Building Interorganizational Relationships That Build Nations

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This paper describes relationship building among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in a civil society effort. It presents the results of an interorganizational network analysis of 17 Croatian civil society organizations that participated in the 2000 parliamentary election campaign. The research analyzes network relationships including density, structural holes, and centrality, considering the nature of these relationships as a function of choice of communication channels and strength of ties. The results of this study describe the communication roles of various organizations during the transformation from a totalitarian state to a fledgling civil society.

Nations throughout Eastern Europe, Asia, Africa, and South America are currently experiencing important social and political changes. Today, where dictators and totalitarian parties once directed the actions of entire nations, there now stand democratically elected governments. What we see happening in many nations is the emergence of civil society. At the center of this change are organizations that are enacting social transformation. The transformation of relationships between governments and publics will require new concepts and methods of inquiry (Bennett, 1998, 2000).

The purpose of this paper is to describe relationship building among nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) in a civil-society effort. This paper presents the results of an interorganizational analysis of 17 Croatian civil society organizations that provided nonpartisan information during the 2000 parliamentary election. This study focuses on communicative relationships, including the channels through which these relationships were maintained and the linkages between civil society groups, media, and an international donor as they all worked toward political reform.

However, although these organizations worked together, there existed a tension between the cooperative relationships necessary in civil society and the actual complex—and at times competitive—dynamic of communication and relationships. The grassroots level of analysis of these relationships provides insight about the communicative relationships among these important facilitators of nation building.

To explain and highlight the importance of civil-society building, the first section of the paper (a) reviews the relevant literature on nation building and civil society; (b) outlines the roles that NGOs, independent media, and international nongovernmental organizations play in the nation-building process; and (c) integrates network theory with civil society theory. The second section reports the results of an interorganizational network analysis of the NGOs, coalitions, and different types of media involved in the preelection campaign. The final section draws insights from these results to explain how the nature of these relationships can facilitate or undermine the nation-building process. Specifically, we consider the impact of organizational importance and structural holes (Burt, 1992a) on these networked relationships as they work toward civil society.

UNDERSTANDING NATION BUILDING AND CIVIL SOCIETY

Relationship building between like-minded people and organizations can positively affect social and political development (Taylor, 2000). Nation building is the process through which nations are created and national identities are constructed. Communication is an important tool in this process (Connor, 1972, 1992; Deutsch, 1963, 1966a, 1966b; Schramm & Lerner, 1976). Much of the communication literature that has addressed nation building has examined it from mass communication or interpersonal perspectives (e.g., Katz & Wedell, 1977; Lerner, 1955; Rogers, 1995; Schramm, 1964). However, Deutsch (1963) saw nations as a "social cohesion" held together by the ability of groups to communicate effectively. One of the most noteworthy ways that relationship building can contribute to nation building is through the establishment of cooperative civil society organizations in transitional nations (Meyer, 1997).

Philosophical and Relational Antecedents of Civil Society

Civil society is a condition that values public participation in the political process. The term describes a society's level of social and political interaction, involving "groups arranged in social networks of a reasonably fixed and routinized character" (Hadenius & Uggla, 1996, p. 1621). The concept of civil society has a rich history. Aristotle (trans. 1947), in the *Politics*, identified the ideal society as a place where all free men [sic]

meet together to discuss important issues. In the *Philosophy of Right*, Georg Hegel (1974) prescribed that government and the public should work together to achieve societal goals. While in prison for communist activities, Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci (1971) wrote extensively of civil society in the *Prison Notebooks.* The concept of civil society is also implicit and explicit throughout Jurgen Habermas's (1981) *Theory of Communicative Action*. His concept describes an ideal communication situation where organizations mediate relationships between the government and the people.

More recently, Harvard professor Robert Putnam compiled an extensive data set about American civil society. Putnam's (2000) book, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community,* raised concerns that civic participation in American society is decreasing. Putnam's argument is that civic engagement—whether in professional associations, bowling leagues, or Parent Teacher Associations—plays a crucial role in creating and sustaining a fair and inclusive society. Similarly, Wolfe (2001) has examined religiosity in American contemporary life and explained reasons why some people do not engage in their community (e.g., over-involvement in careers, distrust of others, etc.). However, engagement is clearly important as a form of social capital that helps to foster various benefits, which civil society organizations reap when they invest their energy and resources into these endeavors (Monge & Contractor, 2000).

Putnam (2000) argued that civil society also strengthens relationships within a society. Many nations encompass diverse ethnic and religious groups. Nation building theorist Larry Diamond (1999) has examined how these ethnic and racial divisions impede nation building. Citizen participation in groups that crossover racial, ethnic, religious, class, and geographic regions is necessary to create the multiple identifications and allegiances needed to maintain the nation-state. According to Diamond (1999), societies that have a variety of active membership organizations are more likely to withstand and survive internal and external threats. In a civil society, people belong to many groups that focus on different interests.

Interorganizational Participants in Nation Building: Collaboration and Competition

We translate Putnam's arguments from the organization-to-citizen context to the organization-to-organization context, focusing on a concept of civil society premised on communication and relationships, specifically among NGOs. NGOs "are the institutional manifestation of civil society" (Wiktorowicz, 2002, p. 79). Extensive research has been conducted on NGOs (c.f., *World Development, Journal of Developing Areas*, and *Human Relations*). NGOs work in such diverse areas of development as special interests, advocacy, service providers, the environment, welfare, human rights, and civil rights. Therefore, they are integral to the nation building

process (Clark, 1995; Drabek, 1987). In a civil society there are many "institutions that represent groups within the society, in broad cultural, political, and ideological senses" (Shaw, 1996, p. 13). Drabek (1987) argued that when organizations work together their networks can "be a valuable tool for strengthening the NGO movement . . . [and that] increasing exchange of experience and expertise will have great benefits" (p. xiv). However, the diversity of such groups naturally foments challenges in building relationships. Thus, in agreement with Alexander (1998), who argued that civil society encompasses the efforts by "private and public associations and organizations, all forms of cooperative social relationships that create bonds of trust, public opinion, legal rights and institutions and political parties" (p. 3), we analyze cooperation through communicative relationships. Although civil society organizations such as NGOs share common goals in relation to obtaining and maintaining democratic governmental practices, as in any relationship, there exist smaller short-term goals and varying needs that may undermine truly collaborative relationships. It is this tension between the normative cooperative relationships *idealized* by civil society theorists in their models and the *actual* practice of communication and relationship building in an everyday civil-society context that drives this research.

One problem for civil society development and interorganizational relationships, as with all organizations and groups, is competition for scarce resources (Burt, 1992a). In this situation, the Croatian organizations studied were vying for the same moneys for funding and were acutely aware of the volatility of the current political context. During transformational processes (such as the 2000 election that moved Croatia from a totalitarian regime into a democracy) distrust exists due to fears of conspiracy, cheating, or an undermining of the fair progress of the campaign. Uncertainty is also high. Still, it behooves organizations to forge links with others that share overlapping goals (i.e., democratic government) because such ties provide opportunities for obtaining information and other resources (i.e., social capital).

Social influence theories (Burt, 1987; Krackhardt, 1992; Rice, 1993) predict that communication partners rely on each other for making sense of new situations that are often rife with ambiguity and uncertainty. Thus, in the context of a nation in social transition, uncertainty and ambiguity are high, so we expect that communication partners should come to depend on one another for information. Kauffman (1993, 1995), in his research on self-organizing biological systems, suggests similar expectations about the rise of systemic order out of chaos by pointing to network density. Network density is a way of representing the linkages among actors in a system proportionate to the system's total possible linkages. Kauffman argued that in systems approaching order, a moderate density value (i.e., a density approaching .5, with a possible range of 0 to 1.0)

indicates a transition to order (i.e., uncertainty reduction) out of chaos (i.e., ambiguity and uncertainty). Brown and Ashman (1996) agree more generally: "The existence of dense networks of local organizations indicates high levels of social capital" (p. 1471). Kauffman (1995) then argued that this can be extended to social systems but critiques current theories of democracy because they take "little account of the unfolding, evolving nature of cultures, economies, and societies" (p. 299).

In this paper, we consider the evolving nature of civil society and identify the general structure of the 2000 Croatian parliamentary campaign's preelection interorganizational network as an indicator that participants are behaving consistently with social influence theory.

H1: The density of the interorganizational network will be moderate.

Research has shown organizations that emerge as more central in networks tend to be valuable, high-demand contacts and thus have greater reputational influence (Benson, 1975; Brass & Burkhardt, 1992; Flanagin, Monge, & Fulk, 2001; Galaskiewicz, 1979; Krackhardt, 1992; Laumann & Pappi, 1976; Mizruchi, 1993).

H2a: The more central an organization is in the interorganizational network, the more important it will be perceived in the Croatian parliamentary election campaign.

Following Flanagin et al. (2001), who found long-term advantages associated with being founding members in a federation, we expect that foundational organizations will emerge as more central. It is expected that those who are reported as most important will also emerge as actors who are more relied upon as communication partners and will be relatively more relied upon in the overarching structure of communication relationships.

H2b: Foundational organizations will be more relied upon communication partners than other organizations in the interorganizational network.

As a validity check to the identity of these foundational organizations as leaders (by international development cooperative institutions), we expect that the collective opinions of the organizations in the network will concur.

H3: Foundational organizations will be reported as having the most impact on the preelection campaign.

Extending Flanagin et al.'s (2001) work, then, we posit that foundational organizations should emerge as important actors because they control access to information and financial resources. That is, they will wield

greater social influence (Krackhardt, 1992; Rice, 1993) and control the financial resources for which they are depended upon (Burt, 1992a). Interorganizational research has focused on this delicate balance between competition and cooperation by framing the network context as a chance for organizations to develop relationships with other organizations (Burt, 1992a).

Structural Holes

The theory of structural holes (Burt, 1992a, 1992b; Monge & Contractor, 2000) is a natural, but largely unused, complement to philosophies about civil society and its development. Drabek (1987) noted that networking among NGOs is crucial to nation building because networks of organizations can provide information, give voice to the public, and provide a forum for civil discussions. By looking at the overarching network of relations rather than at individual organizations apart from their context, we can develop an understanding of the nature of opportunities organizations have (or do not have) in their environments (Barley, Freeman, & Hybels, 1992). Put another way, both present and absent communication ties are invaluable to different types of organizations' existence. The existence of a tie between two organizations provides a chance for a variety of mutually beneficial opportunities that can be in the form of human, social, or financial resources (Brown & Ashman, 1996; Burt, 1992a, 1992b; Susskind, Miller, & Johnson, 1998). These ties are the organizations' investment in hopes of reaping benefits (i.e., their social capital). Burt argued that in the absence of a tie, the potential for reaping benefits is lost between two actors. The unlinked others represent a *structural hole*, creating an opportunity for a third party to benefit by linking the unconnected others. This is the *tertius gaudens* argument, "the third that benefits," that Georg Simmel developed early in the last century (Burt, 1992b, pp. 30–34) and which Burt now applies to entrepreneurial network activities. These links are important, but he notes that excessive and redundant relations, or ties, can also be disadvantageous.

The theory of structural holes posits that a dense network is "inefficient in the sense that it returns less diverse information for the same cost as the sparse network. A solution is to put more time and energy into adding nonredundant contacts to the dense network [i.e., the *tertius gaudens*]" (Burt, 1992a, p. 65). Burt (1992b) posited that the ideal social network of organizational relations is one in which structural holes are optimized such that efficient and effective links are realized. Burt noted that "efficiency refers to having key contacts with one member of each subgroup, rather than maintaining contacts with each member of each subgroup. Effective contacts are those who provide you access to people [organizations] beyond that primary relationship" (Burt, 1992a, p. 69).

So, efficiency and effectiveness of contacts are particularly important to the organizations that provide the resources needed for the development of civil societies (Brown & Ashman, 1996). As resources become even more scarce, cooperation becomes even more crucial. Extending Burt's structural holes theory, a normative model would situate foundational organizations as more efficient and effective. They should pay particular attention to forging contacts in the interest of creating effective and efficient links among others.

> H4a: Foundational organizations will have relatively more effective and efficient network links.

In 1992, as Burt developed the concept of structural holes, Granovetter's (1973, 1982) theory of the strength of weak ties was extended in Krackhardt's chapter, "The Strength of Strong Ties." Krackhardt argued that strong ties, during times of uncertainty and change, are particularly important because "change is not facilitated by weak ties, but rather by a particular type of strong tie" (1992, p. 218). Such a tie is nonredundant, in that the organization has links that connect it to other groups of organizations or indirectly to other organizations beyond the initial contact organization. This type of organization can be categorized as having high "betweenness centrality." Brown and Ashman (1996) found that interorganizational relationships facilitated development between different sectors of a society and that a bridge between sectors creates social capital. In the context of high uncertainty and change, such as the Croatian election, organizations will look to their strong ties for information and decision making. Under such circumstances, these contacts can provide reliable information to which the information seekers do not have direct access, thus, betweenness centrality is an indicator of trust. Foundational organizations should vie for effectiveness and efficiency. However, a normative model suggests that an organization's specific links are also strong ties because of the reliance on partners for key information.

> H4b: The foundational organizations will have high betweenness centrality.

On the other hand, this context involves relationships of distrust, too. In a movement during a time of political transition, there are also challenges to trust among NGOs and the media. Carey (1995) notes that the modern press plays an important role in either facilitating or hindering democracy. For example, in their research on Bosnian nation-building, Taylor and Kent (2000) found that state-run media are not trusted by the public or other organizations. According to the international election monitors who observed the election, "the state media remained throughout the campaign excessively biased in favor of the ruling government"

(The Council of Europe, 2000, p. 4). Brandenburger and Nalebuff (1996) consider analogous situations in which a delicate balance can be achieved between competition and cooperation. They underscored the innate need to monitor the behavior of distrusted others when they cited the movie *The Godfather, Part II*, in which the character Michael Corleone warned: "Keep your friends close, but keep your enemies closer" (Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1996, p. 36). Given the Croatian context, foundational organizations, ideally, can still reap the *tertius gaudens* benefits. However, distrusted organizations such as the state-run media will have highly redundant links as members of the election network communicate often with this necessary, but sometimes antagonistic, organization.

> H4c: The state-run media will have highly redundant connections in the interorganizational network.

Finally, because of the context of uncertainty, change, and distrust, we turn to channels of communication used in relationship building. Media richness theory informs channel choice in situations where interactants need to negotiate relationships (Daft & Lengel, 1984; Poole, Shannon, & DeSanctis, 1992). Channel selection, influenced by contextual factors, affects the outcome of communication interactions. Contextual cues that influence channel choice include equivocality (Daft, Lengel, & Trevino, 1987) and uncertainty reduction (Berger, 1987). Often in communication interactions, there are both situational and symbolic constraints. When there are high levels of equivocality, such as in the case of new communication relationships or in negotiations, then interactants prefer the richer channels such as face-to-face communication. Purdy and Nye (2000) found that in situations requiring negotiations, face-to-face participants are more likely to collaborate, less likely to compete, and show more efficiency in reaching agreements. In the context of the Croatian election, given the new relationships, the uncertain situation of organizations collaborating for the first time, and the competition for general scarcity of resources, it is expected that the richer communication channels will be the most favored.

> H5: Organizations in the interorganizational network will rely on richer channel choices.

A byproduct of using these richer communication channels is that these organizations become more central in the information flows and can reap benefits of having a higher profile (Flanagin et al., 2001). More connected and thus more visible organizations can develop greater perceived prominence (Mizruchi, 1993). Attention to these communication channels is theoretically important because of issues of trust among organizations in postcommunist nations, as posited by Gibson (2001) and Rose, Mishler, and Haerpfer (1997).

TABLE 1
Hypotheses With Corresponding Analytic Procedures

Hypothesis	Analysis
H1: The density of the network will be moderate	Density
H2a: The more central an organization is in the network, the more important it will be perceived in the preelection campaign	Pearson correlation of organizational impact frequencies and in-degree centrality of multiplex link network
H2b: Foundational members will be more relied upon than other organizations in the network	In-degree centrality of multiplex link network
H3: Foundational members will be reported by other organizations as having the most impact on the preelection campaign	Frequencies from the measure of organizational impact
H4a: Foundational members will have relatively more effective and efficient network links	Structural holes
H4b: Foundational members will have high betweenness centrality	Betweenness multiplex network
H4c: The state-run media will have highly redundant connections in the interorganizational network	Structural holes
H5: Organizations in the network will rely on richer channel choices	Rank order reported
H6: Organizations that share rich communication channels will similarly rate each other as influential	QAP multiplex links and communication importance networks

    H6: Organizations that share contacts over rich communication channels will similarly rate each other as influential.

Table 1 summarizes the hypotheses concerning the nature of these complex communicative relationships amongst the civil society organizations. Thus, the effect of interorganizational relations and network factors on the development of civil society are the theoretical foundations that drive this research. The goals of this study are to describe various communicative relations among civil society partners and generate insights about how interorganizational networks can help build nations. The primary methodological approach used to examine these relationships is network analysis.

METHOD

One of the best places to study the process of relationship building in civil-society efforts is in a context that involves conditions of trust, various communication partners, the nature of communication contacts, and competition for scarce resources. Specifically, Yugoslavia was one of the most prosperous socialist states during the Cold War. Its governmental transition embodies relevant concepts such as competitive organizations working together, a climate of distrust, and a shared goal of seeing the fruition of democracy. The following section describes the site, participants, variables of focus, and the rationale for conducting a network analysis of organizational relationships associated with the 2000 Croatian parliamentary election campaign.

The Site: From Yugoslavia to Croatia

Most historians attribute the success of the Yugoslavian nation to its charismatic but authoritarian leader, Marshall Broz Tito (Silber & Little, 1996). Yugoslavia was a nation divided by economic and ethnic envy (Silber & Little, 1996). The standard of living in Croatia was much higher than in the Bosnian or Serbian republics (Rusinow, 1985). As the socialist economy collapsed in the 1980s, Croatians resented that their economic gains were being siphoned away by the less advanced Yugoslavian republics (Glenny, 1995, 1996; Rusinow, 1985).

Tensions between nationalist Croatia and federalist Yugoslavia began to intensify in 1980 when President Tito died. Croatian nationalists such as Franjo Tudjman demanded more autonomy away from the Federation. Croatia was not the only republic that wanted to end the Federalist arrangement: Slovenia, Serbia, and Bosnia also sought political, social, and economic independence. In 1990 Tudjman, with the full support of the Croatian media, was elected president of Croatia. His nationalist movement ended all affiliations with Yugoslavia and created the circumstances that led to the Bosnian and Croatian Civil Wars (Glenny, 1995, 1996). It was not the fact that Croatia was separating from the Yugoslavian Federation that was the problem, rather, it was the way in which it separated from the larger state (Glenny, 1995, 1996). With nationalist intentions, Croatia marginalized and persecuted ethnic minorities within its borders and the media disseminated nationalist propaganda.

Since independence in 1991, the Croatian National Party (HDZ) had dominated the political arena and the opposition had been unable to generate any momentum for political reform. Four factors, however, came together in 1999 to foster an opportunity for civil society development. First, President Tudjman's illness and subsequent death created an important opening (A. Ducal, personal communication, June 7, 2000).

Tudjman's absence created a political vacuum that weakened the HDZ's grasp on power. Second, for the first time ever, opposition candidates with realistic, reformist agendas had emerged. Third, there was an emergence of a highly motivated civil society movement. Lastly, after considerable international financial assistance, a strong independent media sector ensured that opposition candidates and reformist issues would gain in-depth media coverage (A. Budden, personal communication, June 5, 2000).

On November 27, 1999, acting President Pavletic announced the parliamentary election would take place on January 3, 2000. The reform movement had 5 weeks to communicate their messages, reassure voters that this would be a fair election, and educate the public about the major issues facing the nation (I. Krauth, personal communication, June 2, 2000). According to the international nongovernmental organizations operating there, a network of Croatian NGOs was able to cooperate to create a nonpartisan movement to ensure accurate information and fair elections (Budden, 2000; Ducal, 2000). The 2000 parliamentary election was important to the future of Croatia because it was the end of the Tudjman regime and, thus, it was the first time a democratic election was possible. To ensure the first free election in Croatia's history, there were 5,000 election monitors, hundreds of international observers, and security at the election booths. Glas99 (an umbrella coalition organization), GONG (an election monitoring group), and Radio 101 (an independent media organization) were active during the election campaign. These organizations are analogous to founding federations because they are the three types of organizations that civil society theory suggests are needed to ensure a free and fair election (Alexander, 1998; O'Connell, 2000; Shiras, 1996). Indeed, the 2000 parliamentary election was deemed successful, involving free and fair election procedures with a turnout of over 76% (British Helsinki Group, 2000).

Independent Variables

Participating organizations. Organizations selected for inclusion in this study were identified through interviews with USAID, IREX Pro-Media, Soros Open Society, and the British Civil Society Initiative. These international donors were asked to identify the organizations that had been active in the 2000 parliamentary campaign and that were continuing to work on civil society projects. The interviewees were asked to identify who they perceived to be the most effective NGOs and media, as well as the weakest organizations. Although there was general agreement about the most effective organizations, there was little agreement about the weakest organizations in the movement. The organizations in this study included all of the organizations that the donor organizations

had identified as the most effective. A convenience sample of the least effective organizations was based on their availability and willingness to be interviewed.

The main focus of this study is the nature of communication relationships among 17 organizations that worked together during the 2000 Croatian parliamentary election campaign. Consistent with Alexander's (1998) and Shaw's (1996) positions that various organizational types facilitate the existence of a civil society, organizational relationships were analyzed (a) by each individual organization and (b) by their relationship within the network.

For the most part, the organizations in this network share similar values and missions: to build a new and democratic Croatia. Although not all members belonged to the same political party, all network members (with the exception of the state-run media station, HRT) agreed that the ruling party, the HDZ, should no longer hold all of the political and economic power (USAID, 2000). Organizations in this study are classified in two ways: as foundational organizations of the movement and according to organizational type. Foundational organizations were identified as leaders of the preelection campaign by international NGOs including United States Agency for International Development (USAID), Soros Open Society Institute (OSI), and the British Civil Society Initiatives Fund (BCS).

In Croatia, there exist many between-sector relationships that embody what Shaw (1996) called the new spirit of global civil society. Padron (1987) noted that international development cooperative institutions (IDCIs) play important roles in nation building. IDCIs such as USAID, the BCS, the OSI, and International Research and Exchanges Board (IREX-ProMedia) started funding civil society initiatives after 1996. In many nations, IDCIs play a prominent role in civil society development (Clark, 1995). In Croatia, these IDCIs helped to prepare local grassroots organizations for the much anticipated democratic elections (A. Budden, personal communication, June 5, 2000; A. Ducal, personal communication, June 7, 2000; D. Vrucinic, personal communication, June 7, 2000). Foundational organizations included Glas99, GONG, and Radio 101, because these three organizations represent the organizational types needed for fostering free and fair elections (Alexander, 1998; O'Connell, 2000; Shiras, 1996). These organizations were also consistently identified by IDCIs as leaders of the movement. This variable was dummy coded so that Glas99, GONG, and Radio 101 were assigned 1 and the other organizations were assigned 0, indicating they were not foundational organizations.

Antrobus (1987) identified two broad types of civil society organizations. "Users" are those organizations that meet specific needs of citizens. "Intermediaries" are those organizational types that act as umbrellas that bring organizations together. In addition to considering the foundational

organizations versus the general membership, we also consider the organizational types, *coalitions* (intermediaries), *single issue* groups (users), and *media*. These classifications are discussed below.

In this study, the *coalitions* included GONG, an election monitoring organization based in Zagreb with 14 offices throughout Croatia; Glas99, a nonpartisan coalition of 120 smaller NGOs; The Women's Ad Hoc Coalition, a network of single issue groups devoted to children's and women's issues; and UNO, another smaller coalition formed toward the end of the campaign to bring in NGOs from outside of the capital, Zagreb. *Single issue* NGOs included Zelena Action (Green Action), a national environmental organization of several thousand members; UDD, a group dedicated to the diaspora of Croats in the Balkans; Women's Infoteka, dedicated to helping female refugees; Zarez, an NGO to increase participation; the Center for the Protection of Human Rights, a human rights NGO; Nomad, a small Zagreb-based NGO; and Arkzin, a new NGO with an infrequent news sheet. *Media* included Radio 101, the most prominent media outlet in Zagreb; the production team of *Five to Twelve*, a *60 Minutes* type television program; the Attack Newsletter, a provocative investigative news sheet; and CJA, the Croatian Journalists Association. USAID and HRT were added as referents on the survey as representatives of an international donor and the state controlled media, respectively, bringing the total number of survey list organizations to 17. However, these last two organizations were not surveyed.

Once the 15 organizations were identified, the researchers contacted the leadership of each organization to set up an interview to discuss their organization's role in the 2000 parliamentary election. Representatives were eager to share their experiences about the election campaign. At the conclusion of the interview, the researcher asked the interviewee to fill out the interorganizational survey as another way for the researchers to understand the relationships between NGOs and media during the election campaign. Respondents had the choice to immediately complete the survey in private or they could take the survey with them to their home or office. About half of the organizations immediately completed the survey while the other half returned them within 2 days. Surveys were collected by the researchers and tabulated. Only two organizational representatives were unable to be interviewed or surveyed because of conflicting commitments or time constraints.

The response rate included 13 of the 17 organizations in the data set (76%). The two nonresponding organizations and the two referent organizations were kept in the data set for analysis of nonsymmetric network data, in-degree centrality (discussed in more detail below),[1] or the number of ties received by an organization. In other words, part of this study is on the ties received by an organization rather than on an organization's initiated communication links. Reciprocity was assumed between organizations for other network measures.

Dependent Variables and Network Measures

The paper-and-pencil survey included open- and close-ended questions, allowing for the derivation of two types of networks (multiplex link and communication importance networks) as well as several relevant variables, including: (a) *density,* (b) *organizational impact* of any organizations in the movement, (c) *in-degree centrality,* (d) *multiplex media richness* among NGOs, (e) *communication importance* among organizations in the study, (f) *structural holes,* (g) *betweenness centrality,* and (h) *channel use.* Operational definitions of these variables are discussed below and a final subsection describes the procedure used for the last hypothesis. Table 1 summarizes the hypotheses with their corresponding procedures.

Density. The first hypothesis requires a description of the overarching structure of the interorganizational network during a successful campaign. Density describes the overall connectedness of a network by dividing the actual ties (measured as present or absent) by the total possible ties among all members of the network (Borgatti, Everett, & Freeman, 1992). Density ranges from 0–1, where 0 means there are no communication links between any two organizations, and 1 means that each organization reported that it has a tie with every other organization in the network.

Organizational impact. Organizational representatives were asked, "Who are the most important organizations in the 2000 parliamentary election campaign?" This open-ended question was asked before respondents viewed the close-ended roster so that mention of specific organizations on future questions would not bias or force limits on the variety of organizations potentially mentioned. Frequencies of an organization mentioned by other organizations were rank-ordered to address H2a and H3.

In-degree centrality. Among the various measures of centrality, degree centrality in the UCINET network analysis computer software program (Borgatti, et al. 1992) was used. Freeman (1979) describes a communicator with relatively high degree centrality as one who is in the thick of things. On the other hand, one with low degree centrality is said to be peripheral, such that the communicator is relatively isolated from active participation in communication processes (Freeman, 1979). The UCINET centrality calculation provides information about the number of communication ties received by an organization (in-degree centrality) and the number of ties initiated by an organization (out-degree centrality). The focus of H2a and H2b is on the extent to which organizations are chosen by other organizations in the system, so in-degree centralities are used.

Multiplex media richness. Mulitplex links provide information about the strength of relationships based on the media choices organizations make to communicate with each other. Organizations reported which media they used to communicate with each other, and their answers were used to calculate an overall measure of multiplex media richness. Specifically,

media choices were assigned a richness value, reflecting the range from lean to rich media. Lean media were assigned a value of 1 (fax, email, indirect contacts), moderately lean media were assigned a value of 2 (phone), and a value of 3 was assigned to the richest medium (face-to-face and meetings). An index for each dyadic relationship between organization i and organization j was created in which cell ij was the sum of all media choices used to communicate from organization i to organization j and the value of cell ji was taken as the sum of all media choices organization j used to communicate with organization i. Multiplex links' values, then, ranged from 0, where there was no communication contact, to 11, where all media choices were employed. This valued, asymmetric graph was then analyzed using degree centrality in the UCINET network computer software program (Borgatti et al., 1992). As with importance, a relatively high in-degree centrality indicates that the organization is more integrated in the organization network by virtue of its multiple media uses with other organizations in the system. Put another way, multiplex media richness is measured by the centrality of organizations based on media choices. The more central an organization, the richer and more relied upon are that organization and its communication contacts. The network based on multiplex links is used to address H2b, H4, and H6.

   Communication importance. A roster of the 17 organizations was given to organizational respondents. They were asked, "Please rate, on a scale from 0 (*not at all important*) to 10 (*very important*), the value of your communication relationship with each organization listed below." Answers to this question were used for creating the network of relations based on organizational importance and were used to test H2a, H2b, and H6. Quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) is a correlation procedure in the UCINET network analysis software program (Borgatti et al., 1992) that is used to test the similarity of two networks by computing the Pearson's correlation coefficient between corresponding cells of the two data matrices (Borgatti et al., 1992). QAP computes an overall correlation between the two matrices without making parametric assumptions about the data by comparing each dyadic cell pair in matrix A with its corresponding cell pair in matrix B (Krackhardt & Porter, 1986). The procedure is used to test H6, which states that organizations sharing contacts over rich communication channels will similarly rate each other as influential.

   Structural holes. The structural holes option in the UCINET computer program reports measures of *effective size*, *efficiency*, *constraint*, and *hierarchy* (for extended discussion, see Burt, 1992a). These variables provide information about structural holes in the network (H4a). An effective link provides access to organizations beyond the initial contact and effective size can range from zero to the possible number of other actors in the network (in this case, 16 others). Efficiency refers to a contact that con-

nects an actor to a subgroup by way of a single member of that subgroup (as opposed to having multiple contacts to the same subgroup) and is proportionate to the total number of contacts. Constraint is the extent to which the focal organization is invested in organizations that are invested in the "others" of the focal organization's alters (Borgatti, et al. 1992). Scores vary from 0–1, where scores closer to 0 indicate many redundant contacts and 1 means only one contact. Susskind et al. (1998) explain that constraint is "positively related to the formation of structural holes, as high constraint indicates more structural holes" (p. 36). Hierarchy indicates the extent to which constraint on the focal organization is concentrated in a single other organization (Borgatti, et al. 1992). Its algorithm includes the constraint measure and ranges from 0–1, where 0 means equal constraint from all contacts and 1 means that constraints come from just one contact.

Betweenness centrality. To answer H4 we use the betweenness centrality measure—an indication of the extent to which an organization lies on the greatest number of shortest paths between all pairs of actors—in UCINET (Borgatti et al., 1992; Freeman, 1979). An actor with "high betweenness is in a position to act as gatekeeper for information that flows through a network . . . betweenness is an indication of the non-redundancy of the source of information" (Krackhardt, 1992, p. 223).

Channel use. H5 considers channel use, a measure indicating the richness of communication contact (Daft & Lengel, 1984, 1986). Richness of media were based on Daft and Lengel's (1984, 1986) argument that media have a communication capacity that range from rich to lean, where rich media, anchored by face-to-face communication, offer better feedback, allow for the use of multiple cues, use natural language, and are most personal. Lean media are at the opposite extreme of these four characteristics (e.g., impersonal and asymmetric media such as flyers and bulletins are anchors). Organizational representatives were asked to identify which channels they use when they make contact with other organizations in the system. Respondents were instructed to mark all that applied, including phone, fax, email, meetings, personal contact (i.e., face-to-face), and indirect contact (i.e., using a third party to obtain information).

RESULTS

H1 is answered with the overall system density of the communication network based on multiplex media richness. The overall system density is 43%, indicating a moderately connected network (Kauffman, 1993, 1995). The second set of hypotheses consider centrality as it relates to overall importance (H2a) and foundational members (H2b). Pearson's correla-

TABLE 2
In-Degree Centralities for Mulitplex Media Richness, Communication Importance, and Organizational Importance Rankings

Organization	Mulitplex media richness	Communication importance	Organizational importance
	In-degree centrality (rank)	In-degree centrality (rank)	Frequency (rank)
USAID	104.00 (1)	74.12 (1)	0 (-)
GONG	90.00 (2)	55.91 (2)	33 (1)
Glas99	86.00 (3)	53.38 (3)	15 (3)
Ad Hoc	59.00 (4)	40.80 (7)	3 (7)
Radio 101	54.00 (5)	46.16 (6)	17 (2)
HRT	54.00 (5)	47.85 (5)	1 (9)
Arkzin	53.00 (6)	49.29 (4)	0 (-)
Green Action	51.00 (7)	38.10 (8)	9 (4)
UDD	48.00 (8)	30.33 (10)	0 (-)
CJA	47.00 (9)	35.26 (9)	5 (5)
UNO	35.00 (10)	20.80 (16)	3 (7)
Women's Infoteka	33.00 (11)	30.00 (11)	2 (8)
Five to Twelve	33.00 (11)	28.55 (12)	1 (9)
Attack Newsletter	30.00 (12)	26.58 (14)	0 (-)
Zarez	28.00 (13)	27.30 (13)	1 (9)
Center HR	18.00 (14)	9.82 (17)	0 (-)
Nomad	7.00 (15)	24.75 (15)	2 (8)
Feral Tribune	-	-	5 (5)
National	-	-	4 (6)
Novilist	-	-	1 (9)
OTV	-	-	1 (9)
Studio M	-	-	1 (9)
URK	-	-	1 (9)
M	48.82	37.59	
SD	24.83	15.12	

tion coefficient between organizational impact and the in-degree centralities of the multiplex link network was .52, p < .05, thus supporting the hypothesis. Table 2 lists the multiplex media richness in-degree centralities with the most central organizations being USAID, GONG, and Glas99, thus supporting H2b.

Table 2 also lists the in-degree centralities of the communication importance network and their ranks, from most central to least central as well as the organizational impact rankings. H3 stated that foundational members will be perceived to have had the most impact on the preelection campaign. Table 2 describes organizational impact with a ranking of the most frequently mentioned organizations. Top organizations included the election monitoring organization GONG (n = 33), distantly followed by Radio 101 (n = 17), and the umbrella NGO of the campaign Glas99 (n = 15). Of 106 organizations named, 93 (88%) mentioned were organizations in the 17-organization data set. This indicates that our definition of the system (i.e., which organizations should be included) was relatively complete. The international donor organizations that identified these organizations appear well informed about the Croatian civil society effort.

The fourth set of hypotheses pertain to where structural holes emerge and which organizations have the highest betweenness centralities. Table 3 reports the scores for the structural hole analysis and identifies Glas99 and GONG as having the most efficient and effective links, whereas the Center for the Protection of Human Rights and UNO have the least. The constraint measures reveal that no organization was fully dependent on a single other in the network. Structural holes would be indicated by those with scores closer to 1. In this case, scores were rather low, ranging from 0.25 (GONG) to 0.62 (Center for the Protection of Human Rights), which indicates that there are many redundant contacts in the system. Hierarchy scores were also rather low, ranging from 0.07 to 0.31, indicating relatively equal constraints from all contacts. Taken together, these network measures indicate few structural holes in this system and thus it is highly redundant, confirming the fourth set of hypotheses.

H4b predicts that foundational members will have higher betweenness centrality than the other organizations and is answered with the betweenness centrality analysis of the multiplex media-richness network. Table 4 reports the rank-ordered betweenness centrality scores and descriptive statistics. The highest betweenness centrality scores were for Glas99 (12.06) and GONG (9.76). The lowest scores were for UNO (0.00) and the Center for the Protection of Human Rights (0.00). This indicates that Glas99 and GONG act as liaisons among pairs of organizations most frequently, whereas UNO and Center for the Protection of Human Rights—with betweenness scores of zero—do not act in a liaison-type role at all.

Consistent with the argument that there is a deficit of trust among or-

TABLE 3
Structural Holes Results for Efficiency and Effectiveness of Multiplex Link Network

Organization	Effect size	Efficiency	Constraint	Hierarchy
GONG	10.248	0.683	0.249	0.102
Green Action	6.682	0.557	0.304	0.118
GLAS99	10.492	0.656	0.281	0.145
Adhoc	6.354	0.635	0.266	0.073
UNO	2.019	0.404	0.406	0.083
Infoteka	6.437	0.715	0.280	0.119
CJA	6.959	0.633	0.275	0.065
Radio 101	7.548	0.581	0.312	0.160
Five to Twelve	3.343	0.418	0.393	0.135
Zarez	6.908	0.628	0.325	0.199
Nomad	6.654	0.665	0.282	0.080
UDD	5.742	0.574	0.302	0.085
USAID	6.477	0.589	0.299	0.045
Center HR	1.596	0.532	0.618	0.313
Arkzin	5.610	0.701	0.301	0.068
HRT	5.555	0.617	0.300	0.105
Attack	8.334	0.641	0.299	0.240

ganizations in a postcommunist society (Rose et al., 1997), H5 posited that the most common communication channels will be the richest ones. Frequencies and means of the types of media choices are listed in Table 5. The results confirm the hypothesis and indicate that the moderately rich and richer media are most frequently used. Phone ($M = 5.77$, $SD = 1.74$) was used more frequently than (a) fax ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 2.18$), $t(12) = 3.08$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed); (b) email ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 2.48$), $t(12) = 4.11$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed); (c) meetings ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 2.26$), $t(12) = 4.5$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed); or (d) indirect contact ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 2.06$), $t(12) = 4.25$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed). Personal contact ($M = 5.38$, $SD = 2.53$) was used more frequently than (a) email ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 2.48$), $t(12) = -2.99$, $p = .01$ (two-tailed); (b) meetings ($M = 3.54$, $SD = 2.26$), $t(12) = -4.1$, $p < .001$ (two-tailed);

TABLE 4
Betweenness Centrality Scores of Multiplex Link Network

Organization	Betweenness centrality	Rank
GLAS99	12.06	1
GONG	9.76	2
Attack	5.82	3
Radio101	4.43	4
Green Action	3.17	5
USAID	2.36	6
Zarez	2.33	7
CJA	2.01	8
Nomad	1.53	9
Adhoc	1.38	10
Infoteka	1.34	11
UDD	1.27	12
HRT	0.83	13
Arkzin	0.47	14
Five to Twelve	0.24	15
Center HR/UNO	0.00	16/17
M	2.88	
SD	3.31	

or (c) indirect contact ($M = 2.38$, $SD = 2.06$), $t(12) = 3.91$, $p = .002$ (two-tailed). The use of richer media in forging and maintaining contacts should be considered in tandem with H6, which states that communication importance and multiplex media richness are positively associated with each other. The two matrices (the interorganizational matrix representing communication importance and the interorganizational matrix representing multiplex media richness) were correlated using the QAP in UCINET (Borgatti et al., 1992). The matrices have a strong, positive, significant correlation of .78 ($p < .001$). The very strong similarity between the two networks indicates that organizations that communicate with each other frequently via richer media perceive their communication partners to be more important in the communication flows.

TABLE 5
Frequencies and Means of Organizational Channel Use

Organization	Phone	Fax	Email	Meetings	Personal contact	Indirect contact
GONG	6	3	2	4	4	1
Green Action	6	4	2	3	4	2
GLAS99	6	2	0	5	9	8
Ad Hoc	4	4	4	4	3	3
UNO	4	3	2	3	3	2
Infoteka	5	5	5	3	5	0
CJA	10	10	10	10	11	1
Radio 101	7	5	2	1	4	2
Five to Twelve	6	4	1	3	6	3
Zarez	3	2	3	1	2	2
Nomad	7	3	2	2	6	0
UDD	5	7	4	4	7	3
Attack	6	4	4	3	6	4
M	$5.77^{c,d,e,f}$	$4.31^{a,c}$	$3.15^{a,b,e}$	$3.54^{a,b}$	$5.38^{c,d,f}$	$2.38^{a,b}$
SD	1.74	2.18	2.48	2.26	2.53	2.06

NOTE: Superscripts denote $p < .05$ for paired samples t-test. [a] = phone, [b] = personal contact, [c] = email, [d] = meetings, [e] = fax, [f] = indirect contact.

In sum, the interorganizational relationships during the preelection campaign indicate that organizations recognize and value other civil society organizations as allies in their cause, though their use of richer media merits speculation and future questions remain about trust among the system's members. In other words, they rely heavily on the spoken word (as opposed to the permanent and archival nature of written communications). These results reveal the central role of coalitions (e.g., GONG and Glas99) to the reform movement associated with the 2000 Croatian parliamentary election campaign. The results help frame the interdependence among various organizational types during the transformational process from totalitarianism to democracy. The findings and implications about these communicative relationships are discussed below.

DISCUSSION

The results describe the interorganizational relationships among NGOs, coalitions, a donor organization, and media organizations during the 2000 Croatian parliamentary election campaign. The picture that emerges is that of a moderately well-connected group of NGOs and media. Some organizations emerged with highly redundant interactions whereas others had somewhat more efficient and effective contacts, which underscored their importance and value in the communication flows among participants. The answers to the hypotheses identify three points of interest about interorganizational relationships in building civil society: (a) the importance of foundational organizations' roles in the interorganizational network, (b) the complexity of NGO relationships with state and independent media, and (c) the between-sector relationship of donor organizations in facilitating civil society relationships.

Roles of Foundational NGOs

Consistent with the findings of Flanagin et al. (2001), this research shows that creators or foundational members of not-for-profit networks are important and influential members of their interorganizational relationships. In this study, three organizations were identified as foundational members of the election campaign: Glas99, GONG, and Radio 101. The majority of our hypotheses (2a, 2b, 3, 4a, and 4b) tested whether these three organizations truly acted as foundational actors in the network.

The data suggest that these organizations were central to the network, were perceived as having the most impact on the election campaign, and that Glas99 and GONG were effective in forging relationships with other civil society partners. Glas99 bridges different sets of organizations, a role that is consistent with this organization's function as an umbrella group for the election campaign. GONG also emerges as a mediator between other sets of organizations. Given GONG's mission to motivate volunteers for election registration, information dissemination, and fair voting, this finding is consistent with its network role. It appears that as the foundational NGOs were facilitating communication flows, members of this civil society network were relying on them for rich, redundant communication links. Put another way, GONG's mission matched its network role. This finding underscores how imperative it is for donor organizations to ensure that foundational organizations like Glas99 and GONG not only get funding but that these foundational organizations are willing and capable to perform a network role as a go-between within the interorganizational relationships.

The Complex Nature of the NGO-Media Relationship

The relationship between NGOs and the media can also add insight into the development of civil society. In Croatia, as in many post-communist states, the political party in power had retained control over the state-owned media. More recently, alternative media organizations have emerged and have had varying levels of success (USAID, 2000). A close relationship between NGOs and alternative media is natural and expected given each type of organizations' goals of political and social reform. Three independent media (Radio 101, *Five to Twelve,* and the Attack Newsletter) as well as the state run HRT were included on the survey. Civil society members ranked Radio 101 as the second most important organization during the preelection campaign. The other three media outlets did not receive frequent mentions from the network members.

However, the in-degree centrality scores in Table 2 suggest that the NGOs maintain frequent and multiplex linkages with the state controlled television station, HRT. Hypothesis H4c was that links would be highly redundant because of trust. The state run television station emerged as central and is perceived as having an important role during the preelection campaign. Yet, there appears to be a disconnect in the surveys between the organizations identified as being important in the preelection campaign and the organizations with which they have the most frequent and rich communication. Table 2 shows that HRT was only identified one time as an important organization to the preelection campaign, yet it emerged as the most central media organization of the campaign. HRT appeared slightly more central than the independent radio station. These data suggest many informal communication relationships between NGOs and HRT. The existence of numerous relationships with HRT can be attributed to the fact that many of the single-issue organizations in this study had served as advocacy groups before entering the preelection campaign. These service organizations had developed relationships with the state media because it was the dominant news organization operating before, during, and after the war. Thus, NGOs may have had existing relationships with HRT that carried over into the election campaign.

How influential was HRT in the network? Although the organizations maintained frequent contact with HRT (Table 2), the betweenness centralities (Table 4) and structural holes analysis (Table 3) indicate that HRT did not wield powerful connections among groups of organizations. High betweenness centrality and structural holes scores reveal invisible power in the network (Burt, 1992a; Krackhardt, 1992), however, HRT's scores were low. Thus, HRT was instrumental to the NGOs, yet it did not hold the powerful role of gatekeeper in the network. This may change in fu-

ture civil society initiatives because HRT is becoming an independent media outlet now that the HDZ is no longer in power (IREX-Pro Media, 1999; USAID, 2000).

Between-Sector Cooperation

It appears that the NGOs and media outlets in this network relied on one another for information during the preelection campaign. They also relied on a donor organization for information and support. Between-sector relationships are needed in civil society, yet donor–NGO relationships can be tenuous (Heijden, 1987; Krajese, 1987). Atack (1999) addressed NGO legitimacy when indigenous organizations receive funding from IDCIs. Multilateral institutions that fund civil society development in different parts of the world must ensure that grantees are true partners and not merely subcontractors (Atack, 1999). Similarly, in an article about strengthening civil society, Frantz (1987) noted that IDCIs should "relate to several national groups so that they will better understand the reality of the country in which they are working" (p. 126). USAID emerged as the organization with the most frequent and most rich communicative relationships. Although this finding is not surprising—USAID had been one of the largest financial supporters to the Croatian NGO community—the coincidence of both frequency and communication richness suggests that NGOs and alternative media benefited from frequent face-to-face communication with this international humanitarian organization.

USAID's betweenness score ranks it 6 out of the 17 organizations and more importantly, it has the highest in-degree centrality of the multiplex media richness network. USAID's frequent and rich communication offered local organizations information and funding for election activities. Civil society organizations have paradoxical relationships with this donor. Although USAID showed the highest in degree centrality score—a measure of its importance—Table 4 shows that USAID was never mentioned in response to the open-ended question as one of the foundational organizations in the election campaign. This pattern is similar to that of HRT. There appears to be a dependence on both USAID and HRT, coupled with a perception that they did not exert great impact on the election campaign. This indicates that these specific players do not necessarily come to mind immediately, yet their tacit influence is revealed when organizations reported the nature of their communication contacts with them.

CONCLUSION

Hadenius and Uggla (1996) specifically addressed the role of international donors in building civil society when they noted that donors can

help organizations become more articulate and at the same time assist in the establishment of independent media outlets so that civil society organizations have a place to voice opinions. They argued that interorganizational networks "should be established to overcome fragmentation within civil society" (p. 1636). The present study analyzed the interorganizational relationships of 17 NGOs and media in Croatia. The findings suggest how a network of indigenous organizations worked together in a civil society effort. First, the data support Flanagin et al.'s (2001) research, by showing that foundational members are important to civil society building. Second, the data also suggest that both state and alternative media are central to civil society development. In subtle ways this finding transcends the dichotomous understanding of there being one type of media that works for civil society (alternative media) and one type of media that works against civil society (state controlled media). Third, ICDIs also have important roles to play in fostering civil society in transitional nations. International donors should encourage frequent face-to-face contact with civil society organizations, yet be willing to let new leaders emerge who can bring various single-issue organizations together. Indeed, social capital is ensured through the emergence of coalition organizations that can take resources and distribute them in a strategic manner.

This study quantitatively emphasizes that communication contacts through richer media are preferred by civil society organizations and that organizations contacted through richer media are perceived as more important. In future transitions, donors should encourage frequent NGO meetings and personal linkages between groups. Because of the heavy reliance on phones, donors might consider providing cell phones during political transitions for civil society organizations to remain in contact with one another. Interorganizational relationships forged through personal contacts are an important part of the foundation of a civil society.

There are some notable limitations to this research project. The findings are not generalizable since the data presented are based on the single case of the Croatian campaign. Also, the cross-sectional design only presents a snapshot of a time of heightened social and political mobilization by citizens and NGOs. The day-to-day civil society movement in Croatia may look very different. Additionally, the organizations included in this study were funded organizations, however, there are also small, unfunded local organizations that might be considered. Future research should take this into consideration but also elaborate on lessons learned from cases in which civil society efforts failed (e.g., Bosnia).

Civil society is more than merely the creation of political institutions and fair elections. It is based on interorganizational relationships that can help build a nation. Engagement between organizations creates the social capital needed to ensure civil society. In Croatia, communication relation-

ships between local organizations and media, as well as with international donors, helped Croatians to make the transition from a postcommunist, nationalist society to a fledgling civil society.

NOTE

1. The validity of network analysis is challenged when less than 100% of the respondents fail to participate; however, few network studies accomplish a census. Past network analysts have addressed issues related to achieving census data (i.e., 100% response rate) and published findings with a warning to readers to heed this shortcoming. For example, Marshall and Stohl (1993) and Monge, Edwards, and Kirste (1983), were unable to achieve a census. More recently, Feeley (2000) based his cross-organizational analyses on response rates ranging from 70–81%. Under these circumstances and in this study, reciprocity is assumed and column data are used, thereby retaining the integrity of the study.

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