

**INTERORGANIZATIONAL COOPERATION AND ITS MOTIVATORS:  
Multilevel Elements for the Formation of Networks Interorganizational**

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**ABSTRACT**

*This research is based in contributing to the field of knowledge of interorganizational relationships by understanding the motivators present in the formation of an cooperation network in the interior of the state of Paraná. The results show that the main reasons for the formation of interorganizational relationships were: i) improving relationships between the firms in the sector; ii) access to resources; iii) improving relationships with suppliers; and iv) improving the performance and competitiveness.*

**Keywords:** *Interorganizational Relationships. Interorganizational Networks. Motivators. New Organizational Settings.*

**1. INTRODUCTION**

The issue of inter-organizational relationships is already a few decades ago the subject of several studies in organizational theory in other countries. In the Brazilian context, the interest in this topic may still be considered recent, a fact that results in little theoretical knowledge compared to the international context of research on interorganizational relationships. The increased interest in issues pertaining to contacts between organizations, you might find justification in the empirical finding that they need to interact with their environment to access the resources necessary for their activities, for considering that the environment is composed of other organizations, the contact an organization with its environment occurs through contact with other organizations. In this sense, it is understood as interorganizational relationship transactions, flows and relatively durable resources links that occur between two or more organizations (Oliver, 1990).

One way in which these relationships occur is through interorganizational networks, and these, as a way interaction between organizations may represent an effective way to achieve individual and collective goals through complex relationships, where organizations establish interrelationships in different forms in different contexts and from diverse cultural expressions (Castells, 1999), promoting a favorable environment for economic exchanges, the sharing of information, knowledge, skills and resources essential for organizational activity (Balestrin & Vargas, 2004) awakening thus the interest of organizations and researchers for this phenomenon.

When considering that organizations inevitably maintain interactions with each other, the subject of much research has focused on issues that explain how organizations select those with whom will interact, in other words, the reasons that make it relates to a specific organization and not another, and the conditions in which these relationships are wrapped (*e. g.* Brass, Galaskiewicz, Greve & Tsai, 2004; Galaskiewicz, 1985; Grandori & Soda, 1995; Gulati, 1998; Oliver & Ebers, 1998; Oliver, 1990 ; Schermerhorn, 1975; Schmidt & Kochan, 1977; Whetten & Leung, 1979).

In this sense, the central concern of this study resided in identifying the motivators in the formation of interorganizational relationships. This was considering two levels of analysis: the level of organizational analysis (Auster, 1994), we tried to identify the motivators that led organizations to join a network of interorganizational cooperation; already in the analysis of the organizational group level (Oliver & Ebers, 1998), we sought to identify what led to the formation of interorganizational network.

**2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

*2.1 Interorganizational Cooperation*

The cooperation networks have attracted much interest among organizations because, according to Balestrin and Vargas (2004), the network configuration promotes favorable environment for the sharing of information, knowledge, skills and resources essential to the innovation process. In this sense, interorganizational networks consist of an effective way for organizations to achieve competitiveness in the markets through a complex system

of relationships. In addition, cooperative relationships have a strategic importance in competitive environments, particularly to facilitate the synergy of efforts between organizations towards common goals (Balestrin & Vargas, 2004; Balestrin, Vershoore & Reyes, 2010; Cropper, Ebers, Huxham & Ring, 2010; Hibbert, Huxham & Ring, 2010; Vershoore & Balestrin, 2008).

To Child and Faulkner (1998), the cooperative strategy is the attempt of organizations in reaching their goals through cooperation with other organizations, as well as competition with them. Whereas their focus is guided on the benefits that can be achieved through cooperation, a cooperative strategy can offer significant advantages for needy organizations of certain powers or resources to maintain links with other organizations that have the resources and complementary skills; they also offer easy access to new markets and learning opportunities. For Human and Provan (1997) and Albers (2010), cooperation strategies are the result of a collective commitment to strive to develop solutions to common problems. Thus, the achievement of objectives that could not be performed individually is facilitated through joint actions between organizations.

However, we must recognize that, even after establishing cooperative relationships, organizations can continue to compete in other ways. Through cooperative relations, organizations can work together for the collective performance improvement, sharing resources and conducting joint activities in a given market. At the same time, these partners may also compete through independent actions on other markets to improve their own performance (Gnyawali & Madhavan, 2001). Human and Provan (1997) agree that, given the dynamics inherent in interorganizational networks, organizations can collaborate on a project and compete in others.

To Bresser, Dunbar and Jithendranathan (1994), organizations are more favorable to cooperation strategies when they realize they have limited abilities to meet the environmental demands, which are characterized by multiple interdependencies and unexpected changes. Consequently, environmental uncertainty and interdependence also provide new opportunities for cooperation. In this sense, Harrigan (1988) and Bresser (1988) add that an organization can make use of cooperation to supplement their strategies.

On the one hand the competitive strategies are beneficial for organizations, on the other, to act as rivals, only competitively, organizations tend to go to a game in which no one wins or an even worse situation in which everyone loses. When the competitive behavior is only occur only temporary short-term returns, it is difficult to maintain strategic competitive over time. Thus, it is necessary that there is a split of competition strategies to encompass strategies that enjoy the benefits of cooperation (Leão, 2005).

## 2.2. *Motivators of Interorganizational Relationships*

Whereas an organization has the power to choose the organizations with which they will interact and that in other cases, interactions are established on a mandatory basis, the interorganizational relationships presuppose questions such as: What are the reasons and within what conditions organizations establish links with other organizations? In this sense, the motivators of interorganizational relationships relate to explicit or implicit intentions, instrumental or not, which represent the objectives of the organizations for the establishment and maintenance of relationships (Oliver, 1990).

Schermerhorn (1975), to focus on what drives organizations to establish cooperative relationships, shows that the main reason that leads to this kind of activity is access to scarce resources. The author also recognizes that organizations with over resources are better able to establish relationships, they increase the possibility of different types of links with other organizations. In addition to access to resources, Galaskiewicz (1985) stands out as motivators for cooperative relationships reducing environmental uncertainty, improving the legitimacy and scope of collective goals. In turn, Ring and Van de Ven (1994) point out that a number of motivators of cooperative relationships have been identified, including access to new technologies, new markets, economies of scale, complementary skills and shared risk.

The pursuit of efficiency through interorganizational relationships is a motivator that can be seen as a form of negotiation in which each organization seeks to maximize its advantage in obtaining and allocating resources that are critical to their survival (Hall, 2004; Oliver, 1990). Whetten and Leung (1979) draw attention to the fact that an organization can establish interorganizational relations due to their instrumental value, in other words, it is considered the degree to which certain connection may contribute to the achievement of organizational goals. For the authors, the main reason found that drives organizations to establish interorganizational relationships is access to resources that will lead to improvement in performance. Thus, the efficiency emphasizes the importance of obtaining resources for the organizations involved, implying rationality as organizations seek to maximize their earnings in the interaction (Oliver, 1990; Whetten & Leung, 1979).

The power is also cited as a motivator of interorganizational relationships due to the potential that a particular relationship must enable an organization to exercise power over other organizations or their resources (Oliver, 1990). In addressing the power to explain the inter-relationships, it is suggested that the scarcity of resources motivates organizations to try to exercise power, influence or control over other organizations that have the resources required, in contrast to the assumption that the scarcity of resources motivates organizations to cooperate. Whetten and Leung (1979) add that the decision to interact with another organization can be motivated due to the increase that such a relationship can bring to the personal power of the leaders.

In contrast to power, a considerable portion of the literature assumes that relationships are motivated by the need for interorganizational cooperation. Oliver (1990) draws attention to the fact that few studies contrast the power and cooperation, because, as stated earlier, the lack of resources can both induce cooperation (Schermerhorn, 1975) as the competition (Gnyawali & Madhavan, 2001). Schermerhorn (1975) adds that the desire for cooperation by itself is a motivator for relationships, but there are factors that induce organizations to engage in cooperative relations although the interorganizational cooperation is potentially associated with a set of costs where the participation of organizations may incur.

Organizations also establish interorganizational relationships as a way to become more stable before the environmental uncertainties, that is, they are used in relationships as an adaptive response to the uncertain environment. Environmental uncertainty is generated by the scarcity of resources, encouraging organizations to establish relationships to achieve stability and predictability in relations with other organizations (Brass *et al.*, 2004; Galaskiewicz, 1985; Oliver, 1990; Whetten & Leung, 1979).

Improving organizational legitimacy has also been cited as a significant reason the decision to interact with other organizations (Galaskiewicz, 1985; Oliver, 1990; Hall, 2004; Scott, 2003). Institutional theory suggests that the institutional environment imposes pressures on organizations to justify their activities. Such pressures motivate organizations to gain legitimacy to show compliance with the standards, rules, beliefs or expectations of external actors (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983). To do this, organizations seek relationships with organizations that enjoy greater legitimacy and public acceptance of their actions.

### 3. METHODOLOGICAL PROCEDURES

First, it is worth noting that this research used a multimethod approach. For Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2000), approaches and research strategies are not always applied alone, so that can be combined and often this can be very beneficial to the study. The authors say it is very unusual for a single study combining qualitative and quantitative methods and use primary and secondary data. Thus, this study used qualitative methods (Flick, 2004; Godoy, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c) and quantitative (Babbie, 2001; Richardson, 1989).

The theme of organizational relationships is still a poor field of study of conceptual consolidation. Given this and the proposed objectives, this research ranked as exploratory-descriptive, as well as aiming to become familiar with a relatively unexplored subject, it proposes the description of the characteristic of the phenomenon involving the motivators of interorganizational relationships (Godoy, 1995b; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2000).

In this study, the research strategy adopted was the case study. The adoption of this strategy is justified by depth and flexibility that is inherent in it, allowing you to combine qualitative and quantitative methods in order to allow further clarify aspects of the phenomenon of the motivators of interorganizational relationships (Eisenhardt, 1989; Godoy, 1995b).

Considering the objectives of this research, the level of analysis was considered the organizational and organizational group (inter). The organizational level is justified because of the focus of this guided on organizational characteristics and their relationship with the creation, management, maintenance, persistence and failure of interorganizational relationships (Auster, 1994). Also, the use of the organizational group level (inter) is a function that it is oriented to the properties or actions of a group of organizations (Oliver & Ebers, 1998).

The population for this study consists of the formal interorganizational networks in the state of Paraná. Because of that in the case study strategy the researcher focuses on one or a few cases, it can not be the case as sampling unit (Yin, 2001). Thus, the choice of case study was made considering the type of relationship existing (horizontal formal) network age (over five years), number of participants (above 30), location, and also accessibility of researcher. To select the member organizations of the Alpha network that were part of the first phase of the research (qualitative), made use of sampling criterion intentional non-probabilistic, it is the most appropriate sampling method for a situation in which to select a small number of elements of the universe, and producing a significant probability that a representative sample (Oliveira, 2001; Richardson, 1989). For the second phase of

the research (quantitative) was used sampling criterion non-probabilistic for convenience, as it allows organizations to be surveyed are selected according to their accessibility (Oliveira, 2001; Richardson, 1989).

Regarding data collection, this research used primary and secondary data through two phases. The first stage was qualitative, so that the data was obtained through of 12 semi-structured interviews, and 10 interviews with owners or managers of participating companies and 02 interviews with network level leaders and also documentary research. As suggested by Eisenhardt (1989) and, like Human and Provan (1997), the data collected in the first phase and support the theoretical framework, elaborated the instrument (structured questionnaire) used in the second phase of the research which was applied personally by the researcher with the 42 leaders of the organizations selected for the study.

In turn, data analysis consisted of three phases: analysis of interviews and documents through of technique of qualitative analysis content (Flick, 2004; Laille & Dionne, 1999); analysis of structured questionnaires; and verification convergent patterns between the evidence collected through the triangulation of data obtained in the first and second phase.

#### 4. PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

##### 4.1. *Qualitative Data*

To meet the objective of identifying which motivators present in the formation of the Alpha Network, the association's leaders were asked what the goals behind the formation of that association. In turn, to identify the motivators that led the participation of companies in the association, the leaders of these organizations were asked what factors motivated him to join that network.

In general, what is perceived qualitative data, is that the Alpha Network was formed basing on cooperation objectives among traders of building materials, and seek to represent the sector and provide interests of associated services.

Regarding the members of the Alpha network companies, it seems that they began their participation seeking to improve relationships with other industry companies to join forces around common goals. That is why the search for greater cooperation between companies in the sector was present both in the discourse of leaders as the members.

Because the Alpha Network is characterized as the horizontal type cooperation (between companies operating in the same segment competing for the same market) some respondents indicated that their participation in the Alpha Network is motivated by improving relationships with others competitors in order to promote greater cooperation and more healthy competition.

The union of efforts to access scarce resources also shows this as motivator for interorganizational relationships among the members of Alpha Network. Key features highlighted by respondents are related to access to new knowledge and access to credit and financing.

The search for new knowledge through access to training seems to be a constant in the shares of Alpha Network. In this sense, one of the main difficulties reported by respondents refers to the low supply of skilled labor, particularly those individuals responsible for customer service, a fact that has led the association to develop actions towards the training of sector personnel building materials through courses and lectures. In addition to the association's leaders, members own show concern for the training of employees so that they also see in training an attractive factor for membership in the Alpha Network. However, the leaders of the Alpha Network add that the entrepreneurs of the sector also have low qualification, so that your training has also been the focus of the entity's shares.

The retail segment of building materials as a whole suffers from the so-called direct sales. This is the action of manufacturers selling directly to end users, without the intermediation of building materials stores. This fact represents a major threat due to the stores can not compete with the prices charged by manufacturers that tend to have an advantage in terms of cost. Combating direct sales, specifically, has been one of the main motivators that drive the sector's organizations to participate in the Alpha Network, a fact that is revealed both in the statements of the members of the network as leaders.

##### 4.2. *Quantitative Data*

The identification of the inter-relationships of the motivators for the second phase of the research was carried out by means of a construct consisting of 23 indicators derived from theory and qualitative research phase, which

were measured using a Likert scale. In this phase, respondents were asked what the motivators who did participate in the Alpha Network. In order to identify the dimensions underlying constructs and create a new set of variables to simplify the application of techniques subsequent statistics, the data were subjected to exploratory factor analysis of principal components.

According to Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black (2005), Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) consists of a statistical technique for analyzing complex patterns multidimensional relationships between a larger number of variables. The use of this technique is justified by the need to condense and reduce a large number of variables to a few dimensions or latent factors in some constructs. Despite that it was a sample with less than 50 elements and do not have 05 observations per variable, the use of factor analysis finds support in the fact that it is not intended to make inferences beyond the sample studied (Hair *et al.*, 2005).

Initially, the indicators that made up the motivational construct of interorganizational relationships totaled 23 variables. After an initial rotation of the main components, in order to increase the degree to which the application of factor analysis, were taken eight indicators that had low factor loadings or which then had no theoretical correlation with the other indicators of the same reason given by factor analysis. This variable elimination procedure finds support on Hair *et al.* (2005) commenting that the researcher assesses the need to re-specify the factor model by elimination of a variable(s) of analysis.

Using factor analysis, we adopted the principal component extraction method followed by varimax orthogonal rotation definition of the method. After the technical implementation of some care has been taken in order to ensure the adequacy of the technical employment. Therefore, the factor analysis was followed by verification of the correlation matrix of the variables; the measure of adequacy of the sample through the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO), which must have a value above 0,5 for the factor analysis is appropriate (Malhotra, 2001); and Bartlett's sphericity test.

Factor analysis presented a KMO = 0,720 and Bartlett sphericity test with significance = 366,675 = 0,000. To check the reliability of the scales was used Cronbach's alpha, which showed the following results: Factor 1 = 0,902; factor 2 = 0,836; and factor 3 = 0,721. These results confirm the acceptability of the scales, because according to Hair *et al.* (2005), values above 0,70 have high acceptability. Whereas the factor 04 is composed of only 01 indicator, it was not possible to calculate its reliability, but it is emphasized that their factor loadings can be considered high (0,88). In addition, this factor is presented as of great importance for research. The results are shown in Table 01.

Table 01 - Rotated Components Matrix for Motivators of Relationships.

	Fators			
	1	2	3	4
Improve relationships with suppliers	,854			
Get in contact with new suppliers	,837			
Strengthen my company making it more stable against possible crises in the industry	,802			
Have access to more favorable credit lines for the company	,779			
To establish partnerships with other companies in the sector	,726			
Improving communication of my company among our members	,713			
Recognize that cooperation can contribute to the mutual business growth empresas	,643			
Improving the financial performance of my company		,906		
Improving operational performance of my company		,855		
Consider that it could contribute to the achievement of my goals		,709		
Gain competitiveness compared to competitors that are not part of the Alpha Network		,632		
Have access to new knowledge and thus improve my management skills			,802	
Have access to training			,721	
Have access to information from Alpha Network			,617	
Contribute to the fight against direct sale without criteria by industry				,880
<b>Variance Explained</b>	32,6%	19,5%	14,3%	10,9%
<b>Variance Accumulated</b>	32,6%	52,1%	66,4%	77,3%
<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	,902	,836	,721	-

Source: Primary research data.



The factor 01, called relationships and protection, reveals the expectation to establish contacts that promote individual and collective benefits for companies in the sector. The respondents consider that when deciding to participate in the Alpha Network, they were seeking to obtain or improve contacts with suppliers, to protect themselves against industry crises, access more advantageous credit lines, improve communication with other members and contribute to the mutual growth in the sector. Whereas the factor analysis indicates that the variables that are highly correlated factor, respondents appear to be motivated to participate in the Alpha Network in order to improve level of interaction between companies in the building materials sector in the region and with suppliers because they believe this can result in greater stability and protection for the group.

The factor 02, called competitiveness and achieve the objectives, mainly rests on the individual performance of the organization, because the respondents show that their participation in the Network Alpha was motivated by improved financial and operational performance, improving competitiveness and achievement of other objectives of your organization.

The factor 03, called knowledge, highlights the importance given by respondents to the aspects related to learning as a result of greater interaction among companies in the building materials sector of the region, which would allow the exchange of knowledge as well as sharing common problems. In addition, participation in the training offered by the association also seems to act as a motivator, as it represents the potential for improving the training of both entrepreneurs as their employees. Another aspect that factor refers to information from Alpha Network which acts as a source of specific information about the sector.

In turn, the factor relating to the fight against direct sale (factor 4) has a high load factor considered representing the concerns of respondents with the action of the manufacturers that sell directly to the end consumer. Thus, it acts as a motivator in the sense that respondents believe that, through the merger of the companies of the sector, would be better able to combat this type of action of the manufacturers.

After the procedures for validation of the scales, the motivational construct of interorganizational relationships underwent Cluster Analysis technique (Conglomerates Analysis). Considering the four factors identified by factor analysis, were found two very homogeneous groups and heterogeneous internally with each other.

The first procedure for the verification of the existence of these two groups was the realization of a hierarchical cluster analysis with Ward's method and Euclidean distance squared (Hair *et al.*, 2005). From the observation of the dendrogram (graphical representation of clusters), there was the existence of two more general groups.

Whereas the data come from non-metric variables between two independent samples (clusters), the statistical test more suitable for the verification of statistically significant differences between the two groups to construct the factors motivating the interorganizational relationships is the U Mann-Whitney (Bisquerra, Sarriera & Martinez, 2004; Malhotra, 2001). The results show statistically significant differences (p-value = 0,000 at the 95% significance level) for three of the motivating factors of interorganizational relationships between the two groups originated in the cluster analysis. Only the factor "contribute to the fight against direct sale without criteria by industry" did not differ between the two groups (p-value = 0,764, the 95% significance level).

The first cluster consists of a group composed of 14 responders (37,8% of the sample). This group is more motivated to participate in the Alpha Network because of the possibility of collaborating to combat direct sales (mean rank = 18,54) and less motivated by relationship and protective factors (mean rank = 9,61), search for competitiveness and achievement of objectives (mean rank = 10,43) or knowledge (mean rank = 9,96).

The second cluster is composed of 23 responders (62,2% of the sample). Unlike the first group, this was also motivated to participate in the Alpha Network to collaborate to combat direct sales, but to a lesser extent (mean rank = 19,28) compared to the first group. What stands out as a motivator for the second group, are the other three factors: relationships and protection (mean rank = 24,72), competitiveness and achieving goals (mean rank = 24,22) and knowledge (mean rank = 24,50).

## 5. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

With respect to motivators of inter-relationships among the members of Alpha Network, we tried to initially identify those that were present in the formation and maintenance of the network (the organizational group level of analysis); and motivators that led to participation and permanence of companies in those relationships (organizational level) considering thus the observation of Oliver (1990) on the change in motivating the course of the relationship. However, during the qualitative phase, there was no evidence on possible changes in the motivators of interorganizational relationships. For this reason, the analysis as a whole considers only the

motivators present in the formation of relationships at the organizational level. Perhaps the fact that the data do not corroborate the observations of Oliver (1990) is due to the fact that association is relatively new (six years) and not yet answered satisfactorily the expectations of its participants and their own goals.

In general, the motivators of the relationships between the participants of the Alpha Network concerning the cooperation both at the organizational level and at the organizational group level, confirming several studies dealing with the issue of cooperation as one of the main reasons for the inter-relationships (*e.g.* Brass *et al.*, 2004; Galaskiewicz, 1985; Oliver & Ebers, 1998; Oliver, 1990; Schermerhorn, 1975; Schmidt & Kochan, 1977; Whetten & Leung, 1979). It is noticed that the relationship between the companies in the sector studied, prevailed competition and cooperation, was virtually nonexistent. Thus, many companies began their participation in the Alpha Network in order to contribute to the improvement of this relationship cooperation-competition.

However, it is necessary to consider the comments of Whetten and Leung (1979) to warn that the desire for cooperation alone does not fully explain what drives organizations to establish relationships with each other, that is, cooperation may represent a strategy to achieve organizational goals because of its instrumental value. Fact not clearly evidenced during the qualitative phase, but the quantitative phase of the research reveals evidence that, as stated by Child and Faulkner (1998), the cooperative strategy is the attempt of organizations in reaching their goals through cooperation with other organizations, both as competition with them. Thus, we can see that the relationships between those organizations were also influenced by motivating related to the organization's performance (financial and operational), competitiveness and the achievement of objectives, supporting the studies Oliver (1990) and Whetten and Leung (1979).

More explicitly, the data show that one motivation for relationships between the participants of the Alpha Network is to improve the relationship between the companies in the retail industry of building materials that region to promote inter-trade; the resolution of conflicts between those undertakings; and strengthen the sector making it more stable and less vulnerable to sector crises. Sustained by the study of Human and Provan (1997), the data show that the inter-exchanges are represented by the desire to establish contacts with others in the industry in order to share common problems, exchange information and share best practices.

Regarding the conflict, it is seen that one of the problems that affect the relationship between the companies that comprise the Alpha Network originates in situations relating to pricing practices considered unfair by some companies in the region that, in the view of respondents, affect the sector. However, both the leaders as members recognize that this is a difficult problem, as well as the association shall be consistent with the independence of the actions of its participants, any agreement with respect to pricing practices could mean the formation of a cartel, which result in greater losses to the industry and consumers.

The interorganizational relationships are also formed when organizations have difficulties, isolation, access scarce resources (Galaskiewicz, 1985; Oliver & Ebers, 1998; Oliver, 1990; Ring & Van de Ven, 1992, 1994; Schermerhorn, 1975; Whetten & Leung, 1979). Thus, respondents demonstrate that its participation in the Network Alpha was also motivated by the possibility of access to resources such as more favorable credit lines for the company and financing facilities to their clients; and access to knowledge. For access to credit and financing, it acts as a motivator according to the special conditions that some financial institutions offer associated with Alpha Network and its customers as credit card fees, interest, payment terms, and also, facilities for hire.

In the case of access to knowledge, it occurs in two ways. The first is through the training specifically targeted to the sector offered by the association for companies that integrate it. These courses are of specific character, oriented to the sector and are focused on the training of employees who work in the stores and the entrepreneur. A second form of access to knowledge is through the information that the association regularly distributes which deal with aspects considered useful to the industry. Thus, the data support the study of Oliver and Ebers (1998) to consider the possibility of access immaterial resources (knowledge) through contact with other organizations.

Another motivator that presents especially with regard to the relationship with suppliers. In this case, the member organizations of the Alpha Network appear to be motivated by the possibility of improving contacts with current suppliers and partnership development; contact new suppliers; and mainly cooperate to fight the action of manufacturers who work selling directly to the end consumer without the intermediation of retail link. This type of practice of manufacturers, called direct sales, is considered to be very harmful to the industry that can not compete with manufacturers who have an advantage in terms of cost. Whereas most of the time, these vendors also use as retail sales channel, the companies in this sector in the region shown to be largely motivated to attend that association to cooperate in combating this type of practice of manufacturers, corroborating the observation Oliver (1990) and Whetten and Leung (1979) in concluding that the cooperation and power are motivators that

interact when two or more organizations establish cooperative relationships to exercise power over a third organization.

## 6. FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

The main objective of this work was based in identifying the motivators of interorganizational relationships from two levels of analysis: organizational level and the organizational group level. Thus, it was found that, in the organizational group level, Alpha Network was formed with the purpose of promoting the development of the sector in the region through joint actions of those companies. In the organizational level, the motivating relationships for participation in the Alpha Network relate mainly to cooperation. The desire for cooperation between companies in the building materials industry of the region is a counterpoint to a situation in which predominated the competition, and cooperation, was virtually nonexistent, causing many companies started their participation in the Alpha Network in order to contribute to the improvement of this relationship cooperation-competition.

However, one must consider that the desire for cooperation alone does not fully explain what led companies in the construction materials sector to participate in the Alpha Network. Therefore, there was also the desire for cooperation represented a strategy for achieving organizational objectives because of its instrumental value, even if it has been implicitly shown. Thus, it appears that the participation of that association was also influenced by expectations regarding the performance of the organization (financial and operational), competitiveness and achievement of organizational goals.

One point that comes with great emphasis, refers to the interaction that occurs between the motivating cooperation and power, that is, participation in a network of cooperation can also be motivated by the possibility of cooperation to exercise power over a third organization. In the case of Alpha Network, those companies appear to be motivated to participate in the association by the possibility of improving contacts with current suppliers and partnership development; contact new suppliers; and mainly cooperate to fight the action of manufacturers who work selling directly to the end consumer without the intermediation of retail link.

That said, the main finding of this research refers to the fact that the Alpha Network was formed for purposes related to cooperation between companies in the sector of construction materials that region. Moreover, it can be said that there is a certain adjustment in terms of motivating to confront them at the organizational level and at the organizational group level, as there is a certain convergence between them where it appears that both the formation of the association on the participation of companies in those relationships were motivated by factors such as the improvement of horizontal and vertical relationships, access to resources and strengthen the sector. Consequently, at the individual level, it can be said that respondents envision the collective benefits promoted by participation in a network of cooperation, even considering the presence of individual nature motivators related, for example, financial and operational performance.

Of course, this work does not end the discussion about the motivators of interorganizational relationships. Perhaps a next step in this field would be to conduct additional studies to assess the extent to which the objectives and expectations of the participants and own Alpha Network with relationships are being met. This could generate useful information on the effectiveness of cooperative interorganizational relationships.

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