

Comparing For-Profit and Not-For-Profit Collaboration: Cohered Emergent Theory Application

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Abstract

This chapter applies Cohered Emergent Theory to explain how for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations can manage the challenges facing their collaborative activities, benefit from each other and satisfy the interest of their diverse stakeholders. The structure, scope and governing arrangements of collaborations are shaped by the underlying values and objectives of the organizations and partners forming such collaborative relationships. The complexities therein have influenced the existing understanding of for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations. Yet, the challenges of these collaborations and how they are resolved to give way for the two categories of collaborations to benefit from each other is less studied. Through the discipline of Cohered Emergent Theory, the chapter problematizes the need for cross-fertilizing the literature on for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations to generate a collaborative synergy for partners in both sectors. The findings indicate that Cohered Emergent Theory offers a capability and flexible mechanisms to implement collaborations that can potentially resolve power asymmetry, conflicting interests, mistrust, asset redundancies and uncertainties in collaborative arrangements. The implication of these for for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations is to learn from each other through cross-sector collaborations and safeguard against collaborative failures.

Keywords: Collaboration; complexity; Cohered Emergent Theory; for-profit; not-for-profit; power

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Introduction

Individuals collaborate with people within or outside their organizations to contribute knowledge and expertise to achieve shared business objectives. At its core, collaboration is the art of learning and working together to accomplish agreed tasks for shared benefits. The processes involved and the intended outcomes differ from one collaborative activity to another due to the underlying values and objectives of the organizations undertaking the collaboration thereby making the comparison of collaborative arrangements a challenge (Castañer & Oliveira, 2020; Waardenburg et al. 2020).

Firstly, in the profit sector, organizations engage in collaborative activities to access, share and utilize resources and know-how to improve service delivery, product innovation, workforce development, customer satisfaction, and their competitive positions in the market. Their collaborative activities bring maximized profits, minimized costs, or performance improvement to partners engaging in such shared learning activities and initiatives. They emphasize activities that can make their organizations more economically sustainable. The expected outcomes of collaboration in profit sector organizations, therefore, complement their core strategic aims of increasing value for investors, improving competitive positions, or surviving in the market. These can be achieved through inter-organizational collaboration and/or intra-organizational collaborative endeavours.

The managers of profit sector organizations commit a huge amount of resources to manage partner selection and governing mechanisms of their external collaborative activities. These may be formal arrangements of negotiating contracts and outlining responsibilities when involved external partners or through joint ventures, joint research and development pacts, alliances, and shared external technology utilization. It can also be more of an informal external collaboration involving personal networks like engaging in conferences, trade fairs, and social

events than signing up to legally binding contracts. Even within organizations, there is strong informal collaboration and internal personal networks that are used to provide effective feedback, support knowledge sharing, and improve organizational system design. Still, not all collaborative activities in for-profit organizations are successful, and there are many challenges which include difficulties involved in interfirm integration, lack of effective diligence checks, and complications with synergy attainment (Fernandez, Le Roy, & Gnyawali, 2014; Makri, Hitt, & Lane, 2010; Ogundipe, Peters & Tóth, 2022; Sjödin, Parida & Kohtamäki, 2016).

Secondly, although collaboration in not-for-profit organizations has some similarities to for-profit organizations, there are some differences. Not-for-profit organizations provide social or public benefits, and their core values differ from organizations incorporated to achieve profit objectives. They exist in various forms and include public-funded educational and healthcare establishments, religious organizations, professional associations, and social clubs. These organizations focus more on the benefits they accrue from collaborative activities than the costs involved in obtaining the outcomes, which is usually subject to public scrutiny. For instance, many education and research institutes have been using technology and digital platforms to engage with their colleagues and the public to find solutions to global health and sustainability issues, especially in resource-constrained regions (Cheng, Yan & Bajwa, 2017; Van Biljon, Marais & Platz, 2017). They emphasize more on the environmental and social sustainability agenda than the economic element of sustainability, which is natural for profit-making organizations.

Some not-for-profit organizations and professional associations also use *Communities of Practice* as a way of learning through everyday life experiences and sharing knowledge through group interactions based on common ideologies (McLoughlin et al., 2018; Wenger, 1998). This type of collaboration is often constrained by power relations between the old and new

community members, or the orthodox organizational practices and creative ideas needed for organizational change (Amin and Roberts, 2013). These create identity tensions between the organizations' values and the collaborative focus. Often, it is difficult to assess the trustworthiness of information shared on these collaborative platforms.

While there are some overlaps between collaborative activities for profit-oriented and not-for-profit organizations, there are marked differences. For-profit organizations are more cost minimizers. Their collaborative actions gravitate towards increasing market value and realizing economic sustainability for their investors. In contrast, not-for-profit organizations seek to maximize public and social goods. Their collaborative activities gear towards attaining environmental and social sustainability to meet the expectations of the public and funding agencies. However, there is little theoretical understanding of how for-profit and not-for-profit organizations can benefit from each other's collaborative activities and satisfy the interest of the diverse stakeholders directly and indirectly affected by the actions of these two categories of organizations.

On one hand, the literature on for-profit collaborations tends to employ: transaction cost models to elucidate how to manage the costs and risk of collaborations (Hill, 1992; Teece, 1986; Williamson, 1999); resource-based views to explain how firms' resources are used in collaborative activities to gain competitive advantage (Barney, 1991; Beamish & Lupton, 2016; Deken et al., 2018; Grant & Baden-Fuller, 2004) and relational (including network) models to understand the relationships between business partners and the benefits that such relationships provide for them through collaborative engagements (Ahuja, 2000; Dyer & Singh, 1998; Dyer, Singh & Hesterly, 2017; Phelps, 2010). On the other hand, much literature on not-for-profit organizations explains collaborations from cross-sector (Carpenter, Gassner & Thomson, 2016) and complexity perspectives (Fransman et al., 2021). Some works draw insights from

Communities of Practice to guide how collaborative members should create, share, and use knowledge (McLoughlin et al., 2018; Patton & Parker, 2017); apply institutional-based models to explicate how social structure, norms, and culture influence the actions of collaborators (Miller & Paradis, 2020; Phillips, Lawrence & Hardy, 2000); or use design science research to tell how technology can facilitate knowledge sharing in collaborations (Van Biljon, Marais & Platz, 2017). Other theoretical frameworks also aim to explain collaborative processes for for-profit organizations and not-for-profit organizations with public-private models (Pardo, Gil-Garcia & Luna-Reyes, 2010; Pereira, Cunha, Lampoltshammer, Parycek, & Testa, 2017). However, existing theories have yet to explain how for-profit and not-for-profit organizations can benefit from each other's collaborative activities and manage many challenges such as power relations, sustainability issues, synergy attainment, and balancing costs and benefits for collaborative partners.

In this chapter, we draw on Cohered Emergent Theory to explain how for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations can manage the challenges facing their collaborative activities, benefit from each other and satisfy the interest of their diverse stakeholders. Cohered Emergent Theory is a social inclusivity model that proposes how stakeholders with diverse interests can negotiate, collaborate, and contribute to organizational sustainable design and implementation initiatives (Nyame-Asiamah 2020; Nyame-Asiamah & Kawalek, 2021). The chapter will provide a fresh understanding of the literature on collaboration that explains the pollination between for-profit and not-for-profit organizations' collaborations and produces knowledge creation synergy for collaborative partners in both sectors. It will also provide an opportunity for collaborative partners to resolve various challenges inherent in existing collaborative arrangements, maintain sustainable organizations and produce better services for their respective consumers.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows: First, we discuss collaborative activities of for-profit and not-for-profit organizations, highlighting their theoretical and empirical understanding, and challenges. Second, we problematize the need for fertilizing the literature on for-profit collaboration and not-for-profit collaboration, and through Cohered Emergent Theory we conceptualize how such fertilization can produce collaborative synergy for collaborative partners in both sectors. Finally, we conclude the chapter with theoretical and practical implications.

Theoretical and empirical insights of profit sector collaboration

Collaborations in profit sector organizations typically use a wide range of arrangements to explain how firms share and exchange know-how, resources, and capabilities for their benefit. A variety of mechanisms used to implement profit sector collaborations include licensing, alliances, joint ventures, research and development collaboration, research consortia, and outsourcing (Agostini, Nosella & Teshome, 2019; Beamish & Lupton, 2009; Majchrzak, Jarvenpaa & Bagherzadeh, 2015; Oliveira & Lumineau, 2019). The scope and complexity of these arrangements and how they are applied relate to a variety of profit-making objectives of the collaborative partners. Castañer and Oliveira (2020) summarise these objectives as the need to: (i) access new markets and enhance revenue; (ii) access complementary resources and capabilities; (iii) access to new knowledge and learning; and (iv) share costs and reduce risks of a project.

A deeper insight is gained through several theoretical lenses that explain how interfirm collaborations are formed. These considerations relate to partner selection, alliance management and governance, and the performance implications of the collaborations (Beamish & Lupton, 2016; Wassmer, 2010; Hoffmann et al., 2018). Earlier works used transaction costs to elucidate conditions under which firms choose to engage in collaboration (Hill, 1992; Teece,

1986; Williamson, 1999; Williamson, 1975). Transaction cost theory explains how collaborative partners hedge risks and manage costs among themselves for collaborative projects (Johnson & Houston, 2000; Lahiri, Kundu & Munja, 2021). The theory claims that firms choose the governance mechanisms for collaboration to enable them to reduce the costs of implementing collaborative projects (Beamish & Lupton, 2016; Hoffmann et al., 2018; Lahiri, Kundu & Munja, 2021). The theoretical consideration for this is grounded in the hypothesis that when firms engage in joint R&D projects they can combine their expertise, resources, and technology to lower the total investment cost of projects and achieve positive innovative outcomes (Kale, Singh & Raman, 2009; Klijn, Reuer, Buckley & Glaister, 2009).

Dittrich and Duyster, (2007) studied the R&D alliance projects by Nokia Cooperation between 1985 and 2002 and found that Nokia was able to produce an intelligent software that enabled users to access telephony, e-mail, web, electric diary, and entertainment on their mobile devices due to their collaboration with Ericsson, Panasonic, Samsung, Siemens, and Sony Ericsson. This collaboration with other players in the industry enabled Nokia to pull resources from partners, spread risks, and share the high initial investment costs of developing complex technology.

More recently, researchers have applied resource-based views to understand the role that resources play in developing collaborative relationships and achieving outcomes (Beamish & Lupton, 2016; Deken et al., 2018; Grant & Baden-Fuller, 2004). Pioneered by Barney (1991), the resource-based view explains how firms can strategize and utilize their resources to achieve competitive advantage. This view is used in for-profit sector collaborations to understand firms' ability to access valuable and complementary resources such as technological, marketing, distribution, and production capabilities from external partners to gain sustainable competitive advantage (Beamish & Lupton, 2016; Chatain & Mindruta, 2017; Lahiri, Kundu

& Munjal, 2021). Insights from Gulati (1998) give those collaborations and alliances among firms in the biopharmaceuticals, new materials, and the automotive between 1970 and 1989 enabled them to access new channels and the networks for creating and capturing value from their collaborative innovation. Dutta and Hora (2017) also established that collaborating with upstream and downstream partners increases firms' commercial inventions.

Although access to complementary resources is important to all firms, it is more useful for small firms that generally lack the managerial, production, and financial resources to take their innovation to market (O'Dwyer & Gilmore, 2018). By pooling their resources together in collaborative arrangements, small businesses are able to compete effectively with large and resource-intensified firms and generate superior value from their innovation (Leiblein & Madsen, 2009; Ozdemir, Kandemir, & Eng, 2017; Son, Ha, & Lee, 2018). The challenge is that when the collaboration is arranged between small and large firms, the small ones lose out to the large ones because the large firms have strong bargaining power and can easily sway the negotiation toward their interests (Hoffmann et al., 2018). This sub optimizes the strategic intentions of for-profit collaborations, prompting the need to evaluate these forms of collaboration.

The resource-based view has therefore been extended through Resource Dependence Theory and Knowledge Management View to evaluate the impact of collaborations on firms' goals and strategy (Lahiri, Kundu & Munja, 2021; Pfeffer & Salancik, 2003). These assume that both the requisite resources and in-house knowledge needed for effective collaboration are dependent on the capabilities and actions of other firms (Beamish & Lupton, 2016). Some scholars argue that as the critical in-house resources and partners' capabilities coevolve over time, and new opportunities emerge, the strategic aims and directions of collaborative relationships must change to reflect new realities (Agositi, Nosella & Teshome, 2019). The

outcomes for collaborations will be unknown and unpredictable, and these will be understood through emergent and complexity-based models (Ralls & Webb, 2009).

Still, a deeper understanding of for-profit collaborative relationships and how such associations give value to the partners is explored through relational views (Dyer, Singh & Hesterly, 2017; Dyer & Singh, 1998). This insight is popular in the interfirm literature and formation of collaborations (Ahuja, 2000; Dyer, Singh & Hesterly, 2017; Phelps, 2010). The fundamental assumption underpinning the Relational View is that social relationships engender trust and reciprocal exchanges between alliances and inter-organizational relationships (Füller, Matzler & Hoppe, 2008; Phelps, 2010; Rindfleisch, 2000). Repeated exchanges between firms facilitate mutual understanding for operationalizing business routines and counteracting opportunistic behaviours that arise from heterogeneous interests in alliances (Elfenbein & Zenger, 2017; Elfenbein & Zenger, 2013). Relational view of collaboration enables firms to select partners with complementary resources, develop informal trust and create value from their business relationship.

Kulangara, Jackson, and Prater (2016) analysed the different types of inter-organizational relationships between partnered firms to better understand how they foster new product development. They showed that innovation outcomes depend on the quality of relationships, the intensity of exchanges between the parties, and the socialization mechanisms employed in the relationships. It is noted that strong social ties between partners encourage trust development, which enhances the speed at which firms generate new products and operational performance (Nair et al., 2011; Narasimhan & al., 2009; Phelps, 2010; Puranam & Vanneste. 2009).

Challenges of for-profit collaboration

For-profit collaborative arrangements require a complex integration process, often involving a large number of activities. Research suggests that the challenge involved in managing this complexity is probably the single most important determinant of failure of interfirm collaboration (Capron & Mitchell, 2009; Doz, 2017; Dussauge, Garrette & Mitchell, 2000; Parmigiani & Mitchell, 2009). The lack of complementarity and compatibility between partners' capabilities make it difficult for them to integrate their technological resources causing alliance failure (Hess & Rothaermel, 2011; Li, Li & Hitt, 2017; Makri, Hitt, & Lane, 2010). For example, Makri, Hitt and Lane (2010) examined how resource complementarity among collaborative partners in the drug, chemical, and electronics industries impacted the firms' invention performance and found that little or no complementarity in partners' scientific and technological knowledge negatively affected the firms' ability to generate new products. The authors suggested that similarities in knowledge could facilitate the creation of more novel and radical inventions.

For-profit collaborations also fail because businesses do not usually conduct sufficient diligence checks and effective evaluations of partners' capabilities and commitments leading to the wrong formation of alliances (Ogundipe, Peters & Tóth, 2022; Sjödin, Parida & Kohtamäki, 2016). Collaborating with the wrong partners can create tensions in collaborative relations and longevity due to differences in partners' goals, motivations, and allocation of responsibility in their contractual negotiations (Fernandez, Le Roy, & Gnyawali, 2014; Ollila & Elmquist, 2011). Conflicting goals of partners in alliances leads to high costs of monitoring and executing contracts (Williamson, 1975). These differences also create room for the partners to act opportunistically (e.g. large firms copying small firms' innovations) in collaborative arrangements and cause negative impacts on collaborative outcomes (Gnyawali & Park, 2011; Fernandez, Le Roy, & Gnyawali, 2014; Ollila & Elmquist, 2011). Based on an in-depth case

study of collaboration between Astrium (EADS group) and Thales Alenia Space (Thales group) in the telecommunications satellites manufacturing industry in Europe, Fernandez, Le Roy and Gnyawali (2014) showed that conflicting goals in the individual and organizational levels create tensions between collaborative partners and minimize synergy attainment.

Theoretical and empirical insights of not-for-profit collaboration

Most not-for-profit collaboration is built around cross-sector integration in which one-stop service administration is often established across levels of public administrative or institutional structures to provide more convenient services for the public and address social, economic, and environmental problems facing the public (Bryson, Crosby & Stone, 2006; Zhang, Lu & Shou, 2017). Carpenter, Gassner and Thomson (2016) cite an example of collaborative efforts between academia and policing in Australia to explain how to transform police training must reframe the existing hierarchical approach to accountability in collaborations and make collaborative theories relevant in practice. The vital point of this argument is to engage front-line and non-managerial staff in collaborative policing across complex public health and social issues such as HIV, drug use, and mental health in Australia and the Asia Pacific regions. Within this collaborative engagement, public health actors and police can work together to develop an academic curriculum and participate in teaching activities across the collaborative public institutions to help effective policing of health-related issues.

The idea of implementing effective collaborations is not only about setting clear collaborative objectives and resolving tensions between collaborators, but there should be sustainable technology to support knowledge creation and management in collaboration. Crucially, such sustainable technology is needed for sharing research knowledge, developing rural education, improving telehealth services, and maintaining e-government engagement in resource-constrained settings (Cheng, Yan & Bajwa, 2017). Following the design science research

model to develop a sustainable open knowledge repository (tools for collaboration) in South Africa, Van Biljon, Marais and Platz (2017) underscore the need for Information Technology for Development (ICT4D) stakeholders and diverse user groups of the open knowledge repository to evaluate the effectiveness of this IT-enabled collaboration. The assumption by the design science research approach in this collaborative activity is that, as the variety of users of the open knowledge repository increases, the system will be adapted to accommodate the users' specifications and skills levels. It follows that the design of IT-enabled collaboration should align with user requirements, system structures, and collaborative processes. These principles align with the theoretical value of design science research which premises on problem identification and motivation, the definition of the objectives for a solution, design and development, demonstration, evaluation, and communication (Gregor, 2006). However, they do not address conflicting interest.

Extending Bryson et al's (2006) cross-sector collaborative framework which claims a balance between governance and operations in collaboration, Zhang, Lu and Shou (2017) compared cases of information integration projects in local governments in Beijing and Chengdu, to understand the driving factors of the Chinese government's one-stop service transformation. Their findings suggest that the information resource integration was dominated by the governing structures of local government information integration and this cross-sector collaboration was shaped by forces around collaborative condition, structure, process, constraints, outcomes, and accountability.

There is also a growing number of studies using communities of practice to support continuing professional education, information sharing, and knowledge management of many professionals such as health professionals, social care practitioners, and teachers to identify their potential for interprofessional education and collaboration (Amin & Roberts, 2008; Bruce

& Easley Jr., 2000; McLoughlin et al., 2018; Patton & Parker, 2017). Communities of Practice is described by Wenger (1998) as a negotiated process of participation and reification, in which members of common ideologies create abstractions, tools, stories, and terms, and turn conceptions into everyday life experience which in turn guide the group to collaborate. It is a situated learning process that can occur in informal contexts and provides the foundation for collaboration. In this, participation can be virtual or face-to-face and the boundary between cross-sector locations and sociological understanding of such settings is less relevant (Amin and Roberts, 2013; Johnson, 2001). A recent trend of collaborative engagements by health and social care professionals indicates that virtual communities of practice provide an informal platform for clinicians' professional and interprofessional development and can potentially decrease their social and professional isolation (McLoughlin et al., 2018). Research involving 36 teacher educators selected from nine teacher education communities of practice in Europe, North America, and Southeast Asia concluded that social dynamics, personal and professional relationships, shared commitment, safe space, and reflective practices characterize virtual communities of practice (Patton & Parker, 2017). They are features of collaboration that help these community members to reduce isolation and allow them to develop their teaching and research capacities (Patton & Parker, 2017). Often the communities of practice are inhibited by power relations between the old community members and novice who might want to introduce creative ideas and critical principles to innovate collaborations and the necessity to implement such ideas in formal organizational structures to effect the needed organizational change.

Suggestions for incorporating collaborative ideals such as the representation of ethical, fair and possession of equal rights in established organizational system are given by research that seeks to institutionalize collaboration through formal structure (Miller & Paradis, 2020). The argument draws on neo-institutional theory to enact collaborative practices in formal

organizational structures. The account of this is predominated by models of professional obligations and organizational forms which provide links between collaboration and institutional processes (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Phillips et al., 2000). Institutional framing of collaboration explains ways of organizing collaboration at organizational or inter-organizational levels and ensuring that modes of interactions are understood, accepted, and reproduced regardless of technical requirements (Phillips et al., 2000). It is based on the view that the patterns that form rules, norms, and resources of social actions can be reproduced and repeated through shared understanding (Giddens, 1984). Reproducing institutions in collaborative arrangements can trivialize micro-level interactions and the needed coherence between power structures and novice's contribution to trigger innovation.

Recent research suggests that hierarchical powers and deliberate actions can embrace micro-level interactions and unplanned actions to generate the expected collaborative innovations for development (Beck & Plowman, 2014; Fransman et al., 2021). These ideas have roots in complexity principles. Yuan, Zhang and Yu (2018) applied complexity theory to investigate the process of teacher collaboration in an English teaching research group in a secondary school in China. They found that teacher collaboration is an adaptive community, which self-organizes through interactions with its internal environment (e.g. school management) and external (e.g. university researchers). Their study also reveals that complexity tenets can help teachers resolve tensions in collaborative arrangements and improve school effectiveness.

Challenges of not-for-profit collaboration

The advantages and rewards of collaborative actions are often ruined by power relations, mistrust, and cross-boundary restrictions which frustrate collaborative practices (Huxham, 2003). These challenges cause paradoxes in multi-agency collaborative efforts to address wicked social problems such as illegal migration, drug, gun culture, cybercrime, identity theft,

and child abuse. Waardenburg et al. (2020) discuss the multi-agency collaboration and summarise the main challenges of effective collaborative arrangements around problem-solving, collaborative process, and multi-relational accountability. The problem-solving challenge hinges on identifying and defining a grave social concern that requires immediate attention and engaging the perspectives of different partners to solve the problem. The collaborative process challenge lies in the difficulty to establish common grounds for the identified problem and build trust among collaborators with conflicting objectives. The multi-relational accountability revolves around dispiriting pressures from individual collaborator's external agencies, accounting for individual performance to cross-boundary partners, and unwillingness to fulfill mutual responsibilities needed for the collaborative governance.

Waardenburg et al. (2020) observed in an action research study involving eight multi-agency collaborations fighting cybercrime, fraud, money laundering, drug and human trafficking in the Netherlands and found that the collaborators struggled to define the precise problems they were trying to address, innovate beyond the job demands of their parent organizations and refuse to share information due to the apparent lack of authorization from managers of their respective parent organizations. Lægreid and Rykkja (2022) also note that whenever collaborative goals and performance indicators are not clearly specified, accountability becomes distorted and commitment to participating in collaborations reduces. Within the cross-sector collaboration, evidence from China suggests that power imbalance and complex chain of feedback mechanisms cause inefficiencies, leading to collaborative projects generating low effects for the public (Zhang, Lu & Shou, 2017).

Power-centeredness also restricts the ability of communities of practice to question, challenge conventional practices, and offers little room for radical innovation that collaboration subscribes. Amin and Roberts (2013) summarise a variety of community of practice limitations

which include a little scope to align the community creativity with individual members' organisational objectives; a lack of commitment to the community ideologies; and the difficulty for novice to progress from legitimate peripheral participation (induction process) towards full participation due to the representation of a 'master-apprentice' relationship.

Problematizing for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations

At the heart of collaboration is to learn and work together to achieve common goals set by the collaborators within the two main collaborative categories discussed in this chapter. The shared learning activities of for-profit organizations are heavily motivated by market-value creation and economic sustainability for their investors. Much of the theoretical understanding of for-profit collaborations is explained by transaction cost models, resource-based theories, and relational view perspectives. They broadly focus on the understanding of cost minimization, effective resource utilization, and inter(intra)-firm relationships in the process of collaborative formation and implementation. Contrarily, not-for-profit collaborations seek to maximize public and social goods, reflecting the expectations of the public and funding agencies. The literature has explained the processes and governance of these through the perspectives of cross-sector arrangements, communities of practice, design science research, and complexity principles. Although complexity frameworks are not widely applied to for-profit collaborations, they provide breadth and depth of understanding of the multi-faceted layers and complex dynamics of collaborations that can benefit the practice of for-profit alliances and partnerships (Ralls & Webb, 2009).

The literature identifies issues of power dynamics at varying degrees in both for-profit and not-for-profit. Larger firms within for-profit collaborative arrangements have the stronger bargaining power to sway the alliances or partnerships' negotiations toward their interests. created by dependence and bargaining power. The power asymmetry within not-for-profit

collaborations relates to the status and seniority of participants in professional communities which discourage full participation of novice in learning activities, as well as the control mechanisms and institutionalization of hierarchies in cross-sector collaborations which restrict information flow and effective frontline operations. The consequence of these is failure to resolve wicked problems. Not-for-profit arrangements are also marred with tensions arising from conflicting objectives by multi-agencies in cross-sector collaborations. The manifestation of tensions in for-profit collaborations is rooted in co-opetition contractual agreements which allow firms to collaborate and compete simultaneously in the market, leading to mistrust and opportunistic behaviors.

If collaborations are aimed to solve complex problems facing the public and contemporary businesses, then there must be coordinated efforts to resolve theoretical and practical challenges underlying existing collaborative arrangements. Some researchers have proposed public-private partnerships as a way to integrate government agencies, not-profit and private organizations to develop and implement innovative projects that can generate socio-economic gains for the public and businesses (Pardo et al., 2010; Pereira et al., 2017). For instance, within university-industry collaborations where there is a capacity to explore, learn and transform parent firms' research and development activities, research suggests that companies with high absorptive capacity (high ability to identify and use new knowledge for value creation) must give their subsidiaries greater autonomy for collaborative research engagements (Fernald et al., 2017; Melnychuk, Schultz & Wirsich, 2021).

It follows that knowledge transfer mechanisms in university-industry collaborations should integrate knowledge flow from universities to subsidiaries and, in return, from the subsidiaries to the parent companies (Melnychuk et al., 2021). Such integration can clarify the boundaries for innovation in collaborative arrangements, create workable conditions for learning and

maintain positive dynamics in public-private collaborations (Callens, Verhoest & Boon, 2022). This is where autonomy and inclusiveness are necessary for knowledge transfer at different levels of organisational structures and potentially to resolve the complexities, uncertainties, and mistrust involved in utilizing scientific knowledge to achieve high levels of innovation and the common good (e.g. production and consumption of new drug). It follows that the challenges of collaboration can be solved through broader theoretical expositions and a more practical experience of problem-solving which can then empower diverse individuals, teams, and groups as an integral part of planning, learning, and sharing of capabilities beyond individuals' limited rationalities (Cheng, Yan, & Bajwa, 2017).

Cohered Emergent Theory application to collaboration

Our discussion has shown that collaboration is a broad field studied through diverse theoretical lenses. Each approach to studying the discipline unveils complex perspectives on collaborative activities and behaviors which must be coordinated and negotiated within or outside the market mechanisms of collaboration (Nyame-Asiamah, 2020; Nyame-Asiamah et al., 2022b; Ralls & Webb, 2009). More recent studies within not-for-profit stream advocate a collective approach to managing collaborative challenges, resolving cross-boundary barriers, reducing tensions, maximizing participation, and improving accountability (Brorström & Diedrich, 2022). Waardenburg et al. (2020) ask researchers to use research frameworks that can help them participate in collaborative arrangements and support collaborations to learn more about social concerns and design effective processes to address wicked problems. Lægreid and Rykkja (2022) propose using probing questions and feedback through small-scale investigations to address accountability and dynamic relations in collaborations.

Similar suggestions in the for-profit debate point to the need to analyze complementary knowledge of collaborative partners carefully and in detail to ensure that the due diligence

processes cover both financial and technological capabilities that can pre-empt collaborative failure (Makri, Hitt & Lane, 2010). Capron and Mitchell's (2009) submission is to examine how firms' internal factors such as their capability and social climate interact with external factors such as potential market failures to enhance the efficiency of collaboration. Some scholars have emphasized the need to use effective communication to enhance partners' relationships and improve mutual benefits from collaborative commitments (Ogundipe et al., 2022). These propositions indicate again that collaborations should be better understood and managed through complexity-based frameworks to unravel how the multiple, continuous, and nonlinear interactions between collaborators (e.g. partners) and their environments shape collaborative outcomes (Fransman et al., 2021; Ralls & Webb, 2009).

Collaborative structures and arrangements are initiated through rational decision-making, yet they are more complex and emergent than a plan. The processes therein are dynamic. Cohered Emergent Theory provides new perspectives on collaborative processes to resolve power-centeredness, goal conflicts, and mistrust in collaborations. It is an inclusivity model that suggests how individuals, teams, groups, and stakeholders (e.g. researchers) with diverse interests can negotiate, collaborate and contribute to innovative projects and implementation initiatives (Nyame-Asiamah & Kawalek, 2021). Cohered Emergent Theory draws on complexity principles to explain the multiple, continuous, and spontaneous interactions of actors in a given system that produce unified patterns and coherent outcomes (Nyame-Asiamah, 2020; Nyame-Asiamah & Patel, 2010).

The theory assumes that emergent knowledge from individual collaborators in collaborative spaces must not be torpedoed in hierarchical corridors of collaboration (Nyame-Asiamah, 2013). Openness and trust are needed to avert controlled relationships and, instead, to inspire rich and critical suggestions that emerge from individual collaborators' discussions. Similar to

the complexity argument for developing collaborations as adaptive and self-organizing arrangements (Beck & Plowman, 2014; Fransman et al., 2021; Yuan, Zhang & Yu, 2018), Cohered Emergent Theory provides a capability for collaborators to relate individual organizational goals to collaborative objectives to de-escalate (potential) tensions within collaborations. By appropriating collaborative processes from complex adaptive principles, Cohered Emergent Theory gives full and democratic ownership to diverse collaborative partners to co-design and implement their partnership and community arrangements (Nyame-Asiamah, 2020). This potentially reduces asset redundancies and eliminates avoidable operational costs within collaborative alliances and partnerships.

Cohered Emergent Theory sets out guidelines for leadership in collaborative communities to defer planned actions and retract top-down managerial controls and, instead, empower the novice/frontline to provide critique and constructive feedback to stimulate accountability and innovation in collaborations. This introduces coherence to the practice of collaboration to level up power relations between collaborators and resolve tensions between superiors and the novice in not-for-profit collaborative communities (Nyame-Asiamah, 2013). Coherence brings unity to systems integration. It is a negotiated feature of Cohered Emergent Theory that encourages collaborators to work toward common understanding, scale back political actions, and maintain a commitment to trust in alliances and for-profit negotiations. Trust and shared understanding can increase participation in collaborative activities, reduce the risk of opportunistic behaviors and maintain sustainable collaborations (Nyame-Asiamah, 2020; Nyame-Asiamah et al., 2022a).

Sustainable collaborations can never be possible without utilizing power positively to increase knowledge creation, knowledge sharing and information transparency between different levels of collaborative structures within and across for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations. Again,

the cohered emergent discipline provides the capability for public sector agencies and private sector organizations to cross-fertilize best practices between them and potentially generate benefits for themselves and society. Through adaptation, coherence and self-governance, Cohered Emergent Theory sets out flexible mechanisms for implementing deliberate actions in collaborations, and through these the discipline gives useful directions for cross-pollinating theories and practices of collaboration between for-profit and not-profit organizations. The empirical support for this claim is found in action research study and extensive qualitative works that explain how the theory integrates different ontological views – rationalism, emergence and dualism – to address real-life issues in health and mining sectors (Gilbey, 2021; Nyame-Asiamah, 2013; Nyame-Asiamah, 2020; Nyame-Asiamah et al., 2022b).

Conclusion

This chapter drew on Cohered Emergent Theory to explain how for-profit and not-for-profit collaborations can manage the challenges facing their collaborative activities, benefit from each other and satisfy the interest of their diverse stakeholders. Cohered Emergent Theory offers a capability and flexible mechanisms to implement collaborations as a complex adaptive system that can potentially resolve power asymmetry, conflicting interests, mistrust, asset redundancies and uncertainties in collaborative arrangements. The potential outcomes will be effective knowledge sharing and utilization which will in turn lead to sustainable innovations for individuals, businesses, governments and non-governmental agencies.

The application of Cohered Emergent Theory is, thus, our contribution theory and practice. It has helped our understanding of for-profit and not-for-profit collaborative development and practice from a broader perspective and stimulated the need to theorize and cross-fertilize these two broad categories of collaborations from a complexity-based line of inquiry. We also add to small but an increasing number of works applying Cohered Emergent Theory to inform

management decisions, organizational learning, technology adoption, enterprise development and sustainable development initiatives (Gilbey, 2021; Nyame-Asiamah, 2013; Nyame-Asiamah, 2020; Nyame-Asiamah et al., 2022b; Nyame-Asiamah & Kawalek, 2021).

The chapter has implications for private sector businesses, public sector organizations, professional associations and social clubs to learn from one another through cross-sector collaborations, and to plan and implement such partnership arrangements effectively as self-organizing systems to safeguard against conflicts, mistrust, power misuse and failures now and in the future. The chapter also provides fresh insights to collaborations from theoretical and empirical viewpoints to support teaching in academia from now onwards. Its theoretical value has greater possibilities for the reader who studies, designs, implements and evaluates collaborations to execute such agendas through the discipline of Cohered Emergent Theory and to attain positive outcomes.

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