

CHAPTER IV

SUMMARY DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter represents the conclusion of this study. In this final chapter an overview of the study is presented first. This overview is followed by a summary discussion and conclusions of the research results. Then the theoretical, policy, and practice implications of the study are presented. The chapter closes with a discussion of the limitations of the study and recommendations based on the results of this research.

OVERVIEW OF THE STUDY

The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989, and the subsequent rapid collapse of Communism in the former Soviet bloc countries, set off a chain of events unprecedented in history. The idea of civil society played an influential role in the collapse of the communism structure within these former state controlled societies as well as in the subsequent efforts of these countries to move toward more democratic forms of government (Bernhard, 1993a; Weigle & Butterfield, 1992).

Civil society, as it is known in the West, developed through a unique convergence of events, which occurred over a period of several hundred years (Gellner, 1994; Seligman, 1992a). Few, if any of these conditions have been present in the history of these former Soviet bloc countries. The securing of a social space

between the private world of the individual and family, and the domain of the empire or state, has been identified as a particularly important factor in the development of civil society (Gellner, 1994). Civil society has been defined as the midrange within the social structure in which people join together to accomplish common purposes. For example, to conduct business, worship together, and to engage in charitable and recreational pursuits (Johnson & Wright, 1997; Salamon & Anheier, 1997).

The gradual securing of a social space has been identified as a step in the process which eventually led to the collapse of communism in the former Communist countries of Central Europe (Weigle & Butterfield, 1992). Romania, however, was one of the countries of Eastern Europe which experienced the greatest amount of oppression under the rule of the communist dictator Ceausescu and the least amount of reform before the events of 1989. Unlike the majority of the former Soviet bloc countries, little opportunity existed for the securing of a social space within the social structure.

Given this absence of factors predisposing to the development of civil society in Romania prior to 1989, the impetus for this study was the need to identify the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of this country. The present study is based on a social work practice model for community development. This social work model is based on the social work values and principles of: respect

for the inherent worth and dignity of the person, the right to self determination, participation, and social justice (Compton & Galaway, 1989).

The Approach

In order to identify the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania, a secondary analysis of written documents was conducted. These written documents were generated from interviews obtained in Romania, in June, 1996, as part of the LLR project, of the Mandel School of Applied School of Social Sciences, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, Ohio.

One of the purposes of the LLR project was to "identify possibilities for local community-building ventures" (Center for Public Sector Leadership and Service, n.d.). This purpose was very compatible with the purpose of this study; to identify the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania. Because the present research purpose is very compatible with the original purpose for which the data were gathered, validity concerns normally associated with a secondary analysis are considered to be minimal.

The written documents utilized for the secondary analysis were obtained from interviews with key informants from five regions of Romania: Iasi, Cluj-

Napoca, Oradea, Timisoara, and Bucharest. These key informants represent various categories found within the civil sector of Romania, such as education, NGOs, business and the media. The data analysis is confined to goal statements made by the respondents in response to two portions of the interviews. These portions sought the respondent's hopes and vision for the future and suggestions and recommendations.

The findings of this study represent only one aspect of capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania; the direction, motivation, or orientation of the will of key informants already engaged in the civil society sector at the time the data were gathered. These respondents can rightly be expected to have been predisposed toward growth in the civil sector; first, because of their active participation within the sector; second, because of the purpose of the project for which the data were obtained.

The findings obtained from this study are based on an orientational qualitative approach to the data analysis (Patton, 1990). An orientational qualitative method was chosen because of the overall compatibility of this method with the exploratory descriptive nature of the research purpose. Since only one study in the area of civil society development in Romania was identified in the literature, the domain of study remains essentially unresearched. In this instance, exploratory approaches are called for which offer initial depth of understanding at

the expense of breadth. Once key variables have been identified and theoretical clarity has been gained more quantitative methods may be appropriate.

The strengths of a qualitative method for this research purpose includes the fact that it enables the identification of a baseline for further research regarding a social process, that of the development of civil society. A qualitative methodology is also especially suited to this research because of the focus on the subject's frame of reference, the social context and the research setting (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990). Finally, this methodology was employed for the present study because of its suitability for research of a naturally occurring event in which depth of information is considered paramount to the issue of generalizability (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Marshall & Rossman, 1989; Patton, 1990). A major weakness of a qualitative approach is that the findings of the study can only be safely generalized to the group from which they are obtained, or to similar cases (Maxwell, 1996; Patton, 1990).

This orientational qualitative approach utilizes two concepts drawn from systems theory and two concepts drawn from institution building theory. The two systems concepts of growth and maintenance are taken together to constitute capacity for institution building. These two concepts represent two primary trends considered necessary for the development of any system (Bertalanffy, 1968;

Bakan, 1966; Parsons & Bales, 1955). The growth systems trend is the innovative, instrumental, expansionist trend within a system (Bakan, 1966; Parsons & Bales, 1955). The maintenance system trend is the conserving, integrative, expressive, stabilizing trend within the system (Bakan, 1966; Parsons & Bales, 1955).

Institution building is premised on the innovative and integrative role which organizations perform in the enculturation of new technologies and attendant norms and values in planned processes of social change (Esman in Eaton, 1972). The innovative function in institution building theory is related to the growth system trend in systems theory and is referred to as "linkage points." The integrative trend in institution building theory is referred to as "prevailing codes." This concept is comparable to the maintenance trend in systems theory. An assessment of the linkage points and prevailing codes within society provides data regarding the presence of the two institution building dimensions necessary for the "fit" of institution building efforts within society.

The systems concepts of growth and maintenance enables an identification of the capacity for institution building, within the civil society sector of Romania, in terms of direction of capacity; whether toward growth, toward maintenance, or of a mixed growth and maintenance orientation. These concepts also enable an

identification of the nature of that capacity in terms of strength; whether vigorous, strong, moderate, weak, or regressive.

The institution building concepts of "linkage points" and "prevailing codes" enable a further refinement of the nature of the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector. It allows an identification of the attitudes and values present in society which are supportive of innovation and growth, and those which are stabilizing and integrative. They also allow an identification of the specific areas within society which can be tapped for the linking and integration of institution building efforts in order to optimize "fit."

SUMMARY DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Utilizing the systems concepts of growth and maintenance, a capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania is identified within these data which is growth oriented, and moderate, to vigorous in strength. The low end of these results, or the finding of a moderate capacity, is based on interviews from the five regions of Romania. The more vigorous range of the findings is based on individual statements from within the interviews. Since these findings were obtained from informants within the civil society sector who can be expected to be most disposed toward a capacity toward growth for institution building, they are not surprising.

Regional differences in capacity for institution building are found. Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, and Timisoara showed a strong Capacity toward Growth. A more modest orientation toward growth is identified in Iasi. Bucharest shows a preponderance of a moderating trend, with the highest percentage of interviews containing a mixture of growth and maintenance oriented statements.

Several factors need to be considered in regard to regional differences in capacity for institution building. There are regional differences in the number of respondents from the various categories of civil society represented in the data which may account for some of the regional differences. For example, the variation in the number of respondents from the Business category in Timisoara, the University category in Cluj-Napoca, and NGOs in Bucharest.

There are also several factors which may influence the Bucharest results. Since there is a disproportionately large representation of NGO respondents in the Bucharest data and since findings from this category indicate a tendency toward moderation in capacity in this group, this could account for the strength of the moderating trend in this area. It is also possible that since Bucharest is the capital city, and since the greatest amount of aid came into that city at the beginning of the transition period, expectations may have been unrealistically raised and disillusionment may have set in by the time the data were gathered. It is also possible that Bucharest, as the capital city, experienced the greatest amount of

social disorganization following the events of 1989 and that the system in Bucharest is now moving away from growth, toward more stability.

However, differences in the regional results diminished somewhat when a regional comparison is conducted based on individual statements within the interviews rather than on the interview documents themselves. The greater consistency found in the strength of capacity for institution building obtained when individual statements from within interview documents are examined is surprising. This consistency suggests more homogeneity across the regions than the interview documents alone would indicate.

Only very general results are obtained from an analysis of the capacity for institution building within the categories of the civil sector which are represented in the various regions of Romania. This is due to the fact that there is considerable variability in the number of categories from the civil sector that are represented in the various regions, and in the number of respondents found within these categories. This variability makes meaningful cross sector analysis, both within and across regions, impossible.

However, the results of an analysis of the Capacity for Institution building found within the categories of the civil society sector from the entire country of Romania indicate that the categories of: University/Education, Business, and Professional Leaders appear to be disposed toward a Capacity for Growth. The

categories of NGOs, Religion/Church, Public Administration, and Media appear to be moderating in orientation. These findings are general in nature. They are offered cautiously. They are however, consistent with the generally accepted functions of these categories within society.

A more refined analysis of the data, based on the institution building concepts of linkage points and prevailing codes, initially poses some difficulty. This difficulty arises in regard to goal statements which reflect attitudes and values rather than concrete suggestions or recommendations. When attitudes and values are expressed, lack of conceptual clarity distinguishing the concepts of linkage points, defined as technologies and potentialities within the system, and prevailing codes, defined as the values, norms and customs of a society, becomes evident.

This lack of conceptual clarity necessitates the inclusion of growth oriented attitudes and values into the area of Political Culture. This inclusion expands the concept of linkage points, to incorporate the growth oriented attitudes and values which are requisite for institution building within the civil society sector along with the more concrete and easily recognizable areas in which a Capacity for Growth is identified.

This lack of conceptual clarity also necessitates clarification regarding the concept of prevailing codes, since many of the identified maintenance oriented

attitudes and values appear to be more emergent rather than prevailing in nature. However, this initial lack of conceptual clarity also enables a richer analysis of the data.

These results are unexpected and interesting. The surprise at these findings is due in part, to the fact that Romania has often been characterized as very traditional in nature, when in fact, the attitudes and values evident in both the growth and maintenance categories would dispute this characterization. In both cases, the findings in the areas in which a Capacity for Growth and a Capacity for Maintenance are identified, suggest attitudes and values which are likely formative in the emerging system, and they suggest points for the linking and integration of institution building efforts within the system for the optimization of "fit."

The areas in which a Capacity for Growth in institution building is identified are: Political Culture, Services, Education, Economics, Business, Religion/Church, and Agriculture and Village Life. All of the individual Capacity for Maintenance statements, with the exception of one, are categorized in the area of Political Culture. One lone Capacity for Maintenance statement is related to unity with the environment. This statement is retained in the reporting of the data as indicative of the end range of the Capacity for institution building goal statements.

The remainder of the individual Capacity for Maintenance statements are subcategorized into six areas of Political Culture: the Transition, the general System, Government, Human Relations, Religion/Church, and External Relations. A summary discussion of the findings in the specific areas in which a Capacity for Growth, and a Capacity for Maintenance are identified, follows.

Political Culture is the area in which there are the largest number of individual Capacity for Growth goal statements. This finding is important for at least two reasons. First, the purpose of this study is to identify the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector. Secondly, from a systems perspective, the attitudes and values of a society are those which direct the organization and development of the social structure (Parsons cited in Turner, 1986). Consequently, such strong evidence of the requisite attitudes and values for the development of civil society within the area of Political Culture strengthens confidence in the capacity for institution building within the civil sector.

Requisite attitudes and values for linking institution building initiatives within the civil society sector of Romania are identified in the areas of the Transition, State and Local Government, the Mentality, and Diversity. Requisite values which are expressed in regard to approaches to assist in the transition

process are supportive of methods which: start from the inside, are community based, use models which are adapted to the locality, and which include follow up.

The requisite values for institution building within the civil sector expressed as helpful for the successful completion of the transition include those for: the elimination of corruption and the institution of democratic processes, a strong legal foundation, respect for the rule of the law, privatization, leadership, honesty, and planning. Linkage points for institution building are identified for international assistance, consultation, and technical assistance.

Capacity for Growth oriented values supportive of institution building within the civil society sector in regard to the State and Local governments include those for: reorganization, restructuring, and decentralization of the governmental structure in a climate of trust. Additional values supportive of institution building within the civil society sector and directed toward the government are those for: local autonomy, participation, civic responsibility, rational planning, tax reform, privatization, an open market, and a comprehensive system of social protection.

Growth oriented values supportive of a change in mentality are expressed. These values include those for private initiative, trust, risk taking, a rational approach to problem solving and decision-making, appreciation of the value of an

open market, hard work, social concern, political participation and responsibility, respect, and courtesy.

The last area of the Political Culture in which growth oriented values supportive of institution building within the civil society sector is identified, is the area of Diversity. An impetus toward growth in terms of respect for the rights of women and children, children with AIDS, and minority groups such as the Gypsy population and Ukrainians is identified. Linkage points are identified for: policy changes which protect human rights, the development of advocacy groups, and for education for the reduction of stigma related to AIDS. The specific groups mentioned in the area of diversity may be a function, at least in part, of the groups which are represented by the key informants.

The remainder of the specific areas in which a Capacity for Growth is identified reflect more concrete areas in which an impetus for growth is evident and in which linkage points within the sector are evident. A strong capacity for institution building is identified in the area of Services. There is a strong impetus for overall improvement in the health and welfare of the entire population. Linkage points are especially evident for the development of the basic infrastructure, improvement in city and residential services and for cultural and leisure services. Development opportunities are identified in the area of health and medical services. Linkage points are evident for modernization of facilities

and technology, for the development of a private health care sector, for increased access to medication, and for social services provided with medical services.

The greatest impetus for growth in the area of services is directed toward the development of a comprehensive system of social protection made up of public, private and non-governmental components. There also is a strong impetus for the creation of a comprehensive child welfare system based on the principle of deinstitutionalization. The value of the professionalization of services is evident in these data related to services. There is a special emphasis on the professionalization of social work services. This finding might be a function, at least in part, of the purpose of the research project and the selection of respondents in this sample.

The area of Education and the Economic area are equal in size in terms of the number of individual goal statements found within each area. Both of these areas represent areas which are resources for the country. Linkage points identified in the area of Education are for: the modernization of facilities, expanded program offerings and for modern materials and teaching methods. A Capacity for Growth is evident in the areas of education in general and for university education, special education, and public and private education. The values of equality, respect for human rights, and diversity are evident in these data.

The Economic area is equal in size to the area of Education. Considerable consistency is found among the statements in this area. These findings indicate that there is a pressing need for economic development. Economic improvement is seen as necessary for the alleviation of economically based social problems and for the serious consideration of democracy.

Linkage points for institution building in the economic area are evident for: the development of policies supportive of a free market economy, the provision of resources, foreign investment, technical assistance, and specialists, the development of manufacturing, tourism, and agriculture, and for job creation.

Since both the Education and Economic areas represent areas within the social structure which are resources for the development of the system, the strength found within these areas provides some indication of the capacity for development within the civil society sector. The deficits within the Economic area are seen as a major inhibitor for institution building. However, this deficit in the Economic area also indicates an area of opportunity for development.

The Economic area is conceptually more comprehensive than that of Business. However, the two cannot be easily separated. Growth in the area of Business is an essential ingredient to economic development and to the growth of a middle class. For these reasons, growth in the area of Business is also closely

associated with the capacity for institution building within the economic sector of Romania, addressed next.

Capacity for Growth statements in the area of Business also show considerable consistency. Linkage points for development in the area of Business are evident for: foreign investment, consultation, collaboration, partnerships, training, technology, and for specific business ventures.

The last two areas in which a Capacity for Growth is identified are those related to Religion and the Church, and Agriculture and Village Life. Growth oriented goal statements regarding the church and religious life represent the Orthodox and Jewish faith communities. Regarding the Orthodox, linkage points are evident for visits from clergy from non Orthodox countries. Opportunities for growth and linkage points within the Orthodox community are also evident for program development and leadership training of Orthodox personnel. Within the Jewish community, linkage points for institution building are identified for education in the Torah and for means of passing on the Jewish religious and cultural heritage to future generations.

Agriculture and Village Life are seen to be the traditional bases of Romanian economic and cultural life. Linkage points are identified for the development of agriculture and for the renewal of hope in the village, through the provision of resources, technology and the modernization of farming methods.

The Capacity for Maintenance goal statements which are categorized as Political Culture are subcategorized into the six areas of: Transition, General System, State and Local Government, Human Relations, Religion/Church, and External Relations. A single statement is related to unity with the Environment.

Capacity for Maintenance values directed toward the transition process are oriented toward a basic level of economic and political stability and safety and toward a natural and uniform process of change. Additional Capacity for Maintenance values identified as operative within the system and indicative of prevailing codes are oriented toward: preservation of the culture, organization without secularization, the integration of moral and spiritual values with material development, and parallel economic and cultural development. There also is a value for individual freedom coupled with responsibility.

There is considerable consistency in the Capacity for Maintenance goal statements which are directed toward the establishment and maintenance of community which had been destroyed under communism. Maintenance oriented values reflected in these statements are those of: mutual understanding, social concern, inclusivity, participation, open communication, trust, and collaboration. Some of these values may be more reflective of emerging values rather than of prevailing codes.

Maintenance oriented values operative in the system regarding the government are directed toward: more positive government interaction, the development of trust, clarity and continuity of laws, and toward, moderation, balance, and peace within the political system.

The area of Human Relations is the area in which the largest number of individual Capacity for Maintenance statements are identified. The goal statements identified in this area are oriented toward the establishment and maintenance of more egalitarian and mutual relationships between and among the different levels of society and sectors of society, across sectors, among and between groups and organizations, and across statuses. There is an impetus for the integration into the system of disadvantaged, marginalized, and stigmatized groups. The development of interpersonal skills and relationships at the individual, family and community levels is also encouraged. The values identified in this area are the most likely to be indicative of emerging codes rather than prevailing codes.

There is a Capacity for Maintenance for the "rediscovery" and "reintroduction" of Christian values into the system and a concrete opportunity for reconstruction and restoration of old, vulnerable churches.

Finally, a number of Capacity for Maintenance goal statements are oriented toward the establishment and maintenance of external relations which are

guided by the values of openness, mutual respect, and self determination. There are a number of Capacity for Maintenance goal statements which were directed specifically toward assistance providers. These statements reflect the values of, respect for the inherent worth and dignity of the client, participation, and the right to self determination. Recommendations are also made for locality based and collaborative models of intervention. These values are very consistent with social work practice principles and models! They represent prevailing codes which are receptive to community development endeavors which are based on social work practice principles and models.

CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, based on these data, a Capacity for Institution building within the civil society of Romania was identified. The direction of this capacity for institution building within the civil sector is oriented toward growth. The strength of the Capacity toward Growth within the civil society sector is moderate to strong.

There is some regional variation in the strength of the Capacity for institution building based on interview data. A Capacity for Growth appears strong to vigorous in the regions of Cluj-Napoca, Oradea, and Timisoara. It is moderate in Iasi and appears to be oriented toward stabilizing the system in

Bucharest. The regional variation in strength of capacity is less pronounced in an analysis of the individual statements from the various regions. These data indicate a strong orientation toward growth across the system with the most vigor evident in Cluj-Napoca, Timisoara, and Oradea, and a strong orientation in Iasi and Bucharest.

Linkage points for institution building endeavors are evident in these data both in terms of the requisite growth oriented values found within the Political Culture and in specific areas in which a Capacity for Growth is identified. Existing potentialities and technologies which may serve as linkage points for future institution building endeavors are identified in the areas of Services, Education, Economics, Business, Religion/Church, and Agriculture/Village Life.

Prevailing codes are identified in maintenance oriented values which are directed toward the preservation and cohesion of the system. These values indicate values which are likely to be operative within the system. It is very likely that these maintenance oriented values are contributing to the shape of the development of civil society. These maintenance oriented values also suggest points within the system which are likely to be amenable to the integration of institution building efforts.

Prevailing codes are identified in the values operative in the transition and those which are likely to be influential in shaping the development of the system

during the transition process. The maintenance oriented values which are identified in regard to the restructuring of social relationships at all levels in the system are more likely to be reflective of emerging codes. Maintenance oriented values are also identified which are likely to be operative in relationships external to the country, particularly in regard to relationships with foreign assistance providers. There was a lone maintenance oriented statement which is oriented toward instilling a sense of unity with the environment in young people.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are a number of theory development, policy and practice implications related to the findings of this study. A delineation of these implications follows.

Specific to theory development regarding civil society, the findings of this study provide a comprehensive description of the social context for institution building within the civil society sector of a former communist country. As such, this study contributes to the broad, multidisciplinary area of theory regarding civil society.

The two primary concepts of growth and maintenance, utilized in this study, were drawn from General Systems Theory (Bertalanffy, 1968). The specific areas within the civil society sector in which a Capacity for Growth and a

Capacity for Maintenance were identified represent the areas which can serve as a base line for assessment of development within the civil society sector of Romania since the period in which the data were gathered. As such, these findings contribute to systems theory, both in terms of offering a base line for the assessment of a social system in a period of transition, and in terms of the development of a special sort of social structural arrangement; that of civil society in a former communist country.

This study also contributes to institution building theory. The approach to the study represents a model in the application of the principle of "fit," drawn from institution building theory based on the concepts of linkage points and prevailing codes. These concepts were utilized in the analysis in order to optimize "fit" for institution building initiatives. The application of the concepts of linkage points and prevailing codes has added clarity and refinement to these concepts. It has helped clarify the distinction between attitudes and values within the environment which are requisite for institution building and the more concrete linkage points within the system. The application of the concept of prevailing codes has helped to distinguish the concept of prevailing codes from that of emerging codes.

The following section briefly discusses theoretical implications of a more speculative nature. The assertion was made by Seligman (1992a) that "crises in

representing society" (p. 57) are present both in the East and the West and that the situation in each is a "mirror image" (Seligman, 1992b, p. 7) of the other. If it is accepted that the social structural arrangements of Romania and the United States are mirror images of each other to the degree that the civil realm in Romania was inhibited by the all powerful state, and if we accept that the civil realm in the United States is eroded by the all powerful individual, then this analogy holds. This is true since in the case of the United States, the civil realm is eroded from the bottom up and in the case of Romania the civil realm is inhibited from the top down.

From a systems perspective, utilizing the concept of the importance of a balance between both agentic/growth oriented elements and communal/maintenance oriented elements within the system, it can be speculated that there would be movement in the process of restructuring society in Romania, toward the introduction of agentic/instrumental elements, balanced by maintenance oriented elements, at the individual and civil realms where they have been absent. The findings of this study support this speculation.

It can also be speculated that there would be movement within all realms of the social structure within the United States toward more communal/maintenance oriented elements. A very limited perusal of the literature regarding organizations within the civil sector provides evidence of such a

movement. For example, according to Mattessich & Monsey (1992) and Scheff and Kotler (1996), human service, and arts organizations are moving away from an emphasis on autonomy, expansion, and growth. Instead, these organizations are moving toward "strategic collaborations" in order to survive crises in growth and a shrinking funding base (Scheff & Kotler, 1996, p. 52). However, it must be pointed out that the above speculation is clearly speculation and beyond the specific intent of this study.

Although it was not an explicit purpose of this study to address the concept of social capital, evidence supportive of this concept, specifically trust and the establishment of community for the maintenance of the social system, were identified. To this degree, the present study contributes to theory development regarding the concept of social capital.

This study contributes to social work practice theory. The model of the initial LLR project, and that of this research, are both based on a social work practice model for community development in the social development of a foreign country. The social work model of community development utilized, reflects the principles of participation and self determination. This study offers a model of community development which integrates concepts from systems theory, institution building theory, and the practice principles of self determination, participation, and social justice. These are concepts and principles which have

been identified as important for sustainability in social development (Carothers, 1996; Cernea, 1985, Midgley, 1995, Quigley, 1996).

The data utilized in this research represents one aspect of a comprehensive social work assessment for practice intervention; that of identification of client goals. This research is a model of the identification of client goals for the purpose of community development in a foreign country; based on the social work principles of participation and self determination. As such, this research contributes to social work practice theory as a model which integrates a practice purpose with a research purpose.

The findings of this study also contribute to social work policy development in the area of international social work. The specific areas in which technologies and potentialities, linkage points for institution building, are identified within the system, suggest areas which are amenable for policy and program development, and practice initiatives. Since the findings are based on responses of key informants from within the sector of the regions, they are also in keeping with the social work practice principles of self determination and participation.

Since there was a change in the administration of the government with the election of Emil Constantinescu in November of 1996, and since there has been a considerable passage of time since these data were gathered, they may no longer

be representative of the population within the civil society sector. For this reason these data offer the greatest utility as a base line for assessing change in the transition process. For the greatest utility for direct policy and practice initiatives, the continued validity of these findings should be assessed before policy and/or programs are initiated.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

There are a number of limitations to this study. These limitations are related to both the design of the original LLR study and to the design of the study. In regard to the design of the LLR study, the joint practice and research purposes of the initial data gathering process weakened the utility of the results for research purposes alone. The practice orientation allowed discretion to the interviewer in regard to how the interview could be approached to obtain the data. This lack of consistency among interviewers contributed to less rigor in the data.

The fact that the data were gathered in another culture, from persons with another language also is a cause for concern regarding the data. Although a "cultural interpreter" was used to act as an interpreter, what was interpreted, and how it was interpreted depended on this person. It also must be noted that the "cultural interpreters" did not receive training or orientation. It is possible that

simply the fact of the presence of the interpreter alone, was enough to influence the respondent in unknown ways and thereby also the gathering of the data.

Another potential source of bias could be introduced into these data through the process of selection of the key informants. In most cases first contacts were chosen by regional coordinators. The persons who were chosen reflected the knowledge and interests of these coordinators. It is also possible that the personal research interests of interviewers may have influenced this selection process since the key informants were selected after interview teams had arrived on site.

A final limitation related to the design of the original study was the use of interview teams and the interview process which included the use of process recording notes rather than audio tapes. Although there are feasibility and practice considerations supportive of this choice, the data are weakened for research purposes.

There are several limitations of the findings which are related to the design of this study. The use of written documents from interview data rather than from transcriptions of audio taped interviews weakens confidence in the data. The apparent inconsistency in the interview process weakens confidence in the data. The lack of consistency in the number of categories of civil society represented across the regions and the number of respondents within the categories of civil

society within and across the regions made meaningful category analysis more difficult.

The fact that the data were obtained from a culture other than that of the researcher also raises questions about potential bias. Cultural nuances may have been missed. The use of an orientational method of inquiry and conceptual clarity in the approach to analysis adds credibility to the findings. The recoding of a subsample and the establishment of a coefficient of stability also increase confidence in the findings. These data were also analyzed in many different ways so that over the process of the analysis there were numerous opportunities for the researcher to check and recheck the findings. This process of checking and rechecking adds credibility to the findings.

However, there are several approaches that could increase confidence in the data in future research of this type. A trained second reader could be utilized. A random sample could have been drawn from the total sample of 197 interviews and the analysis could have been performed on these data and generalized to the total.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The findings of this study represent a base line in the development of a social system in the process of transition. They also represent the development of

a new form of social structure, that of civil society. The first and most obvious recommendation based on the findings of this study is that a follow-up study be conducted.

A follow-up study is recommended to identify changes in the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania since the time these data were gathered. The direction and shape of civil society development within Romania since these data were gathered could also be assessed. The use of a research design in which an equal number of respondents per category within the civil society sector which are randomly chosen would be ideal. A replication study based on new data is more feasible and could prove fruitful in assessing changes in the capacity for institution building and in the process of civil society development.

Further study of the capacity for institution building within the various categories of groups found within the civil society sector, such as business, NGOs, Media, and Religion/Church, is recommended. The findings in this study are, at best, very tentative, concerning the capacity for institution building found within the categories of the civil sector in Romania. Further research to elaborate on the capacity for institution building found within the categories of civil society could contribute to knowledge regarding institution building theory, and to systems theory, both in terms of the capacity for institution building which the different

categories within the civil sector exhibit and in terms of the role various categories within society play in the overall development of civil society in a former communist country.

Finally, research designed similar to this study, and conducted with respondents from sectors of society not represented in this study, such as laborers and villagers, is recommended. Sectors of society not represented in this study could exert considerable influence in the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania and in the direction and shape of civil society development.

In closing it is reiterated that this study examined only one aspect of the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania, that of the direction of the will of key representatives from categories within that sector. There are other factors which are equally, if not more, powerful within the system, which will ultimately determine the shape and direction of the restructuring of Romanian society. These largely unresearched areas comprise another vast domain for future research which can lend further understanding to the nature and direction of civil society development in Romania. Findings gained from further research in this larger domain can broaden the understanding obtained from this initial analysis of the direction of the will of 196 purposively selected

representatives from categories of the civil sector from across the country in June of 1996.

This concludes the final chapter of this study to identify the capacity for institution building within the civil society sector of Romania. This chapter presents an overview of the study, a summary discussion of the findings, a discussion of the theory, policy and practice implications of the study. And the chapter concludes with recommendations based on the model of the study and its findings.