Voluntary Organizations: Commitment, Leadership, and Organizational Effectiveness

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Voluntary organizations offer a unique opportunity to interpret participant relationships, leadership influences, and organizational effectiveness unencumbered by employment relationships. Regardless of organizational structure or purpose, all organizations are affected to some degree by their leadership and their membership. Based on the literature reviewed, effective voluntary organizations achieve their stated objectives through committed members united under a common purpose, exercising shared responsibility in a collaborative leadership process, and informed through regular communication and interaction.

Keywords: Commitment, Leadership, Organizational Effectiveness

Considerable research has been focused on the effectiveness of formal business and government organizations. However, voluntary organizations have received far less attention. What is effective for business and government organizations may not be effective for the voluntary organization. Regardless of organizational structure or purpose, all organizations are affected to some degree by their leadership and their membership.

This paper examines the nature of voluntary organizations in terms of the tri-partite relationship between individual participation and commitment, appropriate leadership styles, and ultimately organizational effectiveness. Comparatively little data addresses the role of commitment and leadership in voluntary organizations. Catano, Pond, and Kelloway (2001) contend that voluntary organizations represent an ideal context in which to study the subject—a context where no employment relationship exists.

The following questions will be addressed: What distinguishes voluntary organizations from other organizational types? Why do people freely associate with these organizations? What relationships are created within and between voluntary organizations? What leadership methods are appropriate for voluntary organizations? What determines their organizational effectiveness? And finally, what is the relationship between leadership in voluntary organizations, organizational commitment, and organizational effectiveness? At first analysis, commitment implies individual alignment with the shared purpose and beliefs of the organization; organizational effectiveness implies effective leadership around achievement of objectives built from core beliefs; and effective leadership implies the presence of followers united under a shared purpose and committed to the achievement of organizational objectives. A review of relevant literature will be conducted to answer these questions and assess the analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Many factors can be observed that influence how voluntary organizations function, including participant motivation, commitment, leadership, and peer relationships. In the areas of leadership style, the relationship between leaders and non-leaders is heavily influenced by the voluntary nature of the organization. In fact, the dominant relationship in all organizations is the leader-follower relationship. Organizational effectiveness is dependent not only on these influences, but also on how one defines the concept of effectiveness. Factors impacting the implementation of appropriate leadership and management processes within the voluntary organization context are also explored.

Voluntary Organizations

It is necessary to draw a distinction between voluntary organizations and organizations of volunteers. Dartington (1996) suggests that the defining characteristic of voluntary organizations, both structurally and psychologically, is the presence of a voluntary governance process through boards or committees. Voluntary organizations are distinctively group systems; decisions are made by consensus or majority vote and leadership is emergent, subject to the will of the majority, and often rotating (Wilderom & Miner, 1991). Given this group structure, it becomes necessary to determine the factors contributing to the individual decision to associate with, participate in, and commit to, a voluntary organization.

Motivation to associate and participate. Motivation can be generally classified as either extrinsic—doing something for an expectation of compensation, or intrinsic—doing something for the sake of the activity or the outcome. Farmer and Fedor (1999) note the lack of rigorous empirical research exploring the management of volunteers and suggest as a reason the lack of a coherent, well-established framework for understanding volunteer

behavior, particularly in the areas of participation and withdrawal. They suggest that psychological contract theory may be used to explain volunteer behavior and performance. Even though volunteers do not expect financial gain from their services, they do expect other considerations from the organizations for which they work (Farmer & Fedor, 1999). The results of their research supported the idea that psychological contract fulfillment (or violation) affected the level of volunteer participation. Farmer and Fedor (1999) drew four conclusions:

1. People select themselves into their volunteer work situations;
2. Psychological contracts in volunteers are much more likely to be relational than transactional;
3. Perceived breaches in the psychological contract may have serious consequences concerning level of participation in the organization, due to the combination of relational contracts and difficulties in mandating volunteer behavior; and
4. Fulfillment of psychological contracts may rest on more than just expectations.

Allison, Okun, and Dutridge (2002) conducted a study to determine the motives of volunteers given the choices of career, esteem, protective, social, understanding, and value. Participants in the study rated the value motive as their most important motive for volunteering followed by esteem and understanding motives. Post hoc analysis of their data also revealed three additional motives for volunteering: enjoyment, religiosity, and team building. Basically, individuals join voluntary organizations because of the compatibility of their beliefs with the values of the organization.

Organizational commitment. Given the above motives for initial voluntary association, there is a need to look at continued voluntary association, or organizational commitment. Organizational commitment may be generally defined as a strong belief in and acceptance of organizational goals and values, a willingness to exert effort on behalf of the organization, and a desire to maintain organizational membership (Porter, Steers, Mowday, & Boulian, 1974). Catano et al. (2001) contend that commitment to voluntary organizations may be moderated by several factors: some people may join to make social contacts, some because of professional pressure to do so, or even some due to perceived job requirements. Additionally, McPherson (1983) found that behavioral commitment to an organization is constrained less by attitudinal disposition and more by broad social, geographic and institutional factors. For example, people are more likely to retain their memberships in voluntary organizations when their employment relationships reinforce that membership.

Meyer and Allen (1991) developed a model of organizational commitment consisting of three distinct components: affective commitment, continuance commitment, and normative commitment. Under this model, affective commitment denotes an emotional attachment to, identification with, and involvement in the organization; continuance commitment denotes the perceived costs associated with leaving the organization; and normative commitment denotes the perceived obligation to remain in the organization. A meta-analysis conducted by Meyer, Stanley, Herscovitch, and Topolnytsky (2002) found strong correlation between affective commitment and overall job satisfaction, occupational commitment, organizational justice, and transformational leadership. While the research reviewed in the meta-analysis appears to come from organizations where an employment relationship exits, the influences of organizational commitment, justice, and leadership are equally applicable in voluntary organizations. Regarding continuance commitment, positive correlation was found among employees who believed their skills and education would not easily transfer to other organizations, and negative correlation was found when employees perceived the availability of alternatives (Meyer et al., 2002). From the perspective of a voluntary organization, this would seem to be consistent with the factors influencing participant motivation discussed earlier.

Partnership relationships. Taking the relationships of voluntary organization one step further, voluntary partnerships between organizations reveal many similarities. Present within these organizational partnership relationships are the same individual dynamics present within a voluntary organization of individuals. According to Lasker, Weiss, and Miller (2001), the voluntary nature of partnerships can make recruitment and retention of partners challenging. This raises organizational association, commitment, and leadership issues similar to those discussed above under voluntary organizations. Mohr and Spekman (1994) define partnerships as purposive strategic relationships between independent organizations, sharing compatible goals, striving for mutual benefit, and acknowledging a high level of mutual interdependence. Partnerships form to accomplish goals that either party could not easily attain on their own. Farrell and Scotchmer (1988) define partnership as a coalition that divides output equally. Additionally, the equal sharing of output should occur even when partners contribute unequal amounts. Under this economic model, partnership size is controlled by the ability of the individuals involved, where the equal sharing constraint limits the size of the partnership. Partnerships of people and/or organizations with differing ability are smaller than those comprised of similar levels of ability (Farrell & Scotchmer, 1988).

An ideal partnership may be described as a dynamic relationship among diverse actors, based on mutually agreed objectives, pursued through a shared understanding of the division of labor (Brinkerhoff, 2002). Partnerships in this definition must have a careful balance between synergy and respective autonomy, incorporating mutual

respect, equal participation in decision making, mutual accountability, and transparency of operation. Brinkerhoff (2002) proposes a partnership model consisting of two dimensions: mutuality and organizational identity. Mutuality refers to the interdependence or horizontal relationships between partners, including shared purpose and values, mutual trust, and respects. Organizational identity refers to that which is distinctive and enduring in an organization. This view is consistent with the previously discussed research of Farmer & Fedor (1999) regarding the presence of psychological contracts underlying participant motivation.

Assessing partnership organizations as high or low in each of the two dimensions produces four quadrants of inter-organizational relationships. Brinkerhoff (2002) defines the four quadrants as partnership, contracting, extension, and co-optation. Partnership exists in the quadrant where mutuality and organizational identity are maximized. If organizational identity is high but mutuality is low, then contracting describes the inter-organizational relationship. When organizational identity and mutuality are both low, the dominant organization defines the relationship and the following organizations are viewed as extensions of the dominant organization. Co-optation occurs when mutuality is high and organizational identity is low. The less dominant organization will follow the more dominant organization's lead, leading to co-optation of purpose and potentially long-term loss of organizational identity and gradual absorption. Arino and de la Torre (1998) found that in such asymmetrical partnership relationships, conflict resolution mechanisms were critical in promoting positive renegotiation loops, enhancing relationship quality, and rewarding collaborative behavior. Mutuality can reinforce organizational identity, but it is not guaranteed. Brinkerhoff (2002) suggests that by participating and influencing equally, each organization can protect its organizational identity and hence the efficiency, effectiveness and synergistic rewards of the partnership. Additionally, by maintaining organizational identity, it is possible for organizations to be involved in more than one partnership.

Partnership remains an evolving concept and practice (Brinkerhoff, 2002). In fact, Miller and Ahmad (2000) found the term partnership to be much abused, even used to describe traditional contract relationships. Many organizations enter into partnership-style activities without giving much thought to the underlying organizational and interpersonal relationship issues. These hasty decisions may ultimately lead to an increase in interpersonal and/or inter-organizational conflict, participant withdrawal, and even organizational ineffectiveness.

Leadership

The impact of differing leadership styles on volunteers and the organization processes in general can be critical for organizational success. The characteristic of shared governance found in voluntary organizations is different from that found in a typical employment-based organization, and reveals a need for effective application of appropriate leadership styles.

Leadership relationships. Two levels of membership are found within the voluntary organization: leaders and non-leaders (Heidrich, 1990). The nature of the relationship between leaders and non-leaders is especially important in voluntary organizations, since the member has the ultimate option of withdrawing from the organization (Catano et al., 2001). Active participation by both leaders and non-leaders is necessary for the organization to complete its goals and missions (Catano et al., 2001). Further aggravating the relationship between leaders and non-leaders is the recurring problem of building a shared understanding of the common good (Firestone and Fisler, 2002). Without this shared understanding, it would be easy for an organization to lose focus and direction, becoming ineffective and impacting volunteer recruitment and ongoing commitment.

A common failing of voluntary organizations is that leaders can become so directly involved in project accomplishment that they don't leave time to cultivate their subordinate leaders (O'Connell, 1976). According to Dartington (1996), the struggle for authority in voluntary organizations often has the characteristics of an Oedipal conflict, involving the need to usurp or remove past leadership in order to create a new relationship with the original (or perhaps a new) vision of the organization. Those who manage voluntary organizations often subvert the accountability of the characteristic shared governance model to accomplish singularly beneficial objectives. As such, the voluntary organization needs to have ways to maintain its integrity and sense of purpose against the threats of individual ambition (Dartington, 1996).

Lord, Brown, and Freiberg (1999) advocate a self-oriented approach to leadership, where the self-concept of the subordinate determines the appropriate leadership activity. Three component views of self-concept are explored: the individual, interpersonal, and collective. Leadership activities will be most successful when matched to the predominant self-concept of those being led (Lord et al., 1999). For example, transactional leadership fits better with individual-level self-identities, but transformational leadership is more consistent with the collective-level identities. Leadership activities that overemphasize the individual-level identities of subordinates may actually interfere with the development of a group identity (Lord et al., 1999). Instead, when collective-level relational identities are used to build group identity, such as in a voluntary organization, a transformational leadership approach is more likely to be successful.

Transformational leadership. Transformational leaders link task goals to self-regulatory systems, emphasizing higher level self-relevant constructs such as personal projects, self-identities, and underlying values (Lord et al., 1999). They also emphasize a connection between possible selves and collective identities as determinants of specific task goals.

Bass (1985) characterized transformational leadership as the ability to elicit support and participation from followers through personal qualities. This is in contrast to transactional leadership, where support and participation is typically elicited through reward and punishment. Firestone and Fisler (2002) contend that transformational leadership goes beyond mere exchange or transaction to modify the underlying purposes of the work, and suggest specific transformational leadership activities, including "providing idealized influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and individualized consideration" (p. 485). Transformational leadership should promote a sense of professional community. As noted earlier, this shared sense of identity is indicative of a voluntary organization.

Shared leadership. Shared leadership is a management model common to voluntary organizations, and is based on the philosophy of shared governance. Shared governance is a structural model that provides a framework for ensuring the processes of empowerment operate effectively (Porter-O'Grady & Krueger-Wilson, 1995). It is not a democracy, but an accountability-based approach with a clear expectation that all members participate. White (2001) describes governance as a process through which coordination is achieved.

Coluccio and Havlick (1998) provide four characteristics to describe shared leadership: a decentralized organizational structure; a balance of staff autonomy, managerial guidance, collaborative decision making, and individual accountability; an environment ensuring excellence and dignity; and a shared vision within the organization. Within Caluccio and Havlick's model, Jackson (2000) describes four constructs vital to the understanding of shared leadership: accountability, partnership, equity, and ownership. Accountability is the intrinsic responsibility of organization members within a specific role. Partnership is the collaborative relationship among individuals striving toward a common goal. Equity is respect for other's individual contributions to the organization. Ownership exists when individuals are committed to the mission and outcomes of the organization.

Under shared leadership, problems are approached by collaborative means, focusing on the work itself instead of who has authority. Shared leadership is directive, not dictatorial – those in leadership positions must find ways to be accountable without being controlling (Jackson, 2000). People who feel valued and have a shared sense of ownership bring greater energy and commitment to their work.

Collaborative leadership. Chrislip and Larson (1994) define collaborative leadership as a process to initiate, facilitate, and sustain collaborative initiatives among stakeholders. Collaborative leaders are those who have the right credibility and initiative to involve the right individuals and organizations in creating visions, solving problems, and reaching agreements (Hartman, Hofman, and Stafford, 1999). According to Chrislip and Larson (1994), collaborative leaders must focus on process rather than outcomes, further reinforcing the need for a transformational approach.

Collaboration can be defined as a process through which involved parties constructively explore their differences and search for solutions beyond their own limited vision of what is possible (Gray, 1989). Collaboration develops most easily when parties have a pattern of repeated and frequent interaction, but this interaction itself does not assure collaboration (McCaffrey, Faerman, & Hart, 1995). Residual conflicts affect the establishment of organizational trust and may make collaboration difficult. According to Hartman et al. (1999), collaboration can present significant challenges as it progresses from independent or adversarial parties to more tightly connected interrelationships characterized by coordinated decision-making.

A primary factor influencing the nature of collaboration is the existence of a shared vision (Gray, 1989). It is this shared vision that defines the voluntary organization's reason for existence and serves as the foundation for selecting a collective course of action. Lasker et al. (2001) identify synergy as the outcome that gives collaboration its unique advantage. As viewed through a synergistic process, collaboration can foster creative, comprehensive, practical, and transformative thinking (Lasker et al., 2001). The changes that result from this synergistic thinking can produce comprehensive actions and solutions that address problems at many levels.

In terms of social and political systems, collaboration is more likely when individual power is balanced and the number of parties involved is small enough to develop favorable relationships. McCaffrey et al. (1995) contend that the arguments supporting collaboration are so strong that it is easy to forget that an organization's members generally care about other things besides their collective identity and organizational effectiveness. Case studies indicate that leadership affects the outcomes of collaborative efforts (McCaffrey et al., 1995). In fact, both successful and unsuccessful implementations noted the impact of leadership on the final outcome.

Organizational Effectiveness

While a mutually acceptable definition of organizational effectiveness may not be possible, voluntary organizations may be examined under the existing frameworks of organizational control (leadership), defining organizational characteristics, and the available variables for predicting success.

Organizational control. Tannenbaum (1961) defined organizational effectiveness as the extent to which an organization fulfils it stated objectives and preserves its means and resources. A descriptive model called the "control graph" can be used to characterize the pattern of control in formal organizations, with the horizontal axis representing the hierarchical levels of the organization and the vertical axis representing the amount of control exercised by those at each hierarchical level (Tannenbaum, 1961). The resulting graph allows for four prototypic models of organizational control: autocratic (or oligarchic), democratic, laissez faire (or anarchic), and polyarchic. Tannenbaum suggests that voluntary organizations will be more effective under democratic control than autocratic control for two reasons. First, members with a say in determining policies and actions of their organization will satisfy the needs of a broader segment rather than just the leaders. Second, there is likely to be greater acceptance of jointly made decisions as well as an increased sense of responsibility and motivation to further the goals and purposes of the organization. Tannenbaum's suggestions are consistent with previously presented information on individual association, organizational commitment, and shared leadership. An individual who exercises control gives more of himself/herself to the organization, and is likely to be more identified with, more loyal to, and more active on behalf of the organization (Tannenbaum, 1962).

According to Tannenbaum (1962), increasing and distributing the exercise of control more broadly within an organization helps distribute an important sense of organizational involvement. However, the process of translating the expressed desire of organizational members for greater control into the actual exercise of that control may lead to several problem conditions (Tannenbaum, 1961). Some of these conditions may lead to a more autocratic environment, such as leaders making decisions themselves rather than begin a more cumbersome and time-consuming decision-making process. Or leaders may fail to, or choose not to, communicate the information necessary for proper decision-making. Some leaders may not have a clear understanding of what decisions are appropriate for them and which should be made jointly. Other problem conditions may lead to a more laissez faire environment, such as ill-defined responsibilities causing decisions to fall between organization roles. The lack of mutual understanding regarding appropriate decision-making may lead to conflict in which efforts of some are canceled out by the efforts of others, resulting in a situation where neither group exercises much control. This implies the importance of communication and interaction between organization members to permit the development of shared understanding, vision, and purpose, which are essential for organizational effectiveness and long-term success.

Organizational characteristics. Webb (1974) developed a general model of organizational effectiveness in terms of four organizational characteristics: cohesion, efficiency, adaptability, and support. While this model emerged from a study of religious organizations, many parallels exist with other forms of voluntary organizations. Cohesion refers to the presence of a positive working relationship (Webb, 1974). Indicators of cohesion would be commonality of interests, activities, values, and a strong identification with the organization. Efficiency refers to producing a desired result with a minimum of wasted time, effort, or expense (Webb, 1974). While voluntary organizations may often operate inefficiently, with duplication of effort and expense by non-experts, business organizations would not tolerate such a situation. Adaptability is a measure of readiness to accept change and respond effectively (Webb, 1974). Since the nature of volunteerism seems to be rotational leadership, it is important for organizations to be adaptive to changes from the internal as well as external environment. Support refers to the degree to which individuals stand behind their leader (Webb, 1974). This is of course a two-way street; individuals need to feel valued and appreciated within their organization and by those in leadership positions.

Ashmos, Duchon, McDaniel, & Huonker (2002) propose a simple managerial rule to improve organizational effectiveness: use participative decision-making. Participation in this context is defined as joint decision making or influence sharing, not delegation. When done appropriately, participative decision making reduces the manager's capacity to establish and maintain control, but also reduces the need to know everything and to coordinate and organize everything (Ashmos et al., 2002). Participation is a social process, and creates an environment where self-organizing becomes an expression of organizational learning and sense making (Ashmos et al., 2002). While not without difficulty, participative processes reinforce interdependence within organization members, providing a connection to a larger system. According to Ashmos et al. (2002), the connections generated through participation allow the organization to self-organize, re-energize, and co-evolve in ways that are more likely to lead to organizational success.

Organizational success predictors. Mohr and Spekman (1994) found the following variables significant in predicting partnership success: coordination, commitment, trust, communication quality, information sharing,

participation, joint problem solving, and avoiding problem avoidance behaviors. Interestingly, interdependence and persuasive tactics to resolve conflict were not found to be predictors of partnership success. According to Miller and Ahmad (2000), partnerships may have a better chance of success when they are built around specific and limited objectives. Great ambitions are often controversial and more likely to generate fundamental conflict of interests.

An effective system of governance requires balance between three purposes: developing a strategy, mission and/or policy; managing the setting; and being accountable to the people represented by the governing organization (White, 2001). This balance may prove hard to achieve. Additionally, participative management practices must balance the involvement of managers and their subordinates in the processing of information, decision-making, and/or problem-solving (Wagner, 1994).

A study conducted by Kim (2002) found a positive correlation between a manager's use of participative management and high levels of job satisfaction. In addition, the study demonstrated that a participative strategic planning process has a positive effect on employee job satisfaction. These findings also suggest that employee participation in strategic planning contributes to organizational effectiveness. Kim (2002) suggests that the transformational leadership practices of learning, change, and renewal would be required to facilitate implementation of the participative management processes necessary for increased job satisfaction and organizational effectiveness. While job satisfaction may not seem immediately relevant to the voluntary organization, it does exhibit a positive correlation to affective commitment (Meyer et al., 2002), which is arguably necessary for voluntary organization survival.

Implementing Collaborative Leadership

According to Burke (1982), change does not occur without the exercise of power, where "power is the capacity to influence, and leadership is the process or act of influencing" (p. 129). Implementing collaborative leadership would then require the combined influence of all parties involved. Jackson (2000) cites several potential obstacles to the implementation of shared or collaborative leadership. These include team attitudes, turf battles, individual career goals, management versus leadership issues, the organization's culture, the organization's readiness to change, current and future performance, and the current and future external environment. Firestone and Fisler (2002) also speak about the dark side of collaborative, shared, or distributed leadership, noting that it can easily become dispersed leadership, with the chaos, isolation or conflict that logically follows. Many of these barriers are directly influenced by the attitudes of the individuals involved. In fact, the survival of an organization when changing to a shared leadership model may hinge on the ability to incorporate new information into individual mental models (Jackson, 2000), reinforcing the need for a transformative approach. Transformational leadership offers a positive strategy for coordinating these multiple sources of influence without dictatorship or major organizational redesign (Firestone & Fisler, 2002).

Factors that may aid, or even drive, the transition to shared leadership include continuing education, strong organizational and administrative commitment, strong lines of communication, and the ability to define and promote outcomes for shared leadership (Jackson, 2000). For the successful implementation of a shared leadership model, Jackson (2000) recommends a program of concentrated education of the general concepts, specifically accountability, to promote the model. Additionally, all levels of the organization should visibly support the concepts of shared leadership.

McCaffrey et al. (1995) identify four conditions that contribute to the implementation and success of participative systems: prior organizational disposition toward collaboration; social and political organization; nature of incentives, issues, and values; and leadership capacity and style. Ashmos et al. (2002) suggest that implementation of participative processes must be tempered by an organization's predisposition and sensitivity to its environment, essentially their willingness and ability to respond to changes in the environment. Organizations may be predisposed for or against participation based on factors such as past performance, reliance on rules, and rigidity of roles.

Implications for HRD Research

One practical implication of research conducted by Catano, Pond, and Kelloway (2001) on voluntary organizations is the need for a greater emphasis on developing transformational leaders to improve member involvement, commitment, and participation. According to Mohr and Spekman (1994), effort must be dedicated to the formation and implementation of management strategies that promote and encourage continued growth and maintenance of the partnership relationship. As presented here, voluntary organizations require a different leadership approach, and it is quite possible that a different developmental approach is also necessary. Leadership development is an important role for HRD professionals, and as such, differing methods and techniques must be thoroughly researched to identify appropriate and effective processes. Day (2001) suggests that leader development takes a human capital approach

whereas leadership development takes a social capital approach. How do these two approaches impact leadership in voluntary organizations? Additionally, participants in voluntary organizations bring with them knowledge, skills, and abilities from other areas of work and social experience. Research is needed to determine if these prior external leadership experiences translate into effective leadership in the voluntary organization.

According to French and Bell (1999), increasing participation and empowerment are central goals and fundamental values of the field of organization development. As such, interventions are often deliberately designed to increase the involvement and participation of organization leaders and members. What intervention approach should be used with voluntary organizations? Since the consulting skills of HRD professionals are called upon to conduct these participative interventions, research into appropriate and effective methods will always be needed.

According to McCaffrey et al. (1995), studies of perceptions of organizational effectiveness show a higher correlation between participation and effectiveness than studies that look at actual operational indicators of effectiveness. In other words, individuals in participative systems may believe their organization to be more effective than it really is. Does this perception of effectiveness influence individual motivation to associate with a voluntary organization? Since HRD professionals often work with organizations desiring to improving their effectiveness, research is needed to address the apparent difference in perceived versus actual effectiveness.

Conclusions

The review of literature revealed the following tri-partite relationship: organizational commitment arises from individual alignment with the shared purpose and beliefs of the organization; organizational effectiveness depends on effective leadership around achievement of objectives built from core beliefs; and effective leadership is determined by the presence of followers united under a shared purpose and committed to the achievement of organizational objectives. The leader-follower relationship is central. According to White (2001), the top-down governance model of organizational leadership is being replaced by an autonomous, self-referential, and self-organizing model. The view now being adopted is that self-organization is a condition for self-renewal. A transformative leadership and learning process seems to be necessary and evident as interrelationships and connections are rearranged and revised to keep organizations effective at meeting desired outcomes. To be effective, the process of shared governance and leadership must allow this emergence to take place.

Managers and other leaders are drawn to participative systems because they seem to offer solutions to real problems (McCaffrey et al., 1995). However, the implementation of a participative system frequently reveals problems often associated with collective action, including dispositions against cooperating with former adversaries, the perceived costs of collaborating in complex social systems, the difficulties of engaging deep conflict, and the leadership incentives favoring control (McCaffrey et al., 1995). Firestone and Fisler (2002) contend that distribution of leadership may be especially important in partnerships, where no one individual has authority over the full range of participants.

Obviously, the implementation of a collaborative leadership process in a voluntary organization is not to be taken lightly. However, when effectively managed, it can lead to increased member participation and greater organizational effectiveness. An important consideration is that the process of implementing shared leadership is "a dynamic, ever-changing, never-ending journey, rather than a destination" (Jackson, 2000, p. 170).

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