different collaborations participated in the focus group and the two individual interviews: three women and two men. One male represented the collaboration that won the 2014 Colorado Collaboration Award. This collaboration also had the largest number of survey respondents ($N = 17$). The second man represented a disbanded collaboration, which did not participate in the Elements of Interorganizational Survey. Two of the women participating were in collaborations in existence over ten years. The discussion of the study results for each research question is based on the findings from each phase, followed by a summary of the findings.

Findings

Research Question 1: What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts? The first research question was explored in Phase 1 of the study. In this phase narrative content analysis was completed on the 46 collaboration award applications and three interviews with collaboration experts. The themes identified to each of the eight elements of collaborations are described below.

Committed members. There was evidence of committed members in the narratives of the applications and the interviews. Three themes related to committed members identified from the application and interview narrative were (a) inclusion of stakeholders, (b) willingness to work together, and (c) active engagement.

Inclusion of stakeholders. The first theme for committed members is inclusion of stakeholders. Applications contained statements about how the key collaboration members were selected. For example, some of these statements were:

Key stakeholders were involved in the formation of the collaboration.

Our collaboration brings together key players [and] is successful in addressing a shared concern.

As I've been looking at this, the skills of the members coming into the collaboration I think are making a bigger difference.

Flexible in approach and targeted on mutually identified needs.

The members all brought a strong commitment to the spirit of collaboration. In addition, they were committed to working toward a mission beyond their normal scope and that would result in positive collective impact.

Willing to work together. Another committed-member theme consisted of participants being willing to work together with others “who are in line with common goals.” This appears as equal status, standing, or vote for each member. One collaboration wrote in their application how this equal vote was built into the structure.

The Executive Committee (EC) serves as the management structure and is comprised of one consistent representative member from each partner agency. Each member agency has one vote in the collaborative.

One collaboration built the idea, willing to work together, into the process through only accepting members with common goals.

It is agreed that only entities sharing similar goals and ones which are considered by the current groups involved to be compatible matches for the whole, who wish to actively engage in the mission, and who are in line with common goals, will be considered for long-term, on-going involvement in the collaborative.

A different application stated that “Several community leaders agreed to spearhead the effort with strong partnership and collaboration from the community.”

Active engagement. The last committed member theme was concerned with the actions of the participants. The people who choose to be part of the collaboration needed to be engaged in the work, and needed to demonstrate their active engagement through participation. For example, collaboration applications stated their members were those “who wish[ed] to actively engage in the mission” or for whom “hard work and dedication [were] also key,” or that “look not only at the number of organizations involved, but the degree of engagement, . . . and willingness to track and share results.”

Other respondents described the relationship between members. “We became a very cohesive group.”

We have members who would otherwise be perceived as on opposite sides of political issues involving education, but during our meetings there was no disagreement. All minds were focused on our mission. . . . We have no one who retreats completely.

With committed members in place, the collaboration can work through the other elements.

The following statements were created for the Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey instrument based on the narrative related to committed members in the applications and interviews:

- We were strongly committed to the same mission;
- We were actively engaged in the work of our collaboration; and
- We were willing to work together to meet the goals of our collaboration.

Time. The next element was time, with the primary focus on the large amount of time required for effective collaborations. This includes the time for members to know each other, and build relationships. Time is essential to build trust and work through the challenges. Because building and sustaining a collaboration is so time-consuming, the benefit should outweigh the cost and the time.

One of the interviewees discussed time as a requirement for success, stating he thought it takes a long time to build those relationships and collaborations. One of the groups pointed out that collaborations take more time than individual efforts. Yet another group shared that while the time was long, putting the time into the collaboration was rewarding. “Collaborative endeavors, though often more robust, can take more time than individual agency efforts.”

As an example, one interviewee spoke to time needed for outcomes to complex issues.

If the kinds of problems, you’re trying to solve are so complex and so overarching in terms of their effect and sweep that it takes time and we can’t put efficiency as the first criteria for assessing our work because efficiency and effectiveness rarely occur at high levels at the same time.

A different interviewee discussed the effective nature of collaborations.

You’re never going to be efficient in a collaborative early. They don’t work that way. Collaboratives[feel] inefficient . . . They’re more effective based . . . It takes face time and additional time.

Time is required for the development of trust between collaboration participants and the larger community. “In time, stakeholders saw how the . . . trust resulted in community buy-in, which led to long-term support.” “Overcoming the trust issues has been a slow but very rewarding process.”

The following statements were created for the survey instrument:

- Our collaboration took the time needed to build relationships with each other;
- We all gave the time needed for the work of our collaboration; and

- The benefits of this collaboration were worth the time.

Resources. The next element was resources, where the primary focus of the application and interview narrative was that collaborations provide for better utilization of resources.

This collaboration was innovative and unique because it provided a method for avoiding duplication of work and as a result was able to use more funding for the purpose of the project and less funding for management and administration in which each brought resources, talent, energy and commitment to the project.

The strengths of each of the organizations combines in this collaboration to allow resources to be used in the most effective way and helps each organization serve more individuals, customizing the services to meet needs.

An illustration was offered by an interviewee who agreed with resources utilization.

The smaller counties made more progress because in order to survive and resources scarcity, they needed to collaborate.

One collaboration stated that joint resources supported their holistic approach.

We also are unique because the five independent not-for-profit partners agreed to share resources to create a joint marketing and development plan. This approach affirmed our goal of "having the whole be greater than the sum of its parts."

Based on the comments, better utilization of resources may take the form of eliminating duplication, shared funding, or more effective practices. The following statements were created for the survey instrument:

- We effectively pooled our resources to meet collective goals;
- We identified the resources each member could bring to our collective efforts; and
- We identified community partners that could contribute for the collaboration's use.

Communication. The next element was communication. Communication is the glue that holds collaborations together. For this element, three themes emerged: (a) respectful and honest communication; (b) conflict resolution and civility; and (c) consistent and continual communication.

Respectful and honest communication. The first theme for communication was respectful and honest communication between the members of the group. One group pointed out how respectful discussions led to meeting the overall goals while another group offered how an open discussion helped with quality proposals.

As with any successful partnership it is important to maintain honest and transparent communications at all levels of the organizations.

Consensus is achieved through broad and open discussion among all members of the pros and cons of any proposal.

Conflict resolution and civility. The second communication theme was how conflict was resolved with civility. An important part of communication is how disputes that inevitably occur between the members are resolved.

Decisions are made by consensus amongst stakeholders and when creative differences arise the decision ultimately is made through a shared conversation where calculated choices can be made to change the outcome, turning conflict into a long-lasting resolution.

One interviewee provided a perspective about dialogue, disagreement, and safety.

Dialogue and acceptance of dialogue among the participants surfaced. Engagement and working through differences happened. People were valued for the disagreements, and those disagreements were worked in to the betterment of the options. There was a level of safety where people could speak up.

Consistent and continual communication. Consistent and continual communication is underscored by statements from the applications and is the last theme for communication. Communication holds the collaboration together by providing the informal structure and socially sustained boundary to work within.

The primary execution point is through communication. We have developed the tools to bring together the collaborative bodies in a variety of ways. The Roundtable brings them together in person at the monthly meeting, and daily via the online resources. We have a website we use to high effect, and a Facebook page where we post and share information from the [collaboration] and the partners in each collaboration.

Having annual meetings with the members performing the analysis provided additional benefit, according to an interviewee.

Look at data, yearly collaborative process analysis completed by participants, plus building relationships, seeing positive and mutual goal setting and work[ing] better together including participating parties participating in dialogues that heretofore would not have happened.

The Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey statements were:

- We were able to talk about different perspectives in a constructive manner.
- We encouraged open, honest, and respectful discussions during our meetings.
- We used active listening to help us resolve disagreements.
- We worked hard to resolve conflicts.

Trust. The next element was trust, which builds over time. Trusting the actions and behaviors of the other members is fundamental to collaboration. Trust was defined using two themes: (a) trust in the relationships, and (b) trust in the process.

Trust in the relationships. Trust is critical in collaborations, since the members are held together by relationships, not organizational structure. One interviewee shared how trust expanded from their collaboration into the community, while another pointed out the importance of trust in the beginning of the process.

Community efforts internally required an evolution of trust built over many months of meetings. From there, the trust-building had to expand to the community.

the trust . . . ties in quality relationships up front, that everybody has the same ability to state what the goals are and that they're on the same page.

Speaking about a specific group to make the point, an interviewee shared this:

So they are a very gelled group. She realizes the strength in her team and she trusts them and they trust her. So, there's a high level of trust in that team.

Trust in the process. The second theme of trust confirms its important role in the process.

When processes were constructed, some participants pointed out trust was possible. It may be confidentiality agreements, or the attention to detail that allowed the emergence of trust.

Although what at times seemed to be an extensive exercise in detail work and at times unnecessary discussions, what resulted was a strong foundation to grow the collaboration.

Varied confidentiality rules & funding are big challenges & constant assessment to build trust has helped overcome them.

The following statements were crafted for the survey instrument:

- We built a high level of trust.
- We each trusted most members of our collaboration.
- We trusted each other's ability to contribute to the collaboration.

Shared goals. The next element was shared goals, with the focus on the importance of the shared goals for all stakeholders. Some of the application statements relayed the shared goal as the vehicle or starting position to provide focus for the members.

. . . staying focused on our goals and shared vision.

The collaboration has very focused goals and the participants are involved in designing the critical components of the MOU and have input at that time.

This collaboration is structured around shared values and goals.

Some interviewee statements contained ideas how shared goals created a bigger outcome for the community.

[T]he reason[s] we emphasize “for the good of all” as central to collaboration is that it can’t just be about one’s own self-interest alone; that it has to be about something larger than oneself.

Partners had to come to terms with working toward a mission beyond their normal scope, but would result in positive collective impact.

Other statements discussed how the shared goal was created within their group, resulting in the commitment or positive outcomes.

The challenge of crafting goals that resonated with a broad set of stakeholders was overcome with collaborative development of the [action plan], ... which outlines a shared vision and set of goals for restoration.

The [collaboration] was set up to develop a common vision about how to manage the landscape with citizen partners and work together to achieve goals.

The application and interviewee data contained evidence of shared goals. The following statements were crafted:

- We worked toward shared goals;
- We set goals together; and
- We all worked together to achieve the vision we shared.

Defined process. Another element was defined process. The defined process provides the temporary structure in which the collaboration can operate, with a focus on formal processes.

There were identified facets to defined process, such as defining decision-making processes, and the use of agendas.

Some applicants described the formal process for the collaboration, including meeting structure, formal agreements, voting processes, agendas, and artifacts, such as meeting minutes.

Meets and communicates regularly with all collaborators. An annual all-city meeting tackles larger decisions, such as program structure, improvements, and innovation. An agenda is circulated prior to the annual meeting; all collaborators can suggest additional topics; decisions are discussed by all collaborators, and final decisions are implemented through the subsequent MOUs.

Building the infrastructure, a formal process, allows the members to take the necessary time for challenging problems, requiring a long-term approach. Without the infrastructure, results and outcomes suffer.

Our organizational learning curve is understanding the vital importance of long-term execution versus shorter collaborations. But what they held constant in that study was the infrastructure was there for the follow through once the commitment was built. Even with a successful transfer of commitment, if you build these leaky systems of collaborative execution, you will never see the net results of that early commitment because it will just leak out.

Having a focus on the common goal allows the flexibility to work on the process, according to one of the interviewees. Another participant pointed out the process assisted with uncertainty.

Working together with a systematic approach to the work at hand, with mutual accountability, decision making, and mutual planning.

Constantly returning to the shared purpose of the group. Also, we try to lay out manageable chunks of decisions . . . wrestle with the uncertainties and the risks and the confusion but bracketing it enough that it stays within a tolerable range.

The following survey statements were crafted for defined processes:

- We had commonly understood clear processes working toward our goals.
- We used consistent decision-making processes to accomplish our work.
- The process we used to make decisions was effective.
- We set up certain practices like introductions, meeting agendas, time limits, and notetaking.

Collective identity. There was evidence in the applications and interviews demonstrating the change in the group to a collective identity. The language included the benefit for the community and the organizations, building shared accountability, and working together as a committed group. Three themes emerged: (a) greater than the individual, (b) positive benefits from participating, and (c) group cohesion.

Greater than the individual. The first theme of collective identity identified the possibilities working with the other members. Statements from the application data were clear about the benefit of creating something shared by the members, with greater returns for their communities. Words like valuable, wonderful, and great were used.

A valuable model because it shows the potential of collective impact when a formal, cross-sector partnership emphasizes shared responsibility, inter-organizational accountability, and student outcomes.

Positive benefits from participating. The second theme of collective identity included the benefits. Several groups discussed the benefits to the community because of the collaborative efforts. One interviewee commented about the real community impact that occurs with collective identity, leading to collective impact.

When organizations & individuals collaborate & form partnerships for the benefit of their community, great things happen. This project is an example of great things happening for [the] County.

A wonderful benefit for all the groups has evolved as a result of the project, as we share ideas for performances and seasons and discuss possibilities for additional collaborations.

I think for collaboratives when they can see that their work truly has made a difference. But without not only collective identity, but what I'll call collective impact, ... but there's probably more success you haven't even accounted for and that's back to collective impact.

Group cohesion. The third theme for collective identity demonstrated the unity of the group members. The change to collective identity was evident, with statements discussing collaboration over agency needs, overcoming historical barriers, and development of group cohesion.

One of [the]...Program's biggest strengths is the complete equality of all agency partners; being a small group of key personnel...allows for a close-knit group of people who put aside their own agency needs to make sure the collaboration is successful.

The most significant challenge to starting [the collaboration] included overcoming historical differences and geographic boundaries that discouraged collective action and coordination. [The] leadership team helped overcome these barriers by offering opportunities for small wins that slowly brought partners into believing in the power of [it's] work.

The following collective identity statements for the survey instrument were crafted using all this information:

- We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.

- We became a very cohesive group.
- In our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.
- We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own.
- Our collaboration had positive name recognition in our community.
- We have a sense of pride about belonging to this collaboration.
- We all felt great personal satisfaction from being part of this collaboration.

Summary for Research Question 1. Each element was originally found and defined through the literature review. Evidence for each of the elements was found in both the application and interview data, and sub-themes were identified for most of the elements. Survey statements were developed based on the themes that emerged from the narrative application and interview data. Evidence from the applications and interviews supported the importance of each of the elements.

Research Question 2: How do study participants describe successful collaborations?

The second research question was explored in all three phases of the study. In Phase 1, narrative analysis was completed on the application, and experts interviewed data to derive themes on how successful collaborations are described. In Phase 2, survey data using both quantitative and narrative questions addressing the issue of success were collected and respondents' perception of success was measured by level of agreement or disagreement to the "success" statements. In Phase 3, focus group and interview respondents shared the impact their collaboration had in their community.

Phase 1—Qualitative narrative application and expert interviews findings related to the survey statements for successful collaboration. During the narrative analysis, the statements from the applications and interviews were analyzed, and themes emerged that informed the development of four survey statements relating to the meaning of success for the collaborations.

The respondents' view on success in collaborations was based on self-perceptions (the definition was not provided for them). The statements about success followed from the themes derived from participants' narratives about successful collaboration.

Survey Success Statement 1: Overall, our collaboration is successful. The application and interview data demonstrated how collaborations have been successful, and discussed it in terms of outcomes. A member of one group provided an example related to funding and legislation.

The Project has been outstanding in its ability to gain legislative support and leverage state funding to develop strong regional leadership including rural communities; few states have been successful in building a truly statewide effort.

Other respondents focused on the outcomes for their communities.

This collaboration . . . has been highly successful with over 90% of respondents remaining housed, post participation.

Survey Success Statement 2: Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals. Some collaborations discussed achievement of goals as part of their process. Goals were achieved when members participated in their collaborations, shared work, small wins, experienced great results, and gave service to their community.

The goals of the . . . lead organization are simple: to forward the initiatives, contribute to trail efforts of all kinds, support member user groups, and assist land managers.

I think the most common way is for people to tell anecdotal success stories of events or small wins that have an emotional impact, some kind of tangible thing. So, it might be that the group got together and they got a grant together and that's something they celebrate. Or a great turnout at an event, that was jointly planned. I think that's by far the most common way people describe success.

Survey Success Statement 3: Our collaboration achieved more than we could have achieved individually. Within the application data, examples were found about the higher achievement connected to shared goals and efforts. The achievements were accomplished because of the strengths, abilities, talent, and skills collected within one group, anchored by a shared goal.

This collaboration was formed because each partner had strengths and barriers that could be brought together to allow both to meet their goals. This collaboration is structured around shared values and goals.

The interview data contained a similar theme about the power and alignment of the members becoming a cohesive group. Some selections from the interviews are offered to demonstrate what happens with committed members and shared goals.

The collective skills talent and, effort is inevitably more powerful than an individual organization's efforts.

"We have this project [that]we're working on, is a good example. They've kind of combined a number of separate initiatives and they've increasingly built strong ties amongst their core group . . . that they've build a larger identity that is bigger than any one of their initiatives.

Survey Success Statement 4: In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together. The application data spoke to great outcomes, such as working with different collaboration partners and boundaries. The words told the stories about the participants building something wonderful together, with terms such as future, remarkable, unique, and marriage.

One member opined the positive effects provided to the community by their collaboration now and in the future because of relationships.

Indeed, through constant communication and good working relationships, partners support each other at a remarkable level over a vast and remote spatial scale and across historically rigid jurisdictional boundaries.

One of the interviewees had this last thought about building something wonderful, complex, and adaptive:

Collaboration is like jazz improvisation that occurs when people know each other and can improvise in a sweet way, with a fantastic outcome!

In conclusion, there were expressions related to perceived success in both the application and interview data. The evidence was used to create the four survey statements, as discussed.

Phase 2: Quantitative and qualitative survey results related to success. The Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey contained four closed-ended content questions and one open-ended question pertaining specifically to perceived success. (See Appendix E.)

Respondents' perception of success was measured by level of agreement or disagreement to the "success" statements. First the descriptive statistics results on perceived success are shown (see Table 4.3) and explained, followed by the qualitative results from the open-ended survey question related to success.

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Perceived Success

Statements <i>N</i> = 49	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, our collaboration was successful.	5.24	1.07	0.0%	4.1%	4.1%	10.2%	26.5%	55.1%
Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals.	5.0	1.12	0.0%	4.1%	6.1%	18.4%	28.6%	42.9%
We built strong relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.	5.39	1.08	0.0%	4.1%	2.0%	8.2%	22.4%	63.3%
In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.	5.29	1.00	0.0%	4.1%	2.0%	8.2%	32.7%	53.1%

Table 4.3 shows that the majority (82%) of the respondents agreed their collaboration was successful (55 % *strongly agreed* and 26 % *agreed*) and that 72% agreed their collaboration successfully achieved its goals (43% *strongly agree* and 29% *agree*). In regards to building strong, successful relationships that positively benefited the community, the majority (85%) of respondents agreed (63% *strongly agree* and 22 % *agree*), and despite differences, they (86%) built something wonderful together (53 % *strongly agree*, and 33% *agree*).

Many respondents ($N = 37$) took the opportunity to write comments for the question “How would you describe what success looked like for your collaboration?” Some of the survey respondents discussed success in terms of growth in their programming, number of people served, and their contributions to their communities.

We still are the only county in the state with 100% of our primary care providers and licensed child care providers using the same developmental screening...And we have created an amazing app that is tracking data to benefit children individually and the system.

Another respondent wrote about the contributions to the collaboration and the commitment to one another.

Each partner contribute[d] what they could to projects, whether that was money, staff time, equipment, a facility, etc. Applying for grants together. Being committed to monitoring to ensure effectiveness and the ability to learn from what we've done and apply that to future projects. We're like family.

A third respondent discussed the social infrastructure created as an outcome of the collaboration.

We are still working together, trying to answer the hard questions of whether we are having success ecologically. However, in terms of a social infrastructure we have created a group of highly functioning team members and relationships that will be long lasting. We have tangible results including creating jobs and opportunities for community members that would not have been there if it weren't for this group.

The need for more funding to accomplish the set goals was identified by several of the respondents. Funding is a huge resource need for a collaboration. Although sometimes the

committed members are instrumental in providing the funding, the narrative offered in this study showed the needed funding was external to the collaboration.

More financial resources—both for the general organization (including marketing our successes) along with additional funding to continue the success of the Partnership. Funding is always needed and we continue to seek grant funding from a multitude of funding partners (including [funders], foundations and others).

Dedicated and sustainable funding to support the infrastructure; outside funding would have further given the Team recognition, which would have helped the internal recognition.

One of the challenges was the competing priorities discussed above. Not having a collective identity or shared goal negatively impacted one group's ability to be successful.

Maintaining community focus vs. member focus.

In the case of [these]like organizations came to the table and jealousy and competition reared its ugly head, which led to personality conflicts that handcuffed the group's ability to serve the community.

I think setting specific goals, even if those were term limited, would have benefitted the overall work of the team.

Another challenge that was mentioned was the lack of a formal or informal decision making process.

Sometimes I've wondered if we could use more structure in our decision-making.

Phase 3: Focus group. The Phase 3 focus group and individual respondents had many observations about success in collaborations. Their responses ranged from the impact on the community, becoming a community resource, and influence on the outcome of the goal. The results showed success was tied to community impact, or what the groups had collectively been able to accomplish; that is, success was linked to the themes of having impact greater than the individual organization, building something great despite differences, and providing outcomes for the community.

One of the respondents discussed the credibility her group had gained because of the work done.

So if the county commissioners are talking about early childhood, they ask me to come to the table as their technical expert. . . . So, we are the backbone of the collective impact. And the county commissioners here have our framework on their bulletin board. They look at it, they say that, that's what we do.

Another participant discussed the long-time horizon for goal completion, and the stories the group needs to tell about their success.

I would say that we had a tremendous impact and I would say that we did achieve, we didn't achieve the goals, but we really moved the needle. So, I think our goal was to eradicate unplanned teen pregnancies, which I'm not sure that will ever be achieved. But a lot of the collaboration really worked to move, I think, the work that's happened in Colorado. We've put in so many infrastructures, we've worked to pass state legislation.

The role of committed members is seen in the ability to bring people from different organizations together to create a wonderful outcome, and work through challenges and conflict.

I'm talking from my own experience as a participant, sort-of amazed and joyful a collaboration is when you know that the people you're collaborating with are different than you. It's much easier to have a collaboration and work on a team where there's a consistency of thought and experience and style but there's this delight in having a successful collaboration when you know that the group together is different and they're bringing together differences.

I think the things that we maybe disagreed on were more kind of political issues. So, if one organization was really going for that on a certain issue, they would kind of bring it to the table and say, like, hey, this still is coming up, we need to have our position or whatever... And it was a little bit heated at certain meetings, because we would all be at the same meetings, and we all knew, you know, what certain people had done to try to push their organization's agenda But ultimately, we kept coming back to the fact that we're all here for this reason, and so let's put that aside we really want to focus on what our successes are and where we can work together, to try and really separate those pieces out, call them for what they are, and move on.

Research Question 2 summary. There was evidence of success found in the narratives from the applications and the expert interviews. The survey results showed that the majority of the respondents agreed their collaboration was successful and successfully achieved its goals. The qualitative responses in the Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey showed

success varied from community contributions, small successes, inclusion, resources, tangible results, and having the members support a shared goal. Impediments to success included the need for a shared goal, more defined process, resources (funding), and having limited choices.

The analysis of the application and experts' interviews resulted in the Elements of Successful Interorganizational Collaboration survey statements:

- Overall, our collaboration is a success.
- Our collaboration successfully achieved its goals.
- We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.
- In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.

Research Question 3: What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success? The survey respondents provided insight about the collaboration elements influencing the perception of collective identity and success in both the qualitative and quantitative analysis of the survey data. Themes were identified, descriptive statistics were used to summarize and describe the data. Factor analysis was completed, followed by bivariate correlation and linear regression analysis.

Phase 1—Elements of interorganizational collaboration survey qualitative data. Survey respondents were asked “How would you describe the teamwork that developed within your collaboration?” Asking about teamwork was used as a substitute for collective identity, as a familiar term for the construct. A narrative analysis of responses found themes concerning what influenced the perception of collective identity. Integrated narratives captured themes about how committed members, resources, communication, shared goals, defined process, and trust related to collective identity and success.

We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration. Several of the respondents offered thoughts about the value of breaking down boundaries through the work. This achievement took time, communication, and celebrating small wins.

Our collaborative is overcoming the barriers that have been in place by state and local governing agencies.

The most significant challenge to starting [the group] included overcoming historical differences and geographic boundaries that discouraged collective action and coordination. [The] leadership team helped overcome these barriers by offering opportunities for small wins that slowly brought partners into believing.

Having a process with defined goals provided some structure to move forward. The existence of a defined process, with a shared goal provided the ingredients for success.

We were committed to that [goal], so we'd think creatively and work together to achieve that mission . . . Having a nonprofit that convenes monthly meetings, provides communication, keeps people on task, etc. is critical to our success.

I would say that many key partners went above and beyond to assure consistent momentum was achieved towards partnership goals.

Meeting the shared goals that we have identified and exploring new opportunities to maximize the mechanism of the partnership.

We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own. The use of resources, both expertise and funding, was offered. The need to have clear communication about funding posed the thought of its importance.

We have a variety of expertise and resources within the partnership and entities making up the partnership share what they have to contribute (funding, knowledge, expertise, opinions) respectfully and openly. This collaboration clearly shares and provides what it has to offer and that makes me feel very positively about the collaboration overall.

Communication is clear around funding, where work happens.

In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together. Having a relationship based on trust provided a successful outcome.

It was all based on trust. We are all respectful of each other (and our organization's) perspectives. The outcome is highly successful on-the-ground results. We are learning from our mistakes and feel okay discussing them with the group so that we can learn.

As we do this more and see the positive results, it begets more trust for future collaboration.

Challenges for success. Even with good teamwork, when priorities changed, there were difficulties with collaboration. There were also some challenges to the teamwork or collective identity identified in the narratives. One respondent discussed how lack of funding created challenges, through disengagement by members and changing priorities, while others shared difficulties in funding distribution.

The teamwork was good and members were all very congenial. The state agencies had varying levels of priority on this issue so that would sometimes impact our momentum ... due to funding and changing priorities within the agency.

The big challenge was leadership in both organizations not agreeing on who should provide which service, who should have certain dollars.

Collective identity and perceived success were fostered through the breakdown of traditional boundaries while having defined goals to continue the progress. Group cohesion was viewed as a measure of creating a greater collective impact. Even when there were differences between the members, amazing outcomes were created through the work. Difficulties, such as changed priorities, lack of funding, and member disengagement, were barriers to collective identity and perceived success.

Phase 2—Survey. Quantitative analysis. Descriptive statistics were calculated for each of the elements from the results of the Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey and depicted in Tables 4.4 to 4.13.

Committed members. The importance of committed members was established in the application narrative and expert interviews. Survey respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement to the three committed member statements about connecting to the

mission, active engagement, and willingness to work together. The majority (89%) of the respondents agreed that the members were strongly committed to the same mission (56% *strongly agree* and 33% *agree*) and were actively engaged (86%) in the work of the collaboration (60% *strongly agree* and 26% *agree*). The majority (89%) agreed they were willing to work together to meet the goals of the collaboration (61% *strongly agree* and 28% *agree*). (See Table 4.4.)

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Committed Members

Statements <i>N</i> = 57	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We are strongly committed to the same mission.	5.35	0.99	0.0%	5.3%	0.0%	5.3%	33.3%	56.1%
We are actively engaged in the work of our collaboration.	5.37	0.98	0.0%	3.5%	1.8%	8.8%	26.3%	59.6%
We are willing to work together to meet the goals of our collaboration.	5.37	1.08	0.0%	7.0%	0.0%	3.5%	28.1%	61.4%

Time. Another important element for collaboration is time. Survey respondents indicated their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the time statements. The majority (80%) of the respondents agreed they took the time needed to build relationships with each other (37% *strongly agree* and 43% *agree*) and that they gave the time needed for the work of the collaboration (68%, with 30% *strongly agree* and 38% *agree*). When asked if the time required

was worth the benefits, the majority of the respondents (86%) agreed (52% *strongly agree* and 34% *agree*). (See Table 4.5.)

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Time

Statements N = 56	M	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our collaboration took the time needed to build relationships with each other.	5.05	1.03	0.0%	5.4%	4.8%	12.5%	42.9%	37.5%
We all gave the time needed for the work of our collaboration.	4.80	1.17	1.8%	5.4%	1.8%	23.2%	37.5%	30.4%
The benefits of this collaboration were worth the time.	5.23	1.11	1.8%	3.6%	1.8%	7.1%	33.9%	51.8%

Resources. The importance of adequate resources was well established in the literature, and through expert interviews, combining resources is sometimes a reason for forming the collaboration. The survey respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the resources statements. The majority (64%) of the respondents agreed they effectively pooled resources to meet their collective goals (43% *strongly agree* and 24% *agree*) and that they identified the resources each member could bring to their collective efforts (70% with 39% *strongly agree* and 31% *agree*). The majority (70%) agreed that they identified community partners that could contribute resources for the collaboration's use (48% *strongly agree* and 26% *agree*). (See Table 4.6.)

Table 4.6

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Resources

Statements <i>N</i> = 54	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We effectively pooled our resources to meet collective goals.	4.87	1.27	0.0%	9.5%	3.7%	20.4%	24.1%	42.6%
We identified the resources each member could bring to our collective efforts.	4.90	1.19	0.0%	7.4%	3.7%	18.5%	31.5%	38.9%
We identified community partners that could contribute resources for the collaboration's use.	5.13	1.05	0.0%	3.7%	1.9%	20.4%	25.9%	48.1%

Communication. The importance of communication was established in the literature and through expert interviews. The survey respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement or disagreement with the ability of the group to be constructive when discussing differences, the open and honest communication between members, the role of active listening in disputes, and how hard the group worked to resolve conflict. The majority (80%) agreed that they could talk about different perspectives in a constructive manner (33% *strongly agree* and 47% *agree*) and that they encouraged open, honest, and respectful discussions during their meetings (84% with 47% *strongly agree* and 37% *agree*). The majority (74%) of the respondents also agreed that they used active listening to help resolve disagreements (33% *strongly agree* and

41% agree), and that the members worked hard to resolve conflicts (80%, with 35% strongly agree and 45% agree). (See Table 4.7.)

Table 4.7

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Communication

Statements N = 51	M	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We were able to talk about different perspectives in a constructive manner.	5.00	1.04	0.0%	5.9%	2.0%	11.8%	46.1%	33.3%
We encouraged open, honest, and respectful discussions during our meetings.	5.18	1.09	2.0%	2.0%	3.9%	7.8%	37.3%	47.1%
We used active listening to help resolve disagreements.	4.96	1.02	0.0%	3.9%	3.9%	17.6%	41.2%	33.3%
We worked hard to resolve conflicts.	5.06	0.95	0.0%	2.0%	5.9%	11.8%	45.1%	35.3%

Trust. The importance of trust in collaborations was established in the literature and through expert interviews. The survey respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement or disagreement about whether they built a high level of trust, members trusted one another, and they trusted each other's ability to contribute. The majority (84%) agreed they built a high level of trust (44% strongly agree and 40% agree), and the majority (80%) agreed that they trusted most members of the collaboration (56% strongly agree and 24% agree). The majority (78%) of respondents also agreed they trusted the ability of members to contribute (40% strongly agree and 38% agree). (See Table 4.8.)

Table 4.8

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Trust

Statements N = 50	M	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We built a high level of trust.	5.32	0.91	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	6.0%	36.0%	52.0%
We each trusted most members of our collaboration.	5.22	0.95	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	12.0%	38.0%	46.0%
We trusted each other's ability to contribute to the collaboration.	5.22	1.02	0.0%	4.0%	2.0%	12.0%	32.0%	50.0%

Shared goals. The importance of having a shared goal or goals in the collaboration was established in the literature and through expert interviews. The survey respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement or disagreement with whether goals were shared, goals developed by the members, and how the members worked together to achieve the goal. The majority of the respondents (88%) agreed that they worked toward shared goals (52% *strongly agree* and 36% *agree*), and the members set the goals together (84%, with 46% *strongly agree* and 38% *agree*). The majority (82%) agreed the members were working together to achieve the shared vision (50% *strongly agree* and 32% *agree*). (See Table 4.9.)

Table 4.9

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Shared Goals

Statements <i>N</i> = 50	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agreed
We worked toward shared goals.	5.32	0.91	0.0%	2.0%	4.0%	6.0%	36.0%	52.0%
We set goals together.	5.22	0.95	0.0%	4.0%	0.0%	12.0%	38.0%	46.0%
We all worked together to achieve the vision we shared.	5.22	1.02	0.0%	4.0%	2.0%	12.0%	32.0%	50.0%

Defined process. The importance of a defined process was established in the literature and through expert interviews. The survey respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement or disagreement about the existence of commonly understood processes. The majority (58%) agreed that they had commonly understood clear processes for working toward their goals (16% *strongly agree* and 42% *agree*), and consistent decision making practices were used to accomplish the work (66%, with 20% *strongly agree* and 46% *agree*). The majority (74%) agreed the decision-making processes they used was effective (52% *strongly agree* and 22% *agree*). The majority (82%) agreed they set up routine meeting management practices (42% *strongly agree* and 40% *agree*). (See Table 4.10.)

Table 4.10

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Defined Process

Statements N = 50	M	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We had commonly understood clear processes for working toward our goals.	4.62	0.95	0.0%	4.0%	4.0%	34.0%	42.0%	16.0%
We used consistent decision-making processes to accomplish our work.	4.70	1.02	0.0%	4.0%	8.0%	22.0%	46.0%	20.0%
The process we used to make decisions was effective.	4.84	0.96	0.0%	4.0%	4.0%	18.0%	52.0%	22.0%
We set up routine practices, such as introductions, meeting agendas, time limits, and notetaking.	5.12	1.06	2.0%	2.0%	2.0%	12.0%	40.0%	42.0%

Collective identity. The importance of collective identity was established in the literature and through expert interviews. The survey respondents were asked to assess their level of agreement or disagreement with the degree to which collective identity was achieved. The majority (73%) of the respondents agreed that traditional boundaries were broken down to achieve goals (37% *strongly agree* and 37% *agree*), the members became a very cohesive group (71%, with 26% *strongly agree* and 45% *agree*), and through the work of collaboration, they

became something much bigger than they could have individually (83%, with 71 % strongly agree and 12% agree). The majority (86%) of the respondents also agreed they created an impact that was greater than each individual organization could have done on their own (76% strongly agree and 10% agree), the collaboration had positive name recognition in the community (74%, with 41% strongly agree and 33% agree), and the members had a sense of pride about belonging to the collaboration (78%, with 51% strongly agree and 27% agree). Last, the majority (84%) felt a great personal satisfaction from being part of the collaboration (53% strongly agree and 31% agree). (See Table 4.11.)

Table 4.11

Descriptive Statistics (Means, Frequency, and Percentage Distributions) for Collective Identity

Statements N = 49	M	SD	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.	4.98	1.03	0.0%	2.0%	8.1%	16.3%	36.7%	36.7%
We became a very cohesive group.	4.84	1.07	2.0%	2.0%	4.1%	0.4%	44.9%	26.5%
Through the work of our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.	5.49	0.94	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	12.2%	12.2%	71.4%
We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have	5.55	0.91	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	10.2%	10.2%	75.5%

created on its own.								
Our collaboration has positive name recognition in our community.	5.04	1.02	0.0%	2.0%	6.1%	18.4%	32.7%	40.8%
We had a sense of pride about belonging to this collaboration.	5.35	0.93	0.0%	2.0%	2.0%	12.2%	26.5%	57.1%
We all felt great personal satisfaction from being part of this collaboration.	5.29	0.96	0.0%	2.0%	4.1%	10.2%	30.6%	53.1%

The overall mean score for each element was calculated by summing the responses across all the element's survey items and dividing by the number of items. The results were placed in descending order on Table 4.12. Average scores show that survey respondents agreed at some level (somewhat to strongly) with each of the collaboration elements. The committed members' statements had the highest overall mean score (5.36), showing a tendency to strongly agree that committed members were important. Defined process statements had the lowest mean score (4.82), showing respondents were less likely to agree and strongly agree with the defined processes statements. The results showed a skew to the left, demonstrating the tendency to agree or strongly agree with the majority of the statements. The standard deviations are all close to 1.00, showing the responses are mostly grouped close to the mean.

Table 4.12

Descending Overall Mean Score, Standard Deviations, Skewness, and Kurtosis by Element

Element	Mean Score	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Committed Members	5.36	.96	-2.19	4.86
Shared Goals	5.25	.91	-1.73	3.39
Trust	5.16	.98	-1.86	3.72
Communication	5.05	.92	-1.55	2.89
Time	5.03	1.00	-1.66	2.83
Resources	4.97	1.08	-1.21	.90
Defined Process	4.82	.89	-1.23	2.26
Collective Identity	5.22	.87	-1.78	3.13
Success	5.23	.99	-1.79	3.21

An initial bivariate correlation was run to determine how closely the variable (elements) were related to each other as well as to collective identity and success. Bivariate correlations showed a strong positive relationship of the elements with each other and with collective identity and success. (See Table 4.13.)

Table 4.13

Bivariate Correlations for Collaboration Elements and Success Scores

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. Committed members	1								
2. Time	.814**	1							
3. Resources	.721**	.896**	1						
4. Communication	.734**	.767**	.723**	1					
5. Trust	.847**	.867**	.766**	.791**	1				
6. Goals	.836**	.819**	.739**	.822**	.830**	1			
7. Defined Process	.750**	.777**	.736**	.826**	.807**	.794**	1		
8. Collective Identity	.809**	.865**	.797**	.722**	.820**	.754**	.786**	1	
9. Perceived Success	.768**	.840**	.819**	.706**	.801**	.796**	.791**	.893**	1

Note. **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level 2-tailed). $N = 49$

Regression analysis. Due to high correlations for the regression analysis, Factor analysis was completed. Based on the results, four variables were recoded into two. Resources and time had a very high correlation (.896), thus the responses to the resource and time items were averaged across all items for a new combined resources-time variable. With the very high correlation and the small number of responses, time and resources were combined for the linear regression.

There was a high (.893) correlation between the overall collective identity and perceived success measures (see Table 4.13) as well as overlap in meaning. Based on this high correlation, factor analyses were run to determine if there were specific statements in these categories that, if combined, would create a stronger variable. Five collective identity element statements overlapped in meaning with two statements from the perceived success category. Building on this overlap in meaning and the high correlation, a stronger success variable was created based on the overall average of the responses to the five collective identity and two success statements. The newly constructed variable was labeled as *collective identity success*, with the implication of

success being defined as a strong group with name recognition and positive impact on communities and causes. (See Table 4.14.)

Table 4.14

Statements Related to the Relationship between Collective Identity and Perceived Success

Element	Statements Related to Collective Identity and Perceived Success
Collective Identity	<p>We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.</p> <p>We became a very cohesive group</p> <p>Our collaboration had positive name recognition in our community.</p> <p>Through the work of our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.</p> <p>We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own.</p>
Perceived Success	<p>We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.</p> <p>In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.</p>

A second bivariate correlation table was run to verify that there was a strong correlation between the seven collective identity and perceived success statements. As shown in Table 4.15 the correlations between these statements ranged from a high moderate correlation ($r = .619$) to a very high ($r = .918$) between the seven statements. These high correlations supported the development of the new collective identity success variable.

Table 4.15

Bivariate Correlations for Collective Identity Success Seven Statements Scores

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.	1	*					
2. We became a very cohesive group.	.735**	1					
3. We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.	.723**	.770**	1				
4. In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.	.734**	.786**	.893**	1			
5. Our collaboration had positive name recognition in our community.	.496**	.619**	.667**	.683**	1		
6. Through the work of our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.	.657**	.747**	.801**	.780**	.676**	1	
7. We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own.	.698**	.777**	.841**	.827**	.713**	.918**	1

**Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A third bivariate correlation was run to assess the relationships between the new collective identity success variable and the six collaboration elements, with resources and time recoded into one resources-time variable. As shown in Table 4.16, there were again very high to high correlations, ranging from $r = 0.734$ to $r = 0.880$. (See Table 4.16.)

Table 4.16

Bivariate Correlations Between Collective Identity Success and Six Collaboration Elements, Including the Recoded Resources-Time Variable

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Committed Members	1						
2. Resources-Time	.786**	1					
3. Communication	.734**	.767**	1				
4. Trust	.847**	.838**	.791**	1			
5. Shared Goals	.836**	.800**	.822**	.830**	1		
6. Defined Process	.750**	.779**	.826**	.807**	.794**	1	
7. Collective Identity Success	.824**	.880**	.725**	.840**	.789**	.804**	1

**Note. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Linear regression analysis was run to show the relationship between collaboration elements and the collective identity success variable. One linear regression analysis was run with the newly constructed collective identity success dependent variable and the other six elements (committed members, resources-time, communication, trust, shared goals, and defined process) independent variables. A significant regression equation was found, $F(1,47) = 161.90$, $p \leq .001$, with an R^2 of .839. (See Table 4.17 and Table 4.18.)

Table 4.17

Linear Regression Model Summary

Model	R	R ²	R ² _{adj}	F	Sig.
1	.880	.775	.770	161.900	.000
2	.916 ^a	.839	.816	30.548	.000

a. Predictors (Constant) *Resources-Time*

b. Predictors (Constant) *Resources-Time, Committed Members*

c. Dependent Variable: *Collective Identity Success*

Table 4.18

Simple Linear Regression Analysis Standardized Beta

Explanatory Variables	B	SE B	B	T	Sig.
<i>Collective Identity Success</i>	.572	.325		1.757	.086
(constant)					
<i>Resources-Time</i>	.573	.094	.607	6.113	.000
<i>Committed Members</i>	.319	.091	.350	3.524	.001

Summary of Research Question 3. Based on the overall mean score, the participants tended to agree the most with the need for committed members followed by shared goals and trust. A bivariate correlation analysis was completed, showing the highest correlation coefficient relationship between collective identity and success. Seven statements from collective identity and success were combined to form a new collective identity success variable. Based on the high correlation, the resources and time variables were also combined to form a new resources-time variable. A linear regression was performed to explain collective identity success based on the remaining seven elements (committed members, resources-time, communication, trust, shared goals, and defined process). Table 4.18 suggests the largest influences were committed members, and resources-time in descending order. Because of the high correlation of the variables in the regression analysis, multicollinearity exists.

Research Question 4: How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success? The fourth research question was studied from the qualitative data in the focus group, and interviews. The focus group members and the individual interviewees were asked to describe the relationships between members and if the relationships had changed over time, potentially showing a change in collective identity. They were also asked about how differences of perspective or opinion were handled. Lastly, they were asked what did not work. The narrative findings fell into seven (7)

categories: (a) relationships matter and grow over time, (b) collective identity has impact in the community, (c) funding levels matter, (d) defined process helps as a reminder of commitment, (e) having time to build the collaboration helps, (f) committed members are problem solvers, and (g) what impeded collective identity and success.

Relationships matter and grow over time. Collaboration members pointed out the importance of the relationships and how shared goals, honest communication, and trust were critical to the development of collective identity.

So . . . we were really, really strong. And so, our relationship was always friendly . . . really, a very tight-knit group. It was very clear what our goal was, it was very clear what we were trying to do, it was very clear why we were all at the table, and what each of our roles were at the table, what our organizational roles at the table were. . . . the fact that we had really strong relationships, we really trust each other, we were very unified on our goals and really clear about what we were to do.

An individual who was part of a collaboration that had won the Colorado Collaboration Award one year described the relationships as close-knit and had a shared language—both attributes of collective identity.

The . . . Partnership is a non-legal entity. . . . Because of that governance structure, our work is fundamentally based on trust and good working relationships. So, I would say that the folks . . . are [a] very closely knit group . . . I think they share this collective identity . . . In terms of how the relationships have changed over time . . . it's all based on good working relationships. Those can take time and years to build. Cultivating and sustaining those relationships is really a key ingredient . . . We really focus on how to nurture them and how to engage our partners in a way that's appropriate and meaningful.

I think that shared language is another key aspect of that collective identity. That we were completing each other's sentences is probably—Yes, because we spend a lot of time together. But the partnership has this sort of shared language associated with our goals and our vision.

As explained by a focus group participant there can be a core group that keeps collaboration moving forward so collective identity can be formed.

There were . . . guys that were buddies . . . They really set the tone in the moment and the tenor of the group. . . . everyone saw that there was a benefit to collaborating. There is a benefit. They get a lot of gains from it. That keeps the group connected . . . Quarterly,

they pay their dues to the consortium. It's a small staff of 4 or 5 to keep them working for the collective.

Collective identity has impact within the community. While one member discussed how close her group is, another member shared observations about how the community dashboard was used. Both talked about the community impact, as part of a collective identity of the group.

Close. Well, my group, . . . acts as the backbone for the [collaborative's focus]. And we are one hundred and fifty percent committed to the collective impact model. . . . honest and true collaboration is a societal, is a communal value. If you're new to the group . . . some people will take you aside and sort of say, here's the rules and you play nice and you speak and treat people ethically, and if you don't we'll call you out. So, this group has been together for a long time, so I'm sure it's gotten closer overtime, but we literally danced very, very closely together.

[W]e're working a lot with collective impact and have a community wide performance management data dashboard that's backing up our collective action efforts. Because I was participating in a collaboration and also working on collective impact and making that real.

Funding levels matter. One collaboration was disbanded when the funding stopped. The member talked about stability within the group as being important. A member from a different collaboration discussed the challenges between joint funding and competition for the same funding.

They seemed to be well connected and because of that would not just connect when they were together on the program delivery and oversight but on other aspects of community life and checking in on one another about how things were going in the community generally. I think it's a strong enough program that we might revisit it again with a stronger evaluative component. If we can find the funding for it.

[S]ome of those resources were taken away from us, so when you're being funded as a group, we were able to put our egos aside, and we all still did a number of huge kind donations with regard to time and resources. But taking some of that funding off the table that wasn't for all of us, we then found, we were kind of going after the same stream of funding for the same work which was really challenging, because we had to then decide, like, are we going to go after this together as part of the collaboration?

Defined process helps as a reminder of commitment. A member discussed the signing of a memorandum of understanding annually to remind members of the goal and their commitment.

A second member offered insight of the value of having a process so the collaboration members can develop collective identity.

So to join on a yearly basis, we sign an MOU, so we all sign the same document of, like, this is our understanding of how it works, this is what we are here for . . . So we have really clearly outlined roles, responsibilities for the time.

That said,having a really inclusive thoughtful process. We had a two-year planning process, where we cultivated relationship and developed our shared goals and vision. That process really helped . . . That process included a variety forms of engagement . . . different communications tools including maps and other documents. Professional facilitation was important for getting this partnership going. Likewise, for handling differences of opinion . . . We have a shared sense of goals and a common vision.

Another member observed how the process of developing their framework, goal, and vision, through debate, began the process of developing the team, and included different perspectives from the beginning.

Well basically, the process of developing the framework and starting with a common goal, a common vision, actually having the forty of them debate all of that actually begins to create the glue.

Anything that didn't work? Well, for example, the choice of the indicators, the success indicators, the measures, the accountability, people were all over the map about how were they going to measure our collective effort.

Having time to build the collaboration helps. Two focus group members discussed the importance of having time to build relationships.

That's consistent with experience that I've had . . . just the experience of being stretched and not having enough time to do the projects . . . Yes, time seems to be . . . to be a challenge.

I think it was simply that time together that allowed for relationship building and also the success of the collaboration.

Committed members as problem solvers. Two members of the focus group uncovered possible attributes of committed members, being a problem solver and staying in the collaboration.

No one ever walked out of the room. I think everyone was a problem solver and in a discovery mode of the shortcomings of the program. Everyone stayed around the table.

So, I would say that the folks that are involved in . . . problem solving are very closely knit group.

What impeded collective identity and success. In addition to funding, other comments about the challenges for a group to develop collective identity and success were offered. One member of the focus group, offered this insight the balance between needed flexibility and a centralized priority, while another discussed the competing priorities. The last member suggested a general comment about the challenges.

You [are] starting with this idea of flexibility . . . speaks to the executive director's intention of being flexible and making sure that the consortium was really meeting the unique needs of each . . . When the consortium was trying not to be flexible, that's when it didn't work. When member centers felt like they were being forced, they really pulled back.

It is a struggle for some of the partners to maintain mission and set aside their agency priorities for the collaboration which I think is inherent in any collaboration but essential.

Some of the research suggests that 80% of all collaborations fail because people don't understand the challenges of it.

Focus group and interviewees' summary. The research question asked about the collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success. The findings included narrative data from focus group members and interviewees. These fell into six categories: (a) relationships matter and grow over time, (b) collective identity has impact in the community, (c) funding levels matter, (d) defined process helps as a reminder of commitment, (e) having time to build the collaboration helps, (f) committed members are problem solvers, and (g) what impeded collective identity and success.

Chapter Summary

The research findings and results of this multi-phase sequential mixed methods study were discussed in this chapter. The information was used to create statements for the survey. The findings include:

1. There was evidence supporting the existence for all the collaboration elements.
2. The collaboration elements were highly correlated and interdependent with each other.
3. Mean scores showed that the survey respondents generally agreed (somewhat to strongly) with each of the collaboration elements. The highest overall mean score was for committed members (5.36); the lowest overall mean score was for defined process (4.82).
4. The combined resources-time and committed members variables had the greatest influence on collective identity success.
5. There were 20 themes found in the narrative analysis of the application, interview, and focus group data. These themes related to the seven elements of collaborations as follows:
 - a. Committed members—inclusion of stakeholders, willing to work together, active engagement, and problem solvers.
 - b. Communication—respectful and honest communication, conflict resolution and civility, and consistent and continual communication.
 - c. Trust—trust in the relationships and process.
 - d. Collective identity—greater than the individual; positive benefits from participating; and group cohesion.

- e. Defined process and shared goals—having a process with defined goals provided some structure to move forward; defined process helps as a reminder of commitment.
 - f. Time—relationships matter and grow over time; having time to build the collaboration helps.
 - g. Resources— funding levels matter.
6. While the focus was on the positive, some respondents offered narrative on why collaborations did not work as well as they could have; these included: lack of a shared goal, members who were not committed, inadequate resources or time, and competing priorities.

Chapter V: Implications and Discussion of Findings

Chapter V consists of the discussion and interpretation of the findings compared to the relevant theories and research. Based on the findings, an extended model for successful interorganizational collaboration, implications for scholarship and leadership practices, and recommendations for future research are discussed, followed by reflections on the research process, and the conclusions.

The guiding research problem of this sequential mixed-methods study focused on which elements influence successful collaborations and, specifically, how collective identity is developed, sustained, and related to the perception of success. The following four research questions were investigated:

1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts?
2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?
3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success?
4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration's efforts to achieve collective identity and success?

The findings confirm that all eight elements necessary for success, as identified in the literature, were present in the Colorado collaborations, and added additional insight about the nature of the elements. This study also found that collective identity was developed by the members. Counterintuitively it was found that the development of collective identity was viewed as success in collaborations, in addition to goal achievement. Collective identity and success were both strongly linked and overlapped. The development of collective identity is perceived as

beneficial for the members, and their communities, and as promoting resolutions and options for messy community problems.

Furthermore, the role of committed members, time, and resources as elements of collaborations, were found to be larger than expected. Committed members are imperative, as they continue to engage with others, work with uncertainty, are dedicated to solving the issue, and stay at the table when there are difficulties or conflict. They are the ones to take old problems, come together as a group, and provide different outcomes.

Moreover, a larger amount of time is needed than often anticipated. Resources are vital for any effort, and the lack of resources, especially funding, can pose difficulties in creating sustainable outcomes. The importance of a collaboration defined process, where decision-making and meeting management practices are implemented, acts as a continual reminder of goals and individual responsibilities. The mere process of engaging in collaboration brought benefits, such as building relationships, plus a social network to tap into for aid and support on other issues.

Findings of Research Questions

The findings of each research question are discussed in more depth, followed by a summary of findings, conclusions, and implications.

Research Question 1. What elements of collaborations were evident from the Colorado Collaboration Award applications and the interviews with subject matter experts? All eight elements necessary for successful collaboration identified through the literature were confirmed in this research (committed members, time, resources, communication, trust, shared goals, defined process, and collective identity). Evidence for the elements from the data was captured in the following themes.

Committed members. The choice of members is critical to the outcome or success of any collaboration (Emerson et al., 2011). Three themes related to committed members emerged (a) inclusion of stakeholders, (b) willing to work together, and (c) active engagement.

Inclusion of stakeholders. In line with Vangen et al.'s (2014) findings, inclusion of key stakeholders was found to be crucial to speak to a shared problem and results in full member investment in the process and outcome. Stakeholders represented differing skills, and included those who can make changes (Gray, 1989). Comments were made about members' willingness to become involved, even when known conflicts and challenges existed.

Willing to work together. The second emergent theme was based on observations that committed members demonstrated the willingness to work with others who share the same goal, regardless of different organizational or historical boundaries. This theme was described as each member having equality and responsibility for the collaboration. This theme confirms that when responsibility and power is equally shared amongst the members, group cohesion increases (Andersson, 2009; Nowell & Harrison, 2011).

Active engagement. Members who demonstrate the interest and ability participated and contributed to the group until the desired outcomes are achieved (Ales et al., 2011). Another aspect of active engagement was the willingness to provide resources (Harper et al., 2014). The theme was identified through comments such as hard work, dedication willingness to provide resources, and track results.

Committed members are the first element and are critical to the development of the other elements. With the members willing to work together, group cohesion builds. Key stakeholders understand the community and the issue, and are uniquely positioned to work towards the

ultimate goal. Engaged members have the willingness and capability to stay in the collaboration, even when the process becomes difficult and conflict arises.

Time. The findings indicated a long amount of time was required for successful collaboration, much longer than individual efforts. Thomson and Perry (2006) posited the need for time to grow relationships, assemble a process, and foster trust within the members, and comments were offered about sacrificing efficiency for effectiveness. The need for adequate time to develop group processes, move to effectiveness, and build trust is well documented in the literature (Kramer & Crespy, 2011; Purdy, 2012, Erakovich & Anderson, 2013) The importance of time was illustrated by statements describing the larger amount of time required for collaborative efforts, moving past initial inefficiencies of the group process, and time it took to overcome trust issues.

Resources. Better utilization and pooling of resources was a stated reason to engage in collaboration. The need for members of collaborations to provide resources and funding was established (Durugbo et al., 2011), along with the greater funding required for sustained engagement (Harper et al., 2014). One finding in this study reaffirmed collaborations were started to provide for a better utilization of resources. This theme was identified through comments about allowing resources to be used most effectively, using methods to avoid duplication by organizations, and serving more people. This supports Vangen and Huxham (2003) who discussed their concept of collective advantage as bringing together resources to accomplish more than any organization could do individually.

Resources were utilized more effectively, costs were shared, and more people were served. The need for additional funding was also mentioned.

Communication. Communication begins as the collaboration is being formed and continues throughout its life (Hamilton, 2010). Communication is necessary for relationship development (Mulder et al., 2004), and is a prerequisite for building trust, discussing processes and resolving conflict (van Zwanenberg, 2009). Three distinct themes that spoke to communication were found in the analysis: (a) respectful and honest communication, (b) conflict resolution and civility, and (c) consistent and continual communication.

Respectful and honest communication. Respectful and honest communication was deemed as important and comments offered about the value of transparency allowed a frank discussion. Being both respectful and honest requires cooperative listening, and clarity (Hardy et al., 2005). This theme was illustrated by comments highlighting the effectiveness of broad and open discussion, the valuing of disagreements, and the inclusion of all perspectives.

Conflict resolution and civility. Conflict resolution and civility emphasized that communication was important with members from different organizations and perspectives building a socially constructed boundary (Watson & Foster-Fishman, 2013). This theme was illustrated by comments about turning conflict into decisions, disagreements allowing better options to surface, and engagement being an outcome of working through conflicts. Without civility, the conflicts would not be a force of creativity and discovery.

Consistent and continual communication. Prior research acknowledged the need of both frequent informal communication and formal dialogue (McGreavy et al., 2013), and the results supported the literature. This theme was illustrated through comments offering the value of regularly scheduled meetings, creation of websites, conversations outside of meetings, and completion of an annual collaborative process analysis. These examples speak to different types of communication processes that provide continual access to information, ideas, and status of the

collaboration. Communication was provided by the members, and manifested in civility, with honest, yet respectful, information sharing resulting in the development of better options.

Trust. According to Vangen and Huxham (2003), the formation of trust is a critical aspect of the ability to manage different ideas, conflicts, and differing interests, while growing iteratively (Perrault et al., 2011). Trust was found to be critical, and two emergent themes emerged: (a) trust in the relationships, and (b) trust in the process.

Trust in the relationship. Through the members' actions, trust is built iteratively, strengthening both relationships and group cohesion. This theme was illustrated in comments addressing the evolution of trust in the group, the quality of relationships built within the group, and how being trusted allowed trust to form, tying the group together. Trust was then extended to the broader community.

Trust in the process. This theme highlighted the role of rituals and norms in moving the collaboration forward. Using an agenda, eliminating unnecessary discussions, having time limits in meetings, and ensuring everyone has a chance to talk are steps in building trust. Because of the lack of an organizational structure, the process creates a temporary configuration. For example, while differing organizations' rules of confidentiality created a challenge, it was overcome by creating a process within which trust could be built.

The findings indicated two different manifestations of trust, one of trust in the formed relationships, and the other with trust in the processes. Building trust within the group allowed for sensitive subjects to be raised and resolved. Trust within a group took time to build and was impacted when inadequate time was provided to the collaboration.

Shared goal. Several comments contained verbiage about staying focused on the goal, and that the very structure of the group was built around a shared goal, which supports Chrislip's

research (2002) concerning member alignment. Huxham and Vangen (2005) discussed the shared goal as the purpose for the collaboration, while Senge et al. (2007) opined a shared goal provides the starting place, provides momentum during the difficult moments, a commitment to continue.

The findings also indicated that the process of goal creation helped in dealing with challenges faced by collaboration. The broader community impact was also achieved by the energy to move forward due to the shared goal for another group.

The shared goal, or goals, provided the ability to provide energy, direction, and a purpose to the members of the group. Having a shared goal developed or validated in the collaboration was powerful.

Defined process. The survey respondents indicated a high level of agreement that rituals and norms were part of their process. The next step consists of the identification of decision-making processes, and provides the structure for a nonhierarchical, temporary arrangement, and supports Vangen et al. (2014). Petri (2010) opined that interorganizational collaboration is a process and this research showed that most collaborations have some type of process. The process can be informal, but is more effective when there is a formal process throughout the life of the collaboration (Vangen et al., 2014). This was found in this research through formal agreements, such as memorandum of understanding,

Evidence of a formal process was found, such as the setting of roles and responsibilities, creating documents, such as memorandums of understanding, and working systematically. The need to develop an infrastructure for the execution of the outcome was shared. Defining decision-making processes was an important aspect of the process, both the framing and the final

decision, similar to Thomson and Perry (2006). Another comment opined the process reminded members of the goal, especially when decisions were made.

The defined process provides the arrangement for members to have trust in the process, defining the norms, and offers a temporary governance structure, while supporting a shared purpose.

Collective identity. There were comments demonstrating the presence of collective identity, including the benefits for the community, relationships, and working as a group. Kramer (2006) maintained that collective identity is related to member willingness to participate, support for the shared goal, and individual commitment levels. Once there is a change to collective interest, the likelihood of conflict decreases, and a positive outcome increases (Bunniss et al., 2011; De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2005; Kramer, 2006). With the finding of the importance of collective identity in collaboration, three emergent themes were identified: (a) greater than the individual, (b) positive benefits from participating, and (c) group cohesion.

Greater than the individual. This theme was supported by comments expressing the benefit of the work to a larger community, and to the individuals involved. As Innes and Booher (1999) suggested, an important outcome was to help the broader community find a solution to a complex issue through the actions of all organizations. As an illustration, the importance of the group's work was discussed. The energizing effect of overcoming historical differences was offered. Last, the adaptive structure established within the collaboration circled out to the community and created the ability for continuing discussions and the sharing of information, consistent with Fenwick's (2012) research about the larger community benefit.

Positive benefits from participating. The internal and external member benefits were identified. Stümer et al. (2008) theorized members receive emotional benefits by receiving

respect and support within the group, and this was supported by comments sharing how members felt when seeing that all their efforts made a positive impact for the community. Other comments shared how through collaborating, great things happened, provided insight into the continuing benefit of creating relationships in the community, and showed how the sharing of ideas and discussion of additional collaborations continued outside the collaboration. This supports R. Kramer's (2006) notion that the social capital created in collaborations is a collective resource, both inside and outside the collaboration structure.

Group cohesion. The last theme described how members felt when there was formation of collective identity. The members exhibited their commitment to the group by offering resources willingly, consistent with the findings of Veal and Mouzes (2010). Comments were shared about placing collaboration over agency needs, overcoming geographic and historic barriers, and the development of group unity. This was accomplished through small wins, building relationships, and a shared goal. The groups implemented reciprocity and cooperation between the members, confirming the research of Elster (2006) and Teh et al. (2012).

Collective identity is the last of the elements and is indicative of collaboration success. The three themes provide insight into how collective identity looks and feels when formed. Collective identity is also indicative of collective impact to the members and the community, plus an increased probability of a successful outcome. Evidence of collective identity was found in this study.

Summary for Research Question 1. Evidence was found for committed members, time, resources, communication, trust, shared goal, defined process, and collective identity. These findings and themes are consistent with the literature and provided additional insight into how each element manifested inside collaborations.

Research Question 2. How do study participants describe successful collaborations?

The findings indicate success was identified using different measures including meeting the goal and creating a positive outcome, building capacity in a community, and collective identity.

Collective impact, as a gauge of success, was generated through relationships, benefits to the community, and, despite differences, joining together to create something wonderful. I assumed that success equaled completing the goal; the survey participants described success in a far more complex and adaptive manner than was found in the literature, and is a new learning.

The finding is that success is not only a function of goal achievement, but includes the development of collective identity, as evidenced by the themes of group cohesion, working together for a shared goal, and forming strong relationships that were supported by time and resources. Along this adaptive path, success happened with both small and large goal attainment, providing a benefit to the community, and building relationships for current and future goals.

Based on analysis of the application and interview narratives, four emergent measures of success arose:

1. Our collaboration was successful.
2. Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals.
3. We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.
4. In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.

Each of these measures are discussed.

Our collaboration was successful. Most members viewed their collaboration was successful, more than those who felt their goals were achieved. Success was perceived as being accomplished through many different measures such as gaining legislative support, small wins,

increased funding, and success for the larger community. Members shared increases in the number of people using services, growth in programming, increased outreach, and better utilization of available funding as illustrations of success. Similar to the findings of Innes and Booher (1999), the most important outcome was for members to build capacity and a problem-based focus in the local community. Others provided insight about contributions to their communities and to other members as indicative of success. The creation of a social infrastructure to continue the sharing of resources, ideas, and support were also viewed as success.

Other members reflected on the long-time horizon for success, and the story telling and small wins necessary to keep members going and focused. These examples show how success looks, feels and is accomplished in different ways, based on the individual nature and the uniqueness of the collaboration. Each of the 46 collaborations had stated their goals. Some of the goals were lofty and long term, such as implementing outdoor water conservation for users in Colorado. One sought to eliminate a food desert in a Denver community. Others targeted a smaller community. As documented by Cankar and Petkovšek (2013), collaborations forge links between different organizations in communities. The overall success is predicated on contribution to the community, based on the formed links and relationships. Figure 5.1 shows many different measures of collaboration success, in addition to goal attainment.



Figure 5.1. Ways success manifests in collaboration.

Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals. A slight majority of members agreed their goals were achieved, the achievement of small goals, or the interim goals which supported the mission or purpose. This finding of solving complex problems through the efforts of different organizations working together is supported by Vangen et al. (2014).

Success includes having a benefit to the community. Three themes were derived from the findings: commitment, engagement, and teamwork. Commitment describes the feeling towards the goal, other members, and the community. Engagement explains the enthusiasm of the

members towards one another and willingness to work towards the goal. Teamwork expresses how people worked together within the collaboration. These results demonstrate the interrelatedness of the aspects of success.

When asked how the collaborations could have been improved, respondents discussed the need for more resources, committed members, and a goal everyone shared. Funding is key, and in Colorado, access is local, and state funding is hampered due to competition and government funding limitations. As Harper et al. (2014) posited, funding is required for outcomes and sustainability of the work.

We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community. Successful relationships benefit the community and were constructed through communication, trust, and processes around a shared goal. These relationships are part of a social identity, impacting individual and group identity and perceptions, motivations, and behaviors (Stoner et al., 2011; Stümer et al., 2008).

Building relationships, benefitting communities, and learning how to collaborate are important outcomes for the current work and for setting up future opportunities. As was expressed by one member “As we do this more and see the positive results, it begets more trust for future collaboration.”

In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together. Members strongly agreed their collaboration built something wonderful. With the level of agreement with this statement higher than the level for goal achievement, this finding is like the collaborative advantage described by Vangen and Huxham (2003). This finding adds another measure to describe success to the literature: building something wonderful together. As documented by

Ales et al. (2011) members may experience collective learning, while building an inclusive resolution to a messy problem, producing “wonder.”

Wonder includes the idea that it is a great outcome and powerful energizer to build something between people of different organizations, perspectives and experiences. The power came from success, equal voice, inclusion of diverse organizations and members, coming together to create a community benefit, and building relationships through the implementation of communication practices, trust and a process.

The members recognized and felt the power of coming together. When asked about the impact of the collaboration, the majority of the members agreed on the greater collective impact. Narratives described working across traditional organizational boundaries, with new partners and ideas. Words like remarkable, unique, and marriage were used to describe the feeling of building something wonderful. The idea of providing positive results for a community, both now and in the future, was regarded as wonderful. This power of together creating something wonderful is added to the literature as an important contribution of the collaboration process.

Summary for Research Question 2. The majority of the members agreed their collaboration was successful, yet success was identified by a variety of measures. Success meant: strong relationships, benefiting the community, community contributions, internal processes, resources, collective identity, and support for a shared goal. In addition, despite their differences, something wonderful was built. The results highlighted collective impact for the community, the individual nature of each collaboration, and how engaged members move the process forward, especially with a long-time horizon.

These results demonstrate the unique outcomes for success. Groups discussed increased or joint funding, a change in legislation, and growth in programing. Others shared providing

service to their communities, and the collective impact because of the members' efforts. Meeting small goals along the path to big ones was offered. Shared stories spoke of success. When historic boundaries are removed, success occurs in the community, because people work together for a common good. Finally, built and sustained relationships between members was seen as success and a significant outcome for the members and a positive benefit for their communities. An important finding is the process of collaboration brings intrinsic and extrinsic value to members and their communities.

Research Question 3. What collaboration elements influenced survey respondent perception of collective identity and success? Collective identity and success are highly correlated. Members are needed who are committed to the collaboration initially, and will “stay at the table” as one member pointed out. Time and resources are related; time is a subset of resources. Members pointed to the need to have the time to move from inefficiencies to effectiveness. The members agreed the time the collaboration took was worth the benefit. Available funding was the resource needed and the most beneficial. Communication acted as the cornerstone of relationships and trust. The shared goal provided the focus for a group of members from different organizations. Routine meeting and effective decision making practices centered the members on the purpose and goal.

Although all the elements supported the perception of collective identity and success, three elements had the highest influence: committed members, time, and resources. Time was evaluated separately, and then combined as a subset of resources, which was shown to be a higher influence on the perception of success.

Collective identity and perceived success. Statements for collective identity and perceived success overlapped. Seven statements were combined to create a collective identity

success variable. See Figure 5.2 for an illustration of the the seven statements leading up to collective identity and success.



Figure 5.2. The progression to collective identity and success.

These statements formed the core of the overlap between collective identity and collaboration success. In line with Cankar and Petkovšek (2013), links were formed between members from private, government, and nonprofit organizations in 80% of the collaborations. The members agreed the traditional boundaries were navigated, with the groups becoming

cohesive and with a greater impact than the involved individuals. As one respondent pointed out “We have members who would otherwise be perceived as on opposite sides of political issues involving education, but during our meetings there was no disagreement. All minds were focused on our mission.” With group cohesion and commitment, the members were aligned around their work (Stoner et al., 2011; Stümer et al., 2008).

Most members agreed the impact on their community was greater due to their work, where goals, ideas, and resources are shared (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004; Veal & Mouzes, 2010). These findings are supported by the majority agreeing the collaboration earned positive name recognition in their community. The work done in the communities was powerful due to the level that the members used their experience, knowledge, resources, and commitment. It meant that people outside the group knew their work, whether it be the small or the large accomplishments, and there was credibility. When the members broke traditional boundaries, the focus was on the goals, not on the needs of their own agencies. As a cohesive group, the members unify and connect. This study added additional dimensions of collective identity and collaboration success for consideration. Each of the seven statements can be used a measure of collective identity leading to success.

Other results were gathered for collective identity. The majority of the respondents reported the impact of the work done by the collaboration was greater than any one individual organization’s impact. Nearly all the members reported they became part of something bigger than their efforts and had a sense of pride about belonging. Last, matching the literature, the members reported a great personal satisfaction as part of the collaboration working to craft beneficial solutions (Feast, 2013).

The members agreed they built successful relationships. One member pointed out “It was all based-on trust. We are all respectful of each other (and our organization's) perspectives. The outcome is highly successful on-the-ground results.” The members strongly agreed that despite differences, they built something wonderful together.

Collective identity was perceived as a measure of success. When the individual or organizational identity shifts to collective identity, there is a higher level of commitment to the other members, more information and resources was shared, and less impact of any political or organizational impacts to the outcomes (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004; Stümer et al., 2008; Veal & Mouzes, 2010). The members contributed more energy and time for dialogue, discourse, and making choices due to the strength of the relationships. Members shared norms, values, and interests and connect (Stümer et al., 2008), as shown in this illustrative comment:

And so our relationship was always friendly...but we were some of the founding members and really, a very tight-knit group. It was very clear what our goal was, it was very clear what we were trying to do, it was very clear why we were all at the table, and what each of our roles were at the table, what our organizational roles at the table were.... It was really honest, honest group.

There was clarity about the goal, and a determination to work through the issues.

When there is a collective identity, inclusion and valuing of differences exist, with equality where all members discuss differences of perspective, debate options, and work through to outcomes (Koschmann, 2012). One member noted in the survey, “the sum was definitely greater than the parts. Diversity of team allows individuals to use their own strengths to strengthen the effectiveness of the collaboration.” Collective identity was found.

Perceived success was high with unique outcomes being cited as evidence, such as providing benefits and services to their communities. Community impact, working for the common good, and meeting small goals along the way to meeting the larger goals were shared as

successes. When traditional boundaries are spanned and relationships built in the community, success is created for a community. Collective identity as such is success and a positive outcome for the members and their community. Regression analysis showed that the elements of committed members, time, and resources had a statistically significant influence on collective identity success.

Committed members. Committed members are critical, because of the need to stay engaged, work together, and remain focused on the same mission over time. One member captured this idea of committed members: “We have a shared sense of goals and a common vision... level of flexibility and openness to different perspectives has allowed us to handle those differences.” Committed members were shown to be engaged despite difficulties; they provided expertise and shared the concept of providing benefit to their communities (Dietrich et al., 2010; Emerson et al., 2011; Ivery, 2007).

With the importance of committed members, the question is whether enough thought is given to the choice of potential members. These results suggest the thoughtful choosing of the initial committed members to work together in the process is a critical step for success (Johnston, Hicks, Nan, & Auer, 2010).

Time. When the members were asked if there was time to build relationships, less than half agreed. This indicates the members felt there was not enough time to build the relationships, impacting the process, communication, building of trust, and developing the process. Some members discussed the amount of time required to develop a collaboration, using terms like “6+ years; a decade; and years to build.” This difference suggests the time be longer than expected. There is a lot of energy around initial problem to be solved but that energy can dissipate when

difficulties arise in the group. One of the difficulties is the lack of time, as illustrated by the following from the findings:

...the kinds of problems, you're trying to solve are so complex and so overarching in terms of their effect and sweep that it takes time. . . because efficiency and effectiveness rarely occur at high levels at the same time.

This finding supports the literature about needing large amounts of time, so processes and collective identity are developed (M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011; Thomson & Perry, 2006). The members agreed the time required was worth the benefits. If the collaboration did not have a benefit, the time would not be offered, and the level of commitment would decrease (Thomson & Perry, 2006).

Resources. Time and resources are interrelated, yet treated by the literature as two separate initial elements brought into a collaboration (Ales et al., 2011; Erakovich & Anderson, 2013; Harper et al., 2014; M. Kramer & Crespy, 2011; Purdy, 2012). Combining time and resources increased the perception of collective identity success.

Resources were present in the collaborations, with time as one type. When financial and other types of resources are offered, or organizations effectively pool their resources, success has a better chance to occur. Although a majority of the members agreed resources had been effectively pooled, about one third of the respondents did not agree. Potentially some of the respondents felt their organizations offered more resources. However, the majority of respondents identified availability of resources and community partners as high.

Elimination of duplicate resources as success was discussed:

...it provided a method for avoiding duplication of work and as a result was able to use more funding for the purpose of the project and less funding for management and administration.

Sometimes scarcity of resources is solved by success in collaboration, as was shared:

The problems...will continue to grow more complex as the resources available to address them will continue to diminish. It will never be more important than now for the public, private, and nonprofit sectors to find new ways to work together.

The literature discussed the need for all types of resources (Dietrich et al., 2010; Durugbo et al., 2011; Purdy, 2012). The members were clear about the need for a specific type of resources, additional financial resources and funding, pointing out the relationship between successful outcomes and funding. The studied collaborations all had nonprofit partners, a sector where there are many organizations and competition for the funding and resources. Some of the respondents recognized the challenges of having a small staff to provide the time and energy needed for the work.

Time as both an individual and a subset of resources is offered for addition to the literature.

Summary for Research Question 3. There is a high correlation between collective identity and success, showing the interrelationship between the two elements. The new collective identity success variable is comprised of seven statements, or different ways to view collective identity and success. The predictors for collective identity success which demonstrated the largest influence were committed members and resources-time.

The members agreed that committed members were those who were willing to continue working and contribute resources, no matter the number of traditional boundaries and conflict. Time to build the relationships, strengthen the member commitment and for the process to proceed was needed for a positive outcome. The members agreed about the need for better utilization of resources and the significant role funding plays in these collaborations. The high correlation between resources and time was shown, resulting in a new combined resources-time variable for the regression analysis.

The results concerning the development of collective identity provided insight about the difficulty of competing priorities between organizations and collaboration members, and successes with bridging philosophical differences. Collective identity success was developed over time, with resources, through relationships and trust, a common goal, and the breakdown of traditional barriers.

The seven identified collective identity success statements used both internal and external measures. The way the group members saw “cohesive” and positive name recognition by their community indicated how there was dependability inside and outside the collaboration. The relationships brought value to the community. The finding that these members agreed they created a bigger impact collectively and became something bigger speaks to the power of collaboration. Collective identity success is captured in the joy of “In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.”

The accomplishment of a goal is not the only reason for collaboration. These respondents found success in being a member of a group, and in the benefits to their larger community. Having this experience of making a bigger impact, and working across traditional boundaries is an incentive to continue to look for more opportunities to provide value to their community. Through creating relationships and working collectively, there was success.

Research Question 4. How did survey respondents and focus group respondents describe their collaboration’s efforts to achieve collective identity and success? Members shared the many ways their groups developed collective identity and success, beginning with the committed members--the ones who are not satisfied with the status quo, so they work to find unique or sustainable solutions to community problems The need for collective identity is well documented (De Cremer & van Knippenberg, 2004; Koschmann, 2012; R. Kramer, 2006; Stümer et al., 2008;

Veal & Mouzes, 2010) however, there is less research that describes how to create it within the socially created and maintained boundary. The members shared how the process is challenging and included several pre-requisites:

1. Relationships matter and grow over time.
2. Having time to build the collaboration helps.
3. Committed members acted as problem solvers.
4. Funding levels matter.
5. Defined process helps as a reminder of commitment.
6. There was impact within the community.

Relationships matter and grow over time. The importance of relationships between members is key, because building a shared goal, honest communication, and trust over time created collective identity and success. This finding validated the need for time because of its importance in creating a rapport and bond between members. This finding supported the literature (Thomson & Perry, 2006). One respondent shared “That really honest and true communication was imperative for us to be successful . . . we had really strong relationships, we really trust each other, we were very unified on our goals and really clear about what we were to do.” Close-knit relationships were built over time and continued to require cultivation, as one respondent offered

Those [relationships] can take time and years to build. Cultivating and sustaining those relationships is really a key ingredient, so that’s really what I orient around when seeing that question about how the relationships have changed over time. We really focus on how to nurture them and how to engage our partners in a way that’s appropriate and meaningful.

Relationships grow over time and create shared language as captured by a respondent who described

shared language is another key aspect of that collective identity. That we were completing each other's sentences is probably—Yes, because we spend a lot of time together. But the partnership has this sort of shared language associated with our goals and our vision and how we're doing what we're doing.

When relationships have time, there is depth. Over time, trust increases and collective identity as part of success develops. Relationships do change over time, and matter. Both the growth and sustainability depend on the strength of the connections.

Having time to build the collaboration helps. This finding is consistent with Holmesland et al. (2010) and demonstrates the time it takes to create and validate a shared goal, and establish a decision-making process with meeting management. One focus group member spoke to this idea and offered:

We had a two-year planning process, where we cultivated relationship and developed our shared goals and vision. That process really helped develop the partnership and the core group of folks in that partnership that were involved in the day-to-day work. That process included a variety forms of engagement, . . . different communications tools including maps and other documents.

When a collaboration is given a timeframe in which to operate, it is an artificial limit, and there is no way to know how long before the authentic work begins. If building relationships, validating the issue or problem, and determining the approach is cut short, the result may be a failed collaboration. As discussed, the process of collaboration has many benefits, which may not be realized. Foundations which fund this work want results, but efficiency may be in lieu of the richness and wonder of true collaboration. The goal may be achieved, but the formation of collective identity provides even a larger benefit.

Committed members act as problem solvers. One member of the focus group provided a possible new quality of committed members, one of being a problem solver. Emerson et al. (2011) discussed an outcome of trust and engagement may be innovation and knowledge

creation, leading to problem solving. As one respondent opined, “I think everyone was a problem solver and in a discovery mode of the shortcomings of the program.”

Funding levels matter. Funding is one resource that is critical to begin and sustain an effective collaboration. As found in the literature (Ales et al., 2011; Harper et al., 2014), funding is necessary to create the collaboration, implement, and sustain the outcomes. The results of this study support the literature and pointed out that without adequate funds, the ability of each organization to provide adequate money may be strained. One respondent pointed out

The state agencies had varying levels of priority on this issue so that would sometimes impact our momentum (e.g., some members stopped attending regularly; leadership of the collaboration shifted from a strong leader to someone with less authority (by position), due to funding and changing priorities within the agency).

Some of the organizations may be able to provide more funding than others, which may impact the equal voting and position within the group. Last, without funding services and goods cannot be provided to the people or problems being assisted by the collaboration. Nothing operates without funding, and the level of funding makes a difference in the outcome, relationships, and commitment to work by the group.

Defined process helps as a reminder of commitment. One of the functions of a defined process is to sustain collaboration by providing a temporary governance structure. Petri (2010) defined collaboration as a process. As documented by the literature (Durugbo et al., 2011; Thomson & Perry, 2006; Vangen et al., 2014), a defined process provides a temporary support structure. This research found that the defined process also acts as a reminder to members of their commitment to the goal, which extends the literature.

One method used by a group was to re-sign the memorandum of understanding annually, and any procedures for conflict resolution, especially with differing politics and priorities.

So to join on a yearly basis, we sign an MOU, so we all sign the same document of, like, this is our understanding of how it works, this is what we are here for. And in that document, we have certain procedures actually outlined, so that this was consensus decision making, that if consensus can't be made at the table, certain topics, until we could come to a consensus . . . So we have really clearly outlined roles, [and] responsibilities.

Another respondent shared how the progression of developing their defined process for their collaboration included differing perspectives and worked as a connecting activity. "Well basically, the process of developing the framework and starting with a common goal, a common vision, actually having the forty of them debate all of that actually begins to create the glue."

Going back to the defined process provides both a way forward and a reminder of what was the reason for the formation of the collaboration.

There was impact in the community. One of the measures in this study of both collective identity and success was impact in the community. This finding is corroborated by Innes and Booher (1999) who opined the positive impact in the community was an outcome of collaboration. One respondent discussed the relationship in her group and the impact on their community.

Close. Well, my group . . . acts as the backbone for the early childhood collective impact. And we are one hundred and fifty percent committed to the collective impact model . . . So, there's a long history of knowing one another and, in [the] county, honest and true collaboration is a societal, is a communal value.

There were many examples of the outcome when collective identity is formed, and the power of the group is focused on having an impact in the community.

One of the questions on the survey asked about improvement and potential outcomes. Members shared some challenges, and corresponding lack of community impact. The inadequate financial resources and funding, was shared multiple times as a problem.

The need for a more defined decision-making process or clearer processes was identified as imperative. The lack of a shared and understood goal prevented at least one group from achieving any goal or success. The imposition of a shortened time frame demanded by a funder did not allow the time to build relationships, collective identity, or positive outcome. Changing priorities by a member organization had implications for commitment to the group, again having negative impact on the achievement of the goal.

If the group members continued their individual identity and focused on the needs of their own organization, collective identity did not have the chance to develop. Member conflicts and organizational competition

an organization like [a large one], who has a large, operational budget and . . . ability to kind of shift a little bit more, has a greater chance for competing for some of those resources than a much smaller organization . . . that doesn't have the money to invest . . . those kind of pieces that come with it.

When resources are scarce, without looking at community impact and building collective identity, success for the community does not occur.

Summary for Research Question 4. Relationships benefit the group members and the community, and need time to grow. Time is also needed to design the norms and rituals, organize resources, deepen group commitment, and compel a shared goal.

The role and importance of committed members was extended to include acting as problem solvers. The level of funding for implementing and sustaining solutions is important, for the commitment and the continuation of the work. Sufficient funding is required, matching the needs of collaboration.

The impact of the group's work in their community was evidence of both collective identity and success. The defined process provides both a way to move the collaboration forward and a reminder to the members of their commitment to the goal.

Not having resources (funding), time, or a shared goal inhibits the collective identity, and the ability to find solutions. Competition between members or organizations for resources or political inequity were barriers to collective identity.

Contributions, Recommendations, and Implications of Research

Contribution of research to scholarship. This research confirms all the elements (committed members, resources, time, communication, trust, shared goals, defined process, and collective identity) were found in the studied collaborations, and developed element specific exploratory statements. The results offer the knowledge that committed members, resources, and time are essential to begin the processes of developing collective identity inside the collaboration. Second, the other elements (communication, trust, shared goals, and defined process) have a smaller role in collaboration. Lastly, the outcomes of this study suggest that collective identity is intertwined with success. Collective identity defines the benefits within a community, greater than goal achievement. A collaboration can achieve the goal, yet not attain the enhanced advantages, social infrastructure, and relationships as part of collective identity.

The process of collaboration is valuable. Relationships matter, and have an impact on the community. It is not only a means to an end, but has an intrinsic quality of adding value. This study outlines the essential elements of committed members, time, and resources, to begin this change, steps to cultivate it, and the intersection between collective identity and the perception of a successful collaboration

The survey instrument developed for this research used statements for each element, and included perceived success. This survey instrument is added to the scholarship, with the ability to measure the strength of agreement for each element, through complementary statements.

Time and resources are highly correlated, and can be treated separately or together as is the case currently in the literature. Time is a subset of resources and is important on its own. Looking at time as a subset of resources demonstrates this interconnection, while recognizing both are essential for the eventual collective identity and success.

If committed members and resources (with time as a subset) are present at the beginning of a collaboration, the probability of success is greater. Members who are engaged to the process, have enough time to form relationships, adequate resources, and work within the socially sustained boundary, collaboration can be successful, as identified through multiple measures. However, if there is not available funding, or an imposed timeframe, the outcome might not be positive, despite committed members.

In Chapter II, a model of developing collective identity was proposed, beginning only with committed members, to start the initial communication (Fayard & DeSanctis, 2010). Collective identity is then built within a socially sustained boundary and strengthened iteratively by using group rituals and norms, informal and formal communication, defining a process and sharing a goal.

Based on the findings, the extended model of developing collective identity is offered, adding time and resources as critical antecedents alongside committed members. Building relationships over time formed and maintained the socially sustained boundary. Breaking down traditional boundaries navigated outside and inside the collaboration to build something wonderful. The “why” centers a collaboration, by creating the authentic need for the work, and validating the shared goal. Norms and rituals begin the defined process, which acts as both a temporary governance structure and a reminder of the commitment to the goal. The aspects of

communication, respect and honesty, conflict resolution and civility, both consistently and continually, are captured by the informal and formal practices of the group.

Collective identity manifests itself externally because of the changes people have made internally. The results of this study support Stümer et al. (2008) that changes are brought about throughout the course of being members accepting and implementing the norms, values, and shared goal. The results of collective identity means members spend the time in dialogue and discourse, and work through the difficult discussion and decision-making.

Through this study, the importance of time and resources to begin the collaboration was established and the model has been modified to reflect this. This model based on the literature and the empirical research for the development of collective identity is offered for other scholars' use, review, and consideration. The extended model is shared as Figure 5.3.

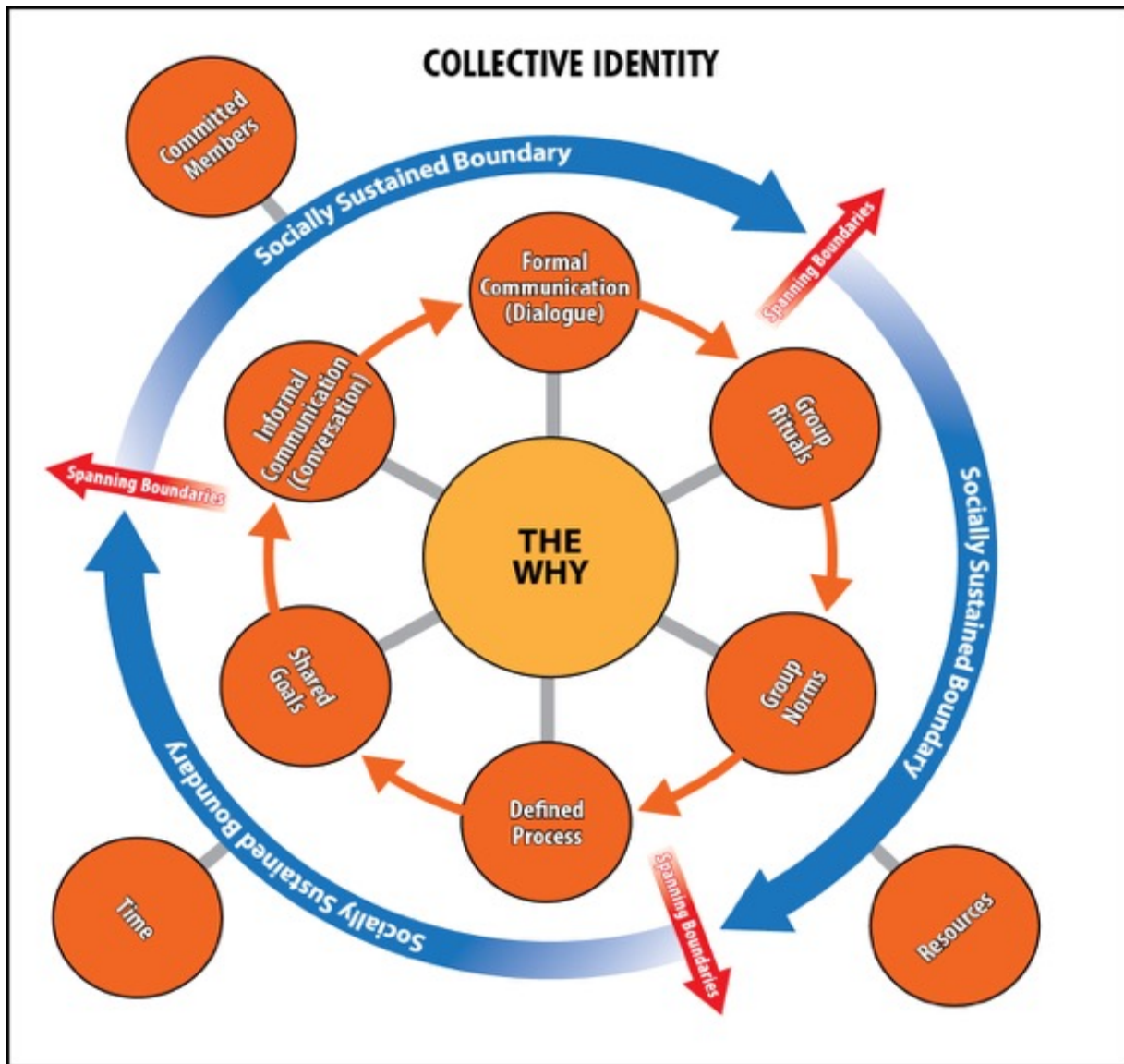


Figure 5.3. Extended model of collective identity development.

Contribution of research to practice. It is not often a researcher has access to a group of 46 interorganizational collaborations (80% of respondent collaborations consisted of nonprofit, public or government and private/other organizations) for a research study. It was an exciting look at how many collaborations and their members were working on providing benefits to their communities in Colorado.

This research found that the following attributes are necessary for successful collaborations:

- The necessity of having committed members to begin a collaboration has been shown. When there is a choice, members who are committed to the problem or issue and demonstrate the capacity to be part of the collaboration for its life are preferred.
- Having time and resources is also essential. Although the resources may not be known at the start of the process, having time to build relationships and processes are known.
- Having rituals, such as meeting management practices, provides some certainty in an uncertain process. Agendas, meeting times, minutes and setting frequency and mode of meetings sets up a routine. Establishing a decision-making process in the beginning can help with a smoother resolution to differences of opinion or approaches.
- The creation and validation of the shared goal provides a focus for members from different organizations. Even if the group was formed around a goal, having the members internalize it offers a shared act, moving towards the collective identity.

The Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration Survey can be used to evaluate the level of agreement for each element and perceived success of a collaboration. Each of the elements has identified behavior markers that will be helpful to explain, or used to assess their existence within a group.

The relationships built during the process may be as important, or more, than achieving the goal because of the longer lasting impact to the community. Collaboration builds capacity

into a community, through the development of the relationships, sharing a common goal, having conversations and dialogue, ideation, and building trust within a problem domain.

The process to develop collective identity is an important contribution to practice. Choosing participants who share the same mission is the start. Ensuring the availability of resources, such as funding, and time as a subset of resources, more than first thought, starts the collaboration with some essential elements. While the members engage in conversation and dialogue, relationships and trust are built. The members need to decide or value the goal. Having meeting management and developing group norms begin the creation of a temporary governance structure. Comprehending the adaptive nature of the collaboration process helps with understanding the uncertainty. With these actions, group cohesion and collective identity forms, which represents success for both the individuals and their community. Finally, there is power in collaborations that are successful.

Last, the reframing of what constitutes success is offered. Goal attainment may be the initial indicator of success. However, based on this research, the act of creating relationships, trust, and the exchange of ideas by the members may be equally or more valuable to create and build community capacity and opportunities.

Implications for Interorganizational Collaborations

Based on these research findings, collective identity is a predictor of building community capacity in addition to success in collaboration. Furthermore, the development of collective identity extends to success. Many of the attributes ascribed to collective identity, such as group cohesion, strong relationships benefiting the community, contributing benefit to the community, internal processes, resources, and support for a shared goal, and building something wonderful are seen as success by the members of the collaboration.

The notion that the start of a successful outcome lies with the initial elements is worthy to note. Committed members, resources, and time as a subset of resources, set up a collaboration for collective identity and success. If these elements are not present, it may mean that the collaboration is one of many that is doomed to fail.

These are learnings from this research. When a collaboration achieves collective identity, it is successful, and manifests in different measures. Begin the journey to success by carefully selecting the members with a commitment to the goal, and have adequate resources, including time. After the creation and validation of a shared goal that benefits the members' community provides energy and power for the outcome.

Recommendations for Future Research

There are several recommendations for future research. First, a study using the survey instrument, with greater yield, or respondents, would provide some validation of the initial findings from this research.

It would be helpful to understand what the needed resources are, besides funding. This study suggested that most of the collaborations identified community partners, but were silent on what type of resources the partners could contribute.

The needed resources are varied based on the individual collaboration needs; it would be advisable to do a needs analysis ahead of starting a collaboration process, to see what is the range of potential resources. As a practice, if there were conversations with outside partners about what resources may be available before the formal collaboration process begins, more collaborations may be successful.

It would be helpful to study why people commit to a collaboration, such as existing relationships, obligations, or desire to fix the existing problem. This study does not answer the

question about how committed members are chosen. More research on how to choose members may provide guidance.

This study was in Colorado with community based problems and issues. The research population was small, and skewed towards a few of the collaborations, where the members responded with higher participation. How would these findings be supported on a larger scale? The survey can be used to provide data points about the health of a collaboration, or as an evaluation tool.

Conclusions

This study was conducted in hopes of learning more about the elements of collaboration and how collective identity was developed, as a predictor of success. There were several findings, with the model for the development of collective identity as the most significant finding. The second significant finding was the high correlation and linkage between collective identity and the perception of success, which builds community capacity when present. A third significant finding is the multiple measures of success. Last, in each phase, the eight identified elements, committed members, time, resources, communication, trust, shared goals, defined process, and collective identity, were present.

The importance of committed members was validated and extended. The role of these members is to engage, practice inclusion of other members, ideas, and opinions, and to recognize that each member needs to demonstrate the willingness to work together.

Time and resources were also necessary for collaboration. More time is needed than sometimes is given. The role of resources, especially funding, was established.

Reflection

This was a crazy, challenging, and incredible experience. So many people and organizations were excited about my study, looking at the elements with an emphasis on the development of collective identity. What I found was that excitement does not translate into participation. I was asking a group of already busy people to stop and participate in my study. I received comments from contact people for some of the collaborations that they were too busy to participate, and certainly too busy to send it out to others in their collaborations. Due to natural endings of jobs, careers and collaborations, some of the contact information was incorrect, and hard to find either the right new or old person. The number of responses for robust statistical analysis was not adequate.

People trusted me with their stories, observations, and ideas as part of my data gathering. I felt responsible, not only as a researcher, but as a person to use their stories for the best possible reason—to learn about increasing the number of successful collaborations. What struck me the most was how many of the respondents felt their collaboration was successful. Most of the members of these collaborations felt successful for a variety of reasons. One main reason was the development of collective identity—the ‘we-ness’ of the group. Success was not only about accomplishing goals, but far more about relationships and providing benefit to their communities. It was humbling.

I am far more of a research practitioner than a researcher. Along every step, when I came to the end of a process or a chapter, my first reaction was to consider how my learning could be applied. One of the difficult and essential parts of the PhD journey was to learn the researcher side. At this stage in my life, I want to know the application, because for me, that is where the

value lies. I recognize the wonder and value of the research, and I know the research has made me a better practitioner.

Collaboration is a complex, emergent and wonderful process. When there is success, it is amazing with all the primary and secondary outcomes. To me, it is a wondrous process. I know now what are the steps I can take with my next collaboration to have success. This journey is worth that knowledge.

Appendix

Appendix A

Expert Interview Script

Interview Script

1. Introductions
2. Purpose of the interview
3. Remind the participant he or she is able to stop the interview at any time for any reason
4. Thank the participant and begin the recording
5. Questions
 - a. How long have you been involved in collaboration work? In what capacity or capacities?
 - b. How do you define collaboration?
 - c. How often do you think a collaboration process results in an option that resolves the issue or problem that was the start of the group coming together? Why?
 - d. How do you think most collaboration members measure success?
 - e. How do you measure the success of a collaboration?
 - f. What do you think the members of most collaborations would say about the success of their collaboration? Why?
 - g. Thinking about all those collaborations, what factors do you think separate a collaboration that results in the resolution of the problem vs. one that does not?
 - h. I am interested in collective identity, or the ‘we-ness of the members. Have you observed collaborations where you think this was present? What did it look like? How did you know the members were thinking together?
 - i. What do you think was the process for the members to come together as a group?

- j. What do you think can be done differently to help more collaborations achieve a resolution to the problem or issue that was the reason for the formation?
 - k. Are there any other thoughts you have about group cohesion in a collaboration?
6. Thank the participant and go through again how the information is going to be used.
 7. Ask the participant if he or she has any questions.
 8. Ask the participant if she or he has any final comments.
 9. Thank them again and turn off the tape recorder.

Appendix B

Consistency Matrix

Element	Element Explanation	Interviews	Applications	Survey Statements	Survey Question
Committed members	Members with commitment to solving the problem, ability to provide resources, adequate communication skills, and the ability to be comfortable with uncertainty and the lack of an organizational structure	people's sense of commitment people's sense of increased alignment of their efforts committed to the same goals working hard and committed to the same goals buildup of commitment, and how it resonates over time goals were more integrated and interlocked flexible in approach and targeted on mutually identified needs more relationships, contributions, and shared history	involved involved in designing the critical components wish to actively engage Key stakeholders were involved agreeing to be part of a solution to meet needs brought a strong a commitment to the spirit of collaboration primary means of communication, networking, and resource sharing among partners degree of engagement, commitment of resources, and willingness to track and share results dedication of the partners long-term, on-going involvement	We were strongly committed to the same mission. We were actively engaged in the work of our collaboration. We were willing to work together to meet the goals of our collaboration.	Question 3

			who wish to actively engage in the mission, in line with common goals		
Time	Adequate time to overcome inefficiencies at the beginning of the collaboration, develop relationships, have interactions to develop emergent elements, and create suitable outcomes	the trust and ties in quality relationships up front sometimes you have to wallow in all the negative stuff and the uncertainty and the risk part of it long enough before you can come out the other side never going to be efficient in a collaborative early trying to build the relationship and build trust takes face time and additional time in it for the long haul, your results are going to be so much better Time is needed to become believers in and understanding of the process. short period of time is the new norm but need time for collaboration	Overcoming the trust issues built consensus, buy-in and a sense of community pride a slow but very rewarding process Collaborative endeavors, though often more robust, can take more time than individual agency efforts institutionalize the level of trust table of trust resulted in community buy-in understand collaborative action takes time challenge of maintaining momentum.	Our collaboration took the time needed to build relationships with each other. We all gave the time needed for the work of our collaboration. The benefits of this collaboration were worth the time.	Question 4
Resources	Required both during and	in order to survive and	increase efficiencies	We effectively	Question 6

	<p>after the collaboration to include adequate time, legislation, funding, commitment, staffing, and supplies and properties needed to the collaboration process and implementation of outcomes</p>	<p>resources scarcity, they needed to collaborate</p>	<p>and reduce duplication each brought resources, talent, energy and commitment combines the strengths of both agencies to optimize resources utilize human capital and pooled resources efficiently and effectively leverages the expertise and resources resources available to address them will continue to diminish allow resources to be used in the most effective way maximize community resources to meet community needs stewarding limited resources sharing resources identifying community partners and sharing existing resources</p>	<p>pooled our resources to meet collective goals.</p> <p>We identified the resources each member could bring to our collective efforts.</p> <p>We identified community partners that could contribute resources for the collaboration's use</p>	
<p>Communication</p>	<p>Information conversations, formal dialogue, discourse,</p>	<p>tell anecdotal success stories</p>	<p>Consensus shared conversation</p>	<p>We were able to talk about different</p>	<p>Question 6</p>

	<p>discussions, virtual and in person, that result in the transmission and exchange of information and ideas, leading to shared understanding</p>	<p>an emotional impact, some kind of tangible thing. importance of the information exchange and trusting relationships build those strong ties to get the outcomes how they communicate continuous communication linking it to both head and heart effective inclusion of all perspectives overburdened by technical challenges of communication candor It's the biggest difference openness and supportive behaviors clear understanding participating in dialogues Surfacing conflict frank discussions, development of effective options Dialogue and acceptance of dialogue valued for the</p>	<p>calculated choices open communication and ongoing evaluations communication through meetings, phone calls, and emails the tools to bring together the collaborative bodies primary execution point is through communication bringing together the perspective encouraging open and honest dialogue Communication, trust, challenge, and transparency meet on a consistent basis conflict all aspects are discussed, facts determined, creative solutions encouraged direct communication and facilitated gatherings electronic forms of communications discuss structural</p>	<p>perspectives in a constructive manner. We encouraged open, honest, and respectful discussions during our meetings. We used active listening to help us resolve disagreements. We worked hard to resolve conflicts.</p>	
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		disagreements disagreements were worked	management, training, and funding maintain honest and transparent communications Communication is paramount fostering open communication bridges philosophical differences though communication information is consistently shared ongoing dialogue and consensus to ensure stability Frequent and agreed upon communication continuous communication and big-picture decisions respectful discussion Compromise, negotiation, and civility continue to be essential		
Trust	An iterative process of consistency of words and action leading to consistent respect and understanding by others	their ability to influence things following through information exchange and trusting relationships	develop trust between the partners strengthen communication skills, develop trust between the partners	We built a high level of trust. We each trusted most members of our collaboration.	Question 7

		<p>trust and ties in quality relationships increase people's commitment layer in healthy doses of accountability supportiveness with one another build a sense of connection and collaboration trusting environment level of openness and candor but supportiveness strength in her team and she trusts them Engagement and working through differences higher level of trust and effectiveness was formed and achieved</p>	<p>efforts internally required an evolution of trust built over many months develop trust between the partners, and learn effective conflict resolution and consensus strategies overcome the trust and communication issues trust-based results constant assessment to build trust Trust and good working relationships tie the partnership together Motivation hone our communication styles and methods to ensure that a diverse constituency Trust, understanding, and a high comfort level slow process of building trust and deepening relationships strong foundation to</p>	<p>We trusted each other's ability to contribute to the collaboration.</p>	
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			grow the collaboration extensive exercise in detail work and		
Shared Goal	A sense of connection and willingness to achieve a commonly held outcome by members	“for the good of all” as central to collaboration something larger clearer the parameters working hard and committed to the same goals messy problems where collaboration could assist common purpose seeing positive and mutual goal setting jointly identifying the problem	shared goal addressing a shared concern, maintains focus on the shared goal to collectively design strategy & action plans synthesize our mission/vision. very focused goals working toward a mission beyond their normal scope, but would result in positive collective impact. challenge of crafting goals that resonated with a broad set of stakeholders collaborative vision articulates the shared vision, goals structured around shared values and goals to create a shared vision cohesive approach	We worked toward shared goals. We set goals together. We all worked together to achieve the vision we shared.	Question 8

			<p>based upon a shared vision and mission values strategic reflection and goal shared vision that supersedes individual organizational agendas. collective "big picture" of the entire initiative uniting a formerly disparate work collaboratively with the common goal</p>		
Defined Process	<p>The member developed course of actions to move the collaboration forward, including decision-making, information sharing, and conflict resolution.</p>	<p>process evaluation measure these interim outcomes before they achieve their longer-range goals early process steps in facilitating these processes population, performance, and process important stage of being able to manage the actual workload efficiently, heavier structures that people can constantly use to continue</p>	<p>monthly planning meetings with strategic alignment meets and communicates regularly program structure, improvements, and innovation clear, open structure and our mission-focused activity planning efforts are conducted views every decision in light of the institution as a whole</p>	<p>We had commonly understood clear processes for working toward our goals.</p> <p>We used consistent decision-making processes to accomplish our work.</p> <p>The process we used to make decisions was effective.</p> <p>We set up certain</p>	Question 9

		<p>executing leaky systems of collaborative execution, parts, skills, and science of project management kept everybody on task kept all the reminders and wrote all the minutes Structuring meetings wrestle with the uncertainties and the risks and the confusion but bracketing overburdened by technical challenges of communication, and document management design objectives that will continually work toward that outcome framework for strategy designing measures that truly reflect performance in reporting those back Mutual planning, mutual decision making, and mutual accountability needing documents or</p>	<p>plan and implement policies strategic plan equal standing in decision-making Occurred in 3 stages a vote of the Board equal decision making power majority consensus on decisions established formal linkages by clearly defining roles and responsibilities not static, but rather an evolving process Decisions are made & conflicts resolved in a consensual way equal power to address problems and/or suggest changes non-binding agreement that addresses stakeholder-designed framework Bylaws establish guiding the vision and strategy, supporting aligned activities</p>	<p>practices, such as introductions, meeting agendas, time limits, and notetaking.</p>	
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		<p>shared information from existing members strong research basis, sharing models and approaches</p>	<p>Coordinating our collective efforts developed a roadmap commitment to a collaborative model allowed for streamline processes to develop Collective review of progress reports and proactive sharing of data Roles and Responsibilities document, which outlines commitments and group norms structure giving equal rights to each partner writing and standardization of protocol paperwork and creation of a new data collection system resulting in strategies</p>		
<p>Collective Identity</p>	<p>The state where members perceive themselves as a group member, which results in higher commitment, participation, and ability to work within a socially constructed boundary</p>	<p>it can't just be about one's own self-interest alone; that it has to be about something larger than oneself that everybody has the same ability to state what the goals are and</p>	<p>team approach to finding the truth working toward a mission beyond their normal scope, but would result in positive collective impact.</p>	<p>We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.</p>	<p>Question 10</p>

		<p>that they're on the same page how people are more connected to each other that willingness to allow oneself to be part of something that's larger than oneself and refashioning of your new identity is part and parcel getting to know each other's stories. condition that they're kind of being vulnerable and being honest with each other about what the work is individuals in the group's ability to call everybody back to the highest purpose of the group building a sense of efficacy in the initiatives that things are moving forward and, and it's worth my contribution people that come in seeing the worthiness of the initiative, contributing their best</p>	<p>blending different corporate cultures, overcoming boundaries and ownership issues, and decreasing the perceived threat potential of collective impact evolved as a result of the project great things happen collaborate & form partnerships for the benefit of their community built consensus, buy-in and a sense of community pride coaxed outside of their traditional silos toward a mutual understanding of the system and shared accountability effectively foster a sense of team solutions that meet the needs of all involved close knit group of people who put aside their own agency needs to make sure the</p>	<p>We became a very cohesive group.</p> <p>Through the work of our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.</p> <p>We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own.</p> <p>Our collaboration had positive name recognition in our community.</p> <p>We had a sense of pride about belonging to this collaboration.</p> <p>We all felt great personal satisfaction from being part of this</p>	
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		<p>effort increase people's commitment to layer in healthy doses of accountability Unless there's one developed I think it's much harder to see the result from the collaboration. without collective impact, understanding collective impact, it's harder to, to get the real success stories out there. collective identity with your mission shared leadership empowerment rituals and norms to help start building that good cohesion norms can be established, rituals are used. norms are critical and maybe they're, if we design them became 'ours' and ownership of the program across is 'we- ness</p>	<p>collaboration is successful agree the work is bigger better at working together overcoming historical differences and geographic boundaries that discouraged collective action and coordination</p>	<p>collaboration.</p>	
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		<p>sense of inclusiveness within the members</p> <p>Rigid boundaries stopped the innovation and “we-ness”, meet people where they are.</p> <p>giving and kindheartedness</p> <p>Ability of people to effectively work together for the common good and common goal by setting aside preconceived notions</p>			
Perceived Success		<p>lot of collaboration ends up being be very amorphous</p> <p>very difficult to carve out victories</p> <p>larger collective impact</p> <p>types of initiatives emphasizing both population measures—around community well-being—and performance measures</p> <p>feel like their network, their ability to influence things through these growing networks is increasing</p>	<p>wonderful benefit for all the groups has evolved</p> <p>Through the collaboration, innovation and refinement of program details is continuous.</p> <p>work together, with a positive impact</p> <p>power and effectiveness of our collaborative work, collaboration keeps us thinking outside the box</p> <p>rewarding, both</p>	<p>Overall, our collaboration was successful.</p> <p>Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals.</p> <p>We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.</p> <p>In spite of our</p>	Question 12

		<p>anecdotal success stories of events or small wins don't often think the climate is right or the purpose is shared, point fingers and shift responsibility, lacking the understanding of the common and individual interest</p>	<p>professionally and personally The collective skills, talent, effort is inevitably more powerful than an individual organization's efforts elevated the level of knowledge and trust ability to unite around difficult issues support each other at a remarkable level over a vast and remote spatial scale and across historically rigid jurisdictional boundaries real learning has come from doing formalized collaborations among key stakeholders and influential leaders make sustainable, institutionalized change possible sustainable, systemic approach sectors to make a lasting impact in the lives of individuals</p>	<p>differences, we built something wonderful together.</p>	
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			together we can achieve much more than we can if we work alone		
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Appendix C

Colorado Collaboration Award Application Categories

Application

This list of the application questions for the [year] Colorado Collaboration Award.

Overview Questions

1. Collaboration Name:
2. Name of Lead Organization (for the purposes of this application):
3. Website:
4. Tax ID # for Lead Organization:
5. Mission of the collaboration:
6. What is the purpose/focus area of the collaboration? (Please select up to three... Please list the partners involved in the collaboration:
7. Colorado county in which the lead organization is based:
8. Colorado county/counties served by the collaboration (hold CTRL and click to select multiple counties):
9. Revenue: [Annual] budget for the collaboration (if applicable)
10. Expenses: [Annual] budget for the collaboration (if applicable)
11. The collaboration includes partners from these sectors (select all that apply):
12. Have you applied for the Colorado Collaboration Award before? In which year(s)? Is your collaboration currently accepting new partners?
13. Yes, please help funders, nonprofits, and the public learn more about this collaboration. I agree that the information provided in this application may be included in publicly-accessible resources. (If you prefer that information about your collaboration not be made available to the public, please leave this box unchecked.)

Narrative Questions

1. **Formation (5 points; maximum 725 characters)**
 Why was the collaboration formed and who was involved in its formation?
 How was it formed?
 What challenges did you face in creating the collaboration and how did you overcome them?
2. **Structure (15 points; maximum 2175 characters)**
 How is the collaboration structured, including its management structure?
 How are decisions made and conflicts resolved?
 How are the communities that you serve involved in the design, decision making and leadership of the collaboration?

3. **Purpose and Goals (25 points; maximum 4700 characters)**

What are the scope and goals of your collaboration?
How do you execute these goals?
What makes your collaboration unique and/or innovative?
What challenges has your collaboration faced when executing your goals and how have you overcome them?
4. **Results to date (40 points; maximum 4700 characters)**

Describe the collaboration's overall approach to evaluation.
Describe how you demonstrate the collaboration's impact.
Tell us about your results – what benefits (from collaborating) have you realized?
In what ways is this collaboration a valuable model from which others can learn or benefit, or which others can replicate?
5. **Planning (5 points; maximum 725 characters)**

Does the collaboration have a strategic plan?
If so, please tell us about it.
Describe how the collaboration engages in planning.
Describe the focus of any current planning efforts.
6. **Anticipated challenges and opportunities (5 points; maximum 725 characters)**

Describe the challenges and opportunities facing the collaboration in the next three to five years.
7. **Budget (5 points; maximum 725 characters)**

What is the nature of the financial relationship between members of the collaboration?
Describe how your collaboration would spend the award if received.

Appendix D

Selected Collaborations

Name	Date Formed	Partners	Sectors
Acts4 Community Outreach Services, Inc. DBA Love INC of Littleton	2006	St. Luke's United Methodist Church St. Herman Orthodox church South Fellowship church Faith Community Church Waterstone Community Church St. Francis Cabrini Catholic Parish	Nonprofit; Government
Adams County Youth Initiative	2007	17th Judicial District – Probation 17th Judicial District - District Attorney's Office 17th Judicial District - Juvenile Court Adams 12 Five Star Schools Adams County Board of County Commissioners Adams County Education Consortium Adams County Human Services Adams County School District 14 Adams County School District 50 Adams County Sheriff's Office City of Brighton City of Commerce City City of Federal Heights City of Northglenn City of Thornton Police Department City of Westminster Community Reach Center Crossroads Church Early Childhood Partnership of Adams County Front Range Community College Mapleton Public Schools School District 27J The Link	Government, Nonprofit, Other
Art in Motion	2010	Advanced Wellness Partners (Formerly BodyTalk Denver) Optimum Films Pay it Forward Denver Project BimmerT Murals (Formerly 2Kool)	Nonprofit; Private/corporate; Other
Backstage Cooperative Arts Warehouse	2009	Canyon Concert Ballet- MUG Debut Theatre -MUG Downtown Development Authority Fort Collins Childrens Theatre- MUG OpenStage Theatre & Company- MUG Opera Fort Collins -MUG The Mostlies -OUG	Nonprofit; Government

		Centennial Children's Chorus -OUG	
Certified Nursing Assistant (CNA) Program	2011	Discover Goodwill of Southern and Western Colorado, El Paso County Department of Human Services (EPDHS), Front Range Nurse Aide Training Program (FRNATP), Business Advisory Council (BAC), Centura Health, Mt. St. Francis Nursing Center, Namaste Alzheimer Center, Sunny Vista	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Colorado Black Health Collaborative	2008	Mile High Fitness Dr. Byron Conner Alzheimer's Association KP African American Center of Excellence Inner City Health Center Caregiver's Guardian Restoration for Victims The Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, STD/HIV Section Care and Treatment Taking Neighborhoods Health to Heart It Takes A Village, Inc. Stella Nash Robert Atwell Carnita Groves Excelsior and Associates Seasons of Life Tri-County Health Department	Nonprofit; Government; Other
Colorado Conservation Partnership (CCP)	2007	Colorado Conservation Trust Colorado Open Lands Conservation Fund The Nature Conservancy Trust for Public Land	Nonprofit
Colorado Daylight Project	2010	ARTS: Addiction Research and Treatment Services, Arapahoe House, Aspen Pointe, Inc., Centennial Mental Health Center, Colorado West Regional Mental Health, Inc., Mental Health Center of Denver, North Range Behavioral Health, Touchstone Health Partners (formerly Larimer Center for Mental Health)	Nonprofit
Colorado Integration Project	2010	Colorado Legacy Foundation (CLF); Colorado Department of Education (CDE); and 13 districts engaged in the pilot of the Colorado model evaluation system including 13 districts integrating standards and assessments.	Nonprofit; Government; Other
Colorado's Interagency Youth Sexual Health Team	2012	Colorado Youth Matter, Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment, Colorado Department of Education, Colorado Department of Human Services, Health Care Policy and Financing, 2	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate

		Youth Leaders, 2 Parent Leaders	
Colorado No Kid Hungry	2009	Hunger Free Colorado, Share Our Strength, and Governor John Hickenlooper.	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Colorado Respite Care Project	2010	Easter Seals Colorado Colorado Department of Human Services State Unit on Aging Colorado Respite Coalition Chronic Care Collaborative Northern Colorado Respite Coalition Southern Colorado Respite Coalition Western Slope Respite Coalition	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Community Care of Central Colorado	2010	Community Health Partnership Rocky Mountain Health Care Services Penrose-St. Francis Health Services UC/Memorial Hospital Peak Vista Community Health Centers AspenPointe	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Community Counts	2010	Energy Industry: Encana Oil & Gas (USA), Inc.; WPX Energy; Chevron; Marathon; Piceance Energy; Occidental Petroleum; Barrett Resources; Ursa Resources; Petroleum Development Corp; Noble Energy; Axia Energy; Summit Midstream; Williams Production; various service contractors to the industry. Counties: Garfield commissioners; Garfield Oil & Gas Liaison's office; Mesa and Garfield counties' sheriff's offices and Road & Bridge departments. Municipalities: Town of Parachute; Battlement Mesa Development Co; Town of Collbran; Town of Debeque. Educational institutions: Colorado Mountain College Foundation; CSU Extension. Business organizations: Rifle and Parachute chambers; Rifle Economic Development Corp. Various local retail businesses, realtors and consultants. Individual "Friends of Community Counts" members	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Continuum of Care for Seniors in Rural Foothills	2009	Mt. Evans Home Health and Hospice Elk Run Assisted Living Augustana Seniors' Resource Center Life Care Center of Evergreen	Nonprofit; Private/corporate
Cradle to Career Initiative	2010	60 local nonprofits serving youth and their families, school districts from Aspen to Parachute, and county health and human services agencies	Nonprofit; Government

Denver Teen Pregnancy Prevention Partnership (DTP3)	2006	Planned Parenthood of the Rocky Mountains Denver School Based Health Centers Denver Are Youth Services COLOR (Colorado Organization for Latina Opportunity and Reproductive Rights) Girls, Inc. Metro Denver Denver Public Schools Colorado Youth Matter City of Denver, Mayor's Office of Education and Children	Nonprofit; Government; Other
Dolores Riparian Restoration Partnership	2009	Bureau of Land Management - CO, UT US Fish and Wildlife Service Department of Energy Colorado Parks and Wildlife Colorado Water Conservation Board Colorado State Forest Service Dolores County San Miguel County Montrose County Mesa County Grand County, Utah University of Utah - Rio Mesa Research Center Colorado Mesa University The Nature Conservancy Tamarisk Coalition Walton Family Foundation Southwest Conservation Corps Western Colorado Conservation Corps Canyon Country Youth Corps - Four Corner School - UT Gateway Canyons Resort	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Eagle Valley Land Exchange	2008	Eagle Valley Land Trust United States Forest Service Colorado State Land Board Eagle County Town of Avon Eagle River Water and Sanitation District Nottingham Family	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Energy Smart Colorado	2009	Office for Resource Efficiency (ORE) Community Office for Resource Efficiency (CORE) Eagle County Eagle Valley Alliance for Sustainability (EVAS) Pitkin County Gunnison County City of Aspen Utilities Holy Cross Energy SourceGas Atmos Energy	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate

		Gunnison County Electric Association	
Farm Westwood - Transforming a Food Desert into a Community Food System	2009	Revision International LiveWell Westwood The Colorado Health Foundation The Denver Foundation The Office of Economic Development The Urban Land Conservancy Denver Public Health Trust for Public Land The Rocky Mountain Farmers Union	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Fearless Victory	2010	Veterans Peace of Mind Project Medicine Horse Program Denis Darby, Peer Specialist with VA Hospital Denver	Other
FERN (Food Exchange Resource Network)	2011	The Denver Inner City Parish, Community Ministry of Southwest Denver, Broadway Assistance Center (BAC), Father Woody's Haven of Hope, Bienvenidos Food Bank, St. Mary's Catholic Parish, Lowery Backpack Program, Mile High Youth Corp, and Colorado Pet Pantry	Nonprofit; Private/corporate
First Judicial District Multi-Disciplinary Team	2007	1. Ralston House child advocacy center 2. Arvada Police Department 3. Colorado School of Mines Department of Public Safety 4. Edgewater Police Department 5. Front Range Forensic Nursing 6. Gilpin County Human Services 7. Gilpin County Sheriff's Office 8. Golden Police Department 9. Jefferson County Attorney's Office 10. Jefferson County District Attorney's Office 11. Jefferson County Human Services 12. Jefferson County Sheriff's Office 13. Lakeside Police Department 14. Lakewood Police Department 15. Littleton Police Department 16. Morrison Police Department 17. Mountain View Police Department 18. Westminster Police Department 19. Wheat Ridge Police Department 20. Private therapists	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Grand County Meeting Milestones Collaborative	2010	Grand County Rural Health Network, Inc. (GCRHN) Grand Beginnings, a partner in the Rural Resort Region Northeast Early Childhood Council (GB) Assuring Better Child Health and Development (ABCD)	Nonprofit; Private/corporate

		Patient Tools Inc. (PTI)	
Grand Valley Trails Alliance	2012	Bureau of Land Management (BLM) United States Forest Service (USFS) Colorado National Monument (CNM) Mesa County (MC) Colorado Plateau Mountain Bike Trail Association (COPMOBA) Grand Mesa Jeep Club (GMJC) Bookcliff Rattlers (BCR) Western Slope ATV Association (WSATVA) Responsible Recreation Foundation (RRF) Quiet Trail Users (various sub-organizations) Grand Junction City (GJC) Colorado Mountain Club (CMC) Hilltop Powderhorn Ski Resort	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Housing Hope	2008	Mercy Housing is proud to work with Denver's Road Home and Denver Housing Authority to provide housing for those in need.	Government, nonprofit
Hunger Relief	2010	Sprouts Farmers Market Whole Foods Markets Natural Grocers/Vitamin Cottage Traders Joe's Market Bakers Way Rudis Bread Company Fresh and Easy Neighborhood Stores FreshPack Wholesale Produce Freshpoint Produce Safeway Corporation Starbucks Coffee Corporation Einstein Bagels Company Colorado Farmers Markets	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
Jefferson County Business Education Alliance	2011	The Jefferson Foundation, all Jefferson County Chambers of Commerce, Wheat Ridge Business Association, Jefferson County Economic Development Corporation, Jefferson County Business Resource Center, Jefferson County Human Services, Tri-County Workforce Center and it's Workforce Investment Board, Jefferson County Public Schools, Red Rocks Community College	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
North Colorado Health Alliance add	2000	Aims Community College Banner Health (Hospital operations)* Christ Community Church Colorado Access* Colorado School of Public Health Colorado State University Greeley Police Department High Plains Library District	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other

		Kaiser Permanente* North Colorado Medical Center Foundation North Range Behavioral Health (Community mental health services)* Northeast Behavioral Health Partnership* Real Food Colorado Salvation Army School District 6 Sunrise Community Health (Federally Qualified Health Center)* Touchstone Health Partners Weld County Commissioners Weld County Department of Public Health and Environment* Weld County Department of Human Services Weld County Medical Society Weld Food Bank United Way of Weld County University of Northern Colorado	
Northeast Denver Youth Engagement Zone	2010	YouthBiz, Inc. cityWILD Earth Force, Inc. Redline Metro Volunteers Bruce Randolph Manual Whittier	Government, nonprofit
Resource Smart Business Program (RSBP)	2010	Four Corners Office for Resource Efficiency (4CORE) Healthy Lifestyle La Plata (HLLP) La Plata Electric Association (LPEA) Fort Lewis College Environmental Center (FLC EC) SWConnect Bright Green, LLC Local First La Plata County	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Rocky Mountain Childhood Conference	2010	The Rocky Mountain Early Childhood Training Collaborative provides a platform to hear and learn from a broad range of multi-disciplinary leaders, practitioners, and experts that promote high quality early education programs. The Colorado Head Start Association, The Colorado Association for the Education of Young Children Denver Preschool Program, and Early Childhood Education Association of Colorado are collaborating to sponsor premiere regional conferences focused on the many complexities, challenges, and facets of	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate

		early childhood education.	
Safe Schools/Healthy Students - One Community Pueblo	2008	Safe Schools, Healthy Students Core Management Team: Pueblo City Schools; Spanish Peaks Behavioral Health Centers; Parkview Medical Center; Crossroads Turning Point; Pueblo City-County Health Department; Colorado Courts; Pueblo Police; District Attorney, 10th Judicial District. Broader Partnership of One Community Pueblo: Pueblo Alliance for Healthy Teens, Mental Health Integration Committee, Juvenile Justice Coalition, Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition, Early Childhood Council, Gang Prevention Task Force, Pueblo 2020 Commission, Senate Bill 94, HB1451 (all of whom represent multiple sectors and agencies in human services, health, juvenile justice, and youth development).	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
San Juan National Forest Weeds Project	2009	San Juan RC&D San Juan National Forest Dove Creek Mandatory Weed Control District La Plata County Montezuma County Upper San Juan Weed Control District	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate
San Luis Valley Hunger Relief	2009	Alamosa Food Bank supporting 6 counties	Nonprofit
Slow the Flow Colorado add	2004	Center for ReSource Conservation, City of Boulder, City and County of Broomfield, City of Longmont, City of Louisville, City of Lafayette, City of Thornton, City of Arvada, Castle Pines North Water District, City of Castle Rock, Centennial Water District, Town of Erie, City of Golden, City of Grand Junction, Left Hand Water District, Little Thompson Water District, City of Loveland, North Table Mountain Water, City of Northglenn, Parker Water District, Commerce City Water District, Town of Superior, City of Westminster, Willows Water District	Nonprofit; Government; Other
South Denver Care Continuum (SDCC) SO Metro Denver-Health Care	2011	Centura Health; Littleton, Parker, Porter Hospitals HealthONE Infinity Rehab St. Andrew's Village Sevens Home Health Shalom Cares	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other

		Comforcare IPC Senior Care of Colorado Angels Care Home Health Rural / Pridemark Ambulance Colorado Community Hospice Colorado Foundation for Medical Care Senior Resource Center DRCOG South Suburban Park and Recreation District	
Swift Pond's Facility Collaboration	2009	Colorado Youth Outdoors Larimer County Colorado Parks and Wildlife Front Range Community College Great Outdoors Colorado	Nonprofit; Government
The Champions Program	2007	Catholic Charities Connections for Independent Living Greeley Transitional House GreenPath Debt Solutions United Way of Weld County (UWWC)	Nonprofit
The Early Childhood Council of Boulder County Collective Impact Collaboration	2012	Boulder County Human Services, YMCA, Head Start, Cities of Boulder, Longmont and Lafayette, Boulder Valley School district, St Vrain Valley School district, Sister Carmen Community Center, Front Range Community College, CU, Mental Health Partners, Childcare Resource and Referral, People's Clinic, Play Therapy Institute, Boulder Institute for Psychotherapy, The Acron Preschool, Imagine!, The Office of Early Childhood-Division of Childcare Licensing, Congregation Har Hashem Preschool, Boulder County Public Health, Boulder Journey School, foster parent of 2 children with special needs	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Triage Collaborative for Domestic Violence Prevention	2009	CO Legal Services, the DV Coordinating Council, SafeHouse Denver, Project Safeguard, Other partners: Denver Police Victim Assistance & Domestic Violence Units, Denver City & District Attorneys' offices, probation, pre-trial service	Nonprofit; Government
USFS Peaks to Prairies Children's Forest Corridor Project	2011	USDA Forest Service Rocky Mountain Region, GP RED, The Greenway Foundation, Denver Audubon, Denver Parks & Recreation, Denver Water, National Wildlife Federation, One World/One Water, Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory, Recreation Equipment, Inc (REI), Colorado Mountain Club, Wildlife Habitat Council, US Geological Survey, Colorado Kids Outdoors,	Nonprofit, Private, Corporate, Government

		Colorado State Forest Service, Colorado Parks & Wildlife, Trust for Public Land, Avid4Adventure, Big City Mountaineers, Colorado Alliance for Environmental Education, Colorado Parks & Recreation Association, Colorado Trout Unlimited, Great Outdoors Colorado, GreenPlay, LLC, I Never Solo, Jax Merchantile Co., Livewell Colorado, Outdoor Recreation Information Center, Peaks Foundation, Mule Deer Foundation, Plains Conservation Center, Wildlife Experience, Colorado Trail Foundation, USTA Intermountain Colorado, Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado, Walk2Connect, Wildlands Restoration Volunteers, Jellystone Park, and numerous location parks, recreation, and open space agencies	
Western Colorado Business Development Corporation	1986	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Incubator Center (BIC) • Colorado Small Business Development Center (CSBDC) • Revolving Loan Fund of Mesa County (BLF) • Mesa County Enterprise Zone (EZ) • Riverview Technology Center (RTC) • City of Grand Junction (GJ) City Council • Mesa County (MC) County Commissioners • City of Fruita (F) • OEDIT (Colorado Office of Economic Development & International Trade) CDBG block grants <p>Partners who do not contribute cash funding but collaborate in programs/development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colorado Mesa University (CMU) • Western Colorado Community College (WCCC) • Grand Junction Economic Partnership (GJEP) • City of Grand Junction (GJ) Visitor & Convention Bureau • Mesa County (MC) Workforce Center & Health Department • Chamber of Commerce for Grand Junction, Fruita and Palisade; Western Colorado Latino Chamber (CoC) • Colorado State University Extension Service (CSU) 	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate; Other
Western Colorado Landscape Collaborative	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grand Mesa, Uncompahgre & Gunnison National Forests • BLM Uncompahgre & Grand Junction Field 	Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate

		<p>Offices</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SW Region of CO Parks & Wildlife • Rocky Mountain Region of Western Area Power Admin. • Tri-State Generation & Transmission Assoc. • Uncompahgre/Com, Inc. (nonprofit) 	
<p>Yampa River System Legacy Partnership (one of two of Colorado's America's Great Outdoors projects as selected by the President and Governor)</p>	1995	<p>18+ representatives (NGOs, GOs and private) from both Routt and Moffat Counties (2 commissioners) and also includes representatives from the cities of Craig and Steamboat; the Town of Hayden; Colorado Parks and Wildlife (2); Bureau of Land Management; The Nature Conservancy; Yampa Valley Land Trust; agriculture (one from each county); private business; public lands; Yampa River; youth and outdoor education; and, youth and outdoor jobs (youth corps)</p>	<p>Nonprofit; Government; Private/corporate</p>

Appendix E

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Thank you for participating in the Colorado Collaboration Award process. I am impressed by all the great work done by so many committed people in these collaborations. In fact, it was during the Colorado Collaboration Award ceremony in October of 2013 that I decided I wanted to do my dissertation research on how these collaborations developed and created value in so many communities.

This Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration survey instrument is one phase of my doctoral research on what elements contribute to successful collaborations. I have a particular focus on the development of collective, or group, identity. This survey is being sent to the contact person for collaborations that participated in the Colorado Collaboration Awards process. I am asking the contact person to fill out the survey and send this survey to at least five people who were instrumental in developing and sustaining their collaboration. This survey is an opportunity to reflect on and share your experiences with collaborations.

The survey results will be confidential and findings will only be reported in the aggregate across all collaborations. You will not be personally identified. However, if you would like to be part of a focus group to talk about the survey findings and participate in meaning-making about effective collaborations, please fill in your contact information at the end of the survey.

Participation in this survey is voluntary and you may decide not to submit the survey at any point in the survey taking process. All survey data will be kept in a secure password protected file. I estimate this survey will take about 15 minutes of your time. Thank you, in advance, for participating. Your responses to the survey will greatly help our understanding of how collaborations form and become effective.

I really appreciate the gift of your time and input.

Pat Greer
Antioch University
PhD in Leadership & Change

If you have any questions about the study, you may contact Pat Greer, at telephone # 303-915-1750 or via email at patgreer@antioch.edu.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact Dr. Philomena Essed, Chair of the Antioch University PhD in Leadership and Change IRB, via email at Essed@antioch.edu.

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Choose your collaboration.

Please select the collaboration that you were a member of that applied for the Colorado Collaboration Award in either 2013 or 2014. (If you do not find the name of your collaboration on this list, please type in the name in the blank space below.)

- * 1. Please choose your collaboration from the drop down menu.

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Elements – Committed Members

- * 2. Thinking about your involvement with [Q1], how active have you been in this collaborative?

	Not at All Active	Not too Active	Somewhat Active	Fairly Active	Very Active
Involvement in collaborative	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

- * 3. Thinking about the commitment it takes to develop collaborations, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about the commitment of the members of [Q1] ?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We were strongly committed to the same mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We were actively engaged in the work of our collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We were willing to work together to meet the goals of our collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element–Time

* 4. Thinking about the time it takes to develop a collaboration, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about [Q1] ?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our collaboration took the time needed to build relationships with each other.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We all gave the time needed for the work of our collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The benefits of this collaboration were worth the time.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element–Resources

* 5. Thinking about the resources it takes to build and sustain collaboration, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about [Q1]?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We effectively pooled our resources to meet collective goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We identified the resources each member could bring to our collective efforts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We identified community partners that could contribute resources for the collaboration's use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element–Emergent Communication

* 6. Thinking about the communication it takes to develop and sustain collaboration, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about [Q1] ?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We were able to talk about different perspectives in a constructive manner.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We encouraged open, honest, and respectful discussions during our meetings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We used active listening to help us resolve disagreements.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We worked hard to resolve conflicts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element –Trust

* 7. Thinking about the level of trust it takes for collaboration, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about [Q1]?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We built a high level of trust.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We each trusted most members of our collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We trusted each other's ability to contribute to the collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element–Shared Goal

* 8. Thinking about shared goals, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each the following statements about [Q1]?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We worked toward shared goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We set goals together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We all worked together to achieve the vision we shared.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element– Defined Process

* 9. Thinking about the processes it takes to manage a collaboration, how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements about [Q1]?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We had commonly understood clear processes for working toward our goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We used consistent decision-making processes to accomplish our work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The process we used to make decisions was effective.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We set up routine practices, such as introductions, meeting agendas, <input type="radio"/> time limits, and notetaking.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Element–Collective Identity

* 10. Thinking about [Q1], how strongly do you disagree or agree with each of the following statements?

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
We managed to break down traditional boundaries to achieve the goals of the collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We became a very cohesive group.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Through the work of our collaboration, we became something much bigger than we could have individually.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We created an impact greater than what each individual organization could have created on its own.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our collaboration had positive name recognition in our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We had a sense of pride about belonging to this collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We all felt great personal satisfaction from being part of this collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

11. How would you describe the teamwork that developed within your collaboration?

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Perceived Success

* 12. Thinking about [Q1], how strongly do you disagree or agree with the following statements about your collaboration's success?.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Overall, our collaboration was successful.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Our collaboration successfully achieved our goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
We built strong successful relationships that brought positive benefit to our community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
In spite of our differences, we built something wonderful together.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

13. How would you describe what success looked like for your collaboration?

14. How could [Q1] been improved, and how would the improvement changed the outcome?

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration

Demographics

15. Gender

Female

Male

16. Age Range

Under 35

35-50

Over 50

17. Highest degree of level of school you are completed

- Less than High school
- High School graduate
- Some college or technical training
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

18. Highest degree of level of school you are completed

- Less than High school
- High School graduate
- Some college or technical training
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree
- Professional degree
- Doctorate degree

19. After the survey results are complete, there will be an opportunity to participate in a focus group to discuss the results and the broader topic of how to create and sustain effective and meaningful collaboration. If you want to be considered for participation in this focus group, please provide your contact information.

Name

Email address

Phone number

Elements of Interorganizational Collaboration**Thank You!!**

Once again, thank you for your input and the gift of your time!

Pat

Appendix F

Focus Group Questions

1. How would you describe the relationship between the members of your group? Would you say, closely knit, very loose, or somewhere between? Why and how have the relationships changed over time?
2. How would you describe the impact your collaboration had? Would you describe it as a tremendous impact, no impact at all, or somewhere in-between? Did your group achieve your goals?
3. What did your group do to facilitate working as a team? How did your group handle differences of opinions or perspective? What didn't work?
4. How have you personally benefited from participating in this collaboration?

Appendix G

Author Video Transcript

Welcome to my dissertation. The title is “The Element of Effective Interorganizational Collaboration: A Mixed Method Study.”

I became interested in collaboration after an experience working with a group who were deciding the use of a 5-acre parcel of land in the southern part of the city where I worked. In the beginning of the process, people would not talk to, look at, or interact with others with who they disagreed. Over time, there was a switch, and when the final plan was presented to City Council, all members of the committee came together to support both the plan and one another. When I saw this shift to people who were supporting each other and their community, I wondered how that happened, and what were the steps.

As I was researching why this change occurred, I came across the term ‘collective identity’, or the group identity or cohesion. Along with exploring the other elements, I made collective identity the focus of my study.

I interviewed experts and used their ideas plus the research to build a survey. This survey was sent out to 46 interorganizational collaborations, with 80% of the collaborations having members from public, private, and nonprofit organizations. After the results were analyzed, I conducted a focus group and additional interviews.

My findings were interesting and powerful. First, achieving collective identity was a success for collaboration, even if the goal is not met. When achieved, collective identity benefits not only the members, but the broader community. One measure of collective identity is found in the way members see benefit to their community. Another measure is the social capital that is created through the process of collaborating. Having small wins builds collective identity and success for the members. Although collaboration may solve a problem, but the process and formation of collective identity brings the greatest benefit.

My research also found the critical elements needed to begin a collaboration to reach collective identity and success. These elements include: committed members, resources, and time. Committed members are those who will continue the process, even though there is conflict and differing viewpoints. Resources may include time as a subset, but certainly include funding. The need for funding was brought up multiple times. Last, collaboration takes more time than is often suspected or given. Collaboration is not efficient because of the need to create relationships and processes, but can be very effective in resolving messy problems.

Collaboration is a complex, creative, and interactive process, and can produce amazing results with messy problems. I hope you enjoy my dissertation about this important topic.

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