

**A summary of the doctoral thesis written under scientific guidance of**

**Dr hab. Katarzyna Czernek-Marszałek, prof. UE**

**Dr hab. Patrycja Klimas, prof. UEW**

**SOCIAL RELATIONSHIPS IN THE COOPETITION OF CULTURAL  
INSTITUTIONS**

**Patrycja Juszczyk**

Current research directions in management and quality studies indicate a constantly growing interest in inter-organizational relations, including coopetition relationships, which are the basis for strategic activities of contemporary organizations. This is related to the relational approach that has been developed for several decades. Among the many perspectives and theoretical approaches explaining the creation and development of inter-organizational relations, there are numerous concepts referring to other disciplines, in particular to sociology. The literature on management, including strategic management, increasingly uses in its analyses the influence of e.g. sociology, what manifests itself in research on the impact of relationships and the social networks created by them on economic phenomena and institutions. On the basis of the relational approach, among the important conclusions of research, more and more attention is paid to social relationships, established and maintained between representatives of economic entities. It is emphasized that social relationships considered at an individual level, characterized by the set of mutual interactions of the parties, are the source of specific connections' system between the organization and its environment, they intertwine with economic relations and determine positive and/or negative economic implications, deciding among others, about the access to resources or the overall performance of the organization.

Among the available studies on social relationships in the relational view, e.g. in the bio-tech sector, in tourism, agriculture or the clothing sector, context of social relationships has not yet been taken into account in the public and *non-profit* sectors, in particular among cultural institutions, which are examples of organizations operating in the indicated sectors. Although the literature emphasizes that the past or present interpersonal relationships constitute the foundation for the functioning of entities from the cultural sector, and their activity is based on interactions and a network of connections with various other entities, social relationships have not yet been the subject of research in relation to cultural institutions in the field of management

and quality studies. The importance of social relationships is emphasized in particular in museums, where, in the opinion of researchers, they play a decisive and priority role.

In the relational view – in strategic management – the phenomenon of coopetition is gaining popularity with much greater dynamics than social relationships. Coopetition has attracted steadily increasing interest for over three decades. In the simplest terms, it refers to the simultaneous occurrence of competition and cooperation between market entities. Importantly, similarly to other phenomena explored in the field of strategic management, the phenomenon of coopetition has also been relatively rarely studied so far in relation to public and *non-profit* organizations.

Despite the highlighted in the literature objective market premises suggesting the existence of coopetition, little or even marginal research attention has so far been devoted to researching this phenomenon among public and non-public cultural institutions. Meanwhile, research shows that museums, which are responsible for promoting and developing culture as well as meeting social needs in terms of usage the cultural goods, on the one hand they undertake a competitive fight for limited resources, including financial resources (e.g. budget subsidies), and on the other hand, they also cooperate, e.g. in terms of expanding the offer (exchange of exhibitions and collections), mutual marketing activities, etc. Thus, it seems that museums in order to operate successfully on the market, they must enter into coopetition relationships. Coopetition in contemporary museums may enable: a better satisfaction of diverse and demanding recipients' needs; exchange of experience, knowledge, skills and abilities; effective usage of limited resources; overcoming own organizational shortcomings or increasing the activities dynamics in the implementation of museum missions or cultural programs. At the same time, coopetition – as well as cooperation and competition – although exploited at the organizational level, they are initiated, developed and, above all, implemented, based on the activity of people that are representatives of organizations. Therefore, it should be assumed that not only market (industry, etc.) conditions, but also social conditions, including interpersonal relationships affect the inter-organizational relationship, which is coopetition.

Therefore, in the dissertation the following research problem is formulated: how do social relationships between individuals representing cultural institutions (museums) affect the initiation and development of competition relationships by these institutions? Hence, the purpose of the dissertation is to identify the manifestations of (potentially positive and/or negative) influence of social relationships on – considered at the inter-organizational level – coopetition relationships of cultural institutions (museums). Due to the exploratory nature of

the main research assumptions, justifying the qualitative methodological approach, the formulated research problem contributed to the following specific questions:

1. What are the motives and areas of activities within the framework of coopetition relationships undertaken by museums?
2. How do social relationships affect the inter-organizational cooperation of museums?
3. How do social relationships affect the competitive behaviour of museums?
4. How do social relationships affect the coopetition – separately – in public and non-public museums?

The empirical part of the dissertation due to the lack of previous research on the subject matter is based on exploratory qualitative research. The research was conducted in the years 2019-2020 using the technique of in-depth, semi-structured interviews. The research subjects were intentionally selected, they were museums in Poland – public and private – examples of cultural institutions. The division into public and non-public museums was determined by the specificity of the organization's activities, significant from the perspective of the social relationships' impact on coopetition. Moreover, public museums were examples of public organizations, while non-public museums were examples of *non-profit* organizations.

As the part of the empirical research, 42 individual semi-structured interviews were conducted – 22 interviews with public museums and 20 interviews with private museums. The interviewees were: in the case of public museums – mainly directors, their deputies or plenipotentiaries and other senior or middle-level managers. In the case of non-public museums, they were founders, i.e. owners or presidents of associations or foundations. In the selection of interlocutors, deliberate sampling was used, combined with the snowball technique (the interlocutors indicated other people as representatives of entities with whom they cooperate and compete at the same time, and which they considered as a valuable source of information).

The conducted research using qualitative methods, techniques and research tools among public (local, state and co-run) and non-public/private museums (examples of *non-profit* organizations), allowed to solve the research problem formulated in the work and to achieve the purpose of the dissertation. Moreover, the results of the conducted research made it possible to answer all the specific questions posed in the thesis, as well as to identify and expand the areas of cooperation and competition of cultural institutions, which have been so far identified in the literature only fragmentarily. In addition, based on the obtained results, it was possible to formulate many findings, e.g. on the specificity of the functioning of cultural institutions (including public and *non-profit* organizations) and to draw conclusions relating to the theory, as well as future directions of empirical research.

The results of the research show the socio-economic effects related to the existence of social relationships i.e. it has revealed that analyzing phenomena on the grounds of management in isolation from interpersonal relationships may give an incomplete picture and/or make such analysis incorrect. The conducted research made it possible to identify the influence of social relationships on inter-organizational cooperation, competitive behavior and cooperation of cultural institutions. On the basis of the presented considerations, some recommendations can also be formulated for managers of public and non-public cultural institutions (museums in particular). Those conclusions concern the use of knowledge on the impact of established and maintained social relationships with competitors to stimulate the development of cultural institutions, build a competitive strategy, use the benefits of social relationships for inter-organizational cooperation or to minimize competitive behaviour among cultural institutions.

The layout of the dissertation was subordinated to the implementation of the adopted research problem and the set of research purposes. The work consists of an introduction, seven chapters and a conclusion.

The first chapter is devoted to social relationships and their place in management and quality studies. It begins by highlighting the increasing influence of the social context in management and quality studies, with a particular focus on sociological aspects. The next section is devoted to the conceptualization of social relationships. Existing definitions are reviewed and the sources of social relations are indicated. An original typology of social relationships is also presented. The last section is devoted to discussing the importance of social relationships to the operation of market entities, focusing in particular on the positive and negative implications arising from establishing and maintaining social relationships by representatives of specific economic entities.

The second chapter focuses on inter-organizational cooperation. The definitions of cooperation were presented and discussed, with an indication of the difference between cooperation and collaboration. The next section presents and analyzes the motives for undertaking inter-organizational cooperation, mainly from the perspective of enterprises. Attention is also paid to the benefits resulting from undertaking cooperation. At the end, the criteria for classifying cooperation are presented, and based on them, the types of cooperation are also characterized, universal enough to be useful for the private, public and *non-profit* sectors.

The third chapter, in turn, is devoted to the discussion of the phenomenon of competition. The competition is presented from the subjective perspective, so by presenting different criteria for identifying competitors in the market. It also presents the essence of the competitiveness

concept and the criteria for classifying competitiveness, as well as the types of competitiveness derived from this classification (also useful among *non-profit* organizations).

The considerations in chapter four focus on cooptation as a complex form of inter-organizational relationship. The phenomenon of cooptation was presented and discussed. The strategic and relational perspectives of the analysis of the discussed phenomenon were also indicated. The next section reviews theories, concepts and approaches explaining the cooptation relationships. Therefore, game theory, resource-based approach, transaction cost theory, network theory and paradox concept are discussed in this connection. The contributions of selected theories and concepts to the development of cooptation research are also presented. Finally, the benefits and costs of cooptation for the conducted business activity are presented, mainly in the areas of: organizational financial performance, market share/market protection, resource utilization and protection, research and development, and operations in international/global markets.

The fifth chapter is devoted to the inter-organizational relations of cultural institutions, in particular public and non-public museums. First, the specificity of the functioning of cultural institutions was presented and museums were introduced as non-commercial organizations. The specificity of museum activity is discussed as well as the legal forms of museums in Poland. Then, the types and areas of inter-organizational cooperation in the field of culture are presented, based on the example of museums. The next section is devoted to competition and the competitiveness of public and *non-profit* organizations, and the last one presents the importance of the cooptation phenomenon for the functioning and development of cultural institutions, especially for museums.

Chapter six, in turn, presents the conceptual framework and methodology of the empirical research. The research gaps in the area of the undertaken issues are identified and the use of qualitative research to solve the research problem is also justified. Moreover, the methods, techniques and research tools used in the study are discussed and the course of the research process is presented. The rationale for the selection of interviewees and the characteristics of the interviewed entities are also indicated. The last section is devoted to the discussion of the adopted methods of empirical data analysis.

The last, seventh chapter, is devoted to the presentation of the results of empirical research. First, the participants' perception of social relationships and cooptation was presented, then the motives and areas of activities undertaken as part of cooptation among museums are discussed. Moreover, the impact of social relationships on inter-organizational cooperation between museums is also presented, discussing particular groups of positive and negative implications

of establishing and maintaining social relationships by museum representatives. The next section presents the impact of social relationships on minimizing and/or enhancing the competitive behaviour of museums, while the final section presents, crucial for the work, the results of research in the area of influence of social relationships on competition relationship – separately in the public and non-public museums.

The conclusion refers to the presented results of empirical research and discusses the findings from the research in the context of assumptions, theories and concepts presented in the theoretical chapters. Recommendations for further empirical research, especially quantitative, are formulated as well as the limitations resulting from the conducted research.

Katowice, 29/01/2021

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Ryszard Jankowski', written in a cursive style.