

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF INTER-ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURAL MODEL IN LOCAL GOVERNMENT

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Abstract. *The partnership structure influences the possibility to implement joint goals in general. It can develop, maintain or encumber the collaboration process and value of a partnership. Thus, the facilitative structure of a partnership is an actual constituent of efficient inter-organizational partnership implementation. The aim of the research is to develop a conceptual structural model for effective inter-organizational partnership in Local Government. There are two such models presented in the article. Models are based on principles of involvement, participation, commitment, personal and group responsibility and comprise vertical and horizontal interaction of social subjects. These models: a) allow to reduce bureaucratic obstacles that occur because of the influence and powers of sponsoring institutions and supervisory authorities on initiation and implementation of inter-organizational programmes and projects; b) eliminate subordinate relations among municipalities and other partnership participants; c) encourages social responsibility of inter-organizational interaction participants since organizations realizing programmes and projects become partially economically interested not only in achievement of the set goals but also in assurance of positive social effect in a long-term perspective.*

Keywords: *inter-organizational partnership, partnership structure, Local Government.*

Raktažodžiai: *tarporganizacinė partnerystė, partnerystės struktūros, vietos savivalda.*

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In time of staple global changes, any organization activities can survive only in compatibility with surrounding socioeconomic environment. Organizations attach more and more importance to the inter-organizational relationships. In this context, partnership is perceived as the most profitable strategy to achieve an organizations' own and joint goals, and simultaneously to satisfy the needs of an spacious extent of stakeholders in any activity.

Because of its nature, inter-organizational partnership is relevant for the public sector and especially for self-government institutions. Functioning closest to the citizens and constantly increasing their requirements for socio-economic welfare, municipalities are capable of satisfying these requirements best. However, at the same time, self-governing institutions are dependent on the management of public institutions to a bigger or smaller extent. Thus, self-government performs the function of a mediator among individual citizens, communities, various organizations and State institutions. Both scientists and practitioners state that in the self-government and public sector in general, partnerships bring the most enormous benefit to the widest circle of benefit receivers (Almond, Verba, 1989; Mintzberg, 1989; Agranoff, McGuire, 2003; Chrislip, 2002). Partnership in any level of government offers clear benefits: better sharing of information by agencies, higher utilization of resources, more engaged policy-making, etc. (Estevez et al., 2010).

The performance of a partnership depends on the selection of the appropriate governing and coordinating mechanisms. Cogitating systematically on the connotations and processes of inter-organizational relationships should show inference about prerequisites for the effective management of partnership. Connotation on the structures of inter-organizational partnership is multiplicity. The partnership structure influences the possibility to implement joint goals in general. It can develop, maintain or encumber the collaboration process and exchange of value. Thus, facilitative structure is an actual constituent of efficient inter-organizational partnership implementation. However, analysis of scientific literature on partnership shows a gap referring to partnership design in local government and in the public sector generally (Raišienė, 2009). Consequently to this observation, the **aim** of the paper is *to develop a conceptual structural model for effective inter-organizational partnership in local government*. The main **objectives** are: to flick through theoretical models of inter-organizational partnership, to examine the factors of partnership which facilitate collaboration among partners, to present and to substantiate a conceptual structural model of inter-organizational partnership in Lithuania's local government.

The current research combines qualitative and quantitative methods of analysis: analysis of scientific literature on inter-organizational partnership and an inquiry of local government experts. The conceptual model is developed on synthesized inferences of theoretical and practical research.

The paper is organized as follows. Section 1 presents broad-brushed theoretical partnership models. Section 2 discusses the proposed framework of design factors of partnership in opinion of local government servants. Section 3 focuses on framing a conceptual structural model of partnership in local government. Section 4 discusses the study.

1. Theoretical models of inter-organizational interaction

Underpinning of the inter-organizational interaction theoretical models review is grounded on an attitude that either private or public sector models of partnerships are analogous nature.

The functions of the analysis of inter-organizational interaction models include clarification, understanding and interpretation of information on the partnership and collaboration process.

Inter-organizational interaction models may include the following types: process, context, mixed and structure models.

A **process** approach proposes a way to reveal inter-organizational relations: to conceptualize the interaction process and to determine the stages of inter-organizational collaboration. The approach exponents are such theoreticians as Ring and Van de Ven (1994), Gitlin, Lyons and Kolodner (1994), Noble and Jones (2003), D'Amor (2004), Hayward, De Marco and Lynch (2000), Gray (2008), Doz (1996) and others. Isolation from the external environment and absence of plain canals of decision-making are seen as the main disadvantages of process models. They reveal the dynamics of organizational relationships without considering the impact of external environment and internal structure.

Context models, differently from the previously mentioned ones, emphasize the impact of external and internal environment of related organizations on the expansion of inter-organizational partnership. Lober (1997), Kingdon (2003), Exworthy and Powell (2004), Sicotte et al. (2002) present the most characteristic works in that field. Though the focal attention is on the analysis of factors existing in the external environment, consideration of other influential factors is perceived as an advantage of contextual models of inter-organizational interaction.

Summarizing **mixed** or **integrated** models of inter-organizational interaction it is important in identifying the systemic principle that unites them all. The models link factors of environmental, organizational and reciprocal collaboration, while pre-conditions for personal interaction efficiency are considered as well. An inherent example is posed by Baker (2006). She joined series of theoretical models and created a Synthetic Stage and Stream Model. This model combines external political and internal collaboration windows, perceiving inter-organizational interaction as a number of phases. The author states that organizations are influenced by different contexts and political and organizational factors. These factors should be kept in mind when collaborating.

Particular examples of organizational and operational **structures** are found in works elaborating on partnership cases (Blumenberg, 2002; Chrislip, 2002; Vigoda-Gadot, 2004; Tushnet, 1993; Black, Carlile, Repenning, 2001); however, conceptual structural models are not presented there.

Organizational and operational structures of partnerships are most frequently formed when planning concrete joint programmes and projects. On the basis of theoretical foundations, partnership structure models are developed and they include in-

terested groups, processes, and contexts, or embrace them all. The studies by D'Amor et al. (2003; 2004) may serve as examples of such collaboration models.

In cooperation with colleagues, D'Amor created an improved model of professional collaboration (D'Amor et al., 2003). According to it, the process of collaboration is conditioned by characteristics of a network formed by collaborating organizations, characteristics of organizations themselves as well as political and economic environment. Professional Collaboration Model later was integrated into the Framework of Interdisciplinary Education for Collaborative Patient-Centered Practice (D'Amor et al., 2004), which was developed following the analysis of interaction among different organizations operating in the Quebec health care network. The range of circumstances affecting partnership was expanded by factors of educational, cultural, social and professional systems and drew in structural mode.

Alter and Hage (1993) integrated theories of loosely coupled systems, network, resource-dependence, and domain into inter-organizational interaction model, where variables determining formation of interaction and collaboration degree were identified and trends in research on collaboration structures and administration process were defined. All the variables were finally related to collaboration outcome.

The operational professional model of inter-organizational collaboration suggested by Straus (2002) is very characteristic. The author argues that collaboration is an interaction between formal organizations and informal structures. Formal organizations share authority and decision-making power. Informal structures base their activity on consensus. Every society consists of various (hierarchical and horizontal) organizations that belong to private, public or non-governmental sectors. Such organizations are inevitably related by subordination links. However, in certain cases, representatives of different organizations have to be involved in joint problem solving. For this reason, during periodical meetings the stakeholders from organizations striving for attainment of a common goal search for solutions satisfying all the interest groups on the basis of consensus. They familiarize their organizations with decisions made in work groups. There the decisions are either accepted or receive comments. During later meetings the discussed decisions are approved or corrected and participants strive for consensus on other problems.

Luna et al. (2002) presented an organizational-dynamic model. The project group is in the centre of this model. It consists of representatives from State and private organizations. The group work is seen as a dynamics-enhancing partnership:

- joint work enhances perception of one's own role and expands knowledge of partners' work;
- since participants learn about each other better and better, their interpersonal trust is strengthened;
- increasing trust results in a more intensive and open sharing of information;
- sufficient information increases efficiency of joint work and prompts performance progress;
- awareness of progress strengthens collaboration.

Facilitative behavior of partners with higher status is of particular importance in this model.

The authors argue that inter-sectional partnership develops by itself as a dynamic process under influence of interrelated and changing factors. Success of partnership is determined by knowledge management. The researchers emphasized that their conclusions were formed on the basis of an example of successful collaboration. They argue that failure may be the result of the different needs and goals of project participants, lack of facilitative management, unfavorable proportions between benefit and costs in different organizations (Luna et al., 2002).

In summarizing, it should be noted that few models of organizational structure are provided in scientific publications. Such situation presupposes that a small number of attempts to substantiate structures of interacting organizations may be explained by the fact that they are different in each case. The majority of authors analyzing organizational partnership and collaboration (Chrislip, 2002; Kickert, Klijn, Koppenjan, 1997; Agranoff, McGuire, 2003) emphasize involvement of stakeholders in collaboration process but leave elaboration on participant problems for practitioners.

Generalization is important to emphasize those specialists of inter-organizational relations that focus on the process and context of inter-organizational interaction; and examples of organizational structures of collaboration are few. But, on the other hand, searching for factors contributing to the increase in interaction efficiency, the authors firstly emphasize integration of organizations and stakeholders involved in partnership. The following reasons encourage the development of a structural model, taking in consideration both, stakeholder involvement and decision-making directions, in context of Local government. This structural model should be proposed to manage partnership more effectively.

2. A framework of design factors of partnership in opinion of Local government servants

The objective of the research was to identify prevailing inter-organizational interaction problems conditioned by the organizational structure of a partnership. The following work **hypothesis** was formulated during the research: the model of inter-organizational partnership prevailing in Lithuanian Local government does not stimulate efficient inter-organizational collaboration.

The method employed in the research is a structured interview of inter-organizational partnership experts. Analysis of scientific-methodological literature and methods of synthesis were employed, composed of an interview questionnaire. The structured interviews were conducted in the year 2006 and, in a lesser extent, replicated in 2009 and 2010. Research of inter-organizational interaction projects have been implemented in 47 municipalities and 54 interviews were conducted during the research. Replicated data was gathered from Alytus, Marijampole and Utena municipalities, and there was no notable statistical differences observed in the distribution of responses in comparison with earlier done research.

In this section, the respondents' answers were generalized and the distribution of opinions was presented as percentages. The responses describing the existing practice most distinctly are quoted.

Inter-organizational partnership and collaboration theoreticians argue that real involvement of partners from organizations participating in project group activities, equal status of organizations in decision-making, efficiency of internal communication, continuous and reciprocal informative relations with a target group of projects or programmes are of utmost importance, striving for high inter-organizational interaction outcomes (Vigoda-Gadot, 2004; Chrislip, 2002; Gray, 2008).

Analyzing organizational structure of partnerships the respondents were asked: a) to point out the underlying criteria for formation of programme/project work group; b) to point out who (according to status, position or roles) were included into it; c) to characterize the role of lead partner; d) to define channels and directions of internal and external information dissemination.

Summarizing of the acquired data revealed that this particular selection criteria was observed only in 9% of situations of project work group formation. In 65% of studied cases there were no established official selection criteria or principles.

The respondents, who pointed out that selection criteria partially existed, mentioned the following: "We observed the principle that work groups have to consist of people with decision-making power," "It was agreed that each partner suggests own coordinator and accountant and they have to be approved by Regional Development Department," "We formally pursued provisions of partnership agreement: representatives of all the interacting parties had to be included," "Each municipality delegated a representative from the Departments of Project or Investment Management," "Leaders of all partner organizations participated," "The main criteria was experience," "People were appointed considering their competence," "The main criteria for selection was competence and experience in similar projects," "Under a common agreement it was decided, that work group would consist of representatives of applicant organization," "The group includes all the representatives from partnership organizations with project implementation experience and creative potential," "...on the basis of competence and personal contacts," "Group members were voted in," "Authorities of organizations appointed specialist with the most extensive experience," "...taking into account administrative skills, competence and experience in other projects."

The respondents, who pointed out that the selection criteria was official and clearly determined, referred to EU or national requirements for project implementation.

The candidacies to work groups were most frequently discussed during informal meetings (statement supported by 87 % of the respondents). The project group very often consisted of people who would directly carry out project activity and partnership representatives with superior decision-making power.

In projects initiated on the basis of the support (i.e. top-down) strategy, experts were invited to participate in inter-organizational activities more frequently than in the project started following the principles of the enabling (i.e. bottom-up) strategy (32 % and 24 % respectively). The respondents stated that experts were invited to

solve serious problems occurring in project implementation (43 %). Partner meetings were also organized in such situations (70 %).

The focus on involvement of all the stakeholders into decision-making processes was insufficient. Representatives from target groups participated in the activity of project work groups only in 11-12 % of the researched projects.

Project initiators, lead partners or higher status organizations, i.e., ministries, dominated in decision-making practice. Only 19 % of the respondents pointed out that no domination was observed.

The lead partner carried out functions of the main implementer and manager of partnership (pointed 65 % of the respondents). Only several respondents mentioned that the key function of the main partner was facilitative leadership: “to organize work of partners and to advise on issues related to project implementation,” “to stimulate successful collaboration and to create atmosphere favourable for efficient work,” “to ensure successful information circulation,” “to rally around partners for joint activity and to pursue the best possible results.”

Characterizing communication channels, 42 % respondents pointed out that information management function was delegated to responsible people most frequently from the organization of lead partner. About one third of the participants in the survey stated that continuous and reciprocal communication process was ensured among all the partnership parties. However, 17 % of the respondents referred to reporting meetings and documents on the completed assignments and achieved results prepared by partners as the main communicative means among interacting parties. Partners were in liaison with each other directly or applying modern information technologies. Partnership parties communicated by e-mail, for example. It was mentioned in the answers of 70 % of the respondents.

The dissemination of external information on projects was evaluated lower than average. The generalized data showed that 22% of the support strategy and 47% of the enabling strategy representatives maintained mutual information relations with targets to the project group. 38% of the respondents representing the support strategy initiated projects and 29% of the survey participants representing the enabling strategy initiated projects or programmes stated that they provided representatives of a target group with the possibility to express their proposals in the initial stage of project organization. Informative campaigns and events for direct project benefit receivers were organized respectively in 27 % and 24 % of the analyzed projects during the period of their implementation. It can be concluded that project implementers do not spare enough attention to involvement of target groups and their participation in decision-making. This is perceived as a negative factor conditioning the efficiency of partnership as well as a factor reducing social effect of inter-organizational projects.

The research data allows for the conclusion that the organizational structure of the analyzed projects most frequently was faulty: the principle that the main executive body of project work group should be really represented by all the subjects of inter-organizational partnership was ignored, the lead partner or any other organizations with conditionally higher status dominated in the decision-making processes and target groups were excluded from project implementation. Data of the replicated

interview shows an analogous situation. This grounds a notice that manner of partnership organization is entrenching culturally and it cannot be easily replaced with progressive one. It also shows a need for structural model have bringing to partnership more presence of all partnership stakeholders.

3. The conceptual structural model of partnership in Lithuania's local government

To be successful, the inter-organizational relationship must identify the optimal combination of productive knowledge across parties and mitigating the risk of opportunistic behavior (Nickerson, Zenger, 2004). Structural theories suggest that social well-being can be explained in terms of organization of society. Citizens may be affected whether the agency is structured bureaucratically or uses a participatory management model of organization. In partnership, there should be no dominant sharer and professionals or servants should not prevail. Society and public administration servants are viewed as equal partners. The professionals' contribution to the relationship is their specialized knowledge based on experience. From the perspective of partnership, the professionals act as facilitators or consultants. All stakeholders are involved as equals in the decision-making processes (Darling, 2000).

Elaborating inter-organizational partnership, municipalities are recommended to implement models of inter-organizational interaction based on vertical and horizontal collaboration.

The core of partnership is the project work group, which should consist of representatives of interest groups related with the programme or project under implementation. This group should include experts in the collaboration process and project activity. Primary interest groups are divided according to their format: initiators, partners and representatives of a target group. Society is seen as a secondary interest group. It is directly related with the project work group. Representatives of society are not included into the project work group, but society is provided with the possibility to engage in decision-making: the work group presents information on programme/project achievements and encounters challenges, ensuring feedback and functioning of the proposal selection and evaluation system. The model sustaining these principles is proposed in Figure 1.

It should be emphasized that the above suggested collaboration programme and project division (CPP) in municipalities would target informing the public, private and non-governmental sectors and society about the projects already implemented and under implementation in the municipality and at managing the system of partnership initiation proposal collection.

It would be erroneous to envisage the reduplication of functions of CPP and other divisions of municipalities, because the collaboration programme/project division provides information on and collects proposals regarding all the programmes and projects under implementation, already initiated and to be initiated in the municipality, the project work group and society collaborates within the framework of

one particular project. On the other hand, if the project work group disregards relevant remarks from citizens, then the link with the municipality allows for a transfer of the problem to a higher level.

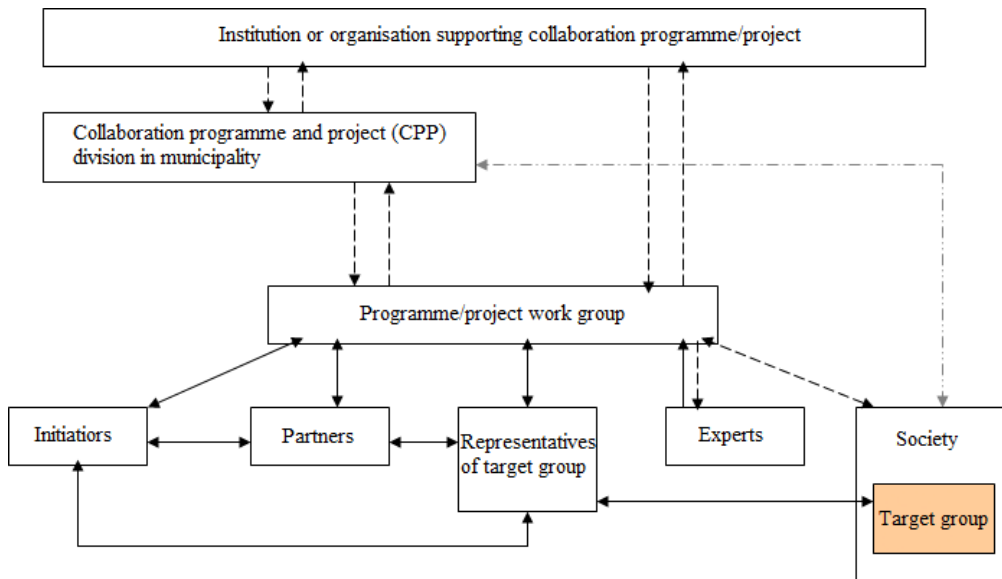


Figure 1. Conceptual model of inter-organizational partnership in self-government implementing collaboration programmes and projects within the territory of one municipality

The conceptual model of inter-organizational interaction is based on horizontal interaction in decision-making but a municipality is given a possibility to provide recommendations to the project work group and it assumes a function to carry out monitoring of social effect of the implemented programme or project. When the project work group ignore or analyze the grounded citizens' requirements negligently during implementation of partnership project, the municipality should evaluate these shortcomings as an unconformity between the need and provided services in the final assessment, and provide this information to the organization financially supporting the programme/project. This would allow for strengthening of decision validity, civic activity and assurance of necessity to consider the interests of other interest groups, communities and citizens, satisfying the needs of a particular group. In modern democracies, including Lithuania, with a growing focus on equal opportunities of citizens, individual liberties and rights, there still occur situations when the interests of the rest of society are violated. This fact should be considered defining the limits of satisfying the needs of the target group with the help of a partnership.

In the conceptual model of inter-organizational partnership, the collaboration programme and project division (CPP) and the work group are linked by direct mutual relations. The work group provides information on CPP division on pro-

programme/project outcome but the programme/project is not directly controlled by a municipality. The division in question do not influence decision-making processes in the work group of achieved results. This information is necessary carrying out direct functions of CPP division: information development, monitoring and independent evaluation of programmes and projects. On the other hand, the work group may address the CPP division for consultations, information, methodological assistance and other issues included into the functions of CPP division such as collaboration processes and financial support. So CPP are a component of partnership. CPP on their own should not be formally responsible for programme/project management, i.e. they should not be the managing authorities, but should be inclusive and involve some degree of co-decision making.

Particular focus should be paid to the link between the project work group and organization or institution sponsoring the programme/project. According to this model, the sponsoring organization *does not influence* the decisions of the work group and *does not control* activity *all the time*. A critical moment for the organization-sponsor is a decision to completely or partially finance a programme/project or to refuse to do it.

In the model a supporting organization is also related to the collaboration programme/project division in a municipality. Seeking to measure the social effect of a programme/project in long-term and medium-term perspectives an organization-sponsor contacts the municipality as an independent evaluator. The received results to a big extent determine the end of the programme/project, i.e., peculiarities of final accounting with programme/project partners.

Another model should be applied implementing partnership within the territories of several municipalities (Figure 2).

This model suggests a “decision support” group. A wide range of interaction subjects may predict serious challenges combining different interests and attitudes even though progressive models for decision preparation are applied. To ensure rationality, representatives of interacting municipal CPP divisions should form an interim board of CPP divisions. Due to functions fulfilled by divisions, this board would be characterized by a high competence in collaboration implementation. The project work group and the board working together in the so-called decision support group would reach decisions ensuring efficiency of inter-organizational interaction and social effectiveness.

In both conceptual models of partnership in self-government, programme/project initiators, partners, experts and representatives of a target group are connected by close reciprocal relations. Though strategic decisions are made by the work group, they are discussed together with all the programme/project participants. The process, when decisions prepared in the group of programme/project representatives are discussed in the organizations they represent or interest groups and are later returned with proposal to amend them or to approve, is widely described by Straus (2002).

The members of a project work group share common time, human, financial and physical resources and exchange experience and abilities. They assist each other in acquiring knowledge and skills necessary for programme/project implementation.

The partner interrelationships are grounded on trust, facilitative leadership and determination to implement the made decisions and to achieve the set joint goals.

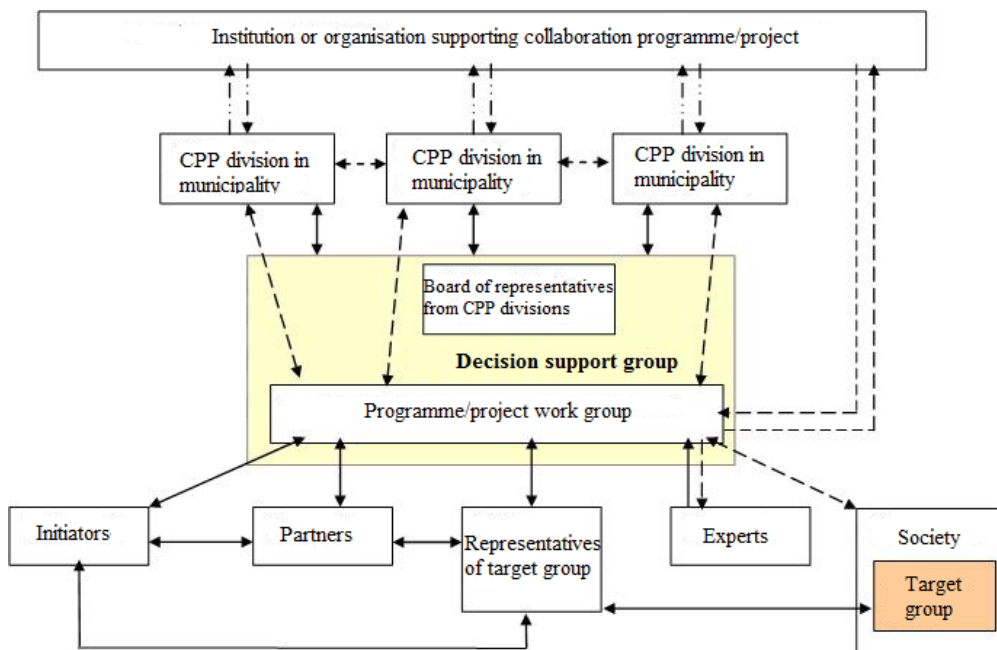


Figure 2. The conceptual model of inter-organizational partnership in self-government implementing collaboration programmes and projects within the territories of several municipalities.

Initiators, partners, the target group or its representatives (if the programme targets a wide social group) are linked by reciprocal relations that enable combining decisions and satisfying needs of target group as good as possible. Though representatives of all the programme/project stakeholders participate in the work group, general meetings of different purposes should be held at set periods: to familiarize with achievements of a particular phase of programme/project, to discuss obstacles occurring during implementation of a programme/project, to foresee further activity or to take on commitments. In other words, informative and reporting meetings, strategic creative sessions with participation of all the programme/project participants are of high necessity.

Experts in inter-organizational interaction or separate spheres should be invited to the programme/project work group. The main function of inter-organizational interaction specialists is to ensure collaboration among all the programme/project participants. The key objectives of such specialists should include facilitative leadership, holding of meetings and conflict mediation. Experts in separate spheres should en-

gage in planning and fulfilment of tasks, solving of specific problems, carrying out a feasibility study and others.

As it was mentioned above, the work group should constantly be in contact with society, providing information on the programme or project under implementation and establishing possibilities for each citizen to express their own opinion regarding partnership activities, or to offer suggestions regarding their improvement.

4. Discussion

1. Drawing inferences from the research we can see that only a few models of organizational and operational structure of partnership are provided in scientific publications. Nevertheless the majority of authors analyzing inter-organizational partnership and collaboration primarily emphasize involvement of stakeholders in the collaboration process to attain high social results. Successful implementation of social changes, social progress also is important to municipalities. So, the search for an effective structural inter-organizational partnership model is consequential for Local government.

2. The empirical research data shows that the organizational structure of a partnership most frequently is faulty in Lithuania's municipalities. The principle that the main executive body of a project work group should be really represented by all the subjects of inter-organizational partnership was ignored; the lead partner or any other organizations with conditionally higher status dominate in the decision-making processes and target groups were excluded from inter-organizational projects implementation. Data of a replicated interview shows an analogous situation. This grounds the notice that the manner of a partnership organization is entrenching culturally and it cannot be easily replaced with a progressive one. It also shows a significant need to develop a deliberate structural model in order to bring to the partnership more of a presence of all the partnership stakeholders.

3. When generalizing, it can be stated that the presented conceptual models of inter-organizational partnership in local government are based on the principles of involvement, participation, commitment, personal and group responsibility and comprise of vertical and horizontal interaction of social subjects. It is particularly important that these models:

- a) Allow the reduction of bureaucratic obstacles that occur because of the influence and power of sponsoring institutions and supervisory authorities on initiation and implementation of inter-organizational programmes and projects. Wider possibilities for proactive activities occur, such as the initiation of the common activity of municipalities and other public, private and non-governmental organizations, having identified a real need and not ignoring the deepening problems of society;
- b) To eliminate subordinate relations among municipalities and other partnership participants. The power and status of municipalities in implementation of programmes and projects are equalized;

- c) Encouragement of social responsibility of inter-organizational interaction participants, since organizations that are realizing programmes and projects become partially economically interested not only in the achievement of the set goals, but also in assurance of a positive social effect in a long-term perspective.

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Santrauka

Savivaldybės užtikrina ryšį tarp piliečių, bendruomenių, įvairių organizacijų ir valstybės institucijų. Svarbu užtikrinti kokybišką šių socialinių subjektų sąveiką, gebėti integruoti ir įgyvendinti skirtingus jų tikslus. Tiek mokslininkai, tiek praktikai sutaria, kad vietos savivaldoje ir apskritai viešajame sektoriuje partnerystė ir bendradarbiavimas suteikia didžiausią naudą plačiausiai naudos gavėjų ratui. Galimybę pasiekti organizacijų bendrai užsibrėžtus tikslus, įgyvendinti jungtinius projektus ypač veikia partnerystės struktūra. Ji gali skatinti, remti arba stabdyti bendradarbiavimo procesą, daryti įtaką partnerystės teikiamai naudai. Tad straipsnyje susitelkiama į vietos savivaldos tarporganizacinės partnerystės struktūrinio modelio paiešką: apibendrinami teoriniai organizacijų sąveikos modeliai, diskutuojami ekspertų apklausos, kurios tikslas – identifikuoti partnerystės įgyvendinimo problemas, kylančias dėl netinkamos organizacinės struktūros, rezultatai. Teorinio bei empirinio tyrimo pagrindu konstruojami du skirtingos apimties konceptualieji vietos savivaldos tarporganizacinės partnerystės struktūriniai modeliai.

Pateiktieji modeliai apjungia vertikaliają bei horizontaliąją socialinių subjektų sąveiką ir yra pagrįsti interesų grupių įtraukimo, dalyvavimo, išipareigojimo ir asmeninės bei grupinės atsakomybės principais. Šie modeliai: a) panaikina tiesioginio pavaldumo ryšius tarp savivaldybių, valstybės institucijų, kitų organizacijų ir tarporganizacinės programos arba projekto įgyvendintojų; b) atveria daugiau galimybių socialiniams subjektams veikti proaktyviai, kadangi leidžia sumažinti biurokratinį suvaržymą, išskylančius dėl suinteresuotų organizacijų ir priežiūros institucijų įtakos, taip pat – dėl galios, inicijuojant ir įgyvendinant partnerystės programas ir projektus; c) skatina tarporganizacinės sąveikos dalyvių socialinę atsakomybę ir sudaro sąlygas užtikrinti teigiamą socialinį poveikį ilgalaikėje perspektyvoje.

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