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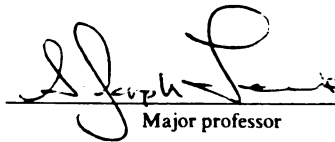
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The Motivation - Participation - Ownership Triangle**

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**LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES ON
NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP:
THE MOTIVATION - PARTICIPATION - OWNERSHIP TRIANGLE**

By

Lela Louise Vandenberg

A DISSERTATION

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ABSTRACT

LEADERS' PERSPECTIVES ON NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP: THE MOTIVATION - PARTICIPATION - OWNERSHIP TRIANGLE

By

Lela Louise Vandenberg

Neighborhood organizations are playing a crucial role in coming to grips with numerous destructive forces in urban areas across America. Because leadership is the driving force behind them, a better understanding of the leadership task is greatly needed. The purpose of this research is descriptive and exploratory: to understand how ten experienced neighborhood leaders in Lansing, Michigan think about leadership and leadership development. The methodology centered around in-depth, open-ended interviews, and an inductive, grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis.

The study found that neighborhood organization leaders view their primary task as empowering members to take effective action. In this effort they focus on three categories of activities that form a mutually reinforcing triangle: member motivation, member participation, and member ownership. Seven other categories variously influence this core: sense of community, meetings, knowledge, vision, communication, member development, and outside liaison.

Experience was the primary mode of leadership development for participants, although mentor-directed experience would be the preferred way. Participants recognize the importance of member leadership development for the future of the organization, but engage in it only indirectly. Leadership training could be useful only if it is learner-centered, participatory, and practice-based.

While confirming aspects of the literature on leadership in grassroots organizations and business settings, this research makes six unique contributions: 1) a comprehensive, descriptive set of activity categories of neighborhood organization leadership; 2) a list of important characteristics of neighborhood organization leaders; 3) a relational framework of the major categories of a theory of neighborhood organization leadership; 4) an understanding of the centrality of the core triangle of leader activities; 5) an understanding of the empowering function of much leader activity in neighborhood organizations; and 6) an understanding of the salience of ownership as an important characteristic distinguishing leadership in neighborhood organizations from leadership in hierarchical ones.

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1993

**Dedicated With Love
To**

Louis Rutare

and

Robert and Madelaine Vandenberg

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I feel a great debt of gratitude toward many who have helped me achieve this long-standing goal. Three in particular have stood by me for many years.

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CHAPTER ONE

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS AND URBAN CRISIS

The tendency of ordinary citizens to respond to immediate problems in their communities through collective self-help efforts has been part of the character of the American people from the earliest days of our nation's history.

--Mario M. Cuomo (in Florin, 1989)

THE PROBLEM

Leadership of neighborhood organizations is the focus of this research. Neighborhood organizations are playing a crucial role in coming to grips with numerous destructive forces in urban areas across America. Because leadership is the driving force behind them, a better understanding of the leadership task is greatly needed.

Complex social and economic crises in urban America led to a renewed focus on grassroots solutions in the 1980s. Retreating government coupled with the on-going effects of poverty and social disease have continued to fuel the move toward local-level self-help. In fact, community-based solutions may be the best and only hope.

A fascinating study of twenty "local heroes" cites community building as "the

most neglected need on the domestic scene today" (Berkowitz, 1987:xii). One reason given for the urgency of this need is the vital link between social support and health. A decade of research highlights the fact that our emotional and physical well-being depends on the strength of our support system (Pilisuk and Parks, 1986). When the institutional supports (agencies, schools, jobs) in that system weaken or fail, we need to depend on people--family, friends, neighbors (Berkowitz, 1987).

Geographic neighborhoods may be the ideal setting for building strong support systems, according to Dyson and Dyson (1989). After listing the causes and effects of the disease crippling our society, the Dysons present their vision for reintegrating fragmented lives and services. This vision lies in what they call "primal communities"--intentional nets of human relationships based in geographic neighborhoods.

Just as neighborhoods may be the ideal setting for support systems, the neighborhood organization may be the ideal vehicle for drawing people together. Neighborhood organizations have sensitivity and knowledge that social agencies cannot imitate, and a greater capacity for mobilizing local people and resources (Mayer, 1984). They provide a means for residents to take active roles and thus develop a stake in their neighborhoods, an important step toward stemming the tide of transiency and resulting decay (Haeberle, 1989). From his work with the Citizen's Committee of New York City, Florin describes the exciting potential of such groups.

At their best, volunteer neighborhood organizations transform isolated individuals into public citizens. They provide a human-scale sense of place, purpose and process which is rare and precious in today's mass society. Grassroots volunteer activity, weaving together private and

public concerns, is a significant form of civic action which generates both tangible and intangible common goods. It represents a step beyond one's own backyard--a step in the direction of neighboring and community.

Neighborhood organizations may also be the ideal vehicle for acquiring resources to attack the intense socio-economic problems of declining neighborhoods. In spite of diminishing government support for social services, there is a "national trend to use local nonprofit organizations as funding conduits for a variety of social programs" (Milofsky, 1988:183). However, organization is the key to attracting these outside resources. Under the heading "The Shape of the Response to the Economic Crisis: Only the Organized Will Decide," Burghardt (1982:14) concludes that the government responds "to those who are the most organized in getting their needs met: the needs of profit" (p.17). Milofsky (1988:183) agrees that "in a contracting economy, well organized interest groups will be influential in determining how funding cutbacks will be made."

Even without resources in some cases, neighborhood organizations have had an impact on the health of many urban neighborhoods (Dyson and Dyson, 1989; Florin, 1989; Haeberle, 1989; Mayer, 1984). The success of these organizations is closely tied to their leadership. As Williams (1985:83) puts it in a chapter entitled, "Leadership: The Driving Gear in the Neighborhood Organization":

If a neighborhood organization is a machine, then leadership is the main cog. But human organization exhibits a crucial difference: its parts are aware of themselves and their interrelationships and, for this reason, vary widely in the efficiency of their operation. Good organizational leaders, then, are not only the central components of the mechanism; they are also master mechanics in that they know how the organizational gears mesh and how to keep them functioning efficiently.

Others echo the importance of leadership. Rich (1980:570) calls leadership a "central concern" for community organization and vital for the success of any group. In his research on neighborhood development organizations, Mayer (1981:14) found that "impressive, credible, committed, and confident leaders have been a key to organizations' success in carrying out projects."

In spite of these and other testimonies, and the common sense nature of the idea that leadership is vital, there is a paucity of research available on neighborhood, local-level, or grass-roots leadership. The literature that exists focuses on types or typologies of leadership (Williams, 1985; Warren and Warren, 1977), incentives for leadership (Rich, 1980), the empowering processes of leadership emergence (Kieffer, 1984), or personal experiences of or visions for leadership (Berkowitz, 1987; Dyson and Dyson, 1989; Kahn, 1982). No study has addressed the important question of what neighborhood organization leaders believe about effective leadership, based on their experiences.

On the other hand, there is a long history of research in the fields of business and psychology on leadership in industrial settings, and in small experimental groups. The applicability of this research to neighborhood organization leadership is questionable, however, given differences in purpose, structure, decision making, and outcomes (Milofsky, 1988). The most obvious difference separating voluntary from nonvoluntary organizations centers on the meaning of 'voluntary'--both leaders and members are free to participate or not, and leaders must make consistent efforts to maintain member support. This difference does not prohibit comparison, "but the

structure and processes in voluntary organizations clearly require careful analysis to determine where the two forms of organizations coincide and where they do not" (Hall, 1982:140). This again points to the need for research on leadership in neighborhood organizations.

THE PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of this study is to describe leadership in neighborhood organizations from the leaders' perspectives. It is an exploratory study of leaders' beliefs about leadership and their opinions about leadership development. Its aim is to understand how experienced neighborhood organization leaders think about leadership. Five broad research questions guide the study:

1. How do neighborhood leaders as a group think about leadership, in terms of major categories and concepts?
2. What are the leaders' opinions and experiences with regards to leadership development and leadership training?
3. How do individual leaders think about leadership, in terms of important categories and relationships among them?
4. What are the similarities and differences in the leaders' views on leadership?
5. Can the leaders' ideas about leadership be integrated in a theoretical framework of neighborhood organization leadership?

DEFINITIONS

For the purpose of this research, key terms are defined as follows.

Leadership: a perception--the set of beliefs each group member holds regarding the behaviors and qualities characteristic of effective leaders; a process--involving the use of noncoercive influence to facilitate group

accomplishment of valued goals; and a property--the qualities that allow one to positively influence the achievement of valued group goals (Vandenberg et al., 1988).

Neighborhood: a limited territory within a larger urban area where people inhabit dwellings and interact socially (Hallman, 1984:13).

Neighborhood Organization: a democratically structured, issue-oriented, voluntary action group with political aims of improving the quality of life by influencing decisions about and increasing local control over members' residential area, while building local pride and interaction networks.

Leadership Development: both the natural process of acquiring leadership through experience, and the systematic process of learning leadership skills through planned training interventions.

THE SETTING

The research took place in Lansing, Michigan, a midwest urban capital of over 122,000 inhabitants. Major employers are State Government, General Motors, and Michigan State University in East Lansing.

Lansing is made up of numerous distinct neighborhoods. In the late 1960's and early 1970's some of the neighborhoods began to coalesce around issues important to residents, and several neighborhood organizations were formed. Now there are over 20 neighborhood organizations, and this number is growing. In 1980 a group of neighborhood leaders founded the Lansing Neighborhood Council in order to pool resources and strengthen and support neighborhood improvement efforts throughout Lansing. The Lansing Neighborhood Council (LNC), an association of neighborhood organizations, is now funded by the city, with help from private sources, membership fees, and Michigan State University. Its goals, as listed in it 1991 Annual Report (LNC,1991:1) are:

to increase membership and strength of neighborhood organizations, to monitor City Hall, to keep neighborhood people informed of important developments which affect neighborhoods, to open lines of communication between neighborhood groups, to assist neighborhood groups with training, technical assistance and research, to increase resources available to neighborhoods for improvement, and to sponsor activities which promote Lansing's neighborhoods.

Some recent accomplishments attest to the LNC's effectiveness. Led by the LNC, a group of leaders from various neighborhood organizations devised a set of recommendations to the new mayor, who was in the process of reorganizing city government. Several important recommendations have been adopted: the creation of a Department of Municipal and Neighborhood Development to replace the former Planning and Municipal Development Department; the establishment of a mayor's Neighborhood Advisory Committee to review neighborhood services and the budgets for these; and the establishment of a Neighborhood Grant Program, funded for \$120,000.

THE PHILOSOPHICAL FRAMEWORK

The constructivist paradigm forms the philosophical foundation of the research. At the center of this paradigm is a relativist ontology, asserting that multiple socially constructed realities exist. Truth is defined as "the best informed and most sophisticated construction on which there is consensus (Guba and Lincoln, 1989:84). The epistemological stance is monistic and subjectivist, as opposed to dualistic and objectivist; the inquirer and the subject of inquiry jointly construct the product of an inquiry process. The methodology that naturally flows from this ontology/epistemology is an interactive, inductive process of iteration and analysis,

reiteration and reanalysis, until a jointly constructed reality emerges or is discovered. This constructivist paradigm has alternatively been labeled the naturalist paradigm by Lincoln and Guba (1985), and the interpretive paradigm by Gioia and Pitre (1990). It is based on two philosophical approaches: phenomenology, and symbolic interactionism (see Bogdan and Biklen, 1992).

Adopting this paradigm does not preclude a search for patterns, regularities, or cause-effect relationships. It is consistent with the logic of the paradigm to expect that individuals in similar situations or having similar experiences would develop similar conceptions, and attribute certain effects to certain causes. However, knowledge that is generated or uncovered within the constructivist framework is viewed as relative to the time and context in which it is generated, and to the individuals involved in generating and interpreting it.

THE THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Consistent with this paradigm is a theoretical assumption underlying the research, that leadership is a cognitive construction existing in the mind of each person. According to this theoretical perspective, leadership is a relative question, depending entirely on the perspective of the observer. This assumption has foundation in two lines of research from cognitive psychology.

One of these, attribution theory, is concerned with the psychological processes by which individuals analyze and attribute meaning to each other's behaviors. The first significant application of it to the study of leadership was made by Calder in 1977. He contended that to understand why leaders and followers behave as they do,

research must focus on individual perceptions of or beliefs about leadership, what he calls their ‘implicit leadership theories’ (ILTs).

Categorization theory presents an alternative model for understanding leadership perceptions. First applied to the study of leadership by Lord and his colleagues in 1982, categorization theory posits that our memories contain categories of people, among other things, which consist of ‘prototypes’ or abstract sets of characteristics possessed by most category members. As we perceive another’s behavior, salient features lead us to assign the person to the most similar existing category. This is conceived of as a largely automatic recognition-based process. On the other hand, attributional processes are more controlled and analytical inferential-based processes (Cronshaw and Lord, 1987). The two aren’t necessarily mutually exclusive, but may be used under different conditions.

In terms of attribution theory, the goal of this research is to understand, at least partially, the nature of the ILTs of neighborhood organization leaders. In categorization theory, the goal is to describe the leaders’ prototypes of leadership, again, at least in part.

THE METHODOLOGY

The research methodology of this study centered around in-depth, open-ended interviews of ten current or former neighborhood organization leaders, and an inductive, grounded theory approach to data analysis. The methodological implications of the constructivist paradigm are explained in detail in Lincoln and Guba (1985). Eight characteristics of research in this framework deserve mention in

relation to this study: (1) natural setting; (2) human instrument; (3) qualitative methods; (4) purposive sampling; (5) inductive data analysis; (6) grounded theory; (7) emergent design; and (8) negotiated outcomes. How each of these is addressed in this research will be described in the sections below on participants, interviews, and analysis.

Participants

Participants comprise a purposive sample (characteristic 4) of all Lansing neighborhood organizations. They were chosen on the basis of recommendations from several people knowledgeable about Lansing neighborhood organizations. They were selected from the 14 most active organizations at the time this study began in April, 1992. An attempt was made to include leaders with a range of experience--from one year, to many years and types of leadership experience. However, all were recommended as effective leaders.

Six women and four men were interviewed. Their average age was 48, with a range from 35 to 66 years. Most were married, six had dependant children living at home, and most had a family income of over \$30,000. Participants were very well educated. All had completed post high school studies, with one bachelor and six masters degrees among the group.

Interviews

The decision to use in-depth interviews as the data collection strategy emerged through dialogue and negotiation with relevant actors in the research setting

(characteristic 7, emergent design). Numerous meetings and discussions with the director of the Lansing Neighborhood Council (LNC), a neighborhood leader and activist, the president of the LNC, and an urban community development specialist led to a consensus that interviewing presidents of neighborhood organizations was an appropriate strategy.

The open-ended in-depth interview is a qualitative method (characteristic 3) especially appropriate given the exploratory nature of the research and the goal of understanding how experienced leaders think about leadership. "At the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the experience of other people and the meaning they make of that experience (Seidman, 1991:3). Lofland (1971:75) calls attention to the two parts of the word 'inter'--between, and 'view'--to perceive or look at. He defines interview as an act of perceiving between two people. This implies a 'jointness' consistent with the joint construction of knowledge from the constructivist epistemological stance. Briggs (1986:3) describes the product of an interview as "an interpretation which is jointly produced by interviewer and respondent."

From this point of view, the researcher exerts inevitable influence on the outcome of the research through the process of interviewing. This has two ramifications; the first a strength, the second a danger. First, the researcher is the 'instrument' of the inquiry, an important and essential characteristic of constructivist research (characteristic 2). Because of the complexity and indeterminacy of qualitative research, the investigator must be able to draw on his or her imagination, creativity, knowledge, and experience in varied and unpredictable ways (McCracken,

1988:18). McCracken (1988:20) describes a process of "imaginative reconstruction" through which the researcher attempts to see reality through the participant's eyes. Lincoln and Guba (1985:193-4) discuss several characteristics "that uniquely qualify the human as the instrument of choice" for constructivist inquiry. Humans are responsive and adaptable. They are also able to immediately process in-coming data, and summarize, ask for clarification, or explore atypical or idiosyncratic responses.

The second ramification of the concept of joint production of meaning is the danger of bias. To minimize the imposition of researcher presuppositions and bias, two precautions can be taken. First, the interviews should be as diffuse or unstructured as possible, and the interviewer should be as nondirective and unobtrusive as possible (Kirk and Miller, 1986; McCracken, 1988). Second, bracketing, a technique in which the researcher consciously enumerates biases and presuppositions in order to set them aside, should be employed periodically. Both of these precautions were taken in the process of this study.

Prior to the interviews, efforts were made to establish a context of familiarity and lay a foundation for trust. This context was essential for conducting the research in a natural setting (characteristic 1). "The investigator must become so much a part of the context that he or she can no longer be considered a 'disturbing' element" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:192).

To establish context, participants were contacted in three ways. First, a letter was sent explaining the purpose of the research and inviting each leader to be interviewed. Second, each participant was contacted by phone, and asked to meet

with the researcher to learn more about the research before deciding whether or not to participate. Third, the introductory meeting was held, most often in the participant's home. After these meetings, each participant agreed to be interviewed.

Most of the interviews were conducted in participants' homes; however, two were conducted at participants' place of work, in or near their neighborhoods. They lasted from 1 1/2 to 3 hours, in a friendly and relaxed atmosphere. Each one was tape-recorded, a procedure which was required for the sake of validity, and proved to present no problem to participants.

Analysis

Grounded theory was chosen to guide the data collection and analysis process because it is founded on a phenomenological philosophy (Hutchinson, 1988; Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) and is consistent with the constructivist paradigm as well as the exploratory nature of this study (characteristic 6, grounded theory). Grounded theory was first proposed in 1967 by Glaser and Strauss to promote the discovery of theory from data and increase the relevance and comprehensiveness of knowledge generated. Strauss and Corbin (1990:23) present this definition:

A grounded theory is one that is inductively derived from the study of the phenomenon it represents. That is, it is discovered, developed, and provisionally verified through systematic data collection and analysis of data pertaining to that phenomenon. Therefore, data collection, analysis, and theory stand in reciprocal relationship with each other. One does not begin with a theory, then prove it. Rather, one begins with an area of study and what is relevant to that area is allowed to emerge.

Several aspects of this definition can be highlighted. First, grounded theory is an

inductive process of discovery (characteristic 5). Second, data collection and analysis inform each other in a back and forth process. Thus the analysis leads to the emergence of knowledge from the ground up (characteristic 7, emergent design--of the analysis as well as the whole research procedure).

Two dual goals guided the analysis. One was to understand the unique conception of leadership of each individual participant, while also discerning common themes, concepts, processes, and relationships from the data as a whole. The second was to provide both descriptive and theoretical interpretations of the data. The process of coding and analyzing the data is described in detail in Chapter 3.

Negotiated outcomes is the final characteristic (number 8) to be discussed. It is an important process in the constructivist paradigm, and is congruent with the back and forth nature of grounded theory. Outcomes are negotiated when participants are involved in giving input to the analysis as it proceeds. Participants were invited into the analysis process in several ways. First, a transcript of the interview was given to each participant with an invitation for feedback or changes. Second, a descriptive and analytical summary of the interview was given to each participant with an invitation for feedback. Third each participant was called and invited to give feedback if they hadn't mailed any. Fourth, a preliminary analysis report was given to participants with an invitation for feedback. Fifth, participants were invited to a luncheon both to thank them and to give them an opportunity to share opinions on the preliminary analysis. A final report was distributed to all participants and the director of the LNC.

DELIMITATIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

This research is limited to what leaders believe about leadership, and what they say they do. It does not attempt to determine what they actually do. This delimitation is based on two assumptions. The first is that neighborhood organization leaders do have cognitive constructions about leadership existing in their minds, i.e., they do have implicit leadership theories. The second assumption is that the meaning one makes of experiences influences subsequent behavior (Seidman, 1991).

On the other hand, participants may not be able to consciously articulate all that they do or believe, and thus this research may only be a partial picture of their implicit leadership theories or cognitive leadership categories. In addition, participants may not have the abilities to be the kind of leader they can describe. Thus a follow-up to this research would include observation of leaders in natural settings.

Another delimitation is the small sample size. This decision was based on the exploratory nature of the research and the goal of building theory--uncovering the categories, concepts, and relationships used by participants to make sense of their experience--as opposed to generalizing findings. To understand how participants think about leadership requires an in-depth study rather than a broad survey.

ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The remainder of this dissertation is presented in four chapters. Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on neighborhood organizations, especially focussing on leadership in neighborhood or grassroots organizations. Chapter 3 gives a detailed

account of the procedure of inquiry outlined in this chapter, and addresses the important question of trustworthiness of the research--reliability and validity. Chapter 4 presents the results of the data analysis process, providing both individual and group descriptions, as well as theoretical interpretations. Chapter 5 summarizes the procedure and results of the study, compares and contrasts the findings with elements of the neighborhood organization literature reviewed in Chapter 2, and the leadership literature from other domains. Chapter 5 also draws conclusions and makes recommendations for practice and for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION LEADERSHIP IN CONTEXT

This chapter will review pertinent literature on neighborhood organizations in order to provide a context for this study and ground it in previous research. Primary attention will be given to leadership in neighborhood organizations, although the subject as a research topic is still in its infancy. The chapter begins with discussions of neighborhood and neighborhood organizing, followed by longer sections on neighborhood organizations and leadership in neighborhood organizations.

NEIGHBORHOOD

A definition of neighborhood is provided by Hallman (1984:13): "A neighborhood is a limited territory within a larger urban area where people inhabit dwellings and interact socially." Downs (1981:15) defines neighborhoods as "geographic units within which certain social relationships exist, although the intensity of these relationships and their importance in the lives of the residents vary tremendously."

In addition to the spatial and social aspects emphasized in these definitions, neighborhoods have been described in terms of characteristics, actions, functions, and types. For example, Hallman (1984:13) describes neighborhoods in terms of six

characteristics focusing on physical, personal, social, functional, economic, and political aspects. He also devotes a chapter to each of six types of neighborhood-based **action**: self-help activities (to improve the quality of life in such areas as safety and security or housing, for example), delivery and coordination of municipal services, human services and education, physical preservation and revitalization, economic development, and governance.

Warren and Warren (1977:25) view neighborhood as a social structure or common framework which encompasses many forms and functions. They list six **functions** highlighting the role of the neighborhood as a social arena, a center of interpersonal influence, a setting for mutual aid, an organizational base, a reference group, and a status arena. They also distinguish among six **types** of neighborhoods differentiated according to three variable dimensions--interaction among residents, sense of identity, and linkages with outside groups. These neighborhood types range from integral, rating high on all three dimensions, to anomic, rating low on the three dimensions.

Williams (1985) traces the historical development of neighborhood as a concept, from its recognition as a basic urban unit in the latter part of the 19th century. Its metamorphosis as a concept went from a mergence with the concept of community, to its rejection as a concept in favor of community. Contemporary perspectives reflect this debate, distinguishing between social and political functions: a neighborhood as a community vs. a neighborhood as a political unit. Those who adhere to the social view take an objective approach and define neighborhood as a

community with certain social characteristics. From the political point of view there is a more subjective emphasis on the consciousness and empowerment of neighborhood residents. This distinction is reflected in the approaches to neighborhood organizing taken by various social interventionists or social activists. These are discussed in the next section.

Dyson and Dyson (1989) focus on the biological and emotional or spiritual aspects of a neighborhood. They assert that the neighborhood is more biological than most other human groupings because "The residential neighborhood satisfies our animal territoriality" (1989:134). It is also the place where many of us center our deepest yearnings for wholeness and connectedness. For these reasons the Dysons believe people are searching for symbols and structures to empower and ennoble their neighborhoods and bring wholeness into their lives. One such structure is the neighborhood organization, also to be discussed in a following section.

In summary, a neighborhood can be seen in biological or territorial, physical, social, political, emotional or spiritual terms. It can also be described in terms of characteristics, activities, functions, and types. How neighborhood organizers have approached the complex task of drawing people together, given this plethora of views, is described in the next section.

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZING

Historians of neighborhood organizing allude to several periods of activity (Fisher, 1984 and 1985; Hallman, 1984). Fisher identifies five periods, however the broader sketch provided here will mention three. The first, from the late 19th century

into the early decades of this century, was a response to problems emerging from the rise of urban-industrial growth. The second, from 1939 to 1960, saw two parallel types of activities. One of these centered around Saul Alinsky. He was master of an effective method of uniting "have-nots" into powerful organizations which confronted and conquered oppressive establishment interests. His career lasted from 1939 until his death in 1972, but students of his work are still engaged in organizing (Williams, 1985; Boyte, 1980). The parallel development in neighborhood organizing during this period came after World War II, instigated by renewed federal interest in domestic concerns. Concepts such as redevelopment and urban renewal led to largely unsuccessful attempts to promote neighborhood participation due to the top-down nature of the organizing.

The third period began in the 1960's as a response to the perceived urban crisis, and ever since then interest in neighborhood organizing has continued to grow (Fisher, 1985). On-going local organizing coupled with interventions by federal agencies, national organizations, and even foundations led to what one author dubs "the turbulent sixties" in neighborhood organizing (Hallman, 1984:121). Some of the current day remnants of all this activity include community action agencies, neighborhood corporations, settlement houses, neighborhood centers, and civic associations. In addition, "The number of neighborhood associations in older, low- and moderate-income neighborhoods has grown in the past 20 years; they vary in their activism but in some cities mobilize to seek benefits for their neighborhoods (Hallman, 1984:138).

Complicating the history of neighborhood organizing, according to Fisher (1985:47) is "the existence of at least three dominant approaches to neighborhood organizing: social work, political activist, and neighborhood maintenance." Hallman (1984:143) presents an even more complex picture. He presents a matrix of approaches to organizing distinguished by emphasis (on operations, advocacy, advisory, or coordination), by initiator (residents, concerned outsider, public or private agency, or developer), and by extent of neighborhood control.

In addition to literature on the historical roots of neighborhood organizing, numerous volumes and chapters on strategies, methods, and techniques of neighborhood organizing have been produced. Some examples of these include Saul Alinsky's two books, Reveille for Radicals (1969) and Rules for Radicals (1972); and books by Warren and Warren (1977), Speeter (1978), and Kahn (1982). All of these are practice-oriented manuals for professional organizers.

From a study of the history of neighborhood organizing and the growing literature base, Fisher suggests some conclusions regarding the strengths and limitations of neighborhood organizing. He presents these in the form of nine lessons learned (Fisher, 1984:158-165). These are included here because some of them have direct relevance to the findings of this study.

The first four lessons concern the organization as a whole, and the larger context in which it functions.

1. Neighborhood organizing cuts across the political spectrum.
2. Neighborhood organizing movements develop in an historical context that includes but transcends local community borders.
3. There is a critical interaction between neighborhood organizing

- efforts, national politics, and nationwide social movements.
4. Problems besetting neighborhoods demand political organization beyond the neighborhood level.

The other five are more concerned with members, especially their motivation and development. These are more directly related to roles and tasks of a leader, or organizer, as Fisher has described them. Elaboration is included with some of them.

5. Neighborhood organizing must be built on more than material rewards and incentives.

The glue that keeps organizations together is personal development and a sense of purpose that transcends narrow individual interests. Fisher (1984:161) says that the organization "must be committed to developing the knowledge, dignity and self-confidence of community residents."

6. Neighborhood organizing must create and sustain a galvanizing vision rooted in people's lives and traditions.
7. Neighborhood organizing requires a gentle balance between organizing, leading, and education.

The best leader or organizer is a catalyst who combines a vision for what is possible "with the knowledge, ability and skills of local people" (Fisher, 1984:162-3).

8. Political education must be an integral part of neighborhood organizing.
9. Success must be measured in tangible and intangible results.

The intangible results are the development of the knowledge, dignity, and self-confidence mentioned above, along with hope, pride, and the raised consciousness of members. Fisher (1984:165) concludes "In general, the lion's share of gains of neighborhood organizing rests not with tangible results but rather in the lives of the

people who participated in them."

NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATIONS

No matter what the formal "participation rights," the possibility for authentic democracy is dependent upon the health, strength, and vitality of neighborhood institutions themselves and the skills and public spirit of the citizenry.

--Harry Boyte, in The Backyard Revolution (1980)

Now we turn to the "neighborhood institutions," in Boyte's terminology forming the context of this study. Milofsky (1988a:3) defines neighborhood organizations as "small, loosely structured, voluntaristic, and heavily democratic organizations that identify themselves with a specific geographic area of a city, town, or rural area." The key concepts here are voluntary, democratic, and geographically defined. A definition by Logan and Rabrenovic (1990:68) adds two important dimensions, of purpose and of residential base: "...a neighborhood association is defined as a civic organization oriented toward maintaining or improving the quality of life in a geographically delimited residential area."

Williams (1985) further elaborates the meaning of neighborhood organization by comparing and contrasting it with other types of voluntary groups. He finds that the neighborhood organization is a type of democratic citizen action group with political aims of influencing decisions and gaining more control over residential area. It focuses on issues of concern to residents, and can pursue one or several goals at a time, making use of multiple strategies. In addition to political objectives, the neighborhood organization aims to promote local pride and establish and support

communication and mutual aid networks. In summary, Williams (1985:78) states that "What most distinguishes the neighborhood organization, it seems, is the residents' interest in exerting some degree of control over their common living space."

In crafting a definition for the purposes of this study, sorting through the concepts presented above results in the following key terms: voluntary, democratic, improving the quality of life, residential area, citizen action, political influence and control, issue-oriented, local pride, and interaction networks. Thus, **a neighborhood organization is a democratically structured, issue-oriented, voluntary citizen action group which aims to improve the quality of life by influencing decisions about and increasing local control over members' residential area, while building local pride and interaction and support networks.**

The following sections summarize the various aspects of neighborhood organizations that have been discussed in the literature. These cover the founding or mobilization of neighborhood organizations, their maintenance, participation and empowerment, and the promise of neighborhood organizations.

Neighborhood Mobilization

Neighborhood mobilization is defined as "the process by which the energies, material resources, loyalties, and political power potentially available to the residents of a specific neighborhood are stimulated and fused into a collective response consistent with their shared interests" (Henig, 1982:10). Henig presents this definition in the context of an exploratory, qualitative, grounded-theory-type study of four neighborhood organizations in Chicago and two in Minneapolis. His purpose

was to understand how and why neighborhood individuals with shared concerns coalesce in a political body to make changes. To achieve this, he analyzes the conditions that help or hinder the mobilization of neighborhood organizations.

Henig proposes a three-step model of mobilization centering on the concepts of perception, evaluation, and calculation. He contends that residents undergo a pre-organization process of analysis and decision making. The first step is perception of the conditions: neighborhood residents cannot mobilize until they first become aware that certain conditions exist. The second step is evaluation of the conditions: residents must then determine if the existing conditions actually affect their interests in some important way. The third step is calculation of what to do about the conditions: if action upon the conditions is seen as too costly or unlikely to succeed, residents may decide to do nothing, and no mobilization occurs.

Certain conditions affect this three step process and the likelihood of it ending in the mobilization of an organization. One of these is the 'nature of the issue' (Henig, 1982:59), i.e. its visibility, suddenness, geographic specificity, clarity of responsibility, complexity, veto-ability (blocking a threat vs. changing an established condition), and institutionalized nature. Another affecting condition is what Henig terms 'conversion factors' (1982:63), variables that influence whether a concern is converted into a political force. These factors include relatively fixed attributes of the local and larger environment, as well as more changeable factors such as attitudes, perceptions, incentives, and strategies of residents, neighborhood leaders, and pertinent officials. The final affecting condition described by Henig is 'dimensions of

response' (Henig, 1982:69). This includes variables of intensity, commitment, cohesion, goal orientation, flexibility, endurance, size, and speed.

Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) look at mobilization more simply in terms of founding issues. They surveyed 72 neighborhood organizations in New York's Capitol District (surrounding Albany) to determine, in part, what caused them to form an organization in the first place. The majority (59 out of 72 cases) were founded in response to a specific issue. The issues were grouped in four categories: industrial or commercial development (especially in suburban organizations), residential development (especially in city organizations), transportation problem, and general concerns.

Organizational Maintenance

"Organization scholars and practitioners recognize that maintaining an active organization is one of the most difficult tasks confronting voluntary block or neighborhood organizations" (Prestby and Wandersman, 1985:285). Prestby and Wandersman (1985) cite studies verifying this claim, and show that maintaining an organization after the initial excitement and activity fades is much more difficult than founding it in the first place. Their own research proposes and then verifies an open-systems framework of organizational characteristics related to the maintenance of block organizations. This framework has four main subsystems: resource acquisition, maintenance (e.g., structure, member commitment), production (e.g., action strategies), and external goal attainment. Their results show that as compared with inactive organizations, active block organizations acquire greater resources, have

more effective maintenance and production subsystems, and are more likely to achieve external goals. Although these findings and their framework serve to distinguish active or successful organizations from inactive or unsuccessful ones, they shed little light on the important how questions: how do block organizations acquire more resources, develop more effective maintenance or production systems, or achieve their goals?

Some fairly detailed answers to these questions were obtained through a study of New York City block associations (Florin, 1989), described in more detail in the section below on participation and empowerment. Findings showed that surviving organizations tended to mobilize and use their resources better through such strategies as gaining assistance from city departments, having members use personal contacts, and networking with organizations facing similar concerns. They were also more active in soliciting resident participation through face-to-face recruiting, giving more members active roles, providing more choices for involvement, developing multiple means of communication with members, and engaging in leadership development of members. Surviving organizations were also more structured in that they had more officers and committees and used written agendas and minutes. Finally, they fostered participation by democratic, participatory planning and decision making; by delegating responsibilities to a greater proportion of members; and by nurturing a strong social component in their organizations.

How well an organization is maintained, or whether or not it survives, depends on organizational factors which influence the on-going functioning of the organization.

The following subsections present a discussion of the maintenance variables found in the neighborhood organization literature. These include member motivation, goals, issues, organizational culture, and organizational life cycles and decline. Another important maintenance variable is leadership, which will be discussed in the next major section of this chapter.

Member Motivation. According to Williams (1985:110), "the attraction and subsequent binding of residents to the neighborhood organization as members is a never-ending process." In spite of the importance of this variable, there is little research on member motivation or how to enhance it. Williams (1985:107, quoting Bruce Ballenger) lists four broad motives for membership:

1. Altruism, or caring for the issue the group is working on, whether or not there is a direct personal outcome for the individual.
2. Self-interest, when there is a direct personal benefit, sometimes triggered by fear and defensiveness about potential or actual changes in the neighborhood.
3. Transaction, related to self-interest but much weaker as a motivator, in which a person expects a tangible commodity, such as a newsletter or a front door decal announcing "I support this organization," in return for joining.
4. Social needs, in which a person seeks to be with friendly and interesting people, to feel a sense of belonging and involvement, to conform (often in response to peer pressure), or to reduce personal feelings of responsibility for the problem.

A study of leader motivation in 11 neighborhood organizations in Indianapolis showed that an altruistic motive, devotion to the community, was the strongest incentive for these leaders' involvement (Rich, 1980). The study did not deal with member motivation. However, a study cited by Williams (1985) did investigate both leader and member motives, finding that members tended to be involved in response

to concrete issues that affected them directly (self-interest motives), while leaders tended to be motivated by a desire to solve the underlying causes of problems. According to Williams, the distinction between leader and member motives was due to differences in awareness and commitment.

This underlines "the need for a neighborhood organization to constantly balance action and education" (Williams, 1985:110). The better an organization educates its members as to the nature and causes of issues affecting them, the more motivated and active it will be in finding solutions. Williams (1985:110) concludes, "The effective neighborhood organization is literally an educational instrument." This emphasis on education reflects two of Fisher's (1984) 'lessons learned' listed above, numbers 7 and 8:

7. Neighborhood organizing requires a gentle balance between organizing, leading, and education, and
8. Political education must be an integral part of neighborhood organizing.

Goals. "Without clarity of purpose, communicated to and understood by even the most marginal member, the neighborhood organization risks irrelevance and dissolution" (Williams, 1985:11). Some organizers view goals in terms of a taxonomy including long-range, intermediate, and short range goals. These were developed by Lancourt in a study of Alinsky-type organizations, but have wide applicability (Williams, 1985).

Depending on neighborhood conditions, long-range goals include accountability to the residents of the neighborhood, stabilization of neighborhood conditions, participation of residents in the organization, social justice and civil rights, and

informing and educating residents. Four intermediate process goals include developing the organization, acquiring power, gaining control over neighborhood affairs, and stopping neighborhood deterioration. Although the differences between the intermediate and long-term goals seem slight, the focus on process is what distinguishes them. One short-term goal, the cornerstone of all the other goals, is victory--the successful resolution of an issue important to residents, bringing immediate and tangible benefits. Success builds organization members' confidence in themselves and in the organization, and leads to further efforts and the achievement of intermediate and long-term goals.

Issues. Issues are the central concern of most neighborhood organizations. Williams call them the 'lifeblood' of the organization (1985:115). An issue is a specific problem or bad condition, often controversial, seen as a threat to neighborhood stability by residents. For a condition to become an issue, a process of 'defining the issue' must take place. This process consists of 5 steps: selecting the problem condition, researching its causes and consequences, informing residents, choosing strategies for attacking the causes, and envisioning desired and possible outcomes (Williams, 1985:114).

In their study of 72 neighborhood organizations in the Albany area, Logan and Rabrenovic (1990) identified 18 issues with which the organizations were currently dealing. These were combined into four indices or types on the basis of a correlation analysis. One of these types is safety, including police and fire protection, personal safety and street lighting. Another is collective consumption, including parks,

playgrounds, streets, sidewalks, garbage collection, traffic, and shopping and health facilities. A third is life-style, including housing, cleanliness, noise, visual aspects, reputation of the neighborhood, and types of people living in the area. The fourth is development, including two of the most frequently mentioned issues--"impact of commercial, industrial, institutional activities on residential land use, and residential land-use changes (Logan and Rabrenovic, 1990:82).

Organizational Culture. As a group of people interact to deal with mutual problems over time, they develop a shared history and common ways of interpreting their situation. This, in turn, leads to shared feelings, attitudes, values, and behaviors. This is organizational culture (Schein, 1990).

Schein (1990:111) defines culture as

(a) a pattern of basic assumptions, (b) invented, discovered, or developed by a given group, (c) as it learns to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, (d) that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore (e) is to be taught to new members as the (f) correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems.

He makes two more points worthy of mention here. One is that there are three levels at which culture is manifested--observable artifacts, values, and basic underlying assumptions. He also points out that the strength or internal consistency of a culture depends on a number of variables--the stability of a group, its age and intensity of experiences, the ways learning takes place, and the strength and clarity of the assumptions held by the group's leaders.

Williams (1985:117) uses the term 'norms' to describe the same concept, and defines norms as "standards or behavioral criteria by which the organization acts to

achieve its goals of self-maintenance and improvement of neighborhood conditions," the 'internal integration' and 'external adaptation' referred to by Schein, quoted above. Williams also asserts that norms can be either conscious or unconscious, and formal or informal. He uses the Alinsky-style militant approach to neighborhood organizing as an example of a set of norms (an organizational culture) that has guided numerous groups to confrontational encounters with powers-that-be. He also refers to more recent approaches to community organizing that have moved away from a strictly militant culture, recognizing that "militancy, while remaining a basic ingredient in the mix of strategies, is not always necessary or effective in gaining the desired objective" (Williams, 1985:117).

In spite of this recognition of the existence of organizational cultures, and the growing body of literature on the topic in business and industry, there is very little research on neighborhood organizational culture. The values and underlying assumptions of neighborhood organizations and how these are taught to or learned by members is a fascinating and fertile area for future research.

Organizational Life Cycles and Decline. Just as living organisms change, develop, and die, so do human organizations (Williams, 1985). Numerous studies in the management literature have proposed life cycle models to predict the beginning, development, and behavior of organizations. These studies claim that changes in organizations follow predictable developmental stages.

Quinn and Cameron (1983) review nine life cycle models and present an integrated summary model of organizational life cycle stages. The first stage is

entrepreneurial, typified by innovation, creativity, resource acquisition, flexibility, growth, and the development of external support. Second is the **collectivity** stage, characterized by "informal communication and structure, a sense of family and cooperativeness among members, high member commitment, and personalized leadership" (Quinn and Cameron, 1983:44). Third is the **formalization** stage, in which stability, efficiency, rational goal setting and attainment, and control are primary. Fourth is the **elaboration of structure** stage, characteristic of mature organizations. This stage is typified by renewal and expansion, decentralization of structure, flexibility, growth, and a balance between differentiation and integration.

After attaining this fourth stage, organizations seem to follow no set pattern. Change occurs unpredictably and "groups frequently revert to earlier stages of development as environmental turbulence is encountered, as turnover in membership occurs, as the primary task changes, or as the leadership style is altered" (Quinn and Cameron, 1983:40). In addition, the age of an organization and its stage are poorly correlated. Some organizations progress rapidly through the stages to maturity, while others are very slow in developing.

It is at the third stage, formalization, that neighborhood organizations face the greatest threat. Milofsky (1988b) explores the processes by which formalization results in the decline of participation and democracy in what he calls community self-help organizations. He contrasts participatory community organizations with bureaucratic organizations to underline the incompatibility of the latter with participation. However, formalization is very seductive because features of

bureaucracies seem so reasonable and helpful in dealing with certain problems. The danger is that "small concessions to convenience can lead to profound changes in the relationship between an organization and its membership" (Milofsky, 1988b:211).

Bureaucracies undermine two difficult but essential tasks of establishing and maintaining voluntary organizations: building loyalty, unity, and mutual responsibility; and convincing residents to look beyond narrow personal interests and identify with the local community.

Results of a case study of a neighborhood organization in Grand Rapids, MI seem to support Milofsky's contention that formalization is a dangerous stage. Easley (1982) identified three stages: identity development, militant reaction, and structural development. This third stage is similar to Quinn and Cameron's formalization stage described above, and is where stagnation and decline set in. According to Williams (1985), the major need at this stage is for an organization to regain its initial enthusiasm and sense of community.

Easley's study is the only one this researcher could find which dealt with the concept of organizational stages in neighborhood organizations, although numerous authors refer to the changes various neighborhood organizations go through. More explicit study of the life cycle stages of neighborhood organizations is needed to determine if the model developed by Quinn and Cameron can apply.

Participation and Empowerment

Participation in neighborhood-based community organizations and block clubs has been the focus of more than a decade of research, much of it in the field of

community psychology. For the purposes of this study **participation** can be defined as the **organized involvement of neighborhood residents in planning and carrying out efforts to improve their neighborhood environment**. The following review is confined to recent literature on participation and its empowering effects in neighborhood organizations.

A study of 15 grassroots leaders and their transitions from politically powerless and ineffectual individuals to dynamic and committed grassroots leaders made a strong case for a link between participation and empowerment (Kieffer, 1984). Using in-depth interviews and naturalistic and phenomenological methodologies, this study describes empowerment as having both process and content dimensions. According to Kieffer (1984:9) it is both a "long-term process of adult learning and development," and "the continuing construction of a multidimensional participatory competence." Participatory competence is defined as

the combination of attitudes, understandings, and abilities required to play a conscious and assertive role in the ongoing social construction of one's political environment (Kieffer, 1984:31).

It is gained through practice and experience over time, as an individual moves through a developmental process. This developmental process is seen to consist of four stages or "eras": the era of entry, the era of advancement, the era of incorporation, and the era of commitment. Each of these denotes a progressive step in an individual's self concept, organizational and political abilities, and sense of personal empowerment.

In 1988, Zimmerman and Rappaport reported further research that applies the

citizen participation literature to the study of psychological empowerment. Although empowerment is a multi-level construct that manifests at individual, organizational, and community levels, Zimmerman and Rappaport focus mainly on individual empowerment. They describe empowerment as "a process by which individuals gain mastery or control over their own lives and democratic participation in the life of their community" (1988:726). They then define empowerment as "the connection between a sense of personal competence, and a desire for, and a willingness to take action in, the public domain" (1988:746).

Their research involved three groups of participants, two groups of students and one of community residents, and used a measure of psychological empowerment and a questionnaire-based classification system of low, medium, or high social involvement. They found that "greater participation in community activities and organizations is associated with psychological empowerment" (1988:745). Those who participated more "reported a greater sense of political efficacy, competence and mastery, a greater desire for control, more civic duty, and a general belief that their success is a result of internal rather than external factors (1988:746).

In 1990, Zimmerman applauded the efforts of several studies to expand the understanding of participation and empowerment beyond the individual level to include the organizational level, as well as social, cultural, political, and environmental influences. The studies he referred to were part of two large research efforts spearheaded by Florin and Wandersman (1990), one in Nashville, TN called the Neighborhood Participation Project, and the other in New York City called the

Block Booster Project. Some of the questions these studies attempted to answer are "(a) Why do some people participate while others do not? (b) Why are some organizations successful while others are ineffective and die out? and (c) What are the effects of citizen participation?" (Florin and Wandersman, 1990:50). The results of three of these studies are briefly described below.

Chavis and Wandersman (1990) found a relationship between a sense of community and participation in block associations. A sense of community had a catalytic effect on perceptions of the environment, social relations, and perceptions of control, all of which influenced participation. Perkins et al. (1990:84) investigated various contextual determinants of participation in block organizations. They found that "a combination of catalysts in the physical environment (e.g., poorly maintained properties) and enablers in the social environment (e.g., block satisfaction and neighboring) may increase participation." Interestingly, crime-related problems, perceptions, and fears were not related to participation.

A study by Prestby et al. used social exchange theory to investigate the relationship between incentives and costs on one hand, and participation and organizational viability on the other. Results showed that higher levels of participation were significantly related to perceptions of higher benefits and lower costs. The study also found that the more efforts leaders made in increasing benefits and reducing costs for members, the higher the levels of participation. A third finding was that higher levels of incentive and cost management efforts were positively related to organizational viability. Incentive management efforts include,

for example, skills training, various material or monetary benefits, information, praise and recognition, newsletters, parties, welcoming, and invitations. Cost management efforts include providing transportation to meetings and child care, rotating duties, keeping meetings short, and emphasizing accomplishments.

A summary model of the major findings of the study equates participation with individual empowerment and organizational viability with organizational empowerment. Thus two implications of the research are stated as follows: "leaders/organizations can promote individual participation and thereby individual empowerment through incentive and cost management efforts;" and "leaders can promote organizational viability and thereby organizational empowerment through incentive and cost management efforts" (Prestby et al., 1990:141 and 142).

This reference to individual empowerment and organizational empowerment calls attention to a distinction made by some authors between empowering organizations and empowered organizations. **Empowering** organizations are those which develop the confidence and competence of individual members, while **empowered** organizations are those which influence the environment (Florin and Wandersman, 1990). Zimmerman (1990) makes the point that empowering organizations are not necessarily empowered ones, and vice versa. To support this contention he cites the study of sense of community by Chavis and Wandersman (1990) mentioned above. They found that "individuals may develop a sense of control even if they do not perceive group power to change over time" (Zimmerman 1990:172). Zimmerman concludes that different types of efforts may be needed to

enhance both the empowering and the empowered potential of neighborhood organizations.

In any case, there is ample evidence to suggest that neighborhood organizations can be both empowering and empowered. For example, the study by Zimmerman (1988) described above established a significant connection between participation and psychological empowerment. In addition, numerous examples of empowered neighborhood organizations which have had a significant impact on their environments can be found in the literature. Some of these will be described in the next section, entitled "The Promise of Neighborhood Organizations."

This section on participation and empowerment ends with two challenges raised by Price (1990), in his review of the Neighborhood Participation and Block Booster Projects. First, he calls on researchers to strengthen participation and empowerment theory by incorporating the large and diverse literature on power in social groups and on social movements. He also insists that research must now focus on the mechanisms, antecedents, or processes by which people and organizations become empowered.

A second challenge relates to what Price sees as the tension between research and practice, or between researchers and the leaders and activists of neighborhood organizations. He refers to papers by a neighborhood leader and an organizer in the New York City project, each describing the research from unique perspectives. Price calls attention to the obvious gulf that exists between the culture of social science and that of block organizing and leadership. His suggestion for bridging this gulf is to

"routinely ask community members for their theories of what is wrong with their community and how to make it right (Price, 1990:165). Along the same lines, Zimmerman (1990) recommends qualitative approaches to research, very similar to the approach taken in this study.

The Promise of Neighborhood Organizations

This heading, "The Promise of Neighborhood Organizations," has been borrowed from Williams (1985) who uses it to introduce the last three chapters of his book. In these chapters he details the roles neighborhood organizations can play in improving the lives of their members and our cities. His chapters deal with the role of the organization as conflict manager at different levels of society; the role of the organization as a mediating institution, or a buffer for residents against the sometimes hostile outside world; and the promise of neighborhood organizations for urban vitality.

This section will summarize three cases illustrating how the potential of neighborhood organizations has been differently realized. The first case is that of the Citizens Committee for New York City and their work with thousands of block and neighborhood organizations. The second is the top-down development of a network of neighborhood organizations in Birmingham, AL. The third case centers on the Dysons and their work in establishing 'neighborhood caretakers.'

Nurturing the Grassroots. The Citizens Committee for New York City is a non-profit non-partisan organization established in 1975 whose purpose is to develop and strengthen volunteer organizations aiming to improve the quality of neighborhood

life (Florin, 1989). The committee provides small incentive grants, self-help conferences, leadership training workshops, how-to guides, and other forms of outreach to over 7,000 grassroots groups throughout New York City.

Partly as a result of the catalytic effect of the Committee's work, NYC neighborhood groups have produced many benefits for residents. They have achieved physical improvements which have had a significant impact on neighborhood stabilization. Efforts have focussed on improvements such as clean-ups, community gardens, tree plantings, and home repairs and improvements. They have sponsored many social and recreational activities to encourage neighboring and nurturing--block parties, art projects, music events, holiday decorating, or youth recreation programs--which have resulted in the creation of a sense of community in many of the organizations. They have tackled social problems by organizing and delivering their own services. Some examples include day-care and babysitting co-ops, employment services for teens, food-buying clubs, food pantries for the hungry, and temporary shelters for the homeless. Finally, they have faced problems of crime and drugs and the fear associated with living near such problems. Most notable is the Committee's Neighborhood Anti-Crime Center which supports groups by providing training and linking them in an information-sharing network (Kaye, 1990; Florin, 1989). Through this Center the Committee has developed an effective three-pronged strategy coordinating neighborhood residents, law enforcement, and representatives of drug abuse treatment and prevention agencies.

Planting the Grassroots. In contrast to the bottom-up neighborhood

organizations just described, the Citizen Participation Program (CPP) in Birmingham, AL was a city-wide initiative by community development administrators hoping to provide equal access to public services and make city government more responsive to neighborhood concerns (Haeberle, 1989). The CPP began in 1974 in a city with no previous history of or support for grassroots activities. Nearly 100 neighborhood organizations were established and officers elected, and each neighborhood was allocated \$10,000-15,000. The organizations were guaranteed reaction time to actions which might affect them and given veto powers in the areas of zoning and licensing. They have also had an initiating role in calling city attention to service-delivery problems.

Although the neighborhood organizations were encouraged to engage in development activities outside the realm of city jurisdiction, with a few exceptions this has not occurred. In addition, "the neighborhood associations tend toward a lack of dynamism in their internal worlds. Meetings are not well attended, and programs are sporadic" (Haeberle, 1989:105).

Many positive benefits have come from this program, however. First, participation rates are higher in black and lower-income areas, giving a voice to those who traditionally have been under-represented in city decision making. Second, service delivery has become more evenly distributed. Third, neighborhoods have direct control over zoning and licensing decisions. Finally, thousands of individuals have obtained leadership experience, a benefit with future potential for people's lives and for society.

Neighborhood Caretakers. Burton and Elizabeth Dyson are ‘social pioneers’ whose mission is to heal urban communities plagued by social diseases. Their strategy lies in creating a ‘new localism’--“a powerful vision of a neighborhood caring for its own needs in health, education, economic growth, affordable housing, and in cooperation with other neighborhoods” (Dyson and Dyson, 1989:7). This vision is fostered by ‘Those Who Make Good Things Happen’ or ‘Those Who Can,’ called TWCs (pronounced Twicks). TWCs come together in communities of families committed to a spiritually-centered vision of a better life.

In bits and pieces the Dysons describe their own social experiment, interjected with stories of others’ experiences and philosophical rationales. They live in a ‘holon’ community called Earthcare Indianapolis. A holon community consists of 6 to 12 families of urban homesteaders intent on creating a healthy living space. They meet weekly to feast, share ideas and experiences, and plan. They share financial resources to some extent, and enter into a decade-long covenant to work, live, and celebrate together. With holon communities they hope to usher in an age characterized by compassion and cooperation, and a vigorous localism coupled with a ‘bumble bee dynamic’--core groups visiting each other and exchanging information and resources.

Neighborhood caretakers are giving form to new leadership styles, new methods for social cohesion and local neighborhood empowerment. They are creating many kinds of families, where an important function

is the transformation of information into knowledge, even wisdom.

--Dyson and Dyson in Neighborhood Caretakers (1989)

NEIGHBORHOOD LEADERSHIP

In contrast to the fairly extensive literature on neighborhood organizations, the literature on neighborhood organization leadership is scarce. Few studies focus exclusively on neighborhood leadership, and in some studies it is only briefly mentioned or not directly alluded to at all. This is remarkable given the importance ascribed to the role of leadership in neighborhood organizations (for example, see Florin et al., 1986). As quoted in Chapter 1, for Williams (1985) it is the 'driving gear' and 'main cog' of neighborhood organizations.

According to Prestby and Wandersman (1985:291), leadership is one of the most important elements in maintaining a neighborhood organization. "The maintenance of block organizations depends more upon the strength and personal qualities of the block leaders than upon any other factor." One effective way leaders act to maintain their organizations is to maximize member incentives and minimize their costs. The research by Prestby et al. (1990) described above shows that a leader's incentive and cost management efforts result in greater participation and organizational viability. Another way leaders enhance their organization's viability is to balance their attention to task, in order to get things accomplished, with their attention to the socio-emotional needs of members to maintain their commitment (Warren and Warren, 1977; Williams, 1985). This is the classic distinction between task and instrumental leadership.

Other authors that have addressed leadership have described it in terms of role sharing, motivation, characteristics, context, and leadership development. Sections on

each of these topics follow.

Types, Roles, and Sharing Leadership

Few references discuss roles of neighborhood leaders. Warren and Warren (1977) distinguish what they call local leader roles: the neighborhood activists, the officers of local organizations, and opinion leaders. Even with a superficial look it is obvious that these are 'types' of neighborhood leaders and tell us little about the roles leaders play in bringing people together to engage in action.

Dyson and Dyson (1989) distinguish between two types of leadership, legitimate and authentic. Legitimate leadership emerges from a group's internal power and is conferred by group members. Authentic leadership arises from a power external to the group, perhaps from the principles and values of some encompassing belief system, and is recognized by group members. An authentic leader "calls the group to something outside itself" (Dyson and Dyson, 1989:64), and enables the group to observe, reflect, interpret, decide, and act.

According to the Dysons, the authentic neighborhood leader embodies four roles: guide, motivator, orchestrator, and sustainer. To fulfill these, the leader needs a bold spirit, integrity, and compassion, as well as skill in four intellectual and social methods. These methods are the basic discussion method, the image shifting workshop (to bring a group to consensus), strategic planning, and celebration. In addition, the leader must encourage caring, life-long learning, and hard work among members if they truly desire to make their neighborhood a life-enhancing social environment.

Several other authors indirectly refer to leadership roles by emphasizing an important point made by Dyson and Dyson (1989): the need for neighborhood organization leaders to share leadership. Williams (1985) contends that because most neighborhood organizations are simultaneously pursuing several goals, a sharing of leadership responsibilities is important. Kahn (1982) puts it this way, "A people's organization...needs as many leaders as it can get."

Motivation

A study by Rich (1980) is the only one found that specifically focuses on the motivation for leadership. From a survey of the officers of six neighborhood organizations, he found that 63% of them said 'devotion to neighborhood' was their primary reason for leadership. When asked what personal rewards they had received from leadership, 37% said 'satisfaction' or enjoyment, 22% said doing their civic duty, 19% said seeing progress, and 19% said social contacts. He also found that the costs associated with leadership had to do with organizational or structural problems with which leaders had to contend. This leads him to recommend three policies government bodies can use to reduce the costs to leadership and thereby foster neighborhood organizations. The policies are giving access to decision making, providing resources, and assisting with organizational problems.

It is interesting to note that this is just what the city of Birmingham did in its Citizen Participation Program described above (Haeberle, 1989). In spite of their efforts, there was a reported 'lack of dynamism' in the majority of organizations. Perhaps pre-existing grassroots-initiated groups would be more likely to benefit from

these policies.

Leader Characteristics

There has been some attempt by researchers and practitioners to identify characteristics of effective leaders. Florin and Mednick (1986) surveyed 421 residents of 17 blocks with block organizations in Nashville, TN, as part of the Neighborhood Participation Project referred to in the section above on participation and empowerment. This study tested five cognitive social learning variables (CSLVs) as predictors of neighborhood leadership. Data analysis focused on variables differentiating leaders, members, and nonmembers. One result showed that leaders had higher self-capability ratings (i.e., higher constructive competencies) than members, indicating the importance of a positive self-perception. Another result was that leaders from lower socio-economic groups attached more importance to the block.

From almost twenty years of grassroots organizing experience, Si Kahn (1982) lists 20 personal qualities of good leaders and 16 skills that reflect his unique insight. From his perspective, a good leader: likes people, is a good listener, makes friends easily, is trustworthy, talks well, helps people believe in themselves, lets others take the credit, works hard, doesn't get discouraged too often, has a sense of her or his own identity, asks questions, is open to new ideas, is flexible, is honest, is self-disciplined, is mature, sets limits for her or himself, is courageous, has vision, and has a sense of humor.

His list of skills includes working with people, defining issues, running

meetings, understanding organizations, developing strategy and tactics, raising money, doing research, communicating, using communication media, training, understanding the group's contextual history and culture, understanding institutions, understanding politics, public speaking, staff supervision, and understanding how power works.

These two lists makes one wonder how anyone can attempt to fill a leadership role!

Kahn (1982) also distinguishes good leaders from bad ones. Good leaders are respected, and characterized as having a commitment to democracy, a base of followers or members, and focused on the values that underlie their work. Bad leaders are pushy, disrespectful, and unreliable.

One other work describing twenty "Local Heroes" (Berkowitz, 1987) is included here. Although the heroes are not, for the most part, neighborhood organization leaders, their experiences are relevant. They were chosen to be interviewed by the author because of their outstanding contributions to 'building community.' Berkowitz (1987:6 and 7) describes them as "ordinary people of extraordinary accomplishment" who added something to their communities that was "local, specific, focused, empowering, measurable, distinctive, unique, and enduring."

In the conclusion, Berkowitz (1987) summarizes the similarities he finds in the twenty heroes. Four background characteristics are similar: low domestic demands (many are single or live alone), positive parental influence, spiritual background, and influence of the 60s. They also share two characteristics and one skill: naivete, humor, and self-pacing.

Two outstanding themes are also mentioned. One is their excitement, manifested in energy, passion, and even anger or rage. It is this excitement that often keeps them going in spite of difficulties. The other theme is their reliance upon traditional virtues, specifically commitment, hard work, persistence, consideration of others, readiness to take a chance, and optimism.

The Context of Leadership

The studies mentioned above rest on the assumption that successful neighborhood organizations depend on effective leaders. Henig (1982) calls this hypothesis #1. Hypothesis #2 is that successful neighborhood organizations depend on effective organizational and action strategies. With data from his qualitative study of 6 urban neighborhoods, Henig rejects both of these hypotheses, showing that only when contextual factors are taken into account can the roles of leadership and strategy be understood. In his words:

In fragmented neighborhoods where there are few shared traditions, where cultural and racial cleavages overpower geographically based interests, where established neighborhood-based institutions do not exist, and where habits of cooperation have not been developed, the obstacles to mobilization...will genuinely threaten collective action. Without exceptional leadership and unusually astute strategies, these neighborhoods will find mobilization exceedingly difficult--even when the residents are quite alert to the common threat they face. In neighborhoods with cultural, historical, and institutional contexts that have allowed the sociable aspects of man's character to emerge, dependence upon these situational facilitators is decreased.

Leadership Development

Boyte (1980:46) calls attention to the wide range of knowledge and skills required by a neighborhood organization, skills not ordinarily accessible to the average citizen:

How to break down problems into manageable issue-parts, research their real causes, develop successful strategies for solving them. How to hold meetings, raise money to keep organizations going, get publicity, put out information in understandable form. How to create organizations that are accountable to their members, train new generations of leadership, involve the broader membership in decision making and utilize their talents.

A practical curriculum for leadership training is described by Kaye (1990). It was developed by the Citizens Committee for New York City, and has been used to train 450 leaders (as of 1990), 75% of whom rated it 'very valuable.' Designed to help neighborhood organization leaders gain skills and ideas to strengthen their organizations, it includes seven topical areas: (1) establishing a strong organizational structure; (2) running effective meetings; (3) strategic planning/problem solving; (4) improving communication, outreach, and publicity; (5) mobilizing and involving members; (6) community research/power analysis; (7) self-assessment.

Training workshops are described as structured learning environments which help to draw out and clarify the wealth of knowledge and experience brought by the leader participants (Kaye, 1990:153). Interactive methods and techniques are used to maximize sharing and involvement of the participants.

Although the importance of leadership training for neighborhood organization leaders is emphasized by Burghardt (1982), he claims that the approach to training

described above falls short of the real need for 'critically conscious leaders' able to understand and act upon the injustice that oppresses them. In contrast, Burghardt takes a Freirean approach to training, stressing the importance of combining process-oriented reflection and self-study, with action-oriented political study.

This Freirean approach derives from Paulo Freire, a Brazilian educator who has had a profound impact on the field of adult education with his revolutionary ideas about education as a tool for liberation from an unquestioning acceptance of unjust social structures (Freire, 1981 and 1985). In a Freirean approach to education, learners are helped to critically examine their social system for the ways in which it controls them, a process called consciousness raising or conscientization. This leads learners to take action as subjects, rather than objects being acted upon. Action is then followed by more critical examination in a continuing action-reflection-action cycle called praxis.

Kieffer (1984) points out that in a neighborhood or grassroots organization, the motivation for critical examination comes from a "gut issue"--some confrontation or problem situation that has hooked people's emotions. From his research on the empowerment of 15 grassroots leaders, Kieffer (1984:28) takes a decidedly Freirean approach to the question of training. He concludes that "we can actively facilitate individuals, or citizen organizations, in their own critical and constructive examination of their efforts toward changing social and political situations." In fact, the participants in his study used great emotional intensity to stress the importance of an external enabler, or mentor, to guide their struggle to empowerment.

On the other hand, Kieffer (1984:27) strongly asserts that no program can be designed to teach empowerment. "Empowerment is not a commodity to be acquired, but a transforming process constructed through action." He repeatedly emphasizes experience and practice as the primary modes of learning.

Independently of Freire, other influential adult educators have taken experience-oriented approaches to learning fueled by critical reflection. For example, Roby Kidd, the founder of the International Council for Adult Education (ICAE), also believed in the inescapable social context of adult learning and the intimate connection between learning and action. As he wrote in his memoirs:

I have believed for many years that no one learns anything without involvement. I am convinced that when someone has learned something well he ought to express that learning in action. From personal experience I know that learning of depth and power occurs when one takes part in significant action, and reflects, studies, analyzes and observes one's own behaviour and that of others engaged in action (quoted in Thomas, 1987:189).

Likewise, Miles Horton (Adams, 1975) insists that education be grounded in learner's experiences, as the indispensable basis for bringing about social change. Like Freire, Horton believes that education is not neutral--either it supports the status quo or it is aimed at altering it. Horton has dedicated his life to helping the 'have-nots' gain more control over their lives through the vehicle of education. In 1932 he founded the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee, now called the Highlander Research and Education Center. The Center is a residential leadership training center where grassroots leaders go to learn to critically examine their situations and to plan ways to lead their people to understand their rights and take more control over their

lives. As Horton says, "I try to get people to understand that they have the makings of solutions to their problems in their own experiences. But they have to learn how to learn from their experiences and from other people's experiences" (quoted in Peters and Bell, 1987:258).

Although the practical skills training approach promoted by Kaye and Boyte (described above) seems to be in definite contrast with these consciousness raising, action-oriented approaches, it is well supported by other respected leaders in the adult education domain (see for example Knowles, 1990; Knox, 1986; Cranton, 1989). For example, Malcolm Knowles is well known for popularizing his concept of andragogy, defined as "the art and science of helping adults learn" (1990:54).

Andragogy can be considered a philosophy of adult education based on humanistic, learner-centered ideas, or a process model for the design and operation of adult education programs. In either case, it is a participatory approach based on learner control of the planning, implementation, and evaluation of learning. From such a perspective, whether learning is skill building or consciousness raising should depend more on the aims of the learners than on those of the learning facilitators. Learner control is the key.

From this point of view, the contrast between the consciousness raising approach and the skill building approach is not so apparent. In fact, both may be used for the same end. Merriam (1987) seems to have found some common ground. After reviewing these and other disparate theories and approaches to adult education she concludes that most identify four common components of adult learning. These

are:

(a) self-direction/autonomy as a characteristic or as a goal of adult learning; (b) the relationship of experiences, especially those of adult life, to learning; (c) the importance of reflection upon one's own learning, and (d) action as some sort of necessary expression of the learning that has occurred. (Merriam, 1987:197)

On the other hand, if the facilitator is not prepared to help learners look critically at their situations, he or she is making a definite choice for the status quo.

CHAPTER THREE
GROUNDING THE RESEARCH: IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS
AND ONGOING ANALYSIS

The long interview is one of the most powerful methods in the qualitative armory. For certain descriptive and analytic purposes, no instrument of inquiry is more revealing. The method can take us into the mental world of the individual, to glimpse the categories and logic by which he or she sees the world....The long interview gives us the opportunity to step into the mind of another person, to see and experience the world as they do themselves.

--Grant McCracken (1988:9)

This study explored neighborhood organization leaders' beliefs about leadership using an interview-based qualitative methodology and grounded theory analysis procedures, founded on assumptions from the constructivist paradigm described in Chapter 1. The research design evolved over time as the researcher interacted with representatives of the neighborhood organizations. Data collection was also an evolutionary process as the researcher's growing skill and sensitivity, coupled with the conception of leadership emerging from the data, led to changes in the interview format.

Various aspects of the research procedure are described in this chapter.

Topics covered include gaining access and negotiating the research agenda, establishing the context, choosing the participants, conducting the interviews, following-up and negotiating outcomes, analyzing the data, and reliability and validity. Table 1 presents a summary outline of the data collection procedure.

TABLE 1: Data Collection Procedure Outline

Gaining Access and Negotiating the Research Agenda

- meetings with the Lansing Neighborhood Council administrator
- consultation with the LNC president
- consultation with two local knowledgeable

Establishing the Context and Interviewing

- letter to participants
- phone call to participants
- introductory meeting with each participant
- interview with each participant

Follow-Up and Negotiating Outcomes

- transcript to participants with invitation for feedback
- analytical summary to participants with invitation for feedback
- phone or mail follow-up to summary
- lunch to obtain more input and share results
- final analysis results to participants with invitation for feedback

GAINING ACCESS AND NEGOTIATING THE RESEARCH AGENDA

The research population consisted of current or past presidents of all active and formal or semi-formal Lansing neighborhood organizations. At the outset of the research process there were 16 of these. The administrator of the Lansing

Neighborhood Council (LNC) was contacted to request both her ideas about the research design and her insight on the various organizations.

The original research design consisted of a quantitative study of the leadership orientations of members of neighborhood organizations. Some modifications were made based on the desires of the LNC administrator. At her recommendation, however, the president of the LNC was also contacted before proceeding. The president's reaction to the study was very negative. She felt that members were being asked to perform difficult mental tasks and to give a large amount of valuable meeting time while receiving little tangible reward.

The researcher went back to the drawing board, and met with two other people with long histories of involvement in Lansing's grassroots organizations. This resulted in a decision to do a grounded theory, qualitative study of leaders' beliefs and experiences regarding neighborhood organization leadership, using a semi-structured interview as the primary mode of data collection. This idea was received warmly by the LNC president. It also fit better with the researcher's constructivist approach, and made more sense given the exploratory nature of the research.

PARTICIPANTS

The study sample consisted of ten current or past presidents of Lansing neighborhood organizations, all thought to be 'effective' or 'good' leaders. Nine current and three past presidents were contacted, based on recommendations of the LNC administrator, a recommendation of one of the presidents interviewed, and the researcher's personal knowledge of the neighborhoods and their activities. An

attempt was made to include participants from a socio-economic range of neighborhoods, facing a range of problems. Two of those contacted arranged an initial meeting with the researcher, but did not show up. They were not pursued.

ESTABLISHING THE CONTEXT

Potential participants were contacted in several steps. First the leader was sent a letter, briefly explaining the intent of the research and inviting his or her participation. This letter is included in appendix A. This was followed by a phone call from the researcher, asking the leader to meet and learn more about the research before deciding whether to participate. For four participants, this meeting took place in their homes. Two participants were met at their work place, two met with the researcher on several occasions in various places, and two felt that a long phone conversation was sufficient introduction.

The purposes of this meeting were twofold. Ostensibly the meeting was informational: to explain the purpose of the research in more detail; to tell the leader what to expect (i.e., length of interview, tape recorder, transcript); to explain their rights (i.e., confidentiality, the right to withdraw or not answer questions); and to tell them how the data might be used (i.e., research reports). At the end of this meeting, all participants agreed to participate and an interview appointment was made.

There was also an important underlying purpose to the meeting--establishing a context for the interview i.e., laying the groundwork for a relationship between researcher and participant, one built on mutual respect and trust. The importance of such a context is pointed out by Seidman (1991), who contends that validly exploring

the meaning of a participant's experiences is impossible between strangers.

According to Bogdan and Biklen (1992:47) researchers hoping to understand how participants think about something "model their interviews after a conversation between two trusting parties." Therefore, in an interview "a good part of the work involves building a relationship, getting to know each other, and putting the subject at ease" (p. 96). This pre-interview meeting was a step in that direction.

Another value in establishing a context for the interview is that it allowed the researcher--the 'human instrument' in constructivist terminology--to get to know the participants and become familiar with the organizations' purposes and functions, and thus be better able to understand and interpret the participants' experiences. This is important given the premise of inquiry as the joint construction of meaning. (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

These introductory meetings lasted from 30 minutes to over an hour, and without exception were friendly and relaxed. They usually began with the researcher giving an explanation of the study, as detailed above. Then discussion ranged from personal and family information, to details about the neighborhood and the history of the neighborhood organization. Following the meeting, a contact summary form was completed by the researcher to enable immediate reflection, as recommended by Miles and Huberman (1984). This form is included in Appendix B.

THE INTERVIEWS

The ten interviews were conducted between March 20 and August 19, 1992 in three phases consisting of three or four interviews each. Seven took place in the

participants' homes, and three at their work places, which were in or near their neighborhoods. These neighborhood-based settings were critical given one of the characteristics of naturalistic or constructivist research--that it take place in the participants' natural contexts. Following each interview, a summary form was again completed to note initial impressions. This is included in Appendix B.

Phasing the interviews was necessitated by the grounded theory analysis process in which data collection and analysis go hand-in-hand. After each interview and set of interviews, there was a period of analysis which led to ideas for changes, additions, and deletions. It was sometimes necessary to refine a question to get more pointed answers, to go more in depth on an issue, or to answer questions raised. However, the need for changes had to be balanced with the desire to keep the same general questions in order to have roughly comparable data for an individual analysis of each interview.

Another reason for multiple phases was due to the purpose of the interviews and their open-ended nature. If a question stimulated little response or led to digressions from the general subject of neighborhood organization leadership, it was dropped for subsequent phases.

The following sections begin with discussions of two important issues: listening, and structure and control. These are followed by descriptions of both the content and the process of the interviews. The content section includes explanations of the purpose of the interview, why specific questions were chosen, and how and why these were changed over time in the three phases. The process section focusses

on the actual conduct of the interview and the style and competence of the interviewer.

Listening

The quote from McCracken at the beginning of this chapter dramatically points out that the interview allows the researcher to "step into the mind of another person" and "see and experience the world as they do." Bogdan and Biklen (1992:98) assert that to listen carefully is the most important task of the interview. In order to do this effectively the researcher must be adept at the difficult skill of listening. McCracken (1988:39) refers to "the sheer difficulty of the listening process" and calls the qualitative interview "extraordinarily draining."

Seidman (1991) describes three levels on which an interviewer must listen. The first is listening for understanding, concentrating on substance in order to internalize what the participant is saying. The second level is listening for and trying to access an "inner voice," as opposed to a more public voice, which can sometimes be detected through non-verbals, discrepancies, or things alluded to. The third level involves listening while remaining aware of the process, i.e., time passing, participant's feelings, or topics needing more exploration. It is also necessary to listen for things such as: key terms, impression management, topic avoidance, deliberate distortion, minor misunderstanding, and outright incomprehension (McCracken, 1988:39).

Given the difficulty and complexity of the task, it would be very difficult, if not impossible, to take detailed notes at the same time. Therefore, "Interviews must

be recorded on tape. Interviewers who attempt to make their own record of the interview by taking notes create an unnecessary and dangerous distraction. A verbatim transcript of the interview testimony must be created" (McCracken, 1988:41). As Mishler (1986:50) puts it, "I wish to reemphasize the point that systematic transcription procedures are necessary for valid analysis and interpretation of interview data."

In this study, before making a final decision to tape record the interviews, the administrator of the Lansing Neighborhood Council was consulted. She thought that tape recording would present no problem. However, each participant was asked permission to record in the first phone call and again at an introductory meeting. Their responses were invariably "no problem," so all interviews were recorded and transcribed.

Structure and Control

The amount of structure imposed by the interviewer, or the obtrusive/unobtrusive balance, is an important interview-related issue in the constructivist paradigm. Some authors take a neutral stance, claiming that the amount of structure imposed depends on the research goals and the nature of the problem being studied (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Bogdan and Biklen, 1992). Others, without taking a strong position, make statements like 'letting those who are studied speak for themselves' and talk about the aim of the research being discovery not verification, implying the less structure the better (Sherman and Webb, 1988). This study attempts to achieve the balance advised by McCracken (1988:21-22, underline added)

Qualitative methods are most useful and powerful when they are used to discover how the respondent sees the world. This objective of the method makes it essential that testimony be elicited in as unobtrusive, nondirective manner as possible....It is important that the investigator allow the respondent to tell his or her own story in his or her own terms. However, it is just as important that the interviewer exercise some control over the interview. Qualitative data are almost always extraordinarily abundant. Every qualitative interview is, potentially, a Pandora's box. Every qualitative researcher is, potentially, the hapless victim of a shapeless inquiry. The scholar who does not control these data will surely sink without a trace.

Mishler (1986) takes a more extreme position, focusing on the empowerment of respondents. In a well-argued indictment of 'standard' interview practice, he asserts that tightly structured interview schedules create for respondents a world that is "abstract, fragmented, precategorized, standardized, divorced from personal and local contexts of relevance, and with its meanings defined and controlled by researchers" (p. 120). He goes on to ask "How can we redress the asymmetry of power inherent to the traditional approach to interviewing and restore control to respondents over what they mean by what they say?" (p. 122).

He answers this question by describing three alternative approaches lying on a continuum. The most empowering of the three, learners/actors and advocates, presents a participatory-research-type approach not feasible for the present study. Elements of the other two approaches--informants and reporters, and research collaborators--have been incorporated into the research design. For example, in the introductory meeting and the informed consent form participants were told how the data might be used. In addition, participants were given a voice in the interpretation of findings. How this was done is described below under "Following Up and

Negotiating Outcomes".

Two elements in particular relate to the interviews--giving control of the flow and content of the interview to participants, and allowing participants to tell stories and ground their answers in their personal experiences. First, participants were encouraged to give examples to illustrate their points of view, which resulted in many interesting stories. In truth, however, participants needed little encouragement; telling stories seemed to come naturally to many of them. Second, the researcher's ability to give over control of the flow and content of the interview increased with experience. This is described in the process section. But to facilitate this even from the beginning, the questions were made to be as 'generic' as possible and still give focus to the interview. They centered on what leaders do and know, and how they interact and learn. Admittedly, however, in 'pure' constructivist research, even the questions would emerge from the process.

Content

One overriding purpose guided the determination of questions for the interview: **to help participants reflect upon what they know or believe about neighborhood organization leadership.** Two considerations supported that purpose: 1) to help participants feel comfortable and not threatened or challenged; and 2) to stimulate participants to talk freely about aspects of leadership important to them, putting control into their hands as much as possible. Therefore, the questions were treated as guides. The aim was not to direct the interview, but to stimulate reflection. With this purpose and these considerations in mind, the initial interview format was

designed, as explained next.

A strategy to enhance comfort level was to begin the questioning with relatively simple, informational questions about background and the organization. This strategy also supported the second consideration, to stimulate participants to talk. It was felt that beginning with objective information would ease participants into the topic area, helping focus their minds for more in-depth reflection. The first questions were as follows:

- o Leadership Roles

1. How long have you been a member of a neighborhood organization (N.O.)?
2. How long have you been a leader of your N.O.?
3. Have you held other job-related or voluntary leadership positions?

- o Organization Description

age, frequency of meetings, active members, leadership structure, neighborhood problems, activities

To stimulate participants to express their ideas, the main set of questions were organized under three interrelated areas: describing reality; describing the ideal; and relating experiences. Describing reality and relating experiences are relatively straightforward tasks though somewhat analytical, while describing the ideal requires more thought and reflection. The questions were designed to be as open as possible, to allow each participant to talk freely about aspects of leadership important to them (consideration 2). They are listed below.

- o Describing Reality

4. What does a N.O.L. typically do?
5. What does a N.O.L. need to know or know about?

o Describing the Ideal

6. Please describe your image of the ideal N.O.L.
7. What is the ideal relationship between a leader and other members?
8. Can you give an example of 'bad' leadership?
9. How can you tell that a N.O. has a good leader?
10. What is your personal philosophy of leadership?

o Relating Experiences

11. What is the biggest challenge or problem you're faced as a N.O.L?
What strategies did you use to deal with it?
12. What is your biggest success as a N.O.L? What strategies did you use to accomplish it?
13. What is the most important thing you've learned about being a N.O.L, something you might tell a new leader?
14. What are the differences between N.O.L. and leadership in a job-related position?

The last set of questions focussed on leadership development and motivation for leadership. The purpose of these was to understand how participants learned to be leaders, the best way to learn, and what motivates them.

o Leadership Development

15. How did you learn to be a N.O.L.?
16. What would be the best way to learn?
17. Is there a need for training for new leaders? For experienced leaders?
18. What topics would be most important to include in a training program for new or experienced leaders?

o Motivation for Leadership

19. What motivates you to give your time and energy as a leader?

At the end of the interview participants were asked to fill out a sheet of demographic information, or they were given the sheet with an addressed, stamped envelope and asked to mail it back, if they wished. One participant chose not to complete it. This sheet, called "Background Information Form," is included in

Appendix C.

Phase 1. Phase one consisted of four interviews conducted between March 20 and April 21, 1992. The interviews lasted from 1 1/2 to 3 hours.

In both the introductory letter and the introductory meeting, participants were told that the interviews would last from 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Out of respect and for the sake of trust, the researcher felt it was important to stay within the time boundary. However, as the ending time approached and the researcher would say "time is almost over," many participants seemed very willing to continue. Therefore several interviews were longer than the 1 1/2 hour projection. In addition, in each interview some questions were not asked in order to remain reasonably close to the 1 1/2 hour limit.

Questions were omitted for another reason. Most participants were extremely talkative with much of relevance to say in response to each question. In the course of responding to one question, a participant often answered several others, thus eliminating the value in asking them. Therefore, during these first phase interviews it quickly became clear that all the questions were not needed. Deciding which ones helped respondents talk most freely, thus providing the richest data, was the issue.

This issue was resolved after a period of analysis in which each question was evaluated in terms of its productivity or usefulness in generating data. The first set of questions of "leadership roles" were kept in tact because they did serve to set the scene and lead into the subject matter, as expected. The questions on "organization description" were eliminated because this description came out naturally in the course

of answering other questions. "Describing reality" questions (4 and 5) proved to be very fruitful, and put participants at ease: they had a lot to say, eagerly, about what a leader does and needs to know.

"Describing the ideal" questions were mixed. Questions 6, 7, and 8 were very productive. For question 6, on the leader, participants listed and explained in detail what they felt were the most important characteristics and abilities of leaders. Question 7 on the leader's relationship with members received very similar responses from all four participants (trust and respect), and it was decided that this relationship question needed to be revised or expanded upon (discussed below). And question 8 on bad leadership brought out very definite opinions, often reinforcing what was said earlier from different angles.

Questions 9 and 10 in this "describing the ideal" section were not as helpful. Question 9, how you can tell if a neighborhood organization has a good leader, needed a lot of explanation by the interviewer and was difficult for respondents to answer. For this reason it was omitted from phases 2 and 3. Question 10 on personal philosophy of leadership was also difficult to answer and needed explanation. However, once participants understood it better they had important things to say, so it was kept.

The three questions on "relating experience" yielded mixed results. Question 11, your biggest challenge, provided thoughtful descriptions of issues and strategies, and interesting stories. For question 12 on biggest success, participants usually named only one issue, and did not have as much to say as for their biggest challenge.

It was decided that this question would only be asked if there was extra time, or if other questions did not generate enough data. Question 13, the most important thing you've learned, was very thought-provoking and participants seemed very interested in answering it. Question 14 on differences between neighborhood organizational leadership and leadership in a job-related position led to what were judged unimportant digressions. Participants tended to talk about jobs they had had and various issues and problems they'd faced, with not a lot to say of relevance to neighborhood leadership. It was decided to change this question, as described below.

The four questions on "leadership development" and the one on "motivation for leadership" all proved to be very useful and interesting.

Phase 2. Three more interviews were conducted from June 11 to 16. As described above, the majority of the questions were effective in stimulating participants to reflect on their knowledge and experience as leaders, and seemed open enough to allow respondents to go in directions they chose. Questions that were eliminated were the ones on organization description and numbers 9 and 12, unless there was extra time. Questions to be modified were numbers 7 and 14.

In addition to this analysis of the questions, phase 2 interviews were preceded by a preliminary analysis of the first four interviews. Each interview was coded by concept and theme, and a cursory look was given to processes and relationships among concepts. This analysis led to other changes in the approach to the interviews in phase 2.

First, as noted above, there was a need to refine certain questions to get more

pointed answers. As follow-up to question 7 about the relationship between leaders and members, asking how that relationship developed or what the leader did to develop it were probing strategies used. Question 14 about differences between neighborhood and job-related leadership was changed to: How has leadership in job-related positions helped you in your leadership in neighborhood organizations?

Second, from this first-level analysis of the data, questions were raised that needed follow-up, often arising from differences among participants. For example, respondents differed in their opinions as to the usefulness of training, and whether one could be trained for leadership. They also differed in their views on the role of vision in leadership. Questions on these topics were incorporated into the interview where appropriate, i.e., when they came up naturally.

Third, several issues or themes emerged that seemed to need more in-depth data. These included motivating members, participation, decision-making, the effect of belief in the possibility of change on motivation, and belief in self as a factor in seeking leadership. These topics were also explored in more depth in subsequent interviews, when appropriate.

Phase 3. After another period of analysis, the final three interviews were conducted from July 31 to August 19. For phase 3, the same general structure of the interview was retained, although by this time the interviews had become very free-flowing. (This evolution to free-flowing is described in the "Process" section below). One change was made in question 10 on personal philosophy of leadership. In explaining the question, participants were asked to give a definition of leadership that

might summarize their basic approach, if that seemed easier.

Phase 3 interviews were influenced by new understandings and new questions that were incorporated into the flow of the interview. A major emerging theme seemed to be member ownership of the organization, which raised questions about the leader's role in member development and how members share or participate in leadership. There was also some question about the mutual influence of leaders and members. More often follow-up questions were framed in terms of 'how' in order to get at process.

Process

Each interview began on a rather formal note, with the reading and signing of the required informed consent form, included in Appendix D. Getting the tape recorder set in a convenient location contributed to this formality. In bringing the interview to a more informal, relaxed plane, the basic purpose of the interview and the two supporting considerations mentioned earlier were kept in mind. To reiterate, the overriding purpose of the interviews was to help participants reflect upon what they know or believe about neighborhood organization leadership by helping them feel comfortable and talk freely.

With regards to feeling comfortable, the researcher explained in the first phone call, at the introductory meeting, and at the beginning of the interview that in no way were participants being evaluated or judged. They were told that they were chosen to be interviewed because they had been recommended as good or successful leaders; and that the goal of the research was to find out what they think, in the hope of

helping other leaders. In addition, the interviewer was open, friendly, respectful, non-judgmental, and very interested in participants' ideas. Participants quickly seemed quite at ease, and did not seem inhibited by the tape recorder.

To help them feel free to say what they thought, participants were also given (verbally) a short summary of the structure of the interview and the types of questions to be asked. At the same time, they were told that the questions themselves were not important; what was important was what they had to say about leadership.

Another important influence on the process of the interviews was the interviewer's growing competence in enabling them to be comfortable and free-flowing. At first, the interviewer relied on the questions to keep the interviews going. By the third interview, the interviewer was much more at ease with going with the flow and only asking what seemed not to be covered in participant's discourse. By the fifth one, the interviewer was skilled at using questioning or prompting techniques ("floating prompts" according to McCracken, 1988) such as clarifying, and expanding and branching from participants' thoughts. In the ninth and tenth interviews very little direction was provided, and much rich data collected. This was due in part to the interviewer's skill, but also in part to the readiness with which these two participants shared their thoughts.

FOLLOW-UP AND OUTCOME NEGOTIATION

By the phrase "negotiated outcomes" we mean to imply that both facts and interpretations...must be subjected to scrutiny by respondents who earlier acted as sources for that information....everyone does have the right to provide input on the subject of what are proper outcomes, and the inquirer has an

obligation to attend to those inputs and to honor them so far as possible.

(Lincoln and Guba, 1985:211)

Several means of inviting participants to have a voice in the formation of the research outcomes were incorporated into the research design. First, a transcript of their interview was given to each participant, ideally within two weeks (although it was sometimes several weeks before a participant received the transcript). With the transcript was a letter thanking the participant for the interview, and inviting him or her to change, delete, or add anything they wanted. (None of them wanted to change anything.) To ensure the confidentiality of the interviews, any identifying characteristics--especially names of people, places, and organizations--were deleted from the transcripts. In addition, they were transcribed with diacritical marks indicating vocal emphasis, laughter, pauses, and unidentifiable segments.

Second, an analytical summary of the interview was given to each participant, with a letter asking them to evaluate how well it reflected their views, and to make any changes they would like. The summaries (in Appendix E) list major themes and concepts brought out during the interviews, and contain an "integrative summary" of the ideas. Two participants clarified some aspects of their viewpoint that they felt were not captured in the summary. The others rated their summaries very high, with comments such as "a very accurate reflection of my ideas," "very accurate," and "very good."

Finally, after another period of analysis, and armed with some preliminary results, the researcher invited all participants to a luncheon, both to thank them for

their participation, and to invite further input and/or reaction. The week before the luncheon, participants were given a preliminary report of findings to read, containing descriptions of the major categories and concepts found. They were also given the interview summary analyses of all the other participants.

Seven of the ten leaders interviewed attended, along with the director of the LNC, and an observer who took notes. On the whole, their reactions were very positive. Specific comments are presented in Chapter 4.

ANALYSIS

The analysis procedure was built upon the phenomenological philosophical foundation described in the first chapter, and used a grounded theory inductive methodology. The goal was to understand how leaders think about their leadership experience by discerning themes, concepts, commonalities, and relationships, while at the same time documenting the uniqueness of each participant. Achieving such an understanding involved a focus on each individual participant as well as across the whole set of participants. It also involved analysis at two levels, the descriptive and the theoretical. These four dimensions of the analysis can be pictured in matrix form.

participants	level of analysis	
	descriptive	theoretical
individual	individual description	individual theory
group	group description	group theory

How the analysis addressed the content of each of the four boxes is described in the section on description and theory building. This section is preceded by segments on coding process, computer assisted analysis, and ongoing analysis.

Coding Process

Coding is a process of labeling meaningful segments of data with descriptive or conceptual analytical identifiers, in order to sort and regroup the data into descriptive or theoretical reformulations. This is called "de-contextualizing and "re-contextualizing" by Tesch (1990:115-116), who describes it as a process of separating out relevant, meaningful portions or segments of data; identifying topics, themes, or categories; labeling the segments appropriately; and re-assembling all portions according to the topic, theme, or category. Some have called the process 'data reduction', but Tesch and others (Lincoln and Guba, 1985) argue that although the analysis moves to more abstract levels, the actual amount of data is not reduced and may even increase.

In Basics of Qualitative Research: Grounded Theory Procedures and Techniques (1990), Strauss and Corbin present the most detailed explication of coding procedures available. They describe three types or levels of coding: open, axial, and selective. Although coding becomes more abstract and theoretical as one moves through the three, in reality they are interwoven processes that do not necessarily take place in separate stages.

In **open coding** concepts, "the basic building blocks of theory" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:74), are identified and labeled. These concepts are developed in terms

of their properties and dimensions, and used to discover categories. In **axial coding** connections are made between categories according to a coding paradigm that specifies a set of relationships among data. These relationships involve conditions, context, action/interaction strategies, and consequences of particular phenomena found in the data. In **selective coding** a "core category" is selected, to which other categories are systematically related and around which they are integrated. In conjunction with these three types of coding, attention is given to identifying and incorporating descriptions of **process** "the linking of action/interactional sequences" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990:143).

Two analytical procedures are integral aspects of coding at any level: making comparisons and asking questions. Making comparisons is a continual process of comparing one meaningful segment of data with another to determine in what ways the segments are alike or different. This is called the "constant comparative method" by Glaser and Strauss (1967). It is used in conjunction with asking questions (for example, who, when, where, what, how, how much, why, how often, under what conditions) to determine appropriate labels and categories for individual portions of data.

In the present research, open coding was done in the margins of each interview. The concepts and categories or themes thus identified were used early in the data collection process to do some axial coding of the first few interviews. A computer software program called "The Ethnograph," described in the next section, was used before applying axial and selective coding procedures to the whole set of

interviews. Axial coding was then applied to each interview, and diagrams for each one were constructed depicting the most salient relationships among the categories and concepts of each interview. These are found in Appendix F. Through this process, it became clear that all the interviews revolved around a core set of three categories. Selective coding was then done to relate all the categories to this core in a representative way.

Computer Assisted Analysis

According to the user manual, "The Ethnograph is a set of interactive, menu driven computer programs designed to assist the ethnographic/qualitative researcher in some of the mechanical aspects of data analysis (Seidel et al., 1988:1-1). These programs enable the researcher to sort pre-coded data into any number of analytical files, and to recode or revise the coding scheme as needed.

Each of the interviews was entered into the software, which formatted each document according to its specifications and produced a hard copy with numbered lines. These copies were then recoded manually using the concepts and categories developed in open coding for the descriptive analysis. The codes were then entered into the program. With that as preparation, the researcher was able to assemble in one file all the data segments labeled with any particular code, which greatly facilitated axial and selective coding.

Ongoing Analysis

An important feature of the coding/analysis process emphasized by Strauss and Corbin (1990) as well as many others (for example, Tesch, 1990; Hutchinson, 1988; Lincoln and Guba, 1985; and Bogdan and Biklen, 1992) is that it is concurrent with data collection. "The grounded theory method requires that the researcher simultaneously collect, code, and analyze the data from the first day in the field. The method is circular, allowing the researcher to change focus and pursue leads revealed by the ongoing data analysis" (Hutchinson, 1988:133). This approach allows theory (and description) to be discovered rather than imposed, and relies on "theoretical sampling" in which insights gained from the data themselves inform further data gathering.

In the present research, on-going data analysis did inform the data collection as described in the section on interview content: analysis done between phases or groups of interviews led to changes in questions and direction for subsequent interviews. This process was not ideal, however. Each of the interviews of one phase were not thoroughly analyzed with open, axial, and selective coding before moving to the next phase. Rather, each of the transcripts were open coded, and a few were axial coded. This level of analysis seemed to provide sufficient data for reflection and decisions about next steps in data collection.

There is some defense of this less-than-ideal approach from Bogdan and Biklen (1992:154). "In our judgment, the beginning researcher should borrow strategies from the analysis-in-the-field mode, but leave the more formal analysis until most of

the data are in. Problems of establishing rapport and getting on in the field are complicated and too consuming for beginners to enable them to actively pursue analysis." Although no problems of rapport arose while doing the interviews, the process, including transcribing the data, was time and energy consuming. Without previous experience with the type of analysis described here, it was difficult to simultaneously maintain on-going analysis to the ideal depth.

Description and Theory Building

Description and theory building were the two goals of this study. Description is a legitimate goal of qualitative research. The discernment of themes, commonalities, and unique aspects is the focus of some phenomenological oriented research (Tesch, 1990:68). Likewise theory building is the focus of many qualitative studies aiming to discover patterns, regularities, or relationships. The grounded theory approach is especially attuned to discovering theory from data.

Description. One aim of this study was to describe the data in terms of each individual, and in terms of the differences and similarities across all participants. This was done after the open coding of all interviews. The individual descriptions, the upper left box in the matrix above, consist of lists of the major themes expressed by each participant, under which are grouped related concepts. In addition, each interview is described in terms of its unique perspective.

The all-participant description (the upper right box in the matrix) had several components. First, a summary list of themes and related concepts was constructed by combining, consolidating, and reformulating those for individuals. Second, a list of

important leader characteristics drawn from all interviews was compiled. Third, a matrix was devised to show which participants addressed each of the major themes. It also shows similarities and differences among participants at a glance. These three outputs will be described in detail in the next chapter.

Theory Building. The other aim of this study was to develop a theoretical understanding of neighborhood organization leadership grounded in participants' own experience of the phenomenon. A theoretical analysis of each interview was constructed by integrating the descriptive themes and concepts around core categories, as in selective coding. This dealt with the bottom left box in the matrix. The output of this procedure was an 'integrative summary' and a diagram of relationships among important categories for each interview. The summaries are included in Appendix E, and the diagrams in Appendix F.

As for group theory, the bottom right box in the matrix, axial and selective coding were done using data that had been sorted and grouped with the help of The Ethnograph. Relationships between major categories and elements of categories were noted for each interview and compared. This led to the construction of a theoretical framework for a grounded theory of relationships among major categories. This consists of a set of hypotheses about the influence of categories on each other.

RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

The final section of this chapter deals with the unavoidable questions of the reliability and validity of the research. Every researcher doing qualitative or grounded theory research from a constructivist or phenomenological paradigm seems

to have his or her own criteria for judging the quality of the research. All of them agree on two points, however: conventional or 'positivist' research standards cannot apply because the paradigms have different assumptions; and 'trustworthiness' is the ultimate standard for constructivist research.

Lincoln and Guba (1985) present a cogent discussion of the concept of trustworthiness, and compare positivist elements with naturalist elements. They assert that all research is judged by four indicators of trustworthiness: truth value, applicability, consistency, and neutrality. The labels given to these in the positivist and naturalist paradigms are shown in Table 2. Each of these indicators is

TABLE 2: Indicators of Trustworthiness in Two Paradigms

Indicators of Trustworthiness	Naturalist Paradigm	Positivist Paradigm
truth value	credibility	internal validity
consistency	dependability	reliability
applicability	transferability	external validity
neutrality	confirmability	objectivity

presented below with a brief explanation. This is followed by a discussion of the ways in which this study addressed each in various aspects of the research, as applicable.

Credibility

Credibility is concerned with accuracy and comprehensiveness, and can be applied to three aspects of the research process--data collection, analysis, and findings. This study addressed the credibility of the data collection process in two ways. First, accuracy was assured by tape recording each interview and producing verbatim transcriptions (McCracken, 1988; and Mishler, 1986). Second, comprehensiveness was enhanced by using fairly open-ended questions, being relatively non-directive, and using floating prompts to encourage participants to expand on their thoughts. All of these help guard against what Kirk and Miller (1986:30) point to as the source of most validity errors--asking the wrong questions. As they put it, "the more diffuse and less focused the method, the wider net it casts." They also cite good rapport with participants as a component of validity (i.e., credibility). How rapport was established has been described in the section entitled "Establishing the Context."

Credibility of the analysis process was reinforced in three ways. The most important of these was what Lincoln and Guba call "member checks"--the solicitation of participant input as the research proceeds. "The member check, whereby data, analytic categories, interpretations, and conclusions are tested with members of those stakeholding groups from whom the data were originally collected, is the most crucial technique for establishing credibility" (Lincoln and Guba, 1985:314). As explained earlier, participants were given the transcript of their interviews to edit if they desired; they were given analytical summaries of their interviews and asked to react

to them; and they were given the semi-final analysis and contributed their reactions at the luncheon. Checking was also done more informally during each interview, as the researcher would ask for clarification or restate participants' words to check if the understanding was right.

The other two methods of enhancing the credibility of the analysis focussed on the process itself. The constant comparison method in which data are continually compared and contrasted contributed to the accuracy of the analysis (Glaser and Strauss, 1967). Likewise, doing 'negative case analysis,' i.e., accounting for exceptions, contributed to its comprehensiveness (Glaser and Strauss, 1967; Lincoln and Guba, 1985).

The findings of constructivist research must also be subject to credibility criteria. Again, the most important of these is participant input: if participants agree that the research findings represent their reality, the findings are extremely credible. Other criteria are given by Strauss and Corbin (1990) and McCracken (1988). Glaser and Strauss (1967:30) state that the integration and clarity of the theory developed will make the case for its credibility. Strauss and Corbin (1990) suggest seven criteria to judge this. These deal with how well the research generates, relates, and develops concepts and categories; how well it incorporates variation, broader conditions, and process; and how significant it seems. McCracken (p.50) also lists seven criteria with which to judge quality: the results must be exact, economical, mutually consistent, externally consistent, unified, powerful, and fertile.

Dependability

A constructivist study cannot be reliable, in the conventional sense of consistency across different observations, because each researcher brings a unique and creative instrument (self) to the process. It also cannot be reliable because of the assumption that conditions (beliefs, contexts, experiences) change; social phenomena are not static. However, it can be dependable in that it can account for changes in the research conditions as the research evolves (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Kirk and Miller (1986:41) claim that "Reliability depends essentially on explicitly described observational procedures." To ensure dependability, this study provides a detailed description of how the data was collected, including reasons for changes in the initial procedures. It also provides a detailed description of how the analysis was carried out.

Transferability

There are two different views on transferability. Practitioners of grounded theory research claim that careful attention to grounded theory procedures results in a rich, theoretical description of some important social processes. The extent to which the theory can apply broadly is a matter for empirical testing (Strauss and Corbin, 1990; Hutchinson, 1988). Lincoln and Guba (1985) claim that transferability depends on first, the 'thickness' or comprehensiveness of the description of the setting and second, the similarity of the setting to which the research is to be transferred. The latter condition is a judgment reserved for the one wishing to make the transfer; while the researcher's responsibility is to provide the thick description.

Although no claims are made for the transferability of this study, the researcher did provide some detail about the supportive setting in which Lansing neighborhood organizations operate. However, the value of this study lies not in how well it might apply elsewhere, but in how well it captured the leadership conceptions of this set of neighborhood leaders.

Confirmability

Confirmability deals with whether the findings of the study are justifiable, given the data, the collection process, and the analysis process. Would another person, looking over research records, agree that the findings are justifiable outcomes? To answer this question, Lincoln and Guba (1985) recommend conducting what they term an "audit trail." This is a very elaborate set of procedures which someone unconnected with the research applies by examining all records and products of the research process. It is a time-consuming process, and one not judged feasible for this study.

However, two means of enhancing confirmability were used in this study. First, records of both the data collection process and the analysis process were kept in detail. Records of what was done, when, where, how, and with whom were saved and are described in this chapter.

Second, the researcher made periodic attempts to 'bracket' assumptions and expectations. Bracketing, termed "manufacturing distance" by McCracken (1988), can be described as being aware of one's personal values and preconceptions so that they can be transcended during the research to allow one to see with a new

perspective (Hutchinson, 1988:130). According to McCracken (1988) skill in doing this is most easily achieved by living in another culture for an extended period of time, which this researcher has done. This puts one's assumptions about life in sharp relief, and helps one develop an awareness of and a sensitivity to the arbitrary nature of one's norms. Because this experience is not feasible for many researchers, McCracken does suggest other ways of uncovering preconceptions, such as noting times of surprise and humor and examining how they violate one's assumptions and expectations.

In the case of this research, before designing the interview protocol and before and during the data analysis process, attempts were made to think through and outline personal biases and assumptions. These center around beliefs about leadership given a knowledge of the business and psychology leadership literature; beliefs about leadership given personal experience with leaders and in leadership roles; beliefs about self-direction, facilitation, and participation given an adult education background; and beliefs about volunteerism, given personal experience in VISTA and Peace Corps.

CHAPTER FOUR

REPORT OF FINDINGS: DESCRIPTION AND THEORY

The findings of this study are reported in five sections corresponding to each of the five research questions presented in Chapter 1. The first section provides a description of the respondents as a group. It includes a compilation and description of the major categories and concepts found in the ten interviews. The second section summarizes participants' views on leadership development and training, and includes a list of training topics suggested by participants. The third focuses on individuals, presenting a summary theoretical analysis of each participant's ideas about leadership. The fourth discusses the similarities and differences among participants. Finally, the fifth presents a theoretical analysis of participants' ideas as a whole, tying various concepts together to construct a framework for a grounded theory.

MAJOR CATEGORIES AND CONCEPTS

This section presents results related to the first research question: How do participants as a group think about leadership? The data analysis process began with the open coding of each interview soon after its transcription, and subsequent axial coding. Ten major themes or categories identifying activity areas of an effective leader were identified. They are compiled in Table 3, along with related concepts or

TABLE 3: Major Categories of Leader Activity**o Member Motivation**leader factors:

- read people
- listen to/drawing out
- care
- show confidence in
- make personal contact
- have positive attitude
- show passion

member factors:

- trusted/respected
- accepted
- esteemed
- recognized/rewarded

organizational factors:

- social aspect
- goal achievement
- relevance

o Participation/Action

- facilitate
- eliminate barriers
- model action
- assess/maximize strengths
- invite
- give direction
- follow through

o Ownership

- participation
- planning/decision making
- leader objectivity
- shared leadership
- independence from leader
- authorized speaking

o Sense of Community

- build/manage relationships
- build neighborhood pride
- establish communication
- ensure representativeness

o Meetings

- importance
- preparation
- flow
- interest
- small group skills

o Knowledge

- problem/context
- resources
- strategy/process/channels
- city politics

o Vision

- rooted in mutual concern
- belief in change
- steadfastness
- big picture/little picture

o Communication

- inform
- persuade
- get feedback

o Member Development

- act as mentor
- provide opportunities

o Outside Liaison

- manage relationships
- act as conduit/spokesperson
- take a stance
- negotiate
- persist/be patient

elements. The major categories include 1) motivating members; 2) encouraging participation and action; 3) ensuring member ownership of the organization and its activities; 4) building a sense of community; 5) conducting meetings; 6) being knowledgeable about the context in which the neighborhood organization operates; 7) developing a vision for the organization; 8) communicating; 9) developing the skills and abilities of members; and 10) acting as a liaison or conduit to people, organizations, and agencies outside the neighborhood. These are listed in order of importance, as determined by how many participants talked about them, how often, and how intensely.

Some of the concepts grouped under a category are purely descriptive. For example in the 'meetings' category, the concept 'importance' refers to participants' beliefs that meetings are very important for developing a group identity, making plans and decisions about action, and other reasons. On the other hand, many of the concepts are found in the data to have a particular influence on the categories to which they belong. These types of concepts, then, constitute the outline of a theory of the category. For example, the other concepts grouped under 'meetings' form a theory of effective meetings that could be stated as follows: effective meetings depend on a leader's advance preparation and small group skills, directed at keeping meetings flowing and interesting, so that effective plans and decisions about action can be made.

Each of the categories and concepts will be described by presenting examples of participants' own words from the interviews. Although there are numerous

examples of each category and concept, only those felt most representative are used. Participants will be identified with the following common surnames: Adams, Brown, Collins, Davis, Edwards, Ford, Gardner, Harris, Johnson, and King (corresponding to participants one through ten). Apostrophes surrounding a word or phrase indicate the participant's verbal emphasis. Bold indicates an emphasis added by the researcher.

An eleventh major theme was leader characteristics--the qualities, and abilities of effective leaders. These will also be described below.

Member Motivation

Member motivation was a major concern of participants. It was discussed in various ways by each of the leaders and at length by some. It is intangible in contrast with its tangible counterpart, participation/action, the next category. It can be defined as **the desire or willingness to be involved.**

According to participants in this study, numerous factors influence the strength of member motivation. These can be divided into three groups: leader factors, related to abilities and attitudes expressed by the leader; member factors, related to feelings or attitudes of members due to actions by the leader; and organizational factors.

Leader Factors. Leader factors include reading people, listening, caring, a positive attitude, and passion. Each of them has a positive relationship with member motivation in the data.

1. Read People. The first leader factor is the ability to read people. This

means, first of all, being able to understand their motives for being involved:

Collins: You have to be 'creative', you have to be 'inventive' in order to get people motivated. And you have to be willing to **read** the person, and see what might make them move where somebody else might not.... You have to be able to **read** the person and see what might make them tick.

Reading people also means being sensitive to their feelings:

Ford: ...working with people who are volunteers, it can be really tricky. The more you work with volunteers, the better you get. Because, when you're a volunteer you can un-volunteer. So if somebody doesn't like something or they get angry at something or disgusted with something that's happening or discouraged with something that's 'not' happening, they can just leave and you don't know why. So you've got to be able to **read** people, and have a feeling that something is not right with so and so, and I don't want to lose her. What can I do to find out what's happening.

And finally, reading people means being sensitive to their abilities and to what will make them want to share those:

Johnson: It's like realizing that you have neighbors who can't read. So you don't take them things that they have to read to do.... But to be **sensitive** enough to these people and their needs, to realize that they can do a lot of other things. They can talk on the phone for you, they can walk around to the neighbors and talk.

Davis: He and I have had words, but then I always back off and come on with a smile again. To keep his friendship, to keep his ideas flowing, but not allow him to take over. That's been my biggest challenge. I think it's working. (laughter)

2. Listen To / Draw Out. Listening involves both the ability and the willingness to let other people talk:

Gardner: If you don't put your phone number in the newsletter, if you're not willing to be interrupted, and if you're not willing to **listen** to even the most 'tedious' person telling you what she thinks, you don't want to do neighborhood work, because they will.

The other aspect of this factor, drawing people out, involves the active ability of soliciting ideas--getting people to talk:

Adams: Some of it is **'getting' people to talk**, getting people to stand up and say what's on their mind. First of all, making them feel comfortable enough that they'll say **'anything'...**

3. Care. Caring is a third leader factor of member motivation. According to one participant:

Ford: You have to **'like'** people. They have to feel like you like them.

Caring was often linked with listening:

Brown: Be involved with the people you're leading, as people. Talk to them, listen to them, **care** about their concerns.

Another participant put it this way, in response to a question about the characteristics of an ideal leader:

Collins: Somebody who **cares**, somebody who's patient, somebody who is willing to listen, somebody who's willing to tell everybody to sit down and shut up if they have to.

A third participant had a lot to say about caring:

Johnson: And you've got to **like** people. If you don't like the people or the job that you're doing, you're never going to be a good leader. That's what I like about my neighborhood group. I **'like'** the neighborhood. It's a nice neighborhood. I've got **'great'** people in this neighborhood. I have people who are interesting--I could sit and just let them tell me about their life experiences all day. And that's a lot of fun....It's not because I'm the strongest caveman there, so therefore I'm the leader. I'm the one who showed that I'm concerned about their issues.

4. Show Confidence. Showing confidence in a member increases motivation to participate because it makes the member feel valued and increases their self-esteem

(a member factor):

Johnson: It makes 'them' happy, because they feel 'you've' got the **confidence** in them to do that job.

The following quote explains a strategy for motivating members by showing confidence in them:

Ford: When you ask someone to assume a position of responsibility, you lay out the characteristics of the person that you think would be the ideal person, and then ask somebody to do it. And they think "my gosh, she thinks I'm that wonderful person!" (laughter) I do that all the time.

5. Make Personal Contact. Participants believe that making personal contact--going door-to-door, having frequent meetings, talking informally to neighbors--is an important motivating strategy.

Edwards: There's several things that a neighborhood leader has to do, and one is to keep **contact** with the people that live in the neighborhood. You cannot be a leader, an effective leader, and do it from your desk in your home. You have to be willing to get out and go meet with people in their homes. And also to convene regular meetings with the neighbors.

6. Have a Positive Attitude. According to participants, having a positive attitude about the possibility of change and communicating this optimism to members helps motivate them:

Edwards: Well I think one of the things that certainly helps [motivate people] is if you have a **positive attitude**, if you have an attitude that through community effort, through neighborhood effort you can accomplish something worthwhile.

Collins: You have to have **positive thinking**....You have to know that 'something' can be done. There is never 'not' an answer to a problem. There's always an answer. It's just a matter of 'finding' the answer....if people persist long enough.

7. Show Passion. Finally, to motivate others leaders must have passion. This

is also called energy, enthusiasm, or commitment, and seems to be 'catching':

Brown: I think one reason X is a good leader is he has a personality which helps **energize** and mobilize people. I don't know how you explain that. I've watched him in action and I'm just very impressed. When he talks about problems and you see his '**passion**' and you see 'his' willingness to get involved and you say "by golly, you know, 'I' can get involved; 'I'm' willing to work on this and help; and this is important to me too."

Member Factors. A second group of factors which influence the strength of member motivation focuses on the feelings or attitudes of members that result from leader actions. These are: trusted and respected, accepted, esteemed or needed, and recognized or rewarded.

1. **Trusted / Respected.** The first member factor refers to the motivating power of the trust and respect the leader shows to members:

King: I think an ideal leader should be someone that has **respect** for everyone that live within their neighborhood. You can't expect people to be cooperative and get involved and work and all that sort of thing if you don't truly respect them, and their needs, or where they are developmentally. So I see that as a core thing.

In response to a question about the ideal relationship between leaders and members another participant said:

Edwards: I think the best kind of relationship is obviously where you have a lot of **respect** for each other....This goes along with treating ideas with respect, feeling you're welcome in anybody's home, and anybody is welcome in your home....I'm a great believer, by the way, in democracy. Not too many of our politicians are. They're afraid of the people, is the truth. They don't trust the people, I **trust** the people. Now, that also means that I expect them to respect me, and I'll respect them.

2. **Accepted.** Feeling accepted is the second member factor. If people feel accepted, they are more likely to participate. In response to a question about the

ideal relationship between a leader and members one participant said:

Ford: I think in this kind of neighborhood organization, where everybody volunteers, a lot of people have different agendas, that it's got to be a very **accepting** relationship. You cannot even suggest that one person's reason for being there is any less important than another person's reason for being there.

The positive effects that an open and accepting attitude can have is aptly illustrated by this story:

King: We have a lot of people with a variety of life styles, and some of them really just want somebody to tell them, "Gee, you're OK, and we'd like to have you involved too." And they really get involved. One of the most fun neighbors that we ever had were some neighbors that could've been really intimidating in that he had just gotten out of Jackson after serving a number of years, and was a huge man, and was the head of a local motorcycle gang. He and his wife and their children moved into the neighborhood and they were very nice people....We had welcomed them into the neighborhood and they became some of our most active and best neighbors, really. It was really an interesting process, but they also became more mainstream in the course of that.

3. Esteemed. Feeling esteemed can be positively influenced by acceptance.

King: I think the **self esteem** issue is really critical in a neighborhood like this. That many times people, like the couple that I mentioned, are struggling with life in general. And if you can find ways for them to feel that they're worthwhile, it changes how they live, their attitudes toward their neighborhood, and often their behavior patterns as well.

4. Recognized / Rewarded. Members need to feel that they are getting

something for their efforts. What satisfies this need varies:

Brown: I guess it depends on the person. Some people are getting the comraderie that they're looking for....Many people are dealing with problems that they think are real important. And to the extent that they feel they're helping to solve those problems, it feels good. People to varying degrees like to be **recognized**. Some folks really don't like to be recognized in a neighborhood setting. It embarrasses them. Others kind of do like to be recognized for what they do well....And praise,

praise hardly ever hurts anybody.

Organizational Factors. Organizational factors are characteristics of the organization which influence member motivation. There are three: a social orientation, goal achievement, and relevance.

1. **Social Orientation.** Having a social orientation positively influences member motivation. According to participants, fun is a strong motivator for involvement in neighborhood organizations:

Gardner: Neighborhood organizations don't just exist for issues, they exist for **fun**, for neighborliness. And people like to get together to see their neighbors, and they don't like to hear about all the things that are wrong all the time. So we, in designing this potluck, designed it with "come and meet your friends and your neighbors"...

The social aspect is also an important element in building and strengthening a neighborhood organization:

Davis: Right now we are reorganizing and trying to strengthen our group and make it a little more of a social.

2. **Goal Achievement.** Achieving a goal means success, another important influence on motivation:

Harris: We've had some successes and people feel a little more hopeful than they have. This is characteristically a very emotionally depressed area, financially and socially. And now, more people who were hopeless have some hope that we 'can' do some things.

3. **Relevance.** Finally, relevance influences motivation. This refers to the perception that the organization is dealing with issues of concern to members or neighborhood residents.

King: ...people tend to come because there's an issue that affects them. And once that issue is dealt with, then they may drift away and

you pull in new people with new issues or whatever.

Participation / Action

As mentioned earlier, participation refers to **the tangible, physical act of being involved**, while motivation refers to the intangible desire or willingness to be involved. As with motivation, all of the leaders talked about participation and action in various ways. Six concepts were identified in this category: facilitate participation/action, eliminate barriers, model action, assess/maximize strengths, give personal invitations, give direction, follow through.

1. Facilitate. Assuming members are motivated to be involved, the leader uses various strategies to facilitate members' active participation. As one participant said:

Brown: A big part of this organization is trying to do things to 'help' the neighborhood and trying to gain a power base to work with the powers that be, again to help the neighborhood. And both of those require action, as opposed to just talking among ourselves. I think a great part of my job is trying to figure out 'where' we'll take action and to 'facilitate' taking action.

2. Eliminate Barriers. One way to facilitate participation is to eliminate barriers by providing transportation or child care, for example:

King: What we 'have' done regularly, when there have been public hearings or things like that, is gone out and physically picked people up and taken them to those meetings. Because often transportation is a problem, or they say "Yeah, I'll come" and they don't. So we often shuttle people downtown.

3. Model Action. Modeling action is often a catalyst for member action, and is seen as essential for effective leaders:

Harris: I think that your example, your **model**, helps set the tone. And if they know that you're not afraid to stand up to the druggies or

whoever it is in your neighborhood, then the people who are going to act, will act. Many times people will be tired of a lot of talk and no action and so it really helps if they see that you know how to do it. If you set a really strong **example** for that, that seems to make a lot of points.

4. Assess / Maximize Strengths. Another strategy to facilitate participation and action is to assess members' abilities and maximize their strengths--getting them to do what they do best:

Johnson: A long time ago I learned that when you work with somebody, you have to find out what they do good, and then you get them to do it for 'you'....let them **do what they do best**.

But given the realities of volunteer work, participation is sometimes determined by willingness rather than ability, as this leader points out:

Brown: ...to try to determine what people do well, what they 'like' to do....I guess another aspect of that is who 'can' do what or who do I think would be good at doing what....one of the 'predominate' things typically in the neighborhood is who can I 'get' to do it?

5. Invite. Just as making personal contact is an effective motivator, giving personal invitations is effective in obtaining participation and action:

King: The way to get people to participate, if you really want them to show up, is to make **person-to-person** contact and say this is what's going on and this is how it affects you.

This last example of giving personal invitations is also an example of member development (asking them to do a little more than they can handle), and of motivation (building esteem by making them experts on something):

Adams: I didn't wait for people to volunteer for stuff. I'd talk to them one on one. You just ask people to do...just a little more than they can handle. And so that's what I would do. Then people had a reason to come to the meeting. They had something to say, they had become an expert on some subject, or their expertise had been validated.

6. Give Direction. Another strategy for achieving participation and action is to provide direction:

Harris: And bad leaders, to me, are people who just go around and nothing gets 'done' because they're unwilling to **give direction** to the group, or at least 'point' in a direction. That's ineffective.

Direction can be given in a number of ways. One is by suggesting alternatives:

Edwards: I think this is one of the functions of a leader, to **suggest alternatives** especially when you seem to be reaching an impasse, in terms of how do you go about getting something done about this particular issue.

Other ways of giving direction are to be specific and to demonstrate what is needed:

Gardner: Part of it is the art of **being concrete**. You have to give them something that is doable. Most people, if you give them time-limited concrete opportunities will say "yeah, I'll do that" You have to **show** other people the manner in which you would like them to be involved, and at the same time not have them think that well, you're so enthusiastic about this that I don't have to do anything because you have it all figured out.

On the other hand, too much direction can be negative, as this participant points out:

Johnson: And you don't need somebody to boss you around and tell you how to do the job.... You don't need to be a slave at it because somebody wants to 'boss' you around. I think that's the 'biggest' mistake most people do with volunteers.

7. Follow Through. The last strategy for enhancing participation and action is follow-through, making sure that people are doing what they said they'd do:

Collins: ...it's the leader's responsibility to make sure things get done. If you don't **follow through**--it's one thing to get it started, it's another thing to keep it going.

One leader calls this "gentle harassment":

Gardner: ...a large part of being a leader in the organization is **gentle harassment** to make sure people **follow through**.... People are

expecting you to do that. They work better within a structure of being asked, "how are you coming on this?"....[By 'harass'] I just mean calling up, when is your next meeting, what's an update, asking them to come to the board meeting to give a report, just keeping on top of it with them. If you don't keep on top of them, they're liable to become discouraged.

Ownership

Ownership refers to members' feeling that the organization belongs to them, that they are in control. It is mentioned by eight of the participants, who see it as essential for a healthy and effective organization. It is closely related to the previous category, participation/action in that participation, in many forms, is a primary cause of feelings of ownership. The six concepts identified in this category include: participation, planning/decision making, leader objectivity, shared leadership, independence from leader, and authorized speaking.

1. Participation. As just stated, ownership is primarily achieved through participation--the more members participate in all aspects of the organization's functioning, the more they feel ownership.

Ford: I think that the 'main' thing is '**ownership**'. The members of a neighborhood organization have to 'own', to feel ownership in the organization, feel ownership in what's 'happening'. And to feel ownership you have to **contribute**. So you've 'got' to find ways that everybody can contribute.

In order to foster ownership, leaders must allow others' contributions and overcome the temptation to just do it themselves:

Gardner: One of my very few criticisms of that person as a leader is that he allows his 'need' for convenience to supersede the need to invite other people into that process, and have more **ownership**.

2. Planning / Decision Making. An important way to instill feelings of ownership is to bring members into the planning and decision making process. As the following leader points out, involvement in decision making is empowering:

Johnson: You have to show that the people have the **empowerment** themselves. That they are the ones that you are the leadership for. It's **'their' decision**.

While members are empowered, the leader's role is more of a servant:

Adams: You need to be fairly modest about what you're contributing to the situation. Your task is to mobilize the organization and the community, to **assist** the organization and the community in making **decisions**. It's more of a **stewardship** than it is---'power'. If you think that being a leader is about power, then I think you're mistaking what your role is.

In addition, leaders have to be willing to allow others' ideas to supersede their own:

Ford: The leader can't come in and say "we're 'going' to do this." It has to be shared ideas, **shared planning** and I think the leader more than anybody else has to be willing to **accept rejection**.

Accepting rejection means:

Johnson: ...to realize that there is more than one correct answer to a problem, and to realize that 'mine' may not be the only correct answer, that somebody else might have a better answer for that problem.

In order to facilitate this planning/decision making process, members must feel that their ideas will be respected:

Edwards: I think number one, you make everyone feel comfortable in a group situation, in the decision-making process. And you do that by 'not', as I've indicated earlier, by not trying to poo poo or negate what anyone else says about something.

3. Leader Objectivity. Another important element in fostering ownership is the leader's objectivity--the conscious attempt not to manipulate members by imposing

opinions or slanting the presentation of issues:

King: So your leadership role is explaining what the various issues are and how they impact, and trying to give a balanced explanation of that....to give both sides, to talk about the pluses and minuses.

4. Shared Leadership. Sharing leadership is a very important way to help members feel ownership:

Gardner: ...one of the best things about being in a leadership position is when you see other people assume those leadership roles. I think that knowing when to stop leading and get other people to come forward is just as important as knowing when to lead.

Another leader describes a team approach:

Harris: Ideally, I think it should be sort of like a 'team' of people working together....I think if you have the spirit inside that we're all going to do this together, and that everybody has equal responsibility for doing the working on it---people have different strengths, but that it's everybody's responsibility. I think ideally, that's the best way that it works out, because then you've got people sharing the weight.

5. Independence From Leader. For members to own the organization, it must be independent of any one person:

Gardner: ...you don't want to develop a cult of a personality. That's what happened to the neighborhood association when it was active before. It becomes too dependent on one person and their ideas.

Encouraging independence means being a good teacher:

Johnson: If you're a good teacher, if you're a good leader, you're teaching the people how to survive without you.

Encouraging independence also means turning over leadership:

Adams: You know what my test [of an effective leader] is? Whether or not they can 'turn over' leadership. I don't think that leadership is something one person does. I think that leadership is a role that is understood by the organization.

6. Authorized Speaking. The last element of ownership is authorized speaking, i.e., only speaking for the organization when it has been consulted and has taken a position:

King: I think one of the worse things you can do is simply express a position as the position of the neighborhood, when the neighborhood has not really been consulted.

Edwards: And furthermore, you do not speak for the neighborhood organization unless the neighborhood organization has taken a position on that particular issue.

Sense of Community

Establishing a sense of community is an important element of participants' leadership. This is done by building and managing relationships, building neighborhood pride, establishing means of neighborhood communication, and making sure the organization truly represents the community.

1. Build / Manage Relationships. Building and managing relationships involves getting people acquainted and feeling comfortable with each other, as well as dealing with conflict. One participant calls good relationships the "glue" that holds an organization together:

Johnson: Well that makes the glue. That's what makes the 'glue' that makes the community....You feel that you know these people, you feel that you know you have a part of them there with you, and you watch out for them. So that's what makes it a neighborhood.

Without this glue, the organization is in danger of self-destructing:

Adams: But I think that the social aspect of it is real important to cultivate because what it does, it helps you to build the level of trust that'll get you over rough spots. If you trust each other, you can disagree and handle tough issues without destroying the organization.

What without that social part, it's very tough.

In addition, this social aspect is a prerequisite for serious action:

Collins: Our biggest success would be getting people acquainted and reacquainted with one another, and getting people out of their house and taking some type of a social stand....you have to get the community together first, before you can weaken the undesirable element and get rid of it.

2. Build Neighborhood Pride. Having positive social relations leads to neighborhood pride, the second strategy for building a sense of community:

Gardner: I love characters, and there's so many characters. And I've made some good friends, and it's a nice pleasant community. I prefer to 'know' who I live with, and a sense of pride in who these people are, and where we live.

This pride can be built by having people engage in a project which is bound to succeed, such as neighborhood beautification:

Edwards: One thing that you 'can' do, and I've noticed that some of the neighborhood groups have done it, we've done it to some extent, and that is to sponsor a project--whether it be a park improvement, a landscape beautification project--which does not take a lot of money, but it can take a lot of effort, by people....To me that's the kind of thing that people can point to and say, "Hey, I've got pride in this neighborhood cause I helped create that. That's what you've got to do. You've got to give people a stake in their neighborhood and in their community.

3. Establish Communication. Establishing communication lines is another strategy leaders have used to develop a sense of community among members and residents. In some neighborhoods this is a newsletter, in others, it happens by word of mouth:

Gardner: The whole idea of a newsletter is really proactive from the stand point of you put out a newsletter to let people know what is happening, to keep people enthusiastic about stuff that's going on in the

neighborhood, give them just a mechanism to hear about things that they might not ever read in the paper or see on TV.

Johnson: We have an informal gossip line for our leaders, and everyone else in the neighborhood, cause people tell us what's going on and we tell other people. We have this network. It's not a phone tree, it's a one-on-one, face-to-face, and the code name that we call it is _____. So if you hear this whispering that's happening in the background, this is the news that's happening in _____, the unofficial name for our neighborhood.

4. Ensure Representativeness. A final aspect of sense of community is the neighborhood organizations' representation of the community. Several participants were concerned about this. The following quote illustrates the responsibility of the organization and its leadership to the community:

Adams: The organization represents the community, and I think it's important to keep the community in mind, not just the organization. Because sometimes the organization can become irrelevant to the community. But to help the community get the information, to get and to process and to articulate the information about what's happening to it. I think that leadership is a 'reflexive' action in the community. The leadership is the community expressing itself as it understands what's happening to it. A community organization is how a community talks about itself and what's happening to it. So the leadership is like the mouth.

Another participant sees power in true representation:

Edwards: I think that there is a power aspect to it to the extent that the neighborhood is reflective of the real desires of what people want to have done in that neighborhood. If you can communicate those desires to the responsible government officials, in our case the city, then I would say that you have some political power. If you try to take it upon yourself to represent only your points of view, then I don't see that as exercising much real power.

A third participant has a more pessimistic, and perhaps more realistic view of a neighborhood organization's ability to truly represent the neighborhood:

Gardner: I don't pretend that the neighborhood association represents everyone in the neighborhood. It's the people that want to get involved. And some people feel like they're very well represented without ever coming to meetings, and other people will harbor an intense resentment about 'one' thing that 'one' committee or one stand that the association might have taken.

Meetings

Nine participants discussed the challenge of conducting meetings. Their ideas center around five concepts: importance, preparation, flow, interest, and small group skills.

1. Importance. Participants view meetings as very important aspects of a neighborhood organization leader's job. For one thing, they help the group identify as a group:

Brown: Meetings are, I guess in a certain sense, are one of the things that really **holds us together**. If we always met in subcommittees and little groups, I don't think we'd be an organization because the meetings are what '**binds us**' together and keeps us going in a common direction, and keeps us feeling like we're like a real group or entity.

Meetings are also important forums for unifying and energizing the group in various ways:

Harris: The meeting is a place to draw everybody back and say, "Here's what we 'did'", to everybody....and to bring up new problems. It's an updating place for the larger group, and a place, sometimes, to form strategy; to air concerns; to reinforce people for what they've done, commend them; bring 'other' community people in and have everybody in the same room at one time so we're all singing the same tune.

2. Preparation. Preparation is an important aspect of conducting a meeting.

As this leader points out, being prepared involves researching a problem in advance

to keep a meeting from becoming bogged down:

Ford: One of the things that bogs down a group quicker than 'anything' else, is to come and just throw things on the table. So I come in, if we have a problem: this is the problem, this is who I've talked to about it, this is what I suggest. These are my suggestions for change, now let's take these and decide what we're going to do.

Being prepared also involves having an agenda:

Davis: I feel that the major thing I have to do is know how to conduct a meeting. I've instituted a couple of new things for them. I have an agenda going in, a printed agenda.

Finally, advance preparation facilitates decision-making and action:

Brown: There needs to be some leg work that goes on so that decisions can be turned into action.

3. Flow. Several participants highlighted the flow or movement of a meeting.

One aspect of this is the ability to take charge:

Harris: A bad leader is somebody who won't take charge when you're supposed to take charge, and won't lead a meeting.

Another aspect is balancing the need to keep things moving with the need to allow people to talk:

Adams: There's always more than you have room for. And so you got to keep it going, but you also got to make sure that people kind of have their 'say', and if there's too much then you need to know when to refer to committee or when to spin it off.

One way to keep the flow is to have some structure:

Ford: I think if you have some framework for your meeting, and everybody knows what the framework is, what the parameters are, it helps the meeting run smoothly.

On the other hand, another leader makes the point that structure can be inhibiting:

King: I think the less formal you can be the better. There are times

when you have to be formal, when you have to do things in a structured way. But to get things done effectively and to make people comfortable I think the more casual you can be, the better.

4. Interest. Making meetings interesting is another challenge for leaders:

Adams: When you bore people to death. That's a terrible thing to do to somebody, and it's the quickest way I know of to wreck a neighborhood organization, is to be really boring. Stuff just goes on and on. What happens is that loud mouths dominate the meeting and more thoughtful people won't sit around for it. So it's just people stand up and bitch.

5. Small Group Skills. Finally, to keep a meeting flowing, leaders need to have small group skills. This involves facilitating discussion and managing conflict:

Gardner: I used to train people in how to run small groups, so I'm, I think, extremely good at sensing where a group is and knowing how to move....I mean, to know that you're losing these people and these people are talking too much and how do you balance all that, and how do you draw the other people out, and how do you cut off people without seeming to be rude, what do you do when faced with a confrontation.

Two illustrations of strategies for facilitating discussions and managing conflict follow:

Davis: We have one or two people that love to talk a long time. So then, their hand goes up and you acknowledge them, and then they say something and then they go on and on. "Well just a minute, I think so and so..." You smoothly move it to another sector.

Edwards: ...if people become abrasive in this manner I simply point out to them that this kind of behavior is counter-productive. It's not going to result in any kind of positive action on this issue. And I would appreciate it if you would change your tone, and become more somebody who wants to solve a problem instead of create one. I'm very open with people.

Knowledge

According to participants, neighborhood leaders need to have substantial knowledge in at least four areas: the problem and its context, resources, problem solving strategies, and city politics.

1. Problem / Context. Knowledge of problems and their neighborhood context is gained through a lot of person-to-person communication (also a motivating factor):

Harris: And you kind of have to know what's going on in your neighborhood. You have to be a real 'hawk'.

2. Resources. Leaders also need to have thorough knowledge of the local resources available to their organizations, especially the skills and expertise of members and neighborhood residents:

Edwards: I think if you expect a leader to be the expert on all of these areas then you'll never get a leader that's worth their salt. Once again, I think that the leader has to be a learner, as you indicated. There are some areas that many people that are in this neighborhood know far more about than I do. So I say, hey, you tap into this kind of know-how and this kind of expertise, and you don't fake it and make like you know everything about everything, because nobody does. So you look upon the neighborhood as being a resource pool and you blend all these resources, and you'd be surprised what you've got.

3. Strategy / Process / Channels. A third important area is knowledge of the strategies, processes, or channels the organization must work through in order to get changes accomplished. One participant talked about processes:

Brown: What are our rights and what are the processes that might aid us? What's the law?....So what leverage do we have as a neighborhood organization? and how can 'we' interact with those departments to try to help get our needs represented by the city, or with the mayor?

Another talks about channels (who and what) and refers to protocol and procedure:

Harris: You need to know how the city works. What you need is, you need to know who you have to call to get what done, and what **protocol--what's the procedure** for getting all these things done.

Several participants gave examples of specific strategies they use or had used to solve problems. One of these is to involve as many of the concerned parties as possible.

In the first example, this meant involving lots of outside agencies. In the second, it meant involving as many in the neighborhood as possible.

King: That is how we've approached a lot of things. We've called everybody we can think of that would have any jurisdiction over a particular issue. And then often we wound up sitting down in a room with them 'all', trying to figure out "OK, if you can't handle the whole problem, what piece of it can you deal with and you can do this piece."

Johnson: In order to deal with it, you have to deal with it more as a group than one on one. Because one on one is not going to win these problems. It takes a commitment by the community to do it. The community then can back you up.

Another strategy is applying pressure to the people or agencies that have jurisdiction over a problem:

Johnson: We've been able to get rid of three very trashy people who did not take care of themselves or their families, let alone the people in the neighborhood. We've been able to get rid of that element through pressure of talking to them, pressuring their landlord, pressuring the police and the city officials.

Manipulating egos is another effective strategy for this leader:

Johnson: You let somebody else know, "Well 'he' did, how come you can't do it? Don't you have as much authority?" You'd be surprised. Bureaucracies love to show that they can flex their muscles and have power. Because one guy doesn't want to feel that he's more impotent than the other guy. It's the same little mind games that you played when you were kids....One person doesn't want to feel that they can do 'less' than another. And that's also understanding how to manipulate bureaucracies, how to manipulate all this silliness.

4. City Politics. The last important aspect of knowledge discussed by participants is political expertise, especially knowledge of city politics:

Davis: This organization is very politically potent. So one of the things we ended up doing is an awful lot of work down at city hall.

Ford: You have 'got' to get into the politics of city government in order to be an effective neighborhood leader because the neighborhoods are bound up in city politics. You can't escape them.

Vision

Most participants expressed the belief that having a vision is crucial. This category contains four concepts: the vision must be rooted in mutual concerns, and the leader must transmit a strong belief in the vision, be steadfast in pursuing it, and be able to see both the big and little pictures (or the long and short term).

1. Rooted in Mutual Concern. First, it is crucial to have members involved in the vision. In order to do this, the vision must be rooted in mutual concerns:

Gardner: [The vision] may be shared or it may be alone, but it has to be something that somebody else will **resonate** to.

The following quote portrays one leader's vision and how members were involved in defining it:

King: It was important that we have a vision...of where we wanted the neighborhood to go, of what the problems were and what was causing those problems and what the solutions might be....If the leadership doesn't have any vision, it's really hard to accomplish anything....And so what our overall goal was, was to make it a liveable place for people, a place where people could live with dignity....When we were eliciting the input of people, what we were saying was "What kinds of problems are you having living here, and what can we do to solve those problems and make this a place where there's a real quality of life?"

2. Belief in Change. Getting members to embrace a vision centers on

instilling a belief in change--the conviction that the vision is attainable, that change is possible. This is similar to the influence of a leader's positive thinking on member motivation discussed earlier. Sometimes a leader can successfully instill this belief:

Brown: So some people like X, who actually get people believing that we 'can' make a difference, I think that's a big element.

However, it is important to recognize that some people's defeatist attitudes may never change:

Harris: I sometimes have trouble with people who are stuck in hopelessness, for very long. If they're originally there, and showing them a couple of things does the trick, fine. I usually let the other people go who don't really want to believe that you can do anything, and I just kind of block them out and do my own thing. I don't want to waste my energy on them.

3. Steadfastness. An effective leader remains steadfast to the vision, sticking with it, persisting through many difficulties. One leader calls this "stick-to-it-iveness":

Brown: Oh, one thing we haven't talked about is, call it '**stick-to-it-iveness**'. That's 'essential' for a good leader, is to be willing to do this thing more or less constantly.

Another leader calls it "positive consistency":

Collins: **Positive consistency**....If you saw a big change, and then you continued to see that change stay at a positive level--where say for instance, the neighborhood stayed clean and people kept their properties up, or people would periodically attend city meetings or functions and kept their presence known--I would say that's good leadership.

Remaining steadfast to a vision is not easy, however. One leader cited it the as biggest challenge:

Harris: Staying dedicated to an issue that's hard to resolve. Staying committed to it. At least having some level of commitment. You

could lose it for a couple of days and feel like you're checking out, but come back. Just longevity....But remaining steadfast to the goal in the thin times is the hardest thing.

With a strong vision, remaining steadfast is possible, because it is the vision that keeps the leader going, as the next quote testifies:

Harris: ...you've got to have a really strong vision....because that's what keeps you in there, is that vision.

4. Big Picture / Little Picture. Having a vision also involves seeing both the big picture and little picture:

Harris: You have to be able to look at the long term and look at the short term and pick your issues carefully, and to kind of 'orchestrate' a strategy for things.

According to one participant, this takes a special kind of ability:

King: Anybody can run a meeting and take care of day-to-day business. But it takes a different kind of thought process to establish that vision and figure out how the pieces fit together, and if this is really going to build toward that vision.

Communication

Participants emphasized the leader's role as a communicator. There are three aspects to this role: informing, persuading, and getting feedback.

1. Inform. The first aspect of a leader's communicator role is reporting information gathered from outside sources back to the organization.

Adams: There's a **reporting** function. If you have a regular meeting, getting all the reporting on the table. The question of reporting back to the neighborhood, having the neighborhood have the opportunity to get information about an issue, and give information about a issue; facilitating that flow.

There are both internal and external aspects to informing. The internal aspect

involves the leader facilitating the sharing of information within the organization, and the external aspect involves the leader acting as a conduit of information from the outside:

Davis: But what I do, I feel that all I do, I 'facilitate'....And I gather the information, and I call a meeting, and then I have them make their reports.

King: You need, as a leader, to be telling people what's going on. As a leader you get lots of contacts, you get lots of communications from banks, from agencies, from whatever who would like to be involved or who have services to offer. It's important as a leader that you share those with people living in your neighborhood so that they can make the decision about whether there's something there that they'd like to be involved in or see a need for.

2. Persuade. The second aspect of a leader's communicator role is persuading. As one participant puts it, this means:

Gardner: Roping other people in to do things that a small group of people think ought to be done.

Persuasion is linked to informing, in that informing--making people aware--is the first step toward convincing people to be involved and make change:

Harris: First you make people aware of a concept, and you have to spend quite a bit of time on **awareness**, giving them information about whatever the thing is. Behavior change is about the last thing that happens, so you kind of got to get the information out there. You let that sink in, and keep talking about it and keep talking about it and keep talking about it.

Another way to help this process along is to explain what tangible results people might expect from their involvement:

Harris: But convincing people, if you can show them what it's going to be like if they do it with real **tangible results**--this is what it's going to be like if we do this particular option, this is what we're shooting for specifically--then I think it helps them see why.

3. Get Feedback. The third aspect of the communicator role is feedback from members:

Ford: ...you have to 'constantly' get **feedback** from the board: what's important, what's not important, how they feel about something.

Member Development

Five participants recognized leadership or membership development as one of the responsibilities of a leader. Mentoring, and providing opportunities for experience are two ways of doing this mentioned by participants.

1. Act as Mentor. One participant cited mentoring as the ideal way to learn to be a leader, and described it like this:

Brown: A mentor. Someone who I can watch in action. Someone who gives me responsibility in chunks, rather than all at once. Somebody who's willing to step in if I need a little bit of help, and take the responsibility for doing that. And to give me feedback in terms of doing things a little differently.

Another describes mentoring as a process of "encouraging":

Gardner: I've had a couple people I have encouraged, called on, asked to do things, worked with them, to get them into leadership positions cause I could see that they had that, and all they needed was some encouragement.

2. Provide Opportunities. One participant describes two approaches to providing opportunities--moving people up through officer positions, or giving committee or other special assignments--and makes a case for the importance of learning through experience:

Adams: There are 2 approaches. One is to try to work them up through the ranks: be the secretary, treasurer, be the vice-president, then be the president....I like using committees a lot more because you

can advance people a lot faster and the work is a lot more challenging....And special assignments, it wouldn't even be necessary to have a committee, just assignments: do some outreach with this community or go and speak at this meeting; really expose them. You don't learn how to be president by being vice-president. You learn how to be president by being president. So you would expose them to presidential-type tasks: speaking to the public, negotiating, and so on.

Sometimes the leader needs to take advantage of, rather than provide, opportunities for experience:

Johnson: If Mr. X wants to come down and say, "Hey, I've got this problem, do you know who I talk to?" I say "Talk to Mr. B in department C." I don't give them "Well let me take care of that for you". That way, they feel they're empowered just by the fact that they know who to talk to. "And then if he doesn't do anything for you, you get back to me and I'll call him too."

This quote gives a reason for leadership development--to empower members.

Another reason is to strengthen member resources:

Edwards: Then you've got a pool to choose from in terms of people who now have some leadership skills and know how things can be done, and how to get people to work cooperatively with each other.

Outside Liaison

Neighborhood leaders often serve as the neighborhood organization's liaison to the outside world. Five aspects of this role are: managing relationships, acting as a conduit or spokesman, taking a stand, negotiating, and being persistent.

1. Manage Relationships. Good relations with outside groups is essential for effective action, and managing these relationships is an important liaison role. Some participants talked about members being too passionate about an issue and thus endangering changes for its successful resolution.

Brown: ...that is an issue on which the neighborhood felt so strongly that I think they were 'overly passionate' in the sense that's possible to beat up the other side too much and to really hurt yourself. I felt a personal pride in terms of 'moderating' that process to what 'I' think has given us a 'very' good opportunity to get something really done that will work.

2. Act as Conduit/Spokesperson. This role involves transmitting information from outside groups to the organization, and relaying the organization's positions by acting as spokesperson. The following quote describes the conduit part of the role:

Davis: Basically, just as soon as something happens down at city hall, something comes up on the agenda, they call me. Or if they have a plan submitted for developing an area they send it to me, and then I take it to our group and check it out. If we don't have time to get it to the group, I would alert everybody by telephone and we'd dash down there.

3. Take a Stance. The liaison role sometimes involves conflict and taking a stand for the neighborhood against powers that be:

Collins: Sometimes they have to be a contact person between the neighborhood and the city government....And they have to be willing to ask questions and take some heat, and do some screaming and yelling. If you're not willing to do that, you're just not going to be able to get anywhere. And you have to be able to **take a stand** against some things, whether you want to or not. You have to be 'brave'.
(laughter)

4. Negotiate. On the other hand, it is important to be flexible and willing to negotiate:

Davis: We haven't gone in there pounding the table, demanding. We've always been open to **negotiation**....And I think they have respect for us because we don't go in there just demanding. We offer alternatives.

5. Persist / Be Patient. The liaison role also requires persistence and patience, as this leader points out:

King: ...you have to be willing to make a whole lot of phone calls. If you run into a dead end, you have to be **persistent** and creative in terms of looking for another avenue.... You have to be **patient** and let the people or the powers that be of whatever group you're dealing with, do the things 'they' have to do to justify whatever action you want them to take. Sometimes it's a long process, but persistence helps....

Leader Characteristics

The last category to be described is that of leader characteristics. Participants mentioned many characteristics they feel are important or essential for neighborhood leaders. These are listed in Table 4, grouped in five sub-categories: ability-related, affective, cognitive, moral, and personality-related.

Ability-Related. Ability-related characteristics are those that one can develop or acquire through conscious attempts. Those mentioned by participants include able to communicate, able to listen, able to draw people out, able to understand self, able to read people (also called perceptive), creative, and directive.

Affective. Affective characteristics are expressed in relationships and focus on feelings. These include accepting or open to others, affirming (also called encouraging and esteeming), caring, friendly, patient, respectful, sensitive, and trusting. Characteristics from this group were mentioned most by participants.

Cognitive. Cognitive characteristics are thought-oriented in nature and engage mental processes in different ways. These are analytical, broad-minded, intelligent, knowledgeable, learning-oriented, and realistic.

Moral. Moral characteristics denote qualities of good character. These include committed, consistent, courageous (also called thick-skinned), having

TABLE 4: Leader Characteristics**Ability-Related**

able to communicate
 able to listen
 able to understand self
 able to read people
 creative
 directive

Cognitive

analytical
 broad-minded
 intelligent
 knowledgeable
 learning-oriented
 realistic

Personality-Related

active
 confident
 energetic
 enthusiastic/passionate
 flexible
 humorous
 intuitive
 optimistic
 persistent
 visionary

Affective

accepting/open
 affirming
 caring
 friendly
 patient
 respectful
 sensitive
 trusting

Moral

committed
 consistent
 courageous
 generous
 having integrity
 honest
 humble
 responsible
 trustworthy

integrity, honest (also called above-board, open, and straight-forward), humble, generous, and trustworthy.

Personality-Related. Personality-related characteristics indicate personal qualities. These include active, energetic, enthusiastic/passionate, flexible, humorous (having a sense of humor), intuitive, optimistic, persistent, and visionary.

Other Categories

Other categories not explicitly described here include organizational development, member motivation, and managing relationships. First, two participants discussed **organizational development**--the phases or stages of their organization's growth. For one of these, it was a major area of concern. This leader felt that one of the duties of a leader was to move the organization from an exclusive focus on issues to a development orientation with a more proactive and visionary approach to neighborhood problems. The other talked about organizational evolution from bringing people in and building excitement about an issue, to concerted action followed by a period of 'now what?'

Second, **leader motivation** was a topic addressed by most participants because most were directly asked what motivated them to give the considerable time and energy it takes to be a neighborhood organization leader. Most began their involvement with a very practical reason, such as the desire to protect their property values. This motivation was eventually supplemented by one of satisfaction from their efforts--satisfaction with the results or satisfaction from the deepening relationships with their neighbors, both of which fueled motivation for further

involvement.

Third, **managing relationships** was a major area of concern for all participants. It appears as an element in several categories, but is singled out here because of its pervasive importance. It is a critical element in the categories sense of community, outside liaison, member motivation (called 'social aspect'), and meetings (called 'small group skills'). Well-managed relationships also strongly influence ownership and participation/action.

Participant Reactions

Seven participants and the director of the Lansing Neighborhood Council attended a meeting at which the above results were presented and explained. Prior to the meeting participants had been given a written preliminary report of these results, and it seemed that most or all had read it. They had several reactions.

One leader's first reaction on looking at the list of categories and concepts was that it seems overwhelming, which raised the question: how can any one person do or be all of these things? But this leader and others went on to make several points: 1) a leader doesn't do all these things at the same time; 2) a leader doesn't do all equally well; 3) a leader does a lot of these things automatically, without really thinking about them consciously; and 4) not all of these have to be found in one person--the leader has to have a certain level of skill, but other members fill the gaps. With these points in mind, the list does not seem so daunting.

Some of the leaders made comments about specific categories or elements. One felt there should be a bigger emphasis on 'getting people to talk,' as opposed to

being a good listener. Another wanted to make sure that 'feeling needed' was emphasized as a motivational factor. Another made the point that modeling is a primary mode of learning in a neighborhood organization, and wanted to find a way to promote that sort of learning. Based on these points, some revisions were made in the explanation of the categories and elements.

One leader called attention to the importance of the **context** within which neighborhood organization leadership is exercised. To be successful, neighborhood organizations must cooperate and work together. Another pointed out that this leads to the issue of **power**. There is power in the neighborhoods if people come together, get organized, and then exercise collective power. An example of the collective power of Lansing neighborhood organizations is in their successful efforts to secure a stronger voice in city government. There is now a new city department of Municipal and Neighborhood Development.

Another comment about the categories as a whole related to their interconnectedness. They are perceived as not only linked, but "feeding off" each other in a "snowball effect." As a leader makes efforts in one area, other areas are affected and momentum is gained. Thus the categories and their elements are seen as a complex whole. In the last section of this chapter, the researcher presents a framework with specific hypotheses about how the various categories are linked.

In spite of this complexity and interconnectedness, it is helpful to have the complex whole broken into understandable categories, another leader asserted. In fact, these results (in a condensed version, with redundancies weeded out) could be

the basis of a pamphlet useful for both new leaders--to learn what they have to do-- and for experienced leaders--to help them keep on track. Others agreed that these results could also be used in a leadership workshop or training program.

LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING

This section presents results pertaining to the second research question: What are the participants' opinions and experiences with regards to leadership development and leadership training? All participants were asked questions about leadership development and training, although specific questions varied with each interview. All were asked how they learned to be leaders and whether leadership training was or could be useful. Other questions variably asked dealt with the best way to learn leadership, whether anyone could learn, and what topics should be covered in training courses. The next sections summarize responses about leadership development, i.e., how leadership was and should best be learned, and training for neighborhood organization leadership.

Leadership Development

Participants developed leadership abilities in a variety of ways. For some, leadership had been modeled and encouraged in their families. Others learned leadership skills in school extracurricular activities, or later in voluntary organizations or in job-related positions. Several had attended leadership seminars or workshops.

As for acquiring the leadership abilities specific to neighborhood organization leadership, there were two commonalities among participants. First, most said they

had learned by doing, also called on-the-job training or learning by trial and error. Second, many also said they learned by watching, by observing and learning from experienced leaders.

Most participants also said that the best way to learn is from a mentor. Brown aptly states what most participants expressed:

A mentor. Someone who I can watch in action. Someone who gives me responsibility in chunks, rather than all at once. Somebody who's willing to step in if I need a little bit of help, and take the responsibility for doing that. And to give me feedback in terms of doing things a little differently.

A few also mentioned watching a good leader in action as an effective way of learning, although some saw this as an extension of the mentoring method. Only four mentioned training as a 'best' way to learn.

Training for Neighborhood Organization Leadership

Although only four said training was a preferred way to learn leadership, when asked if leadership training could be useful most participants (8) answered yes. Three of these were definite yes's without conditions. These three firmly believe that more people could be leaders if given the opportunity, through training, to explore their potentials and dispel their fears.

The other five showed some hesitation in embracing the utility of training. They admitted, however, that there are potential or even actual leaders who could benefit from training, but only under certain conditions. One stated that a person would have to be ready for leadership--i.e., want to be a leader to benefit. Two asserted that receptiveness to training depends on one's motivation, personality, or

natural capacity--i.e., a self-centered motivation or certain personality traits could undermine or overwhelm any training. Two others insisted that to be effective, any training program would have to be well-targeted to the specific setting and objectives of the neighborhood organization. This would be an especially difficult condition to fulfill according to one of these participants who had had several bad experiences with useless training programs.

Another participant who thought training might be helpful wondered if people would be motivated to give the time to it. Similarly, several participants expressed the opinion that even experienced leaders would benefit from training (in developing new leadership, for example), but doubted they would be motivated to spend the time.

Two participants believe that, in general, leadership cannot be acquired through training. One strongly feels that leadership is instinctual, and only the mechanics (such as Robert's Rules of Order) can be consciously learned. The other feels that leadership is a mindset, and that the important things such as vision, the psychology of relationships, and communication cannot be taught.

In summary, most participants believe that leadership training for potential or actual neighborhood organization leaders could be beneficial, depending on various conditions: if there is a readiness and desire for leadership, if the motivation for leadership is not self-centered, if there is an inherent personality or capacity for leadership, if the training is well-targeted, or if there is a desire for training.

Several participants had strong opinions about how leadership training should be conducted. Two methods were advocated. One centers on practice--giving

trainees ample opportunity to try out what they are learning in a practice-feedback-practice cycle. The other involves more individualized practice, in line with the mentor method of learning--giving specific leadership tasks in the organization, starting small and allowing individuals to build skills through actual experience. Both of these would involve practice and feedback.

Finally, some participants had specific ideas for training topics, although some felt they would need more time to think before making suggestions. The specific topics mentioned by participants are listed in Table 5. They are divided into four groups: conducting meetings and related topics, building leadership/member development, strategy development, and other topics.

INDIVIDUAL ANALYSIS

The third research question is: How do individual participants think about leadership, in terms of important categories and relationships among them? To answer this, the concepts and themes identified in coding were used to develop analytical summaries and diagrams of each respondent's views on leadership and leadership development. At the risk of oversimplifying participants' thoughts, these summaries attempted to relate the major themes expressed by each respondent in a way that reflected the essence of their ideas. Each summary was submitted to the respondent for revision and approval. These summaries, along with lists of the themes and concepts discussed by each participant, are included in Appendix E. Diagrams developed from the summaries can be found in Appendix F. Note that the summaries were written before the 10 categories previously described were identified.

TABLE 5: Suggested Training Topics**Conducting Meetings and Related Topics**

- o conducting meetings
- o preparing for meetings
- o running small groups
- o managing discussion
- o handling conflict
- o bringing closure to issue or discussion
- o using Robert's Rules of Order

Building Leadership / Member Development

- o building new leadership
- o building a culture of shared leadership
- o turning over leadership
- o assessing members' development and abilities
- o understanding people and appreciating differences
- o practical tools for effective leadership
(e.g., motivational techniques)

Strategy Development

- o problem solving skills
- o responding to outside pressure
(e.g., assessing a proposal or asking the right questions)
- o who's who in city politics and bureaucracy
- o how to get things done (politically)

Other Topics

- o self-understanding (motivation for leadership)
- o communication skills
- o organizational skills (e.g., keeping files or bookkeeping)
- o writing effective letters
- o publishing a newsletter

Therefore, they may differ slightly in terminology.

COMPARISON OF PARTICIPANTS

The fourth research question is: What are the similarities and differences in participants' views on leadership? To answer this question, participants' ideas about leadership were compared by examining the major themes of each interview, studying the individual analytical summaries, constructing diagrams of the thematic and conceptual relationships found in each interview, consulting the contact summary forms completed soon after each interview, and scanning the original interview transcripts. The major themes of each interview were identified by using The Ethnograph program to tabulate the number of segments coded in each category for each interview. This tabulation was cross-checked with the themes mentioned in the summaries and the contact summary forms. When there was some discrepancy, the original transcript was consulted.

Table 6 shows each participant's emphasis of the ten major categories. A 'D' indicates a major emphasis or dominant theme of the interview; an 's' indicates a minor emphasis or secondary theme. The purpose of the table is to give a general comparative picture of participants' ideas. Note that an empty cell does not mean that the topic was not mentioned, but rather that it was not a thematic emphasis. Likewise, an empty cell does not necessarily mean that the participant would think that category unimportant if asked about it directly.

TABLE 6: Participant Emphasis of the Major Categories

Categories	PARTICIPANTS									
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Motivation	s	D	D	s	D	D	s	D	D	D
Participation	s	D	s	D	s	D	D	D	s	D
Ownership	D				D	D	D	D	D	D
Sense of Community	D		D	D	D	s	s		D	
Meetings	D	D	D	D		D		s	s	
Knowledge		D	s			s	s	s	s	D
Vision			D				D	D		s
Communication		s			s		s	D		s
Member Development	D	s			s				D	
Outside Liaison	s			D	s	s				D

D = a dominant theme of the interview

s = a secondary theme of the interview

Similarities

Table 6 shows a definite similarity in themes. The strongest themes--those discussed most often by the greatest number of participants--were **motivation**, **participation/action**, and **ownership**. These were either major or minor themes of 10, 10, and 7 participants, respectively. A second group of themes were emphasized by 7 participants: **sense of community**, **meetings**, and **knowledge**. The other four were emphasized by 4 or 5 participants.

In addition to these themes, there is also a definite similarity in what participants believe to be the ultimate goal of neighborhood organization leadership. This becomes especially clear when comparing the diagrams in Appendix F. According to participants, the goal is to establish an organization that is **growing**, **vital**, **active**, **empowered**, **action-oriented**, or **goal achieving**. Furthermore, seven participants, for all of whom ownership was a major theme, expressed a direct relationship between ownership and this ultimate goal of a successful organization.

This focus on action, empowerment, and achievement puts the major themes in a means-end context. Motivation, participation, ownership and the others are important not in and of themselves, but because they are necessary for a neighborhood organization to function successfully.

Certain leader characteristics were also mentioned repeatedly by many participants. Those from the group of **affective** characteristics in Table 4 were emphasized most by participants. The ones mentioned most often are: **accepting/open**, **caring**, **affirming**, **respectful**, **trusting**, and **patient**. Two from the

ability-related group mentioned most often are also very affective in nature: able to listen and able to read people. The most frequently mentioned characteristics from the **personality-related** group are active, enthusiastic/passionate, and persistent. Those mentioned most from the **moral** group are committed and honest. Only one characteristic from the **cognitive** group, analytical, was mentioned repeatedly.

One must not conclude that these are the only characteristics participants, as a whole, think are important, however. If presented with a list, it is likely that participants would rate many others as important. Also, participants alluded to many of the characteristics without specifically mentioning them.

Unique Perspectives

It is clear from the data that participants are more similar than different. The differences and unique perspectives discussed below do not divide participants into opposing camps. Rather, participants seem to be describing the same phenomenon from unique vantage points.

Some differences in how participants viewed the relationships between the various themes that were emphasized can be discerned. For example, of those who emphasized ownership, two felt that member development had the most important impact on ownership, two felt that participation had the biggest impact, and for the other three, no other category was seen as particularly influencing ownership. This is not to say that these participants would not agree with each other about the impact of other elements. Again, these are the ideas that came up naturally in the flow of the interview.

The relationships among motivation and other elements were also expressed differently. Motivation was seen to influence participation/action, action-oriented organization, or a spiritual center. Motivation was seen to be influenced variously by ownership, meetings, communication, vision, positive leadership, and social relations (or sense of community).

Finally, each interview was unique. Each participant had unique areas of concern or unique ways of relating various elements. The uniqueness of each participant's ideas is described briefly below. Note, however, that these are not the only areas of emphasis, only the ones that set each interview apart.

Adams. A major unique focus of Adams' interview is the leader's important role in member development, especially leadership development, the aim of which is both to improve the effectiveness of the organization as well as develop new leadership. Another unique focus is the task of moving an organization from an issue orientation to a development orientation in which the organization becomes more proactive and has a broad vision for neighborhood redevelopment.

Brown. In this interview, Brown put a unique focus on the strategies and processes of successful issue resolution. These ranged from actively listening to neighborhood concerns and analyzing contexts and resources, to knowing the political and bureaucratic processes involved in addressing particular problems.

Collins. Collins' focus on a positive, spiritual center as the catalyst for effective action and interaction is unique. With this positive center, both in the organization and the leader, efforts will result in success and negative elements will

be overcome.

Davis. Davis gave a unique emphasis to the social aspect of a neighborhood organization as an important element in building and strengthening the organization. Building a friendly, homey atmosphere in the neighborhood, where people know and like each other, is an important first step.

Edwards. This participant gave special attention to establishing comfortable relationships among organization members as a critical precondition to effective action. This focus included an emphasis on managing conflict in an open, forthright manner. Another unique aspect of this interview was the importance given to improving the neighborhood's economic well-being by bringing in businesses.

Ford. Ford's interview was unique in making ownership the central condition for a successful organization. Building ownership was seen as the most important task of a leader, facilitated by a careful attention to member motivation and the psychology of volunteers.

Gardner. This interview was unique in Gardner's focus on the importance of participation as a condition for member ownership, and the strategies for ensuring it. A unique concept was 'gentle harassment'--a leader's way of encouraging members to take responsibility, follow through, and accomplish goals.

Harris. Harris made a unique connection between a leader's vision and the communication of this vision in such a way as to motivate members to take action. The leader's modeling of the behaviors desired from members was also given unique attention as a motivating/action strategy.

Johnson. The unique focus of Johnson's interview was on caring as the underlying condition of all the elements leading to an empowered organization. Critical importance was given to liking, listening to, understanding, appreciating, encouraging, trusting, and rewarding members.

King. In this interview, King showed unique insight into member motivation and the importance of building the self-esteem and feelings of value and worth of fragile members. Another unique focus was the strategy of bringing together all the outside groups with jurisdiction over a particular problem in order to combine resources and devise united strategies.

FRAMEWORK FOR A GROUNDED THEORY

Given the ten major categories and the analyses of each leader's ideas about leadership, it is possible to construct a theoretical framework of relationships. This framework is the foundation for a comprehensive grounded theory of neighborhood organization leadership. It represents the relationships among the major categories as expressed by participants as a whole, and provides the basis for more detailed analyses of individual categories concepts, and relationships found in the data. Such analyses are beyond the scope of the present study.

The framework is pictured in the Figure 1, with arrows showing the direction of influence of the various elements on each other. The numbers on the arrows correspond to the numbers in the list of relational statements which follow.

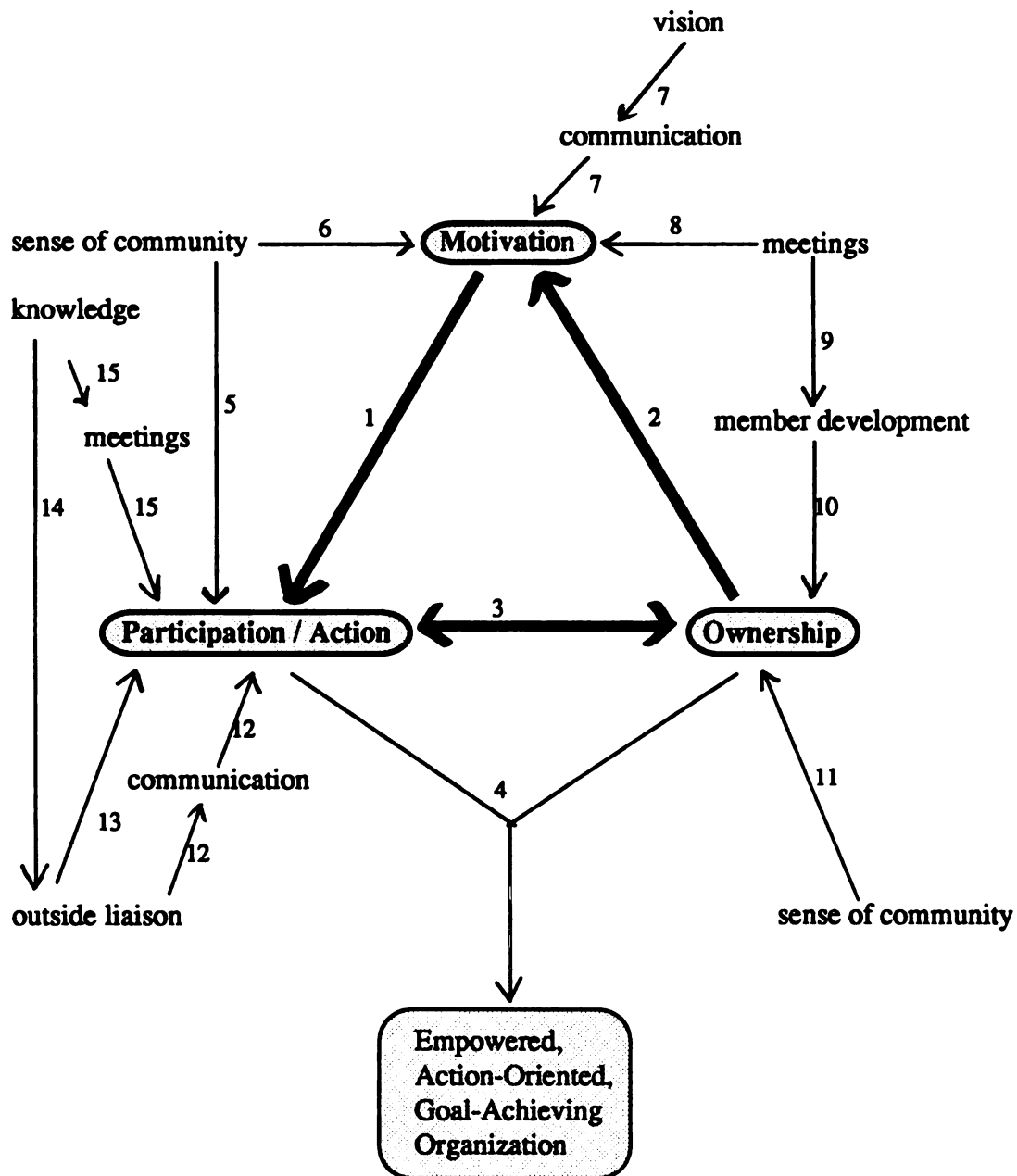


FIGURE 1: A Relational Framework of the Major Categories of a Theory of Neighborhood Organization Leadership

Relational Statements

These statements constitute hypotheses derived from the data about the type and direction of influence the categories have on each other.

1. The more a leader motivates members, the more likely members will be to participate and act.
2. The more a leader involves members in participation and action, the more members will feel ownership of the organization.
AND
The more they feel ownership, the more they will participate and act.
3. The more a leader helps members feel ownership of the organization, the more motivated members will feel to continue or increase their involvement in it.
4. The more members feel ownership, participate and act, the more their organization will be action-oriented, empowered, and goal achieving.
5. The better a leader is at building and managing friendly relations, the more easily members will work together.
6. The more a leader can develop a sense of community, the more motivated members will be.
7. If a leader ensures that a vision is rooted in mutual concern and communicates it persuasively, then members' motivation will be increased.
8. If a leader conducts interesting and well-run meetings, member motivation will be increased.
9. The more a leader gives members opportunities to exercise skills and take leadership in the context of meetings, the more members' abilities will grow.
10. The more a leader gives members opportunities for skill and leadership development, the more members will have ownership of the organization.
11. The better a leader is at establishing good relations among members, the more effectively members will engage in planning and decision making (elements of ownership).

12. The better a leader is at channeling information from outside sources to members, the more effective will be participation and action.
13. The better a leader manages the organization's relationships with outside groups, the more effective will be member participation and action.
14. The more knowledge a leader has of city politics, strategy, and channels, the more successful the leader will be as a liaison.
15. The more knowledgeable a leader is (about problems/resources/strategies) in preparation for a meeting, the more likely it is that appropriate decisions will be made and turned into action.

Discussion

A number of observations can be made about the framework. The first concerns the **centrality of 'motivation,' 'participation/action,' and 'ownership.'** It seems that motivation and ownership are the indispensable bases of a participatory, action-oriented neighborhood organization. One can conclude that the greater member motivation and feelings of ownership, the more participation/action there will be. In addition, ownership and participation/action seem to be involved in a happy circle of mutual reinforcement, as shown by relationship #2 in the diagram. As these two increase, so does the likelihood that the organization will be empowered to achieve its goals.

A second observation concerns the importance of 'sense of community.' As explained in the first section of this chapter and listed in Table 3, sense of community consists of four elements: building and managing relationships, building neighborhood pride, establishing communication, and paying attention to representativeness. According to participants, all of these elements have an impact on

motivation (relationship #5), while good relationships among members is especially important for participation and ownership (#s 6 and 7). It is interesting to note that this element 'managing relationships' is also an important aspect of the outside liaison role (#12)--managing the interactions between members and outsiders with whom the organization may be negotiating.

A third observation concerns meetings. They are important forums for increasing member motivation (#4), for developing member skills and abilities (#9), and for planning and decision making (#14). In fact, although many of the actual accomplishments of a neighborhood organization are achieved outside of meetings, much of the leadership preceding these accomplishments takes place within, in preparation for, or as follow up to meetings.

Fourth, knowledge has a two-fold importance. The leader must be well-informed about neighborhood concerns in preparation for a meeting (#14), and must be familiar with the politics and procedures of city government and bureaucracy (#13) in order to be an effective liaison.

Fifth, as outside liaison, the leader influences participation and action in two ways. As a conduit of information from outside sources to organization members, the leader influences the plans, decisions, and resulting actions of members (#11). As a negotiator and manager of member-outsider relationships, the leader contributes directly to the effectiveness of action (#12).

Sixth, the persuasive communication of a vision has an impact on member motivation (#10). A vision was seen to provide an inspiring core around which a

group could coalesce.

A final observation concerns the impact of member development on ownership (#8). Although member development was a theme of only four interviews, those four participants felt very strongly that it was an indispensable component of ownership, and of the successful continuation of the organization.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS

You have to show that the people have the empowerment themselves, that they are the ones that you are the leadership for....the problem is that people have to feel that they are empowered by it. And that's the hardest point, to feel that, in other words, they're a part of you and your leadership.

--Johnson, Neighborhood Leader

This chapter begins with a summary of the study and its findings. This is followed by a discussion of conclusions about the nature of participants' views of leadership and how these views relate to neighborhood organization literature covered in Chapter 2, and literature on leadership from other domains. The last section of the chapter gives recommendations for practice and for further research.

SUMMARY

This section summarizes the purpose of the research and its methodology, and presents a list of the most salient findings.

Purpose

Given the important role of neighborhood organizations in confronting numerous destructive forces in urban America, this study focused on neighborhood

organization leadership as the driving force behind such organizations. Its purpose was descriptive and exploratory: to understand how ten experienced neighborhood leaders in Lansing, Michigan think about leadership and leadership development. The study addressed five broad research questions:

1. How do participants as a group think about leadership, in terms of major categories and concepts?
2. What are participants' opinions and experiences with regards to leadership development and leadership training?
3. How do individual participants think about leadership, in terms of important categories and relationships among them?
4. What are the similarities and differences in participants' views on leadership?
5. Can participants' ideas about leadership be integrated in a theoretical framework of neighborhood organization leadership?

Methodology

The research was framed by the constructivist paradigm philosophically, and theoretically set within the cognitive psychology domains of attribution and categorization. Thus, from both the philosophical and theoretical standpoints, 'truth is in the eye of the beholder.' Or more specifically, how leadership is defined depends on the perspective of the one defining it.

Consistent with this philosophical and theoretical base, the methodology aimed to discover leaders' perspectives on leadership as broadly and unobtrusively as possible. It centered around in-depth, open-ended interviews of ten current or former neighborhood organization leaders, and used an inductive, grounded theory approach to data collection and analysis. The research design was iteratively developed in

negotiation with members of the target setting. Leaders were invited to participate in the study after a series of introductory and explanatory communications--by phone, by letter, and face-to-face. These served to establish a context for the research and a level of familiarity with and trust in the researcher. The tape-recorded interviews lasted 1 1/2 to 3 hours and took place in a setting comfortable to each participant.

Data analysis was also an iterative process. The ten interviews were grouped in three phases, the first two followed by periods of data analysis and revisions to the interview formats as new insights were gained. Analysis consisted of coding significant segments of data, assisted by a computer program, The Ethnograph. In this way, concepts and categories were identified and related to each other. Finally, all of the categories were integrated around three core categories in a theoretical framework of neighborhood organization leadership.

Findings

Findings are both descriptive and theoretical, focusing on how participants think about leadership, and what their opinions are about leadership development and leadership training. These are listed and briefly described below.

1. Participants' ideas about leadership can best be described in terms of ten major categories and related concepts, as presented in Table 3. The categories are member motivation, participation/action, ownership, sense of community, meetings, knowledge, vision, communication, member development, and outside liaison.
2. The concepts grouped under each category are both theoretical and descriptive, and form a rudimentary theory of the category to which they belong.
3. Participants describe an ideal neighborhood organization leader in terms of numerous ability-related, affective, cognitive, moral, and personality-related

characteristics, as presented in Table 4.

4. Managing relationships, an element of several categories, is a major area of concern for all participants.
5. While agreeing with the category/concept analysis, participants pointed out that a leader doesn't perform all of these functions consciously or all at once or equally well; and that other members have leadership skills that fill gaps in the leader's abilities.
6. A major similarity among participants is their belief about the ultimate goal of their leadership--an active, empowered, achieving organization.
7. Another major similarity among participants is their emphasis of certain themes. **Motivation, participation/action, and ownership** form a core triangle of major themes around which most of the interviews circulate. Other important themes are sense of community, meetings, and knowledge.
8. As for differences, each participant has unique areas of concern, and differing ways of relating various categories and elements.
9. Participants learned leadership through experience and observation.
10. Participants feel the best way to learn leadership is under the guidance of a mentor who could be observed and who would direct the leader through formative experiences.
11. Most participants feel that training could be helpful for leadership development only under certain conditions. Conditions that apply to a potential trainee include a readiness, desire, or capacity for leadership; motivation for leadership not based on a hidden personal agenda; and a desire for training. Conditions that apply to a training program are that it be well-targeted, with practice-oriented methods.
12. A theoretical framework of relationships encompassing all the data centers around motivation, participation/action, and ownership. This framework is pictured in Figure 1.

CONCLUSIONS

The view of leadership that emerges from the data is simultaneously action-oriented and member-oriented. According to the leaders involved in this research, the

goal of neighborhood organization leadership is an empowered, action-oriented, goal achieving organization. Although many factors influence the attainment of this goal--such as the leader's knowledge of neighborhood problems and city politics, and the leader's abilities as an outside liaison--the ones of greatest concern focus on the involvement of other people. The success of a neighborhood organization seems to depend directly on members feeling ownership of the organization and on their participation in action. And for members to participate, they must be motivated.

Thus the ten leaders interviewed apply great energy and effort to understanding and encouraging members, involving them in organization activities, and managing interpersonal relationships. Much of the conversation of each interview focused on concepts such as reading people, listening, drawing people out, caring, showing confidence in, trusting, accepting, rewarding, modeling, assessing and maximizing strengths, inviting, building relationships, and sharing leadership, for example.

The rest of this section will discuss conclusions about the nature of this view in light of the literature on neighborhood organization leadership discussed in Chapter 2. Conclusions resulting from a comparison of participants' perspective with some current views of leadership from the domains of social psychology and business will also be drawn. Finally, conclusions about leadership development and training will be discussed. These discussions will be followed by a summary list of conclusions drawn.

The Neighborhood Organization Literature

Reviewing the neighborhood organization literature in the light of this study's findings leads to several conclusions. These can be grouped under four headings: empowering and empowered, motivation and participation, member education, and leader characteristics. The following sections discuss each of these.

Empowering and Empowered. Given participants' aim of an empowered, action-oriented organization, and their emphasis of the motivation-participation-ownership triangle, the distinction between empowered and empowering organizations is extremely relevant. Quoting from Chapter 2, **empowering** organizations are those which develop the self-confidence and competence of individual members, while **empowered** organizations are those which influence the environment (Florin and Wandersman, 1990).

In this study, participants' leadership efforts are primarily concerned with the individual empowerment of members, that is, with creating empowering organizations. From the studies by Kieffer (1984) and Zimmerman and Rappaport (1988) described in Chapter 2, individual (or psychological) empowerment consists of both a developmental process of growth in self-confidence and personal competence, as well as the willingness to take an active part in one's socio-political environment. These two aspects reinforce each other because it is through participation that the developmental process takes place, which in turn leads to further desire for participation.

Two of the three core categories focus on a leader's efforts to maximize the

active participation of members. The category participation/action includes tangible ways to encourage involvement, as seen by looking at its related concepts: facilitating, eliminating barriers, modeling action, assessing and maximizing strengths, inviting, giving direction, and following through. The category ownership is closely linked to participation in the data, with the two mutually reinforcing each other. Elements of ownership, such as member control of planning and decision-making and sharing in leadership, also call for greater participation.

Looking at the third core category, motivation, every one of its elements either builds members' self confidence and sense of competence, or builds members' participation. The leader factors--reading people, listening, drawing out, caring, showing confidence in, making personal contact, having a positive attitude, showing passion--empower members by making them feel valued and worthwhile or by modeling empowering attitudes. Just as empowering are the member factors--making members feel trusted, respected, accepted, esteemed, recognized and rewarded. The organizational factors--ensuring social times, goal achievements, and relevance--have a direct impact on members' motivation to participate.

An analysis of the most frequently mentioned leader characteristics listed in Table 4 supports the conclusion that participants are focused on the individual empowerment of their members. A cluster of affective characteristics stands out: accepting/open, caring, affirming/encouraging, respectful, trusting, patient, able to listen, and able to read people.

Thus the core triangle, motivation-participation-ownership, represents a

neighborhood organization leader's concerted efforts to build an empowering organization, one that enables its members to develop self-confidence, gain competence, and participate in effective actions to solve problems. A cluster of affective leader characteristics supports this goal. The outcome of these efforts, according to the leaders in this study, is an empowered organization. In other words, an empowering organization is the means to an empowered one. Or as participants in this study might put it, to have an empowered organization, an organization must focus on empowering its members. (However, Zimmerman, 1990, points out that empowering organizations are not necessarily empowered ones, and empowered ones not necessarily empowering.)

Motivation and Participation. Although this study provides a more comprehensive list of descriptive variables than previous studies, data confirm findings related to motivation and participation from a number of studies reviewed in Chapter 2. For example, one of the nine "lessons learned" from Fisher's (1984) study of the history of neighborhood organizing points out that neighborhood organizations must be built on more than material rewards and incentives. According to Fisher, the glue that keeps organizations together is personal development and a sense of group purpose. Another of his lessons is that success is intangible as well as tangible. As such it can be viewed in terms of increased neighborhood pride and social involvement.

In the present study, personal development is the empowering aspect of the core categories as explained above. A sense of group purpose, in the present study,

comes from a vision. When communicated effectively, this vision, based on a belief that change is possible and rooted in mutual concern, has a significant impact on motivation (see Figure 1). Another of Fisher's (1984) principles also reinforces this finding. He speaks of the galvanizing potential of a vision rooted in people's live and tradition. Neighborhood pride and social relationships are both elements of the category sense of community, which influences all three of the core categories.

Florin's (1989) study of surviving neighborhood organizations also found several aspects of motivation to be critical. One is face-to-face recruiting, similar to 'make personal contact,' from the motivation category, and 'invite,' an element of the participation/action category. He also found that surviving organizations fostered participation by engaging in democratic planning and decision-making, an element of ownership in this study; delegating active roles to members, an aspect of both participation and ownership in this study; and having a strong social component, an element of both motivation and sense of community. Finally, surviving organizations used multiple means of communication and had written agendas for meetings, both of which were found to positively influence motivation in this study.

Other studies highlight relevance, goal achievement, and a focus on issues important to members as significant factors of member motivation (Williams, 1985). All of these are aspects of the motivation category in this study.

Member Education. Member education is another aspect of the neighborhood organization literature reflected in the present study. There are two dimensions to this concept. One is content-oriented--education about problems, issues and contexts.

The other is process-oriented--the personal development of members, their psychological empowerment as discussed above.

Williams (1985) addresses the first aspect when he underlines the constant need for a neighborhood organization to balance action and education. As stated in Chapter 2, the better an organization educates its members as to the nature and causes of issues affecting them, the more motivated and active they will be in finding solutions. Two more of Fisher's (1984) lessons learned reinforce these ideas. One calls for a gentle balance between organizing, leading, and education; the other makes political education an integral part of any effort.

Participants in this study did not talk per se about 'educating' members, but it is very clear they consider this an important facet of their roles as leaders in many respects. (In the following, the pertinent categories and elements are listed in parentheses). According to participants, a leader must be well-prepared for meetings (meetings: preparation) by gathering information about situations important to members (knowledge: problem/context, resources, strategies, city politics) and then communicating this information (communication: inform) to members objectively (ownership: leader objectivity) and leading discussion about it (meetings: small group skills) so that members can make the best plans and decisions (ownership: planning and decision-making). It is through this process that members become educated.

The other dimension of member education found in the literature is the process-oriented personal development of members. That the leaders in this study are concerned about the personal development or personal empowerment of members is

clear from the discussion above.

Leader Characteristics. Participants mentioned 38 characteristics, compiled in Table 4, as important for effective leaders. Of the 20 of Kahn's (1982) personal qualities of good leaders listed in Chapter 2, 19 are found in this table. Only one, self-discipline, is not specifically mentioned by participants.

From Berkowitz's (1987) study of 20 local heroes, the two outstanding themes identified resonate with the present study. First is the excitement, energy, or passion that keeps the 'heroes' going when things get difficult. The leaders in the present study spoke strongly of passion and its great motivating power for both the leader and members, and described the ideal leader as energetic, enthusiastic, active, persistent, and committed. One leader, speaking of passion, put it this way:

You have to get emotional about your neighborhood. You can't be dispassionate. And somebody who is less than enthusiastic is not going to make it....Because a lot of times it's this emotionalism that other people in the neighborhood feel the same thing, and by being enthusiastic and becoming angry at this thing and excited by this, and showing your emotions, then you are allowing them to show their emotions and to really get involved in the whole process.

The other theme is the heroes' reliance on traditional virtues. These are very similar to the moral characteristics listed in Table 4: committed, consistent, courageous, generous, having integrity, honest, humble, responsible, and trustworthy. Thus one can conclude that Table 4 presents a comprehensive list of important leader characteristics. However the relative importance of each, and how each influences members or organizational functioning are questions for further study.

The Leadership Literature

From the early part of this century, scholars from numerous disciplines have been studying leadership intensively. This research, centered in the fields of business and social psychology, has taken many approaches and produced many theories.

Currently, these approaches can be grouped into six categories:

- 1) **Personal influence:** Leadership is viewed as a process in which leaders use their personal traits, behaviors, and skills to influence the behaviors and attitudes of followers.
- 2) **Situational:** Leadership is a process in which leaders influence the behaviors and attitudes of followers by using the traits, behaviors, and skills that fit the needs of the situation.
- 3) **Reciprocal:** Leadership is a two-way process of influence between leaders and followers through which leaders fit their actions to followers' needs, and followers accept and cooperate with leaders who help them achieve their goals.
- 4) **Cognitive:** Leadership exists in each person's mind as a mental image consisting of the qualities a person has learned from experience to associate with leadership, an image which is used to judge the leadership of others.
- 5) **Transformational:** Leadership is a transforming process in which followers become less self-concerned and more interested in working towards a vision they share with the leader.
- 6) **Maverick:** Leadership is whatever has worked. This category includes many recent accounts of successful leadership in individual situations or in top-rated companies, for example.

An in-depth comparison of each of these approaches with the findings of this study is beyond its scope. Rather, the following discussion highlights three current approaches most relevant to the study and practice of neighborhood organization leadership.

Before comparing any of these approaches with the views of leaders from this

study, however, one must question the relevance of business-based approaches to voluntary leadership in voluntary organizations. According to Rost (1991), most leadership research has been operating under what he calls the industrial paradigm, equating leadership with good management. In this paradigm, a leader has an authority relationship with followers in a hierarchical structure, and must manage them effectively so that certain goals, usually profit-oriented, are achieved. Followers often have no personal stake in the organization's success as long as their jobs are not threatened, and research has been concerned with the best ways to get followers to do the leader's wishes.

In contrast, voluntary community organizations like neighborhood organizations are participatory and democratic. They have a large variety of goals, the majority of them process-oriented with the development of people and the improvement of communities as the ultimate goals. People participate voluntarily and have a personal stake in the organization's outcomes (Vandenberg et al., 1985).

Where then is the common ground? It is in the facilitative and motivational facets of leadership in either setting. In both industrial and community leadership, leaders are involved in helping people work together for some end. They are also deeply invested in a motivational role. The data of this study clearly show the importance of member motivation for neighborhood organization leadership.

Likewise, much of the current leadership literature focuses on motivation--how to get people to do more than what they are obligated and expected to do. Two recent titles clearly convey this idea: Leadership and Performance Beyond Expectations (Bass,

1985), and The Leadership Challenge: How to Get Extraordinary Things Done in Organizations (Kouzes and Posner, 1987). Similarly, in The Art of the Leader (Cohen, 1990:9), Cohen defines leadership as "getting people to perform to their maximum potential."

Transformational Leadership. The most widely researched and promoted of the motivational approaches to leadership is transformational, described above. The term transformational was originally defined by Burns (1978) in his groundbreaking book Leadership. Subsequently Bass (1985) and his colleagues (Avolio and Bass, 1988) have extensively researched the concept, and devised a measure of transformational leadership (the multifactor leadership questionnaire or MLQ) and a comprehensive training program.

The current version of transformational theory centers around four major concepts, called the four I's (Bass and Avolio, 1990; Thullen and Booth, 1992): individual consideration; intellectual stimulation, inspirational motivation, and idealized influence (or charisma). Each of these encompasses a set of leader behaviors with a particular focus. Individual consideration focuses on the needs and personal development of individual followers. Intellectual stimulation focuses on helping followers develop the capacity for creative and innovative problem solving. The focus of inspirational motivation is on motivating followers by encouraging them to believe in themselves, to commit to a vision, and to exert extra effort to attain it. Finally, idealized influence focuses on followers' emotional identification with and commitment to the leader and the organizational mission, and on their development as

future leaders.

According to leaders in the present study, neighborhood organization leadership is transformational in many important ways. Although the following examples from the data may not fit neatly into the four 'I' categories, they are representative of transformational behaviors. Neighborhood organization leaders build member self-esteem by caring, listening, understanding, accepting, and trusting. They build self-confidence and skills by giving members responsibilities that maximize their strengths and by providing opportunities for them to take leadership roles. They lead members through the intellectual challenge of planning and decision-making: analyzing problems, identifying resources, and devising strategies given the realities of local politics. They invite participation in all aspects of the organization's efforts and provide support in the form of direction and follow through. They involve members in the development of a shared vision, rooted in mutual concern, and inspire commitment to the vision and belief in their abilities to achieve it. They work to establish pride in the neighborhood and a sense of organizational and community identity. And finally, they inspire members by their model: their passion, activity, steadfastness, and positive attitude.

Managerial Practices as Personal Influence. The second current approach to leadership to be discussed might be classified as personal influence. It centers around the work of Gary Yukl and Colleagues (Yukl, 1989; Yukl et al., 1989) to develop a taxonomy of effective managerial behaviors. These behaviors fall into 11 practices or scales, and include: informing, consulting and delegating, planning and organizing,

problem solving, clarifying roles and objectives, monitoring operations and environment, motivating, recognizing and rewarding, supporting and mentoring, managing conflict and team building, and networking.

Many of these practices are clearly similar to categories and elements identified in the present study. The member motivation category of this study embodies aspects of three of Yukl's practices: motivation, recognizing and rewarding, and supporting and mentoring (which is also part of the member development category). The participation/action category (especially the elements invite, give direction, and follow through) would include Yukl's consulting and delegating, and clarifying roles and objectives. The category sense of community relates to Yukl's managing conflict and team building, although team building could also be considered an element of the category ownership, and is one of the reasons for the importance of meetings. The category knowledge could include Yukl's problem solving, monitoring operations and environment, and networking (which is also an aspect of the category liaison). The communication category would include what Yukl calls informing.

A difference between Yukl's managerial behaviors and the findings of this study is in responsibilities of planning and organizing, and problem solving, both viewed as managerial responsibilities by Yukl. Although participants in this study do engage in those activities, they see a large part of their role as making members integral parts of those processes. Also, notably absent from Yukl's list is any reference to vision. This is not surprising; Yukl is concerned with managerial

behaviors and the development of a vision is usually seen as a function of leadership.

Teamwork and Reciprocity. The third approach of relevance to this study, teamwork, could be considered a maverick approach with ties to the reciprocal approach. Edwin Hollander, one of the earliest proponents of a more follower-oriented, reciprocal view of leadership points out "...being a follower can be an active role that holds within it the potential of leadership, and behaviors seen to represent effective leadership include attributes of good followership....Effective leadership is achieved after all by a process in which there is reciprocity and the potential for two-way influence and power sharing" (Hollander and Offermann, 1989; see also Hollander, 1978; and Hollander and Offermann, 1990).

The most well-developed example of power sharing and teamwork is the work of Glenn Parker (1991), who has done a comprehensive study of the characteristics of effective teams and the personal styles of effective team players. Many of the characteristics of an effective team identified by Parker are emphasized by participants of this study: participation, listening, civilized disagreement, consensus decisions, open communication, shared leadership, and external relations. The significance of this approach to neighborhood organization leadership lies in the importance given to sharing the various facets and roles of leadership. This teamwork approach comes closest to the truly participatory nature of neighborhood organization leadership.

Harris sums it up like this:

...you'll fry, you'll be done if you're doing it all yourself. The ideal is working into teamwork rather than leadership. You're all equal players.

The Ownership Factor. This leads us to consider the major difference between leadership in neighborhood organizations as viewed by the leaders in this study, and leadership in the hierarchical organizations around which the research and approaches discussed here revolve. The difference lies in for what, or for whom, the leadership exists. According to the leaders interviewed, their leadership is truly member-centered and focused on the empowerment of members, as the quote at the head of this chapter illustrates. The focus is on member empowerment not just that they might then "perform beyond expectations" or "get extraordinary things done," but that they might actually jointly own their neighborhood organization. And owning means planning, making decisions, sharing leadership, participating fully in organizational efforts, and taking full responsibility for outcomes. As Adams puts it, even leadership is owned by the organization:

I don't think that leadership is something one person does. I think that leadership is a role that is understood by the organization. And if the organization understands what it wants from a leader, and a leader understands what it wants from a leader, then what you have is a lot of leadership.

This attitude requires a certain measure of **humility**, and involves **stewardship**, as

Adams again points out:

You need to be fairly modest about what you're contributing to the situation. Your task is to mobilize the organization and the community, to assist the organization and the community in making decisions. It's more of a stewardship than it is power.

Leadership Development

Leadership development was found to be one of the significant characteristics of surviving organizations by Florin (1989). Prestby and Wandersman (1985) also found that an organization's ability to replace the leader is an important factor in its maintenance. And as Kahn (1982:36) states, "one of the most important roles of an individual leader in a people's organization is to produce other leaders."

Most of the leaders in this study expressed a concern for the leadership development of other members, and saw this as important for the future of the organization. The leaders in this study also make it very clear that leadership is best developed in a mentoring relationship involving observation and guided practice. This is supported by Kidd's (Thomas, 1987) belief that deep and powerful learning takes place when one observes, analyzes and reflects on one's own and others' actions. Most leaders also felt that an organization should not become too dependent on one person, that leadership should be shared, and that leadership should be turned over periodically. These are all elements of ownership. In spite of these opinions, however, only three participants said leadership development was something they actively tried to do, and only two dwelt on the topic at some length.

Why more of the leaders do not openly engage in the leadership development of their members is not clear. In some ways they do it unknowingly through an informal type of mentoring (as described by Bey and Holmes, 1990), by delegating, providing opportunities for member involvement, and sharing responsibilities and leadership, all of which were discussed in the interviews. It may also be that because

being a leader is a learning process, it is difficult to pass it on to others while one is going through it. Also, to develop leadership in others may take special skills that many may not have acquired. Finally, it may be that the task of leadership is overwhelming enough, without the added burden of such a responsibility. Many participants emphasized the demanding nature of the job, and the time and energy needed. As Ford put it:

Well, the ideal neighborhood organization leader would have the energy of a 25 year old, would have an independent income, would not have to work....I mean, it can be all-consuming if you let it be.

The importance of experience in leadership development is a strong finding of this study. Participants learned by doing, with or without (mostly without) the guidance of a mentor. Gardner describes the link between this type of learning and ownership:

I see a lot of what goes on in neighborhood associations is new people get involved and they go through that same process of discovery: Oh, that's how the zoning board works, or that's how this works, or that's what we have to do to get this done. And that's OK. I'm in the minority position of believing that duplication is not necessarily wasteful; that duplication is how, maybe, people get to have ownership over things.

This view supports Kieffer's (1984) repeated emphasis on experience and practice as the primary modes of learning for the 15 grassroots leaders in his study. Indeed, the relationship between experience and learning is one of the four common components of adult learning identified by Merriam (1987), and listed in Chapter 2.

Although not all participants wholeheartedly embrace the idea of leadership training, they recognize its potential value. Regarding the 'what' of a training

program, participants felt that the content must be completely individualized, based on the particular needs of each organization and individual. As one leader pointed out at the lunch meeting, every leader does some things well naturally, but finds other things difficult due to personality characteristics or past experiences. Training, then, should be aimed at the weak areas. As for the 'how' of training programs, participants emphasized practice and feedback.

In both the what and the how, then, andragogical principles seem to apply. Participants are calling for learner-centered programming using participatory, action-based methods. Learner-controlled planning and implementation would be the legitimate way to proceed.

This leaves the question of consciousness raising or critical reflection felt by Freire and Horton to be an essential component of any effort aiming to empower and create change, as discussed in Chapter 2. Are these Lansing neighborhood leaders involved in massaging the status quo rather than restructuring it? Are they being duped by the systems they are fighting against? Although this was not a focal question of this study, there is some indication that the educational process discussed in an earlier section of this chapter entitled Member Education involves developing the political savvy to come against the powers that be. In addition, all ten of the leaders interviewed are intelligent, articulate, and insightful individuals. This is not to say that critical reflection on the status of their neighborhoods and neighborhood organizations would not be useful, but to suggest that they seem to be engaged in such thought processes already.

To illustrate, Adams describes a consciousness-raising process of moving a group from being "mad as hell" and feeling helpless, to an understanding of their rights.

People that are mad as hell and aren't going to take it any more, I don't find that there's much progress in that direction. You have to really approach it in a fundamentally different program, which is not that I'm mad as hell. I mean, what's that? So what? So you're mad. It's that in this situation I have rights and I have interests, either as an individual or as a community, and this is an assault on my rights and my interests, and this has to be negotiated. This has to be either resisted or negotiated. And that's a very different way of looking at problems. Because the first assumes that the key issue is your rage. And I haven't seen that rage really turns into much very useful. The other is some sense of yourself as a unit with integrity, that has certain needs, and that you want to pursue meetings your needs. And so, depending on how outrageous the proposal is...you may need to resist this thing completely, this affront, this proposal. Or you may be able to negotiate.

Summary Conclusions

The following is a list of conclusions drawn from the preceding discussion.

1. Participants View of Leadership

The neighborhood organization leaders in this study view leadership as both action-oriented and member-oriented. To develop an action-oriented organization they focus on three categories of activities that form a mutually reinforcing triangle: member motivation, member participation, and member ownership.

2. Empowering and Empowered Organization

Participants' leadership efforts are primarily concerned with the individual empowerment of members. This is done tangibly by encouraging member participation and ownership, and intangibly by building members' self confidence and sense of competence. A cluster of leader characteristics contributes to these efforts: accepting, caring, affirming, respectful, trusting, patient, able to listen, and able to read people. Empowered members form the basis for an empowered organization.

3. Motivation and Participation

Although more comprehensive in scope, data from this study confirm findings from a number of other studies about the influence of the following variables on motivation and participation: personal empowerment of members, a sense of group purpose centered in a vision, neighborhood pride, social involvement, personal contact, democratic planning and decision-making, active roles to members, multiple means of communication, written agendas for meetings, relevance of meetings and issues, and goal achievement.

4. Member Education

Consistent with the neighborhood organization literature, participants indirectly educate their members about the nature and causes of issues affecting them in a process of communication, planning, and decision-making. In some cases, this process can be considered consciousness raising.

5. Leader Characteristics

Data from this study confirm the importance of leader characteristics associated with grassroots leaders in the literature, including the importance of passion--meaning enthusiasm, energy, activity, and persistence; and of moral virtues including commitment, consistency, courage, generosity, integrity, honesty, humility, responsibility, and trustworthiness.

6. The Business-Based Leadership Literature

Comparison of the findings of this study with the leadership literature from the field of business is legitimate because leadership is both facilitative and motivational in both industrial and community settings.

7. Transformational Leadership

This study shows that neighborhood organization leadership is transformational in many ways. Leaders build member self-esteem, self-confidence, and skills; they stimulate members intellectually in problem-solving processes; they encourage complete participation in and commitment to a vision; they work to establish neighborhood pride and organizational identity; and they inspire members by their model of passion, activity, steadfastness, and positive attitude.

8. Managerial Practices

The categories of leader activity developed in this study are in close

accordance with 11 managerial practices found in the literature. However, some practices considered managerial are activities leaders and members engage in jointly in this study, such as planning and problem solving. In addition, vision, an important aspect of neighborhood organization leadership, is absent from the managerial practices list.

9. Teamwork and Reciprocity

Many of the characteristics of an effective team identified in the literature are emphasized by the leaders of this study: participation, listening, civilized disagreement, consensus decisions, open communication, shared leadership, and external relations.

10. Ownership

In contrast to leadership in hierarchical organizations, neighborhood organization leadership is primarily focused on member empowerment and full ownership of all aspects of the organization's functioning.

11. Leadership Development

Experience was the primary mode of leadership development for participants, in support of both adult education and community leadership literature. However, most participants would prefer to learn through experience, but guided by a mentor.

12. Member Leadership Development

Participants recognize the importance of member leadership development for the future of the organization, also a finding of previous research. However most engage in member leadership development only indirectly. The reasons for this are speculative, to be uncovered by further research.

13. Leadership Training

Consistent with andragogical principles, participants call for leadership training that is learner-centered, participatory, and practice-based.

14. Consciousness Raising

Leaders in this study seem to be engaged in the analytical and problem-solving processes involved in critical reflection or consciousness raising. This, also, is a question that would require further study, however.

15. Unique Contributions

It is useful to highlight the unique contributions of this study:

- o a comprehensive, descriptive set of activity categories of neighborhood organization leadership;
- o a list of important characteristics of neighborhood organization leaders;
- o a relational framework of the major categories of a theory of neighborhood organization leadership;
- o an understanding of the centrality of a core triangle of leader activities-- member motivation, member participation/action, and member ownership;
- o an understanding of the empowering function of much leader activity in neighborhood organizations;
- o an understanding of the salience of ownership as an important characteristic distinguishing leadership in neighborhood organizations from leadership in hierarchical organizations.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter concludes with a set of recommendations for practice and for further research. Some emanate from limitations inherent in the study, which are also identified here.

Recommendations for Leadership Development

Recommendations for leadership development in neighborhood organizations center around a principal of participant-control. A program of leadership development could have many aspects, but foremost it should be based on Knowles (1990) andragogical principles and give participants complete control over its development. One way to do this would be to use the major categories and concepts

identified in this research to devise a self assessment tool similar to one developed by Rizzo and Thullen (1993) for transformational leadership. Program participants could use this tool to rate the importance of the various concepts and evaluate their own abilities and skills. With this information they could then choose program content.

To ensure a practice-based format, the learning program could be centered around relevant case studies designed by participants. These case studies could form the basis for practice in group analysis, planning, and decision-making. They could also provide role-playing material for the practice of other skills determined important by participants, such as conducting meetings, conflict management, listening, esteem building, or communication, for example.

Given the findings of this study, incorporating the concept of mentoring in a leadership learning program would be essential. An ongoing context for active mentoring (called the "initiator style" by Bey and Holmes, 1990) could be created in which both potential or new leaders and experienced leaders meet periodically for feedback and assignments, in between periods of on-site practice.

A leadership learning program might also incorporate a political education or consciousness raising component, depending on the wishes of participants. Since there is some indication that the leaders in this study practice critical analysis, this component could be simply periodic meetings between leaders of different organizations to discuss their situations and share experiences, insights, and advice. This would provide leaders with the opportunity to reflect, with their peers, on what they are learning in their particular situations. How to engage members in critical

problem analysis and reflection on action might be another focus of these meetings.

Finally a component for experienced leaders should focus on building new leadership, given the importance attached to this by participants in this study. This could include practice in mentoring by having experienced leaders mentor each other in various ways.

One final cautionary statement: any program involving outside intervention or input must be strictly guided by the principle of **ownership** found to be so critical in this study. Great care must be taken by outsiders to impose, plan, or decide nothing, no matter how potentially beneficial. The role of outsiders can be consultative and facilitative, with all control in the hands of the organizations involved. Guided by a principle of ownership, and based on the four components of adult learning listed in Chapter 2--self-direction, reliance on experience, reflection on learning, and learning followed by action--a comprehensive, flexible learning program like that sketched above could have a beneficial impact on neighborhood organization leadership.

Recommendations for Research

The first group of recommendations for further research concern limitations of the research methodology, and constitute suggestions for improving it.

- o For novice researchers, conduct a pilot study of several interviews to put the researcher at ease with the process.
- o Carefully select participants for the first phase of interviews, and use this phase to explore, with participants, the most relevant topics to pursue in future phases.
- o Analyze each phase of interviews thoroughly, with both open and axial coding, before moving on to the next phase.

The next two recommendations are suggestions for supplementing this research and furthering its analysis.

- o This study is limited to what neighborhood organization leaders say about leadership. Given that what leaders say about leadership may not be the same as what they are able to do, systematic observation of leaders in action would be an appropriate strategy to supplement the findings of this study.
- o Further analysis of each of the major categories identified would provide necessary depth to the theory which has been broadly outlined here. Each category should undergo intensive axial and selective coding, building in the relevant processes identified. For example, each of the concepts in a category could be explained in terms of strategies, conditions, consequences, and linkages to other concepts. A theory of member motivation, for example, might explicate specific strategies leaders use, under what conditions and with what results, to motivate members.

Finally, the following list consists of recommended questions for further research, given the findings and conclusions of this study.

- o What are the indicators of a successful neighborhood organization?
- o What is the empirical relationship between success indicators and the major categories of leader activity identified in this study?
- o Which of the major activity categories do leaders consider most important?
- o Which leader characteristics do leaders consider most important?
To what extent do the leader characteristics correlate with success indicators?
- o Which of the hypothesized relationships between the major activity categories do leaders consider most important?
To what extent do the hypothesized relationships correlate with indicators of success?
- o To what extent do leaders engage in the leadership development of their members? What are the barriers to leaders engaging in the leadership development of their members? How can leaders be helped to engage in more member leadership development?
- o To what extent do leaders engage in critical problem analysis and reflection on action? Do they see any benefit in this process? How can they be helped to

engage in more critical analysis and reflection?

APPENDIX A**INTRODUCTORY LETTER TO POTENTIAL PARTICIPANTS**

1912 W. Rundle
Lansing, MI 48910
484-1953

Dear

I am writing you, as president of _____ to invite you to participate in a study of leadership in neighborhood organizations. I will be conducting the study as part of my graduate studies at Michigan State University. Priscilla Holmes of the Lansing Neighborhood Council has met with me several times about this, and she recommended that I contact you.

The purpose of the study is to understand leadership in neighborhood organizations, from the opinions and experiences of neighborhood leaders like yourself. Your participation would involve a short (15-20 minute) introductory meeting or phone conversation, and a discussion-interview lasting 1 or 1 1/2 hours. In the first meeting I would explain the study in more detail and answer any questions. If you agree to participate, we would then schedule a second meeting for a time and place convenient for you.

As president of _____, you are making an important contribution to improving the quality of life in Lansing. Your ideas, opinions, and experiences would greatly enrich the growing body of knowledge about neighborhood organizations, and help future neighborhood leaders be more effective. I hope you will consider meeting with me.

I will call you soon to make an appointment to explain the study further. Thank you for considering this invitation.

Sincerely,

Lela Vandenberg

APPENDIX B

CONTACT SUMMARY FORMS

Pre-Interview Contact Summary

1. Date, Time, Place, Length of Meeting:

2. Topics Discussed:

3. Nature of the Interaction:

Interview Contact Summary

1. Date, Time, Place, Length of Interview:

2. General Impressions:

3. Main Issues and Themes:

APPENDIX C**BACKGROUND INFORMATION FORM**

1. What is your age? _____

2. What is your marital status? single
divorced _____ married _____
widowed _____

3. How many children live with you _____?

What are their ages? _____

4. How many people (children and adults) live in your household? _____

5. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

8th grade _____ High School _____ Some College _____

Bachelors Degree _____ Masters Degree _____ Other Degree _____

6. Are you employed 3/4 time or more outside your home? _____

7. What is the yearly gross income range of your family?

0 - 14,999 _____ 30,000 - 44,999 _____

15,000 - 29,999 _____ 45,000 and up _____

APPENDIX D**INFORMED CONSENT FORM**

Dear Neighborhood Leader,

Your efforts to make your neighborhood a better place to live have made a difference. That is why you have been invited to participate in a study of leadership in neighborhood organizations. I am doing this study as a graduate student at Michigan State University, under the direction of Dr. Frank Fear, Chairperson of the Department of Resource Development.

The aim of the study is to understand your ideas, experiences, and opinions about neighborhood leadership. You will be asked to briefly describe your organization, and then to share 1) your beliefs about neighborhood leadership; 2) your experience as a neighborhood leader; 3) your opinions about leadership development; and 4) your reasons for donating your time and energy to neighborhood leadership.

Before we begin, I would like to reassure you that as a participant, you have several very definite rights:

- o Your participation consists of a discussion-interview lasting 1 to 1 1/2 hours.
- o Your participation is voluntary: you can refuse to participate, refuse to answer certain questions, or withdraw at any time.
- o You will receive a written transcription of the interview. You will also receive a summary of the research findings, and will be invited to share your reactions to it.
- o This interview will be kept completely confidential. Only I will have access to the tape recording. The transcription will be identified only with a code number, and any identifying characteristics will be deleted.
- o Excerpts of this interview may be made part of the final research report, or published in other forms such as articles in research journals. However, under no circumstances will your name or identifying characteristics be associated with any excerpts or included in any report.
- o You may be asked for a follow-up interview. This would be entirely optional.

Thank you for your willingness to talk with me. Your participation is very important and very much appreciated. If you have any thoughts or questions about the study at any time, please contact me:

Lela Vandenberg
1912 W. Rundle
Lansing, MI 48910
Tel: 484-1953

I understand the research and procedures as described above, and voluntarily agree to participate in this study.

NAME

DATE

APPENDIX E

SUMMARY INTERVIEW ANALYSES

SUMMARY ANALYSIS #1

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- o Leader Openness o Leader as Conduit o Meeting Flow
 - listening - information flow - focus
- o Developing Membership
 - member assessment, - member validation, - delegation
- o Member-Driven Org (vs. Leader-Led)
 - vision (mutually constructed), - indirect ldrshp style, - org independence (from leader), - group decisions, - leader as mouth, - ldrshp transition
- o Org Vitality
 - trust, - social bonds, -growth, -openness
- o Development Org (vs. Issue Org)
 - org responsiveness, - org-community relations, -proactive

Integrative Summary

The purpose of a neighborhood organization is to represent the neighborhood in dealing with issues that affect it. To accomplish this, a neighborhood organization leader has three major tasks: 1) to mobilize the organization to make decisions and take action; 2) to promote organizational growth and vitality; and 3) to move the organization from an issue orientation to a development orientation.

For an organization to effectively mobilize, it must be member-driven: decisions are made and a vision is developed by the group. The group defines leadership and is independent of any one leader, so leadership transitions are smooth. The leader's role in this mobilization process centers on membership development. The leader must assess members' ability levels and provide task opportunities to move them toward more leadership. The leader must also be open, a good listener, affirming, knowledgeable about issues, humble, objective, and able to turn over leadership.

A growing, vital organization welcomes and encourages newcomers, causing them

to feel accepted and valued. Organization vitality is promoted by developing trust and social bonds, keeping meetings moving and focussed, giving balanced presentations of issues, and seeking to overcome self-satisfaction by validating new people and ideas. In addition, the leader acts as an information conduit, only speaking for the organization when authorized.

A development organization is proactive not reactive, having a broad vision for neighborhood redevelopment. It plans for and initiates this by welcoming and facilitating proposals for development that are congruent with the organization's vision. It also aims to suppress those that are counter to this vision. The leader must keep the org in touch with their relationship to the community, as well as work with interested development groups.

Leadership Development

Experience. Early leadership development programs, (such as scouts, and in high school and college) fostered a belief in own abilities as leader, which resulted in the acceptance of leadership opportunities. With experience (especially in the anti-war movement), came the ability to act more quickly and handle a broader range of situations.

Belief. Leaders must be continually open to learning. Training in specific skills needed by all leaders can be very beneficial. Important training topics are: solving problems, facilitating discussion, bringing closure to an issue, assessing a proposal, asking the right questions, assessing and encourage members' development, and imbuing a culture of leadership. Even experienced, successful leaders could benefit from training in the essential task of building new leadership.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS # 2

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|--------------------------|--|
| o Knowing Members' Minds | o Strategizing |
| - listening | - problem/context analysis |
| - caring | - knowing political and bureaucratic process |
| o Member Motivation | o Running Meetings |
| - leader passion | - flow |
| - persuasion | - relevance |
| - leader example | - preparation |
| o Facilitating Action | |

Integrative Summary

The purpose of a neighborhood organization is to help the neighborhood solve problems by developing a power base from which to take action and effectively deal with powers that be. The leader's role in developing a strong, action-oriented organization centers around four interrelated abilities: running effective meetings; facilitating decision making; planning effective action strategies; and motivating members to act.

Meetings are what bind a group together, keep it going in a common direction, and make it feel like a real entity. To run an effective meeting, the leader must be concerned with three elements: flow, by handling discussion well; relevance, by dealing with everyone's interests; and preparation.

To facilitate timely decision making, the leader must be prepared. Such preparation involves extensive listening to members in order to understand their needs, desires, and motivations, and to assess their abilities, strengths, and willingness to be involved. It also involves being informed about community happenings of import to the neighborhood, and formulating tentative ideas for action opportunities and strategies.

To plan effective strategy, a leader needs to be able to analyze a problem and its context, and to understand the political and bureaucratic processes involved. To be an effective strategist, a leader needs to be analytical, creative, persistent, and intelligent.

Motivating members to be actively involved depends partly on the leader's ability to run meetings and facilitate decision making. It also depends on how well the leader models certain key characteristics: passion about issues, caring and empathy toward members, activity and stick-to-it-iveness, and conviction that the group can make a difference. The leader's example is also critical. An effective leader creates action not only with the support of a group, but also as an individual. His or her willingness and ability to act helps to mobilize the support and energy of others. People tend to follow those who get things done.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership abilities developed through observation and analysis of other leaders, and trial and error involving on-going self-assessment.

Belief. The best way to learn to be a leader would be with a mentor--someone to watch in action, to assign increasingly challenging leadership tasks, to help when needed, and to give feedback. Training in leadership could be quite helpful, but only if it were well-targeted. Possible topics are: techniques for running meetings, and

action strategies and processes. Experienced leaders are unlikely to see the need for training.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS #3

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- o Positive Center
 - spiritual nature
 - positive thinking
 - consistency/follow-through
- o Social Relations
- o Running Meetings
- o Courage
 - questioning
 - taking heat
- o Member Motivation
 - reading people/intuition
 - listening
- caring, patient, respectful

Integrative Summary

The basis of a successful neighborhood organization is a strong, positive center, which is the catalyst for effective action and interaction. This positive center consists of a spiritual-type belief in God, or a positive force, or just goodness. It is evidenced by positive thinking--a conviction that problems can be solved and that good things will happen. To create this positive center in a group, the leader must be concerned with three things: being positively centered as a leader; motivating members; and developing strong social relations.

A leader who is positively centered models positive thinking and demonstrates consistency by following through with action efforts. Having a positive center also means the leader is courageous: able to deal with difficult people, stand up for the group's rights, and be persistent in asking questions and fighting problems. When facing difficult situations, this centering is achieved by a type of spiritual or psychological preparation (such as prayer, or psyching oneself up).

To motivate members to be involved, the leader must be caring, patient, respectful, and a good listener. Also essential is the ability to read people --an intuitive understanding of what people want and need, and how to reach them and draw them in. Members are also motivated by well-run, interesting meetings. Therefore a leader must be skilled at reading situations and effectively handling discussion and conflict.

Strong social relations among members can be achieved by planning fun events

that bring people out of their houses to get acquainted and reacquainted. Such events also serve to develop a sense of community and pride, a prerequisite to combatting negative elements.

Leadership Development

Experience. Being raised in a family of leaders with parents as experienced models, led to a natural acquisition of an understanding of leadership.

Belief. Acquisition of leadership, by watching and learning from experienced leaders, along with guidance, is the best way to learn leadership. Leadership training courses wouldn't hurt, but people might not be willing to take the time to participate. Useful topics would be communication skills, including letter writing; organizational skills; basic bookkeeping; and how to publish a newsletter.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS #4

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Inside Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - friendliness - conciliation - facilitation/participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Outside Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - information carrier - political processes - negotiation |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Running Meetings <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - preparation - handling discussion | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Success Indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - increased membership - activity/committees |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Social Aspect | |

Integrative Summary

A strong neighborhood organization has four main characteristics: strong social ties; active and committed members; a growing membership; and political expertise to deal with city officials. The leader's job has three major aspects: running effective meetings; encouraging friendly relationships; and being a contact person for outside groups.

To run effective meetings the leader must be prepared. This entails being informed about member and committee activities, and having a printed agenda. One way of being informed is to have pre-meeting meetings with committee heads and other board members. The leader must also be able to handle discussion, to ensure that some people don't dominate.

To encourage friendly relationships, the leader needs to model a spirit of friendliness and homeliness, handle conflicts with conciliation, and encourage members to plan social activities. A facilitative leadership style, in which the leader delegates responsibilities and provides helpful information, is effective in promoting participation.

As the contact person for external groups, the leader must transmit information to the organization so decisions can be made. The leader must also know the political processes involved in facing various issues, and be good at negotiating--a more effective strategy than confronting and demanding.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership was learned by watching or observing others in leadership roles. Experience was gained through numerous voluntary and work-related positions, where taking charge felt like second nature.

Belief. Leadership is largely instinctual, second nature. A natural leader will evolve into leadership, but can't be trained for it. How you react to people is within you. The only trainable aspects of leadership are the mechanics, such as the how to's of Robert's Rules of Order.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS # 5

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Comfort Level <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication - conflict - openness - respect | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Member Control <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - objectivity - planning/decision making - democracy - members as resources |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Member Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - positive attitude - start with success | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Outside Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - welcoming businesses - knowing political channels |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Action Orientation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Economic Well-Being |

Integrative Summary

The purpose of this neighborhood organization is to enhance the life of residents by making the neighborhood safer and more aesthetically pleasing, and by improving its economic well-being by bringing in businesses. To achieve these goals the

organization must be action-oriented. The leader's role centers around four tasks: to establish comfortable relations among members; to enable members to be in control; to strengthen motivation; and to cultivate outside relationships.

Comfortable relations, essential for decision making and action, involve respect, communication, conflict management, and openness. The leader develops respect among members by modelling acceptance--of ideas and differences. Frequent contact and communication, including regular meetings, is also important. The leader must also be sensitive to underlying conflicts among members. These are effectively handled by discussing problems openly with each individual concerned.

Member control requires the leader to be objective, allowing all ideas to be expressed without judgment. Plans and decisions are made by the whole group, putting true democratic principles into practice, and avoiding manipulation by the leader. Members are seen as resources, each one having strengths to contribute. The leader also provides opportunities for others to take leadership roles, to encourage leadership development so that leadership can be regularly passed from one member to another.

The leader encourages motivation by demonstrating a positive attitude, a belief that something can be done; and by starting with an achievable goal, one that will build pride and give people a stake in the neighborhood.

The leader also plays a key role as liaison to outside interests. Knowing the political channels for effectively tackling various issues is one aspect of this role. Another is welcoming and even advocating for businesses considering locating in the area.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership was learned through many experiences, in the military and various other jobs. Attending integrated schools was an important factor.

Belief. Anyone who is ready, who wants to be a leader, can be. If our society provided more opportunity and required fewer qualifications for leadership, many more people could be leaders.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS #6

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Member Ownership - shared planning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Participation - fun |
|---|--|

- shared decisions
- shared information
- projects
- newsletter
- o Volunteers
 - motivation
 - reading people
 - support/encouragement
 - acceptance
- o Leader Characteristics
 - commitment
 - enthusiasm
 - time
 - caring
 - openness
- o Meeting Preparation
 - agenda
 - flow
 - structure/direction
- o City Politics
 - knowledge of channels
 - using inside resources

Integrative Summary

The most important characteristic of a neighborhood organization is member ownership: members participating fully in the planning, decision making, and activities of the organization. To ensure member ownership, an effective leader aims to promote participation and strengthen motivation. Strategies to increase participation include social events, neighborhood improvement events, and a newsletter.

Working effectively with volunteers is essential for leaders aiming to increase member participation and motivation. This involves understanding each person's motivations, priorities, and abilities. It also requires an ability to 'read' people's feelings, and treat them gingerly when necessary. The leader must also provide encouragement, support, and recognition.

Well-run, time-limited meetings contribute to member motivation. Meetings flow and conflicts, discussion, and decisions are handled more easily when the leader comes prepared with a well-planned agenda, and benevolently imposes structure and direction.

Certain leader characteristics or qualities also impact member participation and motivation, and contribute to leadership effectiveness in general. A leader's commitment can be inspiring. Commitment to the organization and neighborhood is evidenced by time and energy spent, as well as enthusiasm, passion, and activity. Commitment to the members is shown by caring and acceptance, as well as openness-sharing information, keeping no secrets, and being above-board about the leader's own motivation.

To effectively help an organization achieve its goals, a leader must also know city politics: who's who, and who to go to for what. When this is lacking, the leader

must be aware of neighborhood resources, and willing to call on those who do know to help. A logical succession in leadership would allow future leaders to learn the political process ahead of time.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership was fostered at an early age as an oldest child in a family that encouraged it. Experience was gained in leadership roles in high school and college, followed by leadership positions with various boards, in politics, and at work.

Belief. Leadership training is very important for the longterm effectiveness of a neighborhood organization. Although there are some people who would never be comfortable in leadership roles, there is a large pool of potential leaders who could overcome, with training, the most common barriers: fear of failure and lack of skills. Training should provide people with tools--tricks of the trade, or tried and true methods of running meetings or motivating people, for example.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS # 7

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- o Vision
 - mutual concern
- o Persuasion
 - inspiring
 - inviting
- o Participation
 - member ownership
 - org independence
 - representativeness
 - relying on internal resources
 - delegating
 - assessing needs
 - forming committees
 - keeping members informed
 - social aspect
- o Follow-Through
 - gentle harassment
 - support/encouragement
- o Leader Characteristics
 - active/committed
 - enthusiastic/optimistic
 - creative
 - sense of humor
 - listening to/understanding volunteers
 - realistic
- o Small Group Skills
 - reading a group
 - handling discussion and conflict

Integrative Summary

Neighborhood organization leadership is a process of developing a vision or idea, inspiring members to participate in carrying it out, and following through to make sure things get done. The vision or idea may be initiated by one or a few people, but for it to be accepted and acted upon, it must arise from mutual concern.

Participation, in part, depends on the art of friendly persuasion, which includes inspiring members by talking up the idea, and inviting them to help. Follow through might also be called gentle harassment: checking up on commitments with phone calls, thus giving support and encouragement.

Participation is essential because it allows members to feel ownership of the organization and its goals. This prevents organizational dependence on one person, and ensures the timely passing on of leadership. It also ensures that the organization represents a community. Participation is achieved by a number of strategies: seeing members as resources and using their knowledge and abilities; delegating responsibilities and assigning concrete tasks; discussing and assessing needs as a group; forming committees; keeping members informed; and cultivating social relations.

Certain characteristics and skills are important for effective leadership of this process. A leader needs to be enthusiastic, active, committed, creative, optimistic, realistic, and have a good sense of humor. Also essential are small group skills--reading a group and handling discussion and conflict; and people skills--listening to members, and understanding and knowing how to work with volunteers.

Leadership Development

Experience. Self-confidence in leadership roles was gained in high school and church youth group, preceded by early opportunities for independence as a child. Volunteer work in college training people in small group and listening skills further enhanced leadership abilities. Extensive leadership roles in work-related and voluntary settings have added much experience.

Belief. People can be effectively trained in some aspects of leadership, such as small group skills, provided they have a predisposition to leadership in terms of personality and motivation. To be effective, training programs must be practical, based on a practice-feedback-practice methodology. There is no leadership unique to neighborhood organizations; leadership is leadership. Therefore, leadership training can be generic.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS #8

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - big picture - belief in change - persistence/steadfastness - building o Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - modeling action/catalyst - process/getting things done - understanding city govt. - taking charge - power o Team Approach <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - shared resources - equal responsibility - shared leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Communication <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - knowing - informing - motivating - understanding others - sharing vision and objectives - explaining tangible results o Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - self-understanding - integrity - active/energetic - intelligent - patient - analytical - broadminded |
|---|---|

Integrative Summary

Neighborhood leadership begins with one person's vision for how things could be. This person gathers information, takes some action, and begins communicating the vision to others, who become inspired to join the action. The major elements of this process are vision, communication, and action.

Vision depends on the leader's ability to see the big picture and his or her belief that change can happen. As the leader communicates the vision, it is fed or built upon by others' ideas. Achieving the vision requires persistence and steadfastness--not losing hope in the face of difficulty.

Communication has two aspects: informing and motivating. The leader raises others' awareness of a problem by talking about it. This involves getting to know the people in the neighborhood, including their fears and motivations, and knowing the facts related to the problem. To motivate their participation in action, the leader must be able to paint a clear picture of the vision, specific objectives, and the tangible results of certain actions.

Action is also a motivator. The leader's model of action and energy acts as a catalyst to others' action. In addition, successful action requires that the leader know process--how to get things done and how city government works. The leader must

also be able to take charge at meetings--facilitating planning and decisionmaking by voicing opinions and laying out alternatives. A team approach in a neighborhood organization is ideal: members share resources, assume equal responsibility, and gradually learn to share leadership. Success means that the organization has become a power to reckon with.

Effective neighborhood organization leaders have integrity, intelligence, patience, and a good understanding of their own motives. They are also active, energetic, analytical, and broadminded.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership began as a child, in a family where that role was naturally assumed. An inability to sit still and wait for someone else, as well as a desire to make change happen, led to many opportunities for leadership. Observing good leaders and emulating them has been the most effective way to learn. Reading, and participating in and designing leadership workshops have also helped.

Belief. The best way to learn leadership is by watching good leaders, asking them questions, and gaining experience under them. Training can be helpful only if it is good. Reading is also important. However, leaders are born, not made: you can only train people for leadership who have the natural ability.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS # 9

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Caring <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - the glue - recognizing uniqueness - listening/sensitivity - trust o Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - motivation/perks o Leader <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - intelligence - sense of humor - self understanding - open/friendly - active/model - patient | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Member Development <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - maximizing strengths - showing confidence o Sense of Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - communication network - welcoming newcomers - supporting local business o Ownership <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - empowerment - leader as teacher - independence - sharing responsibility/leadership - joint decisionmaking - city bureaucracy |
|--|---|

Integrative Summary

The key to successful neighborhood organization leadership is caring--about individuals and about the neighborhood community. It is the glue that holds people together, enabling a strong, politically empowered organization to develop. This caring/empowering process has three major elements: concern for individuals, concern for community, and member ownership.

An effective leader recognizes and values the uniqueness of each individual, and listens to and cares about their concerns. This requires sensitivity and builds trust. The leader fosters member development by looking for opportunities to show confidence in them and delegates responsibilities which maximize their strengths and minimize their weaknesses. The leader also recognizes that members are volunteers who need to feel satisfaction from their participation. Making things fun, showing appreciation, and helping people learn are three ways a leader can provide motivating perks.

Building a sense of community is an important step in developing a strong organization. This can be helped by establishing an informal communication network, welcoming newcomers and inviting them to join in current efforts, and supporting local businesses.

For an organization to be truly empowered to effectively deal with city bureaucracy, it must be owned by the members, not dependent on one leader. To promote member ownership the leader must be a teacher--teaching members how to do rather than doing for. Sharing responsibility, sharing leadership, and making decisions by consensus are also essential.

Successful leaders have intelligence, a sense of humor, and a clear understanding of their own motivations. They are also open, friendly, active, patient, and willing models.

Leadership Development

Experience. A life-long desire to be a leader led to participation in numerous leadership training courses, run by various work-related associations. However, leadership was learned primarily through trial and error.

Belief. Anyone has the potential for leadership, given the right situation and training, but some kind of internal transformation has to occur for one to be successful. This transformation involves honesty, sincerity, responsibility, and the building of trust and respect. Important topics for leadership training include the uniqueness of each individual, and a self-examination of one's motives for leading.

SUMMARY ANALYSIS # 10

Major Themes and Related Concepts

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Vision <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conviction - causes and solutions - big picture - talking with others - eliciting opinions o Member Motivation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - issue centered - person-to-person - relevance - eliminating barriers - respect - building self-esteem | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Outside Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - phone calling/persistence - reasonableness/patience - interagency cooperation - unified voice o Leader Responsibility <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - informing - objectivity - achieving consensus - speaking with authorization o Leader Characteristics <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - integrity - good communication/listening - thick-skinned |
|---|--|

Integrative Summary

The motivation for leadership in a neighborhood organization begins with a conviction that the neighborhood can be a better place to live, and a vision for how it could be. This vision entails tracing the often complex causes of and potential solutions to problems, while not losing sight of how specific actions fit into the big picture. To move toward realizing the vision, it is important to share it with others and elicit their input and perspectives, as the first step in a process of member motivation.

Member motivation is usually issue-centered: people are more willing to be involved in solving problems that affect them personally. The leader's role in motivating participation consists of face-to-face contact and communication, inviting people to join the effort, explaining its relevance to them, and removing barriers to participation, such as transportation. The leader must also have respect for all members, regardless of lifestyle, and seek to build members' self-esteem. This is especially important in neighborhoods with many "fragile" residents--those who have been generally beaten down by life.

A major responsibility of the leader involves working with outside interests: city government and various public and private service providers. In attempting to focus these resources on neighborhood concerns, the leader must be persistent in phone-calling, patient, and reasonable. Establishing an interagency team is an effective

strategy for dealing with complex problems. Getting neighborhood organization members to speak with a unified voice is effective when trying to win city government support.

The leader is also responsible for keeping members informed, presenting issues objectively, achieving consensus, and only speaking for the group when authorized. The leader must have integrity, be a good communicator, and be good at drawing others out. It also helps to be thick-skinned.

Leadership Development

Experience. Leadership was never aspired to. It was an evolving process that began with the recognition that something had to be done, and there was no one else to do it. Help was obtained from numerous willing sources of advice and information. With some experience, the opportunities for leadership snowballed.

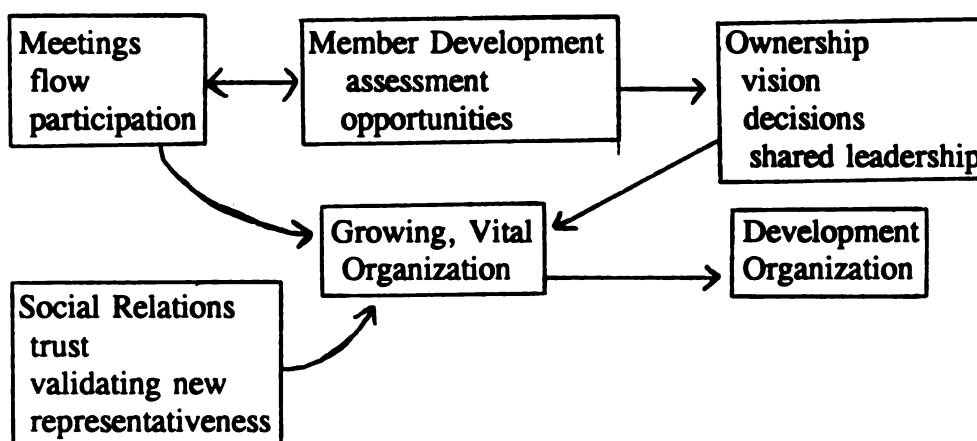
Belief. Learning from knowledgeable sources is effective. Leadership training is generally a waste of time unless it is specifically tailored to your organization and your neighborhood. Not everyone can be an effective leader. Leadership depends on the untrainable ability to establish a vision and see how specific problems relate to the overall picture.

APPENDIX F

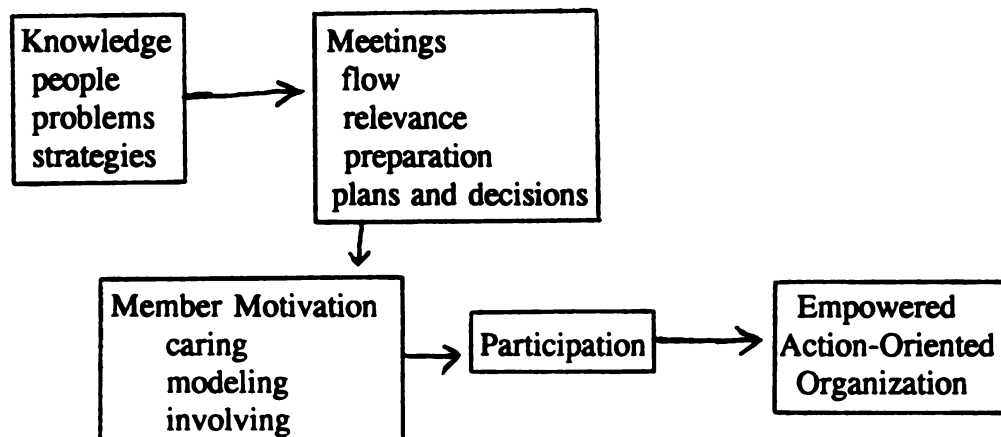
INDIVIDUAL THEMATIC DIAGRAMS

Adams

The major themes identified in Adams' interview were ownership, member development, meetings, social relations, and organizational development. These centered around a theme of organizational growth and vitality--having a strong, active, and growing organization responsive to community needs.

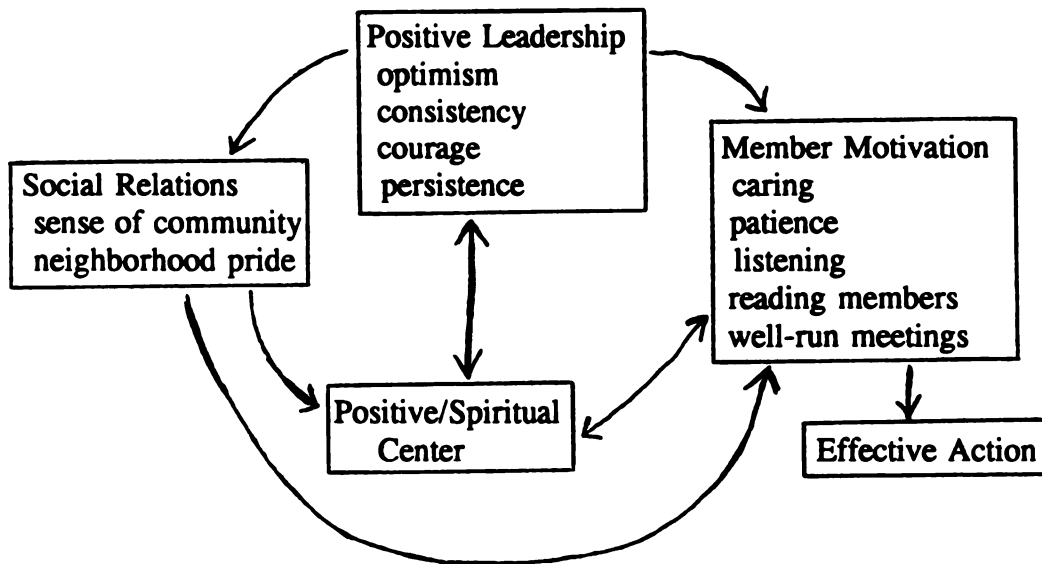
**Brown**

The major themes of Brown's interview were knowledge, meetings, member motivation, and participation/action (with a minor theme of member development). These four were seen as factors which influence the ultimate goal of developing an empowered, action-oriented organization.



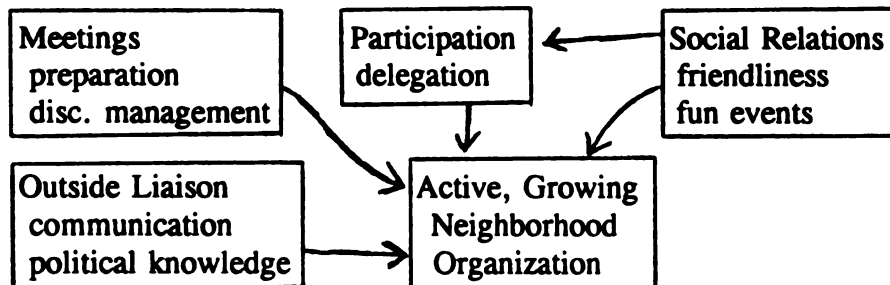
Collins

Four major themes of Collins' interview stand out. These are positive leadership (embodied in elements of the categories vision and motivation), member motivation, social relations, and meetings (with minor themes of participation and knowledge). They centered around a concept unique to this interview: a positive or spiritual center.



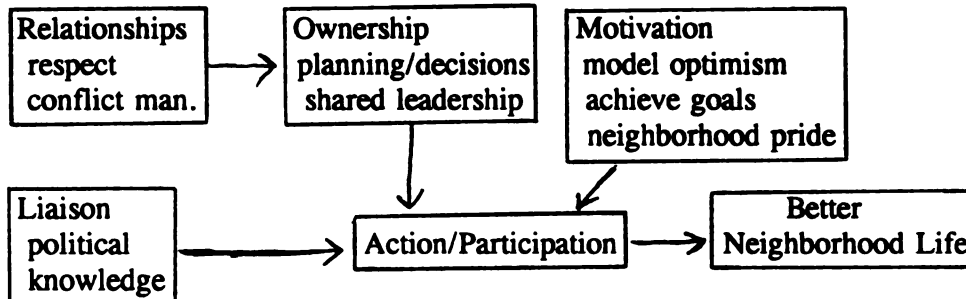
Davis

Davis emphasized four themes: meetings, social aspect, participation, and outside liaison (with a minor theme of motivation). These were the major contributing factors for an active and growing neighborhood organization.



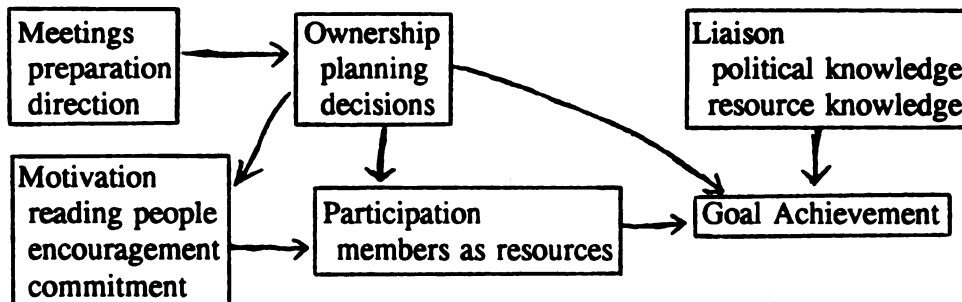
Edwards

Edwards highlighted five elements that contribute to an action-oriented organization and ultimately lead to better neighborhood life. These are comfortable relationships, ownership, motivation, outside liaison, and action/participation (with a minor theme of member development).



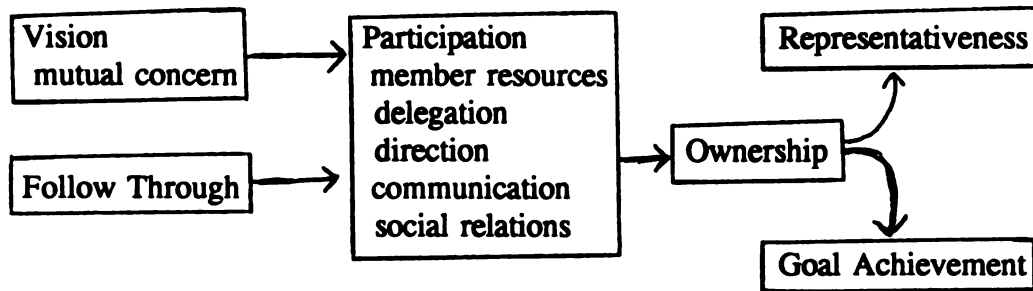
Ford

For Ford, ownership is the most important characteristic of a successful neighborhood organization. Three other important themes center around ownership: motivation, participation, and meetings. Knowledge and liaison are minor themes.



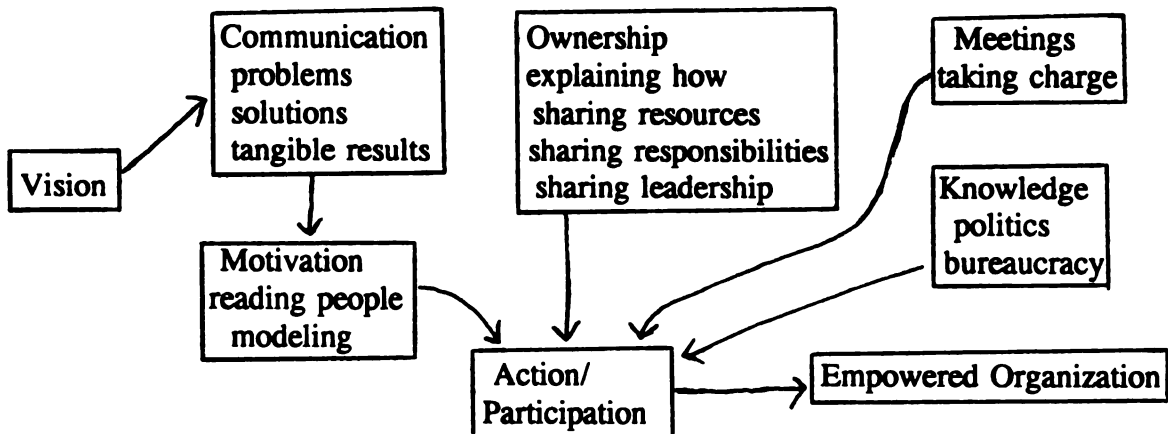
Gardner

Four themes are predominant in Gardner's interview: vision, participation, ownership, and follow through (with minor themes of motivation, knowledge, and sense of community).



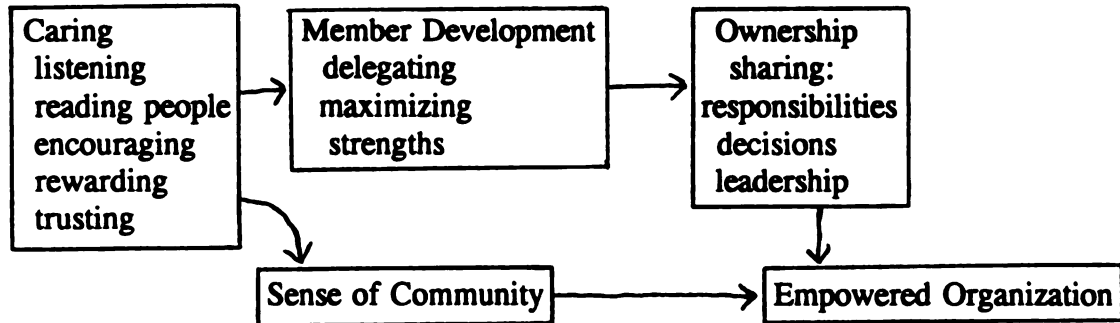
Harris

Harris' interview focuses on the process of moving from a vision to a powerful organization, capable of achieving its goals. Major themes are vision, communication, motivation, ownership, and action/participation with minor themes of meetings and knowledge.



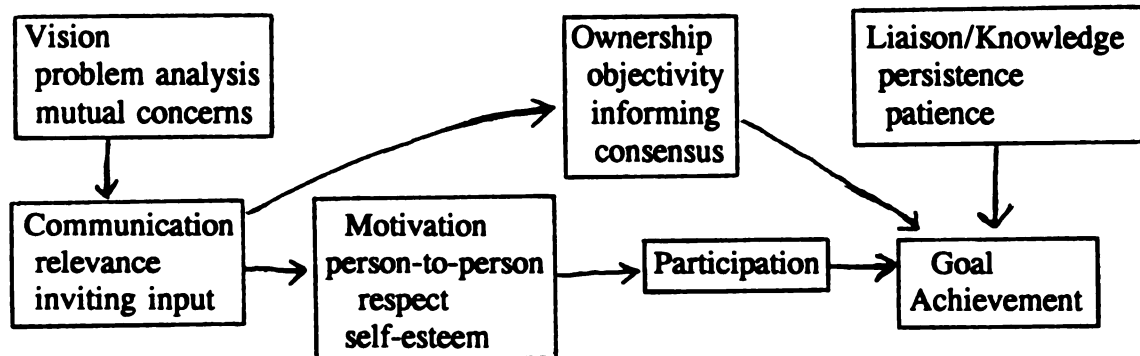
Johnson

The main themes stressed by Johnson are caring (an element of the motivation category), member development, ownership, and sense of community (with minor themes of participation, meetings, and knowledge).



King

Four themes stood out in King's interview: motivation, ownership, knowledge, and liaison, with minor themes of vision, communication, and participation.



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