PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICES

by

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Summary

Enterprises are in the midst of some revolutionary changes in how people are managed in work situations. The major premise underlying work-force management traditionally has been that efficiency can be achieved best by imposing management control over workers' behaviour. Today, in response to massive evidence that control-oriented management models can produce outcomes that subvert the interest of both enterprises and the people who work in them, a new work-force management model is appearing - that of participative management.

The premise of the emerging model is that enterprises must elicit the commitment of their employees if they are to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in contemporary markets. Rather than relying on a "retain and control" management, enterprises in the future will apply a "share and learn" management where they will heavily rely of member self-management in pursuing collective objectives.

This study intends to stress the fact that employee potential needs to be mobilised by management and can only show up as performance when employees are given opportunity to contribute to decision-making with the minimum interference of management. This study calls for a transformation of leadership willing to empower staff to participate fully and freely in the creation of the future.

The time has come to transform the way in which leaders work with and provide leadership to staff in academic information services. Leaders in academic information services need to realise that employee participation will enhance commitment and performance for both employees and management.

A review of literature revealed that participative management is more than only a willingness to share influence - formal patterns of participation need to be truely implemented where employees have a right to contribute on all levels of decision-making. Participation is not an absolute term - there are various degrees of participation and types of involvement programmes to apply. Participative management is more complex than simply allowing employees to make some of the decisions. It involves formal programmes which need to be effectively implemented.

The empirical survey which was done through a twenty-item questionnaire distributed to seven academic information services in Gauteng, revealed that participative management is applied at these institutions but more in low-level decisions. This indicated that participation is still limited and controlled by management and is not yet experienced as a right by employees.

This study also clearly showed that self-regulation occurs most effectively through self-managed work-teams. These teams offer the highest degree of decision-making autonomy to all levels of staff and are a unique and viable alternative to traditional forms of work design in academic information services.

Directors and leaders of modern academic information services need to encourage and facilitate self-regulation among employees of all levels. This will help to cope more effectively with future challenges of rapid change and technological complexity that now threaten efforts to create more responsive academic information services.

CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND AIM OF STUDY

1.1   INTRODUCTION

Steven R Covey uses a very useful metaphor to illustrate the theme of this project, that of the goose that laid golden eggs. The story tells of a farmer who had a goose that laid golden eggs and in his impatience to get more eggs, he slaughtered the goose to cut it open.

The error of the farmer was to think that he was the one who could produce the golden eggs and that the goose was merely a means to this end. If he had been wise, he would have cared for the goose and enabled it and it would have continued to produce and would probably have produced better. "The farmer is the steward of the goose and the goose is the steward of the egg" (Maisela, 1995:22).

As we hurtle towards a new millennium, enterprises are experiencing unprecedented change propelled by a diverse work-force with immense potential. Every manager of an enterprise today need to realise that it's the employee who produces the outcome and eventually increases the competitiveness of the enterprise and not only capital and technology.

Human resources need to be cared for, listened to and empowered to produce more and better results.

South Africa has entered a new political era which will have a major impact on the economy and the way business is done. Waves of workplace democracy are sweeping the country combined with demands for involvements, transparency and empowerment by workers.

The newer order enterprise should be prepared to change, adapt, be flexible and ready to innovate. The reality of change has caused Roger Blackwell of Ohio State University to comment: "More of the same will not work in the world of tomorrow - yesterday's success will not guarantee tomorrow's profits" (Pretorius, 1996:20). Unless management acts, the more successful a firm has been in the past, the more likely it is to fail in the future.

A new culture has to emerge within South African enterprises as a mixture of Eurocentric and the local philosophy of ubuntu. According to Maisela (1995:20), a successful manager is not effectively measured by what he does, but what he can inspire others to do. What is argued now by management theorists is an increasingly collaborative, team-oriented environment where leaders need to serve as integrators and facilitators rather than as formal authority figures. This requires a people-driven enterprise with people-driven growth leading to the unlocking of people potential and the creation of opportunities to contribute towards a competitive edge.

Once described as the enterprise of the future, the knowledge-based enterprise with teams of specialists who direct and supervise their own performance, is increasingly the enterprise of the present. Andrews and Herschel see it as self-actualization of the individual through organisational affiliation (1996:5).

The more diverse work-force as experienced in the modern enterprise today, offers opportunity for collaborative ventures which bring together people who possess different attributes, skills and expectations. In the new participative, empowering enterprise, members feel free to voice, exchange and challenge ideas, to bargain and negotiate with fellow workers.

This emerging information age with its advanced technology has created a revolution in the way academic information services are structured and the ways people lead.

Academic information services can now do the same or more work with fewer people; thus they need to facilitate opportunities for each member to contribute maximum value to the enterprise and its information users, and to do it in a way that is personally compelling.

Empowerment and participation has more to do with employee feelings and perceptions, and less to do with management technique and strategy. It makes employees feel significant, committed to learning, team spirited and excited about their work.

Gone are the days of the authoritarian style of management in academic information services where directors raised people up in the hierarchy instead of enabling employees to the point where they will realise that they are not there to get anything but to give everything.

Directors in academic information services should start to recognise that there is vast untapped potential in the minds of their employees and only leaders willing to replace self-interest with service as the basis for holding and using power will be effective today with "the making of generous human beings" as the prime concern (Maisela, 1995:22).

According to Maritz (1995:8), the main reason why enterprises fail to perform is not because they lack resources, but because they ignore or block employees' efforts.

It is time management of academic information services move away from strategy, structure and systems towards shared vision, values, participation, learning and growth. It is time to stop using participative management as a buzzword "for show". Employee involvement programmes need to be fully and truly implemented to enable workers to fully and truly add value to the service they offer.

The specialised knowledge of experts integrated into a common task / project by taking initiative is under discussion here.

This reveals a huge challenge to the academic information services which need to be transformed from a collection-centred organisation to an access organisation which is less tied to place, paper and print. A serious thought need to be given to relationships and interdependencies between its employees as well as between the institution and its information workers. It needs a pro-active, assertive and collaborative approach which encourages innovation, autonomy and growth.

1.2   PROBLEM STATEMENT

The central research question to be addressed in this study is the following: Why is strategic transformation towards participative governance necessary for academic information services? This central research question can be subdivided into the following specific research questions:

- Can participative management be implemented in academic information services?

- What are the characteristics of participative management styles?

- To what degree is effective participative management practised in academic information services in the Gauteng area?

- How can participative management effectively be implemented in academic information services?

1.3   RELEVANCY OF THE STUDY TO INFORMATION SCIENCE

From the previous discussion, it is clear that employee potential needs to be mobilised by management and can only show up as performance when employees are given opportunity to contribute to decision-making with the minimum interference of management.

The era when people in information services were compelled to use the same things in the same place (cataloguer near the catalogue or reference librarian near the index, etc.) has passed. Networks and integrated systems have ushered in a new era where records and information can move to staff / users and not vice versa.

The academic information services' internal environment need to become more flexible with the emphasis on interaction with its external environment. The expectations and information needs of its clients need to be focussed on and the potential of information technology need to be realised and optimally utilised.

It's time academic information services design work procedures that empower information specialists to offer a more flexible specialised service, where decisions can be taken at the points where problems occur and where they can be solved immediately and most effectively. The focus should be on the purpose and the manner, means and method should not be controlled - a system that enhance situational appropriateness and effectiveness.

This study calls for a transformation in leadership willing to empower staff with responsibility to participate fully and freely in the creation of the future. The time has come to transform the way in which leaders and managers work with and provide leadership to staff in the information industry.

1.4   AIM OF THE STUDY

A survey of information science literature in the areas of participation and power reveals that a narrow view persists of the forms and participation possible and the potential dehumanising effect of an equal distribution of power in academic information services is rarely mentioned. It also reveals that the decision to permit or to deny participation is treated as a managerial right. It seems as if power is treated as a fixed rather than an expanding factor in academic information services today and need to be addressed urgently (Martell, 1987:114).

The implementation of the participative management style in the academic information services environment needs to be promoted and leaders in academic information services need to be convinced that a participative management style will enhance commitment and performance for both employees and management if applied effectively.

Through the empirical survey the researcher would like to assess the degree to which effective (real) participation is practised in the academic information services industry today with special reference to academic institutions in the Gauteng region.

The researcher also wants to determine which management styles are applied in these institutions and whether these correlate with the amount of participation allowed. While assessing the extent of participation allowed, attention will also be given to the issue of group decision-making. As self-management expresses itself best through group / team decision-making, formal patterns of group participation in these institutions are also going to be assessed.

The researcher sincerely hopes that the compendium of ideas given in this paper on participative management will erase all possible fears and misconceptions about the process and will together with the research results stimulate action amongst leaders of academic information services.

1.5   EXPLANATION OF TERMS

1.5.1   Strategic transformation

- Phipps (1993:20) calls it a fundamental change in structure, character and condition towards an optimal degree of strategic fitness in a changing environment.

- Senge sees it as striving towards the idealised future state of a true "learning organisation" (Senge, 1990:540).

- Bass talks of a constant search to move corporate resources from areas of lower to higher productivity (De Coning, 1994:35).

For the purpose of this study, strategic transformation is seen as responsiveness - enhancement by empowering staff to participate in decision-making inspiring them to look beyond their self-interest to the interest of the group.

1.5.2   Empowerment

- Maisela (1995:22) suggest that empowerment means moving from weakness to strength which is the same as saying it means moving from taking to giving.

- Conger and Kanungo see it as "creating conditions for heightening motivation for task accomplishment through the development of a strong sense of personal efficacy" (Andrews and Herschel, 1996:5).

- Burk notes: "To empower implies the granting of power, the delegation of authority (Andrews and Herschel, 1996:180).

Empowerment can thus be seen as the facilitating of opportunities for each member to contribute maximum value to the enterprise.

1.5.3 <u>Self-management</u> (Self-regulation)

- Martell (1987:118) defines self-management as control by the employee over those decisions that directly affect the work to be performed occurring most frequently in a team or group setting.

- Hackman (in Glaser, 1992:147): When workers have responsibility for not only what needs to be done, but also for monitoring and managing their own performance, work processes and resources needed to achieve organisational goals.

- Harrington-Mackin (1994:5) says an employee is self-managed if he / she operates without a visible manager, controls his / her own operation and assumes management responsibilities in addition to a specific job e.g. planning, organising, directing and controlling. To be able to set your own performance standards and even screen applicants for job appointments in your work area.

Self-management thus refers to a high degree of decision-making autonomy with a much greater emphasis on control within rather then from outside.

1.5.4   Transformational leadership

- Manz and Sims (in Glaser, 1992:275) report that it points to a leader who leads others to lead themselves.

- Pretorius (1996:21) sees it as common goals, vision and values, the right climate, empowerment, emphasis on teamwork.

- Chattell (1995:135) calls it "leading from behind": it is about finding ways of getting out of the way of people who know what they are doing.

For the purpose of this study, the transformational leader is one who cracks down on unnecessary bureaucracy and who focuses on commitment and continual learning without possessiveness - who keeps the focus on purpose without controlling the way, the method and the means.

1.6   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study will follow the sequence tabled below:

- A literature study will be undertaken in order to assess effective participative management in academic information services.

- Empirical survey to assess the degree to which participative management is effectively practised in the academic information services of academic institutions in the Gauteng region.

A questionnaire will be distributed to employees in order to obtain the necessary data. The empirical survey will be discussed in detail in Chapter 5.

1.7   PREVIOUS RESEARCH

A large body of research exists regarding the outcomes of employee participation schemes (see e.g. Carson: 1985, Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell: 1992). Much less research addresses the incidence and amount of participation.

The survey-based data reported in the studies of Katz (1954), Holter (1965), Hilgendorf & Irving (1970), Hespe & Little (1971), Rus (1979), the DIO team (1979) are primarily used either to support the argument that most workers want greater participation, to make comparisons of the amount of participation or to examine the issues over which employees hold influence (Drago & Wooden, 1991:179).

For the purpose of this research, these studies suggest that employee desires for participation generally exceed the prevalence of, and amount of perceived influence provided by the programmes.

Of studies that are directly pertinent to this research, Maurice P Marchant (1970) examined the relationships between various performance criteria (dependent variables) and the degree of information service participation in management. He concluded that involvement of academic information service staff in the service's administration produces more job satisfaction and, through it, better information services.

Suzan Bengston and Dorothy Shields (1985) tested the predictive equations from Marchant's research on participative management and job satisfaction and found management style was again the best prediction of information specialist satisfaction in an academic setting.

Nancy Brown (1979) developed an operational model for actually measuring staff participation quantitatively which has not yet been applied by researchers.

Two of the determinants used by Nancy Brown (1979:201-207) namely the degree of control or participation as suggested by Bernstein and Nightingale as well as the issues listed by her are going to be used in the questionnaire of this research to enable the researcher to determine the degree of participation.

The research done by Auret (1995) indicated that most of the academic information services in South Africa still apply the traditional hierarchical and autocratic style of management. Directors are seen in this study as the "nerve centre" of the academic information services as they are the only ones allowed to commit the information services to new and important courses of action (Auret, 1995:34). No attention was given to participative management in this research.

1.8   STRUCTURE OF THE STUDY

In **Chapter two** strategic transformation in academic information services is discussed with special reference to the forces initiating this change, the disabilities of information services today as well as possible strategies for change.

Chapter three pays attention to the nature of participative management, kinds of participative programmes and the effective implementation thereof.

Participative management specifically in academic information services is the theme of **Chapter four** with special attention to self-managed teamwork.

Chapter five discusses the results of the empirical survey to assess the degree to which participative management is practised in academic information services in the Gauteng region.

The conclusion and recommendations of the research are presented in **Chapter six**.

CHAPTER TWO

STRATEGIC TRANSFORMATION:

A FORCE TOWARDS PARTICIPATIVE GOVERNANCE IN THE MODERN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICE

2.1 INTRODUCTION

Society's collective vision of institutional governance is under-going a fundamental shift - the replacement of authoritarianism by participation. Such a shift requires profound changes in our assumptions about how successful organisations must work and necessitates an appropriate organisational response in order to survive - a transformation of the existing enterprise in terms of the right response at the right time to highly unique and transient customer needs. This emerging new age of participation is as radical a development for human institutions as the discovery of the New World was for Europeans five hundred years ago.

Faced with changing markets, advanced technology and increased competition, many enterprises have come to understand that the key to corporate success not only requires capital and technological improvements, but also changes in the way in which its employees are managed (Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell, 1992:91).

While the goal of all transformation is to improve performance, many efforts are not transformational. The reason for this according to McLagan & Nel (1996:16, Part 1) is because "they have not been propelled by a new vision of institutional governance" - that of participative management. This transformational process and environmental instability places new demands on the academic information services today where information workers can no longer see themselves as information keepers and distributors, but rather need to realise that people, not printed or electronic resources are the most valuable information asset in any enterprise.

The "warehouse" perspective needs to change to the "expert" perspective where those in need of information are linked by information experts to the required information via information systems and networks.

Change will affect information services more dramatically than can be fully envisioned and information specialists cannot accurately speculate or fully comprehend the range of challenges and opportunities ahead (Leinbach, 1990:31). The rest of their careers will be spent in information services that are undergoing dramatic change dictated by technology, new approaches to research, by demands for information, by different means of accessing that information and by the availability of resources.

In this chapter, the focus will be on strategic transformation towards a more participative management style by specifically referring to changes necessary in the academic information services.

2.2   AUTHORITARIAN VERSUS PARTICIPATIVE GOVERNANCE

It is helpful, in coming to understand the full implications of this revolution in management, to remind oneself of some contrasts between participation and the more familiar authoritarian management. McLagan & Nel (1996:16, Part 2) compare it as follows:

In an authoritarian system, managers think and employees do. Thus the formulation of strategy and the implementation thereof are separate activities. In contrast, under participation, people with different roles think at the same time about the same things, but not in the same way. In an authoritarian system, people in senior positions are management; they manage the workplace. In a participative environment, most employees are self-managing. They direct their own workflow.

There are still formal leaders who are accountable for the organisation's strategic positioning, but they are no longer isolated up there, far from the bustle of the organisation. They are part of a leadership alliance that involves everyone in the work place and information that has traditionally been the prerogative of management.

In an authoritarian system, people at the top matter most. There are many systems and programmes to use and support their skills and brains. In contrast, the participative enterprise honours and actively supports the dignity, rights and responsibilities of all.

People in traditional systems often guard and hoard knowledge and use it for power and position. In participative institutions, such behaviour is considered to be theft of knowledge capital. Learning and sharing knowledge are two key values. People teach one another and everyone is a learner. Formal leaders are stewards not superiors.

The definitions of performance also vary. In the authoritarian system, performance if often short-term and focussed on the financial gain of shareholders. In the participative organisation performance focuses on the customer, on the adding of value, on beneficiation and on the ability to replenish. People everywhere in the system are equally responsible for creating it.

In the face of rapid change and growing environmental complexity, traditional authoritarian bureaucracies are becoming, what Kreitner (1983:237) calls "unwieldy structural dinosaurs". Leaders concerned with stability, fixed assets and the static way of doing things need to give way to those who can make things happen through any possible configuration of resources, flexible enough to be rapidly disassembled when its usefulness has passed. In the old paradigm, most enterprises spent most of their time managing weaknesses instead of realising and amplifying the potentials of those resources which had most to offer.

Professional and technical skills will be of no value unless its owner is empowered to make an integrative and creative contribution towards customer value - to instantly connect those who know and those who need to know. The issue is primarily one of freeing up resources to be able to perform multiple roles and putting them in a position to respond to the voice of the customer. Chattell (1995:86) gives a clear comparison in Figure 2.1 of the old paradigm versus the new.
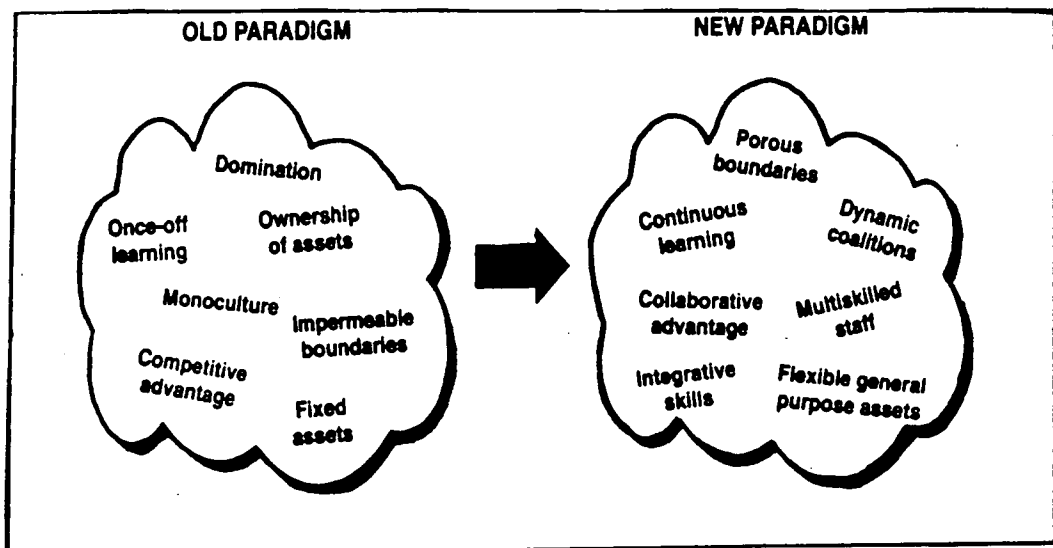
Figure 2.1

Organisation Influx

(Chattell, 1995:86)

2.3   WHY CHANGE?

The information age is clearly upon us and academics, consultants and managers state that information is a critical competitive weapon and its use is growing by every measure. Management experts consistently trumpet the importance of information use and effective information management. These, then should be halcyon days for academic information services as the keepers and distributors of information.

2.3.1   Forces initiating change in the Academic Information Service

2.3.1.1   Information users / consumers

Increasing customer assertiveness is an important factor driving the move towards participation. Information users are controlling the information services through their specific needs and expectations. In the business world, the producer or supplier no longer plays the major role but the consumer becomes the prime determinant in the type and quality of service to be rendered. Attention is now directed towards specialised markets, as small as one individual.

In the academic research environment, the keyword is specialisation where specialised information needs are focussed on. Information services in the future will have to insist on a high degree of both availability and accessibility of information sources. In this context, "availability" can be defined as the degree to which services are available "in time" and "distance" to consumers; while accessibility refers to the "format" in which the services are supplied. It is against the background of these two principles that leaders and workers in the information industry will have to decide:

- whether their existing range of services can be brought in line with the changing needs of information users, or

- whether they should embark on a process of strategic transformation (transforming information services into something new and completely different to what it has been up to now) (De Coning, 1994:37).

The higher order information needs of academics and students will continue to grow to immense proportions which presents an obvious growth opportunity for the academic information service.

Students with diverse educational- and cultural backgrounds are becoming a professional challenge to those offering an information service to them. Information specialists should facilitate growth and learning by striving towards flexibility and adaptation. Consumers of information need to be empowered to continually expand their capabilities and to participate in the creation of the future, giving them the means and tools to obtain, evaluate and use knowledge. In practice, the person who receives the consumer's request must be empowered to do whatever it takes to get and keep the consumer.

2.3.1.2   Information Technology

Technological changes should be absorbed and utilised optimally by designing ways of incorporating new technology to enhance effectiveness. Technology is changing the nature of work and freeing up time - time that can be devoted to participation. As automation and computers takes on the routine work, the new worker can now become a manager of exceptions with increased responsibility and an opportunity to make a more significant impact.

The academic information service's greatest challenge is to develop information systems and networks to enable consumers to help themselves. Consumers should be connected to information and learning by using new technologies. Information technology is revolutionising organisational design by co-ordinating behaviour without hierarchical control and can now be used as a necessary ingredient for achieving service quality. The key to becoming a player in these new arenas will be rooted in the ability to establish corporate and consumer alliances through the use of information technology. According to Buckland as quoted by Leinbach (1990:8), information technology will be the area of greatest change in information science education in the next century. Now is the time to align activities and to perform tasks faster with greater accuracy.

Chattell (1995:165) stresses that new technologies must enable the enterprise to behave differently, with high levels of innovation, closeness to the consumer, fast responses and adaptability - the behaviours on which success in the turbulent nineties ultimately depends. Information technology are tools used to enable a fast, responsive, flexible and co-operative system to deliver what the consumer wants, where and when it is required - it enables us to build, what Phipps (1993:2) calls, "libraries without walls".

2.3.1.3   <u>Work-force Innovation</u>

Changes in information technology and the increasingly high profile of information as a valuable resource, have caused significant changes in the role played by information personnel.

They now need a range of skills previously the domain of specialists and are forced to adapt and to unite into a partnership of knowledge, skills and perspective. Increased interdependence now requires increased participation and levels and functions, previously relatively isolated, now realised that the walls between them must be brought down to render a more competitive service. Peter Senge (1990:4) asserts that only enterprises that tap people's commitment and ability to learn at all levels of the enterprise, will truly excel in the future.

The information specialists of the nineties need to have technical astuteness and the ability to link information consumers to information. They should be able to analyse information needs, evaluate services, develop systems, train users and to liaise with executives inside and outside the enterprise. Information specialists will fail to transform information services into empowering institutions, and give students and academics the tools to obtain, evaluate and extend knowledge if, as leaders, they fail to create a shared vision for their information services and support their colleagues' continuous learning.

Information staff can no longer be seen merely as signposts to sources but rather as the key to their effective use and exploitation (Castelyn & Webb, 1993:133). In the academic information service, specialist knowledge is crucial over and above basic information seeking and finding skills - which are in themselves becoming more complex and at the same time exciting given the range of sources and formats now available, including the ability to manipulate data as well as store it.

According to Kochan & Useem (1992:170) the challenge for enterprises lies in developing a well-educated, adaptable, highly motivated and multi-skilled work-force by:

- sustaining a high level of participation and co-operation among employees and management, and

- supporting the transformation and human resource policies, practices and traditions.

They further characterise this transition from a traditional human resource strategy that emphasised "control" to one that emphasises "commitment". Simply put by De Coning (1994:36) "followers should be transformed from mere followers to true organisational entrepreneurs". Information service staff should be allowed to exercise their creativity to the benefit of the institution - the latent entrepreneurial potential of followers should be activated. What a challenge to the transformational leader in the academic information service!

Senge (1990:10) identified specific limitations of current enterprises and these are evident in academic information services today.

2.3.2 Limitations / Disabilities of Information Services today

2.3.2.1 Linear Thinking

Information services have tended to be reactive to changing environmental conditions, looking for cause / effect relationships to the problems they have. They have seen serial price hikes as an inflationary issue, not as a scholarly communication process issue; they have seen computers as tools to adapt to information service processes rather than attempting to understand their full capabilities and let these guide them in how they can be used to meet their goals.

2.3.2.2 Controlling Leadership

The participative developments of the 70's and the 80's have opened up the management process, but hierarchy has continued to reinforce control and direction from the top. The ultimate goal of information service leaders is still to get followers where they think they need to go. The new governance requires a new kind of leadership that does not depend on the superiority and sub-ordination that supported leadership in the past.

2.3.2.3 Negative Mental Models

Information specialists continue to see themselves as subservient to others, secondary players in the educational process, unable to assert their view of the importance of empowering students to connect to sources of knowledge outside the classroom. They don't see themselves as necessary collaborators with unique contributions.

2.3.2.4   Lack of Vision

Information leaders of the past decades were slow to see the possibilities inherent in the new technologies to achieve what is not presently achievable in the way they have organised information services, unable to break the old structures that they know are limiting.

A preferred future position must be established which needs to be shared by all staff and controlled by a transparent and democratic leadership. Information workers need to have a vision of what they want information services to be, and believe they can participate in creating that future by exploiting today's opportunities.

2.3.2.5   Individual Competition

Managers of information services have stratified their staff and set them to evaluate each others accomplishments within the product / service orientation. They have not valued their contribution to the vision; they have recognised their ability to follow others.

They rewarded their staff for being better than each other, for producing more and more. Building collections became the goal rather than the means of achieving the ultimate goal. Information services rated themselves by size and by numbers and failed to see the goal as learning.

2.4   STRATEGIES FOR CHANGE IN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICES

From the previous discussion, it is clear that complex social and technological changes are rapidly redefining every assumption that has shaped business thought and practice.

"Anticipation of competitor and consumer actions makes the difference between riding the waves of the future and being crushed by them" (Chattell, 1995:9). As the whole ball game shifts, design and integration become value - adding capabilities.

Consumers of information have dramatically different and escalating expectations and information services must now be seen as a module within the total information network or a link upon which each individual will become increasingly reliant. In the case of academic information services, staff need to interact closely with instructors in the curriculum planning process to direct end-user efforts and to help through managing information access. They will increasingly have to provide an appointment consultation service with consumers on a one-to-one basis to identify needs of individuals, formulate access methodology and direct the client to the appropriate resources by utilising document delivery.

The use of the team approach in the education process will become increasingly prevalent where the information specialist will be responsible for managing information access of a specific subject area with its specific specialised information needs. The use of technology will make instantaneous provision of information possible through electronic query on consultation, database access and document delivery from various service points.

Before looking at specific strategies for change for academic information services, it is necessary to first look at a few performance imperatives for the winning enterprise.

2.4.1   New Performance Imperatives for the Winning Enterprise

2.4.1.1   Adaptability

The ability to still do useful things when conditions change is a good measure of organisational adaptability.

Those whose usefulness diminishes as a result of change, were "dead wood awaiting the first storm to clear the way for new growth" (Chattell, 1995:13).

Information specialists need to have a new type of flexibility in the workplace which is more compatible with rapid technological change, new production / service techniques such as "just-in-time", and otherwise altered organisational structures. The structures of tomorrow's enterprise are aiming to provide a vehicle for the energies, imaginations and creativities of people rather to freeze itself around one idea. Adaptation requires changing expectations and letting go of the past - become capable of giving rise to and sustaining the creation of the new.

2.4.1.2   Innovation

Experiencing the unexpected is the watchword of the winning enterprise, but being prepared for the unexpected increases the chances of handling it effectively. Mission number one in the transforming enterprise should be to grasp the new and discard the old. Successful innovation in enterprises has its source in people and managers who, rather than being dedicated to preserving positions, are dedicated to bringing about the future - to change shape quickly to apply new knowledge and ideas.

Innovation is about using technology to amplify what people can do. The winning enterprise is an expression of what its people can do which is different, creative and daring. Tom Peters (1992;227) distinguishes clearly between a worker as a business person and one that "fills a job slot". What a difference! The market demands that every employee be turned into a business person. Yes, it means being empowered and also having all the enterprise's information at everyone's fingertips.

2.4.1.3   Fast Responses

The rapid introduction of new practices and technologies extend the time the enterprise has to operate at distinctive levels of performance. Products / services should be rapidly matched with changing consumer needs and tastes with the ability to create and deliver them at the moment required. The development of just-in-time techniques are important to time-sensitive consumer needs and the creation and delivery of a customised response.

In academic information services new technology assists in reducing the time between the consumer needing to have the information and being able to get it - it reduces the amount of time a consumer is on hold. Information specialists need to be prepared and skilled enough to react fast to information requests.

2.4.1.4   Participative Management

The cry has gone out to revamp enterprises to move away from specialised jobs to broader work responsibilities; away from narrow functional perspectives to an enterprise - wide view (Kochan & Useem, 1992:154).

In partial response to these demands, enterprises have set up cross-functional teams in areas such as new service and new process development. These teams are designed to react quickly from a broad perspective and to do the tasks in parallel not sequentially. Self-managed teams in academic information services are going to be discussed in more detail in Chapter 4.

The focus now is on leaders who create a shared vision amongst employees and only provide advice when requested instead of command and control. The leaders should also foster the belief in people that their destinies are very much in their own hands.

Providing people with challenges and problems and not just pre-digested solutions, opens the door on individual growth.

Information specialists must be given opportunities to solve problems and to make decisions at the points where it is necessary. They must be seen as knowledgeable in their fields of expertise and be treated as the primary assets of the institution they serve. Experts must be motivated to work together to ensure better outcomes and to extend the boundaries of the present and of what is possible. The ethos moves from one of hiding from the future by predicting it, to engaging people as willing co-producers of a better future (Chattell, 1995:126).

2.4.1.5   <u>Organisational Learning</u>

Shoshana Zuboff states: "Learning is the new form of labour. It's no longer a separate activity that occurs either before one enters the workplace or in remote classroom settings ..... learning is the heart of productive activity (Peters, 1993:382).

Information specialists frequently learn from their clients and colleagues and should frequently shift projects and problem situations. The keyword these days is knowledge integration - it only becomes useful when integrated into a task or applied in a meaningful way.

Consumers become learners when they use "smart" services / products which engage them in an educational process which will help them to learn. The information industry is moving towards an era of information services without walls and a service primarily busy to connect people with information and to empower them to become self-sufficient information finders. Information specialists will see themselves as learners in shaping the future and encouraging continual growth and change by striving towards flexibility and adaptation.

According to Chattell (1995:73) the success of tomorrow's enterprise will be determined by it's ability to bring about management and services which can be enabled by technology to give expression to the highest qualities of people (See Figure 2.2).
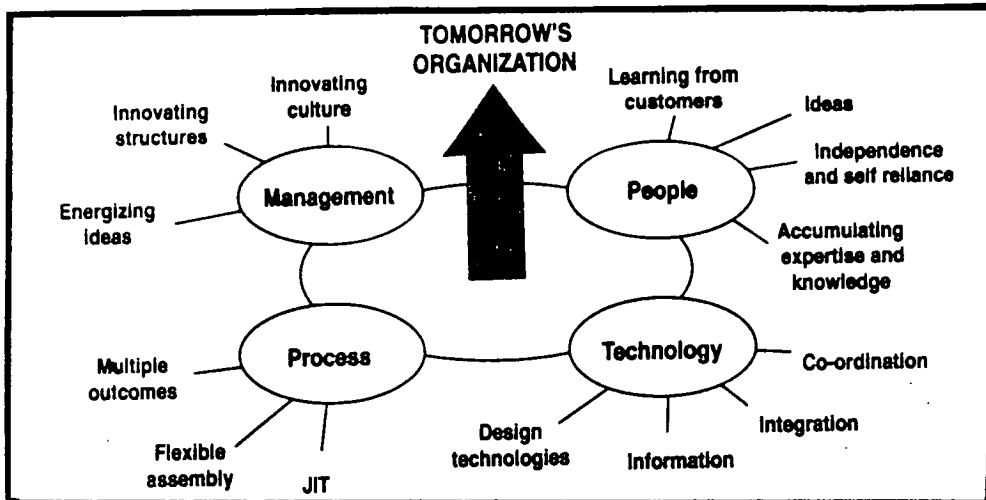
Figure 2.2

Multifactor Production

(Chattell, 1995:73)

The methods and processes suggested by Senge (1990:57-255) which can directly be applied to developing academic information services capable of surviving and serving the future, will be discussed in the following section.

2.4.2   Senge's five disciplines for effective transformation

(Senge, 1990:57-255)

These disciplines are paths for acquiring certain skills or competencies to be practised, not learned or achieved. Let's examine them one by one, remembering that they must work in concert with each other to truly transform.

2.4.2.1   Systems Thinking

Systems thinking is the process of seeing the world a new - helping us to see ourselves as part of the big picture, and how our actions create the problems we experience. Information specialists cannot rely on vendors to design their information systems without their full collaboration because they make themselves dependent on whatever they come up with. They must become partners in decision-making, learning the best ways to serve their consumers in a way that they themselves can learn to retrieve, evaluate and use information. Information specialists must be given the support to follow their own vision, use their own abilities and to share at their own levels.

Systems thinking will help information services to break out of the predictable cycle of problems, change structures and change the way information specialists react to problems.

Many enterprises, including information services are structured to keep people from seeing the whole and keeping them from important interactions because of status, hierarchy and rigid functional divisions. An open dialogue about expected results and an empowering of all parties to contribute to solutions is a better way to achieve the ultimate goal ..... learning (Phipps, 1993:29).

2.4.2.2   Personal Mastery

Personal mastery is the continually clarifying and deepening of personal vision, of focussing energies, of developing patience and of seeing reality objectively. Personal mastery is the goal of each member of the learning enterprise. It stresses individual self-fulfilment, commitment to what personally matters and support for each person's aspirations.

"Organisations learn only through individuals who learn" (Phipps, 1993:29).

Information specialists should allow their vision and knowledge to define the enterprises in which they choose to develop and not vice versa. Honesty, openness, questioning, listening and sharing are important ingredients in practising personal mastery. Information specialists must constantly get honest feedback about mistakes, mis-perceptions and accomplishments in order to continue to learn.

The enterprise where its workers are allowed to participate in decision-making will facilitate a "broader vision" and a "greater connectedness to the whole" that can only lead to a greater understanding, and a more productive enterprise.

2.4.2.3   <u>Managing Mental Models</u>

Mental models determine not only how one makes sense of the world, but how one takes action. Whether simple generalisations or complex cultural beliefs or values, they definitely shape behaviour, consciously or unconsciously. Reacting as a victim when one really has choices and can take action is construed as applying one's own negative mental model of powerlessness.

Information specialists need to break these negative models and crack the mirrors they have created for themselves, the mirrors that reflect the limitations they think they are surrounded by.

2.4.2.4   <u>Team Learning</u>

Team learning focuses on genuine thinking together, dialoguing, suspending assumptions and discovering insights together which results in shared growth and new insights not to convince one another of individual meaning. There is a need for innovative, co-ordinated action by tapping many minds.

Teams should be challenged to think of the unthinkable instead of looking at the same tired solutions to choose from. Collaboration with outsiders and with key players from different backgrounds can be a powerful way of increasing the range of solutions and creative ideas. Team learning demands the mastering of the practises of dialogue and discussions and the maintaining of an open atmosphere where critical thoughts can be applied without creating a threatening atmosphere. It is this participation in the development of a shared vision that is the hallmark of openness. Continuing the shared visioning process allows for everyone to be on the same wave length.

2.4.2.5   Developing Shared Vision

"A vision is truly shared when you and I have a similar picture and are committed to one another having it, not just to each of us, individually, having it" (Senge, 1990:206). When people truly share a vision they are connected, bound together by a common aspiration.

In order to build a shared vision, leaders must encourage personal vision and share their own vision in a way that others are encouraged to share theirs and connect one with the other. Commitment to a vision, which really is only possible when one considers it to be his/her own personal vision, is wanting it to happen, "creating whatever 'laws' (structures) are needed" (Senge, 1990:219).

The leader's responsibility then becomes connecting and building the vision through sharing, dialogue, listening and helping others to co-create the vision. This brings us to the one major attribute that sets successful enterprises apart from unsuccessful ones: dynamic and effective leadership.

2.4.3   Transformational Leadership

Maisela (1995:20) stresses that a successful management style can best be measured not by what managers do but what they can inspire others to do. She states that managers who treat sub-ordinates as if they expect no growth will cause them to be static.

Management's leadership in the change effort seems to be the key determinant of whether the change effort will succeed or not. This new type of leadership will have to do more than just creating and articulating a new vision for the enterprise (Clement, 1994:33). He further points out that specific leader behaviours are necessary e.g. open communication, wide spread participation by making decisions in teams and thirdly, to demonstrate visible and consistent support for and acceptance of employee contributions and input.

Chattell (1995:135) calls it "leading from behind" - it is about finding ways of getting out of the way of people who know what they are doing.

To create opportunities as a leader for people to develop their abilities to make their fullest contribution and to deliver a superior performance. The true transformational leader is one who motivates people, rather than simply telling them what to do.

De Coning (1994:35) describes the task of a true transitional leader as follows: to crack down on unnecessary bureaucracy and to empower followers to pro-actively identify and exploit new opportunities on behalf of the enterprise which they serve. This leadership function includes:

- formulating and testing visions for the enterprise.

- being a proper entrepreneurial role model for followers.

- being tolerant of followers' mistakes.

- continuously coaching and mentoring followers.

- establishing and maintaining a culture conducive for followers to act as true entrepreneurs.

In so far as information is associated with power and power with leadership, computer networks create opportunities for widespread empowerment and leadership sharing. Maritz (1995:8) states that the effective management of available potential equals performance. According to him, it is the quality of the enterprise's leadership which will dictate whether or not the talents and commitment of its people will become manifest and expressed in the work of the enterprise.

In Table 2.1 Hershey & Kizzier (in Andrews & Herschel, 1996:92) reflects how the management style affects the amount of employee participation allowed in an enterprise. It ranges from the highly participative consensus-building approach used by the Japanese to the autocratic style, which allows for little or no employee involvement in decision-making and places a heavy reliance on policies and rules.

Consensus Building	Very high employee participation
Democratic	High employee participation
Co-ordinative	Moderate employee participation
Authoritarian	Limited employee participation
Autocratic	Very little or no employee participation

Table 2.1

The Impact of Management Style on Employee Participation

Source: Hershey & Kizzier (in Andrews & Herschel, 1996:92)

Designers of new enterprises, focussed on continual learning and commitment, are what is needed in today's academic information services. Leaders who instill responsibility without possessiveness, who keep the focus on purpose and do not control the way, the method, the means, but empower others to choose as they remember, continually recreate the vision (Phipps, 1993:36).

There is an incredible reservoir of creative, energetic talent in academic information services. Let's seek the leaders who will be designers, stewards and teachers; who will help create learning information services where information specialists pursue all possible techniques and competencies for the purpose of modelling to the education environment in which they live, their reason for being.

From the previous mentioned strategies for change, it is clear that giving the people the tools they need to move the enterprise forward and keeping the focus on learning will allow for eradication of the negative morale and lack of self-fulfilment associated with hierarchical control.

2.5   CONCLUSION

The shift to participative governance in the workplace is both inevitable and necessary. It is inevitable because the capacity for participation is widespread and becoming more so. It is necessary because the issues that we face in the workplace are too complex and interdependent to be solved by a few people in authority.

Gone are the days of the authoritarian style of management. Managers of academic information services in South Africa should start to recognise that there is vast untapped potential in the minds of their staff. They should realise that they can and must trust in the potential at their disposal if they are to become truly effective leaders.

The empowering enterprise according to Andrews & Herschel (1996:184) is one which encourages concern for accomplishment rather than for status. Power would be used to get the job done, rather than to stand over others. Individuals are being seen as capable of initiating action and therefore as worthy collaborators. Empowerment involves leadership actions such as coaching, negotiating, sharing and facilitating.

The time has come to transform the way in which leaders work with and provide leadership to staff in information services. This transformation requires a new philosophy of leadership, one that empowers staff and fosters creativity (Sullivan, 1991:73). Information specialists should give up the goal of getting information to people and assume the goal of creating a learning enterprise for people who care that other people have the information they need and want. Commitment to the new governance is not a matter of picking and choosing the items on the transformational - strategies menu that they want to change. It means a commitment to transformation - to participation.

In the next chapter the nature of participative management will be explored in detail in order to assess how it can be applied successfully in academic information services.

CHAPTER THREE

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN PERSPECTIVE

"Western philosophy says that work
exists to provide goods and service .....
Eastern philosophy says that work
exists to enhance the human spirit"
(Peter B Grazier in Osif & Harwood
1995:117)

3.1   INTRODUCTION

Twenty-first-century enterprises will find it hard to survive, let alone flourish, unless they get better work from their employees. According to Maritz (1995:10) the art of effective leadership is revealed in a mind set which acknowledges and values the multitude of possibilities which exist among the enterprise's members. He refers to a commitment to the reality of unseen yet nevertheless present potential which needs to be mobilised so that it can become manifest in the work people do.

Recent American business publications are flooded with articles on corporate culture, on the changing attitudes of American workers, on the need for greater employee participation in managerial decision-making and on the place of employees as the most important asset of the enterprise. These changes were based on the assumption that empowering people throughout the enterprise will result in a more responsive, more flexible, and ultimately more successful enterprise. For these reasons, in many companies employee involvement in decision-making at last becomes more than a symbolic "buzz"-word. Moreover, the importance of reformulating human resource strategies to emphasize training, teamwork, co-operation and participation was one of the key recommendations of the MIT study of competitiveness in eight United States industries.

Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell (1992:91) summarized these recommendations in the following way: ".... if people are asked to give maximum effort and to accept uncertainty and rapid change, they must be full participants in the enterprise ....."

Participative management is not a new management approach and for over half a century, it has been presented as the "answer" to the twin problems of productivity growth and work humanisation, yet only a small minority of employees are covered by relevant programmes even today (Drago & Wooden, 1991:177). If participation is so attractive, why is it not universal?

In this chapter, an attempt is going to be made to offer a detailed discussion on the issue of participative management. At first, its nature is going to be discussed where after its importance, a short historical perspective, kinds of participation schemes as well as the very crucial topic of implementation is going to get attention.

3.2   NATURE OF PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT

3.2.1   Definition

As Peter Block points out (in McLagan & Nel, 1996:15), participation is a system of governance that requires all elements of an enterprise to be redesigned in a common direction. If, instead, the elements are treated separately, as the province of separate staff specialities, with techniques or interventions applied to them individually, nothing important will change. He offers some examples of commonly encountered contradictions: You cannot build teams and continue to reward individual performance or advocate self-management and have bosses to supervise and control all activities.

Maisela (1995:20) states that it is a management style that actively seeks employee inputs, allowing the employee to contribute to the resolution of work related issues while Marchant (1982:783) thinks its much more than to share authority and decision-making. According to him the staff's judgement of the confidence and trust their leaders have in them is the most important aspect of participative management.

Participative management is clearly the opposite of autocratic management and can be defined as a system engaging employees as willing co-producers of a better future. It speaks of mutual trust where employees are acknowledged as valuable contributors and co-owners to help develop better decisions.

It is important to note that "participative" is not an absolute word. There are levels of participation, different forms or schemes it can take and the range of subject matter / area dealt with.

3.2.2   Degree / Levels of Participation

Levels of participation refer to the extent to which employees (or their representatives) influence the final decision. This can range from employees simply being informed by management, through two-way communication up to a stage where employees have joint or full control.

Richardson (1985:33) uses a hierarchy (see Figure 3.1) based on three levels of involvement. The first level is reached when management makes a major effort to improve communication and attitudes, but it still views employees as relatively passive. The second level exists when enterprises seek to actively involve employees in productivity improvement and cost management. At the third level, management views employees as partners in the enterprise and rewards efforts through gain-sharing or profit-sharing schemes.
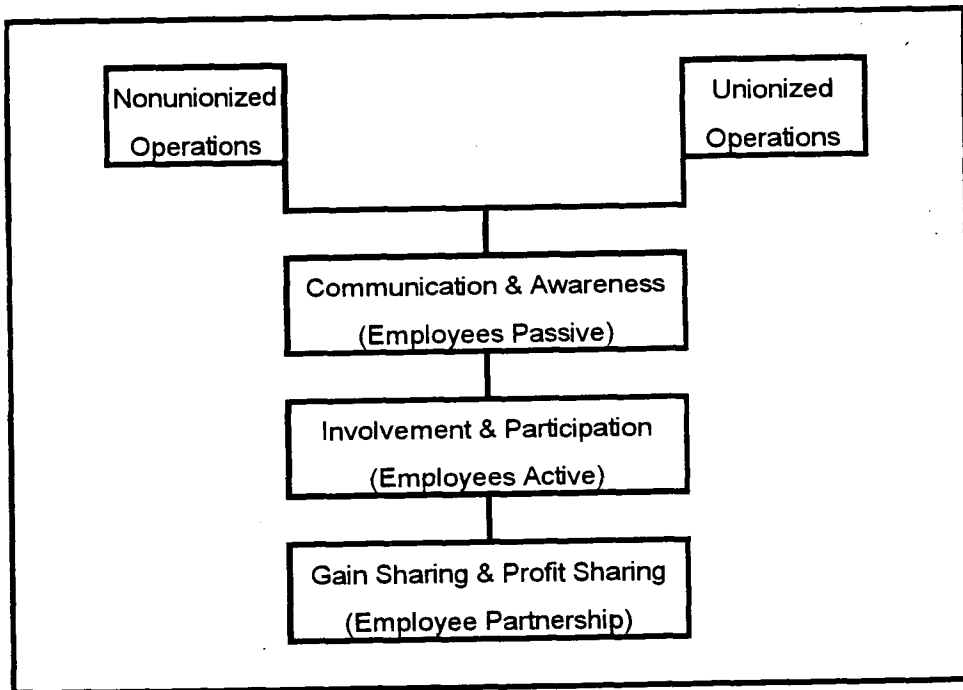
Figure 3.1

Employee-Centered Programs

Source: Richardson, 1985:34

3.2.3   Forms of Participation

The forms of participation are going to be discussed in detail in paragraph 3.5 later in this chapter. For now it is important to note that participation can either be direct, indirect or financial. Direct is concerned with face to face (or written) contact between managers and their sub-ordinates. The type of techniques which can be included here are team briefing, house journals, suggestion schemes, quality circles and total quality management. The basic point about this form of involvement, however, is that employees are involved on a direct individual level, rather than through representatives.

Secondly, there is indirect participation which covers the situation in which employees are involved in the process of management decision-making via their representatives, who are typically elected by and from employee groups. Schemes would vary from joint consultation, company councils, collective bargaining and employees on the board.

Thirdly financial involvement obviously relates to the economic participation of employees in the success or failure of the enterprise.

3.2.4   Subject matter / area of involvement

At one extreme, this refers to broad strategic decisions which affect the enterprise as a whole, whereas at the other the range may be more restricted to issues relating to items which are quite marginal to the running of the business e.g. the state of the car park or the canteen or the colours of the walls in the office. In between these two extremes are issues of operational importance concerned with production or service decisions, slightly beyond the employee's own job description but nonetheless connected with it - strategic, operational and task-related (Marchington, 1992:25).

It is clear that participative management is not a goal in itself to be achieved but a process that an enterprise can use to achieve the goals that the total enterprise values. It is more complex than simply allowing employees to make some decisions. In short: it refers to influence in decision making through interaction between workers and managers based upon information-sharing.

3.3   WHY PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT?

Every enterprise moves to participative management for its own reasons. However, there seem to be a few recurring themes or benefits of this management style:

3.3.1   Increased productivity and profits

Participative management provides enterprises with new ideas based on employees' practical experiences and expertise knowledge for the purpose of improving productivity and profits. According to research done by Marchant (1982:783) on participative management in information services, service improves where staff are involved in decision-making. According to him, management can now be released for broader, more important activities.

A study of 101 industrial firms in the United States showed that those applying participative management have higher value-line financial ratings and better industrial relations (Carson, 1985:45). In the same survey it was found that some companies could in this manner save over R9,2 million after-tax annually by initiating cost-reduction programmes along participatory lines. It is obvious that better decisions can now be taken because of the collective effort of employees and management. New opportunities for learning and growth for both employees and the enterprise are now facilitated. A vision of the enterprise's future can now be shared by employees and management which is vital for the fulfilment of its mission.

3.3.2   Satisfaction / Quality of Working Life

As Blumberg noted (in Marchington, 1992:28) "there is hardly a study in the entire literature which fails to demonstrate that satisfaction at work is enhanced from a genuine increase in workers' decision-making power".

According to a survey done by Juechter (1982:45) virtually all 15 managers concluded that they would put the benefit of "an enhanced perception of self-worth" on top of the list. Maisela (1995:22) agrees when she states that its an opportunity for employees to develop and demonstrate their abilities to the fullest.

Some of the personal benefits of involvement that many of the participants cited in the research done by Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell (1992:94) were greater job security, increased pride in their work and increased profit-sharing. The social benefits were generally less important than personal or job-related benefits.

At this point it would be suitable to mention the different kinds of needs that individuals bring to their organisational experiences: McClelland & Burnham (1979) in Andrews & Herschel (1996:172) identified in particular:

- the need for affiliation - having the desire to belong, to be liked and to interact;

- the need for achievement - being driven to succeed and desiring feedback, and

- the need for power.

This explains why participative management really motivates employees to contribute value and input to the enterprises to which they belong - it fulfills their needs!

3.3.3   Commitment

Central to the HRM (Human Resource Management) literature, it is believed that involvement leads to an increase in employee commitment to the enterprise. It is also assumed that commitment leads to more positive behaviour at work, including higher levels of performance. American consultants / academics such as Peters & Waterman (in Marchington 1992:29) argue that managers are themselves the major barrier to high levels of commitment on the part of staff. People come to work motivated and interested but they are soon alienated by the web of rules and constraints which govern their working lives.

If only management could find ways to release and tap employees' creativity, via participation, then their commitment to organisational goals would follow. Martin & Nichols (in Marchington 1992:29) belief that commitment is sustained by three pillars: a sense of belonging to the employing enterprise, a sense of excitement about the job and confidence in the leadership of management. They provide support for their model with case studies from a range of enterprises.

3.3.4   Co-operation / Collaboration / Industrial Relations

Here participation is seen as a device which will assist in preventing or minimising conflict and resistance. According to Bell (1979:2) the efficient running of any enterprise depends on the willing co-operation of its work-force, and that co-operation is more likely to be given when people feel involved and acknowledged for their contributions.

According to Marchant (1982:784) participative management helps to eliminate or lessen the feeling of hostility towards orders imposed from above and it helps people to feel able to drop their defences and expend their energy productively instead. Through several case studies, Richardson (1985:35) confirmed this view by reports of improved management-employee relations and a decline in grievances against management. Industrial relations will improve when communication links with the work-force improve.

3.3.5   Control / Labour Process

"Real" involvement should be allowed by management where actual transfer of control takes place from management to employees. Quite often workers are given the illusion of making decisions by choosing among fixed and limited alternatives designed by a management which deliberately leaves insignificant matters open to choice.

For participative schemes to be successful and to achieve real change in enterprises, involvement needs to provide employees with access to and control over strategic decisions. To move beyond a superficial understanding of participative management and to recognise the inherent challenges in achieving an empowered enterprise, the two sets of meanings listed in Table 3.1 (Lubans, 1996:34) will give an overall perspective on what an empowered relationship really means. It means more "work" and an accompanying "loss of clarity" about roles and responsibility. There is risk and change for both groups, but more for managers than for staff. Of the seventeen meanings listed for staff, there is not a single negative. Management's fourteen meanings are tipped toward the negative with their anticipating less-than-happy outcomes: "loss of status", "it takes longer", "squash team ideas", "loss of control".

For Staff	For Management
Responsibility	Trust in staff
Trust in self	Loss of status / rewards
Chance to place ideas into practice	Innovation
Require support	Power shared
"Blamelessness"	No loss of power
Involvement	It takes longer
Power reclaimed	Squash" team ideas
Recognition	Risk / loss of control
Readier acceptance of decisions and changes	Letting go / gaining time
	Harness motivation
Decision making	Coaching
Taking challenges	Delegation
Threats / opportunities	
Higher standards	
Motivation	
Self recognition	

Table 3.1

Empowerment - Two Views

Source: Lubans (1996:34)

3.4   HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT

3.4.1   Scientific Management versus Human Relations Approach

The notion of employee participation has since the early twentieth century received its initial stimulus from the writings and empirical studies of Frederick Taylor and Elton Mayo. The scientific management approach of Taylor beginning in the 1890's tended to regard the needs of workers as primarily economic. He tried to improve productivity while working within the bureaucratic structure. Scientific management combined a study of workers' physical capabilities with an economic approach that viewed man as driven by fear of hunger and search for financial profit (Marchant, 1976:2).

The research of Elton Mayo and his associates at the Western Electric Company's Hawthorne Works in Chicago from 1927 to 1932 intended to demonstrate causal relationships predicted by scientific principles developed by Taylor. The Mayo results were the first to note failings in that concept and to orient consideration on social groups. He found that variations in working conditions were not systematically related to worker productivity or satisfaction. The critical factor, rather, was workers' perceptions of the special attention they were receiving (Andrews & Herschel, 1996:38).

The classic research, known as the Hawthorne studies, is widely regarded as the foundation of the human relations movement. The major findings and conclusions were:

- The level of production is set by social norms.

- Non-economic rewards and sanctions significantly affect the behaviour of workers and largely limit the effect of economic plans.

- Often workers do not react or act as individuals but as members of groups.

- The function of leadership is important in setting group norms.

- Communication between ranks is an important factor in organisation behaviour.

In summary, virtually every assumption of scientific management was called into question (Marchant, 1976:3). The human relations school, born in the 1930's out of reaction to scientific management, emphasized the role of communication, participation and leadership. It emphasized the power of social relations and questioned the importance of economic reward as a source of motivation. The scientific management assumed that the most efficient enterprise would be the most productive and give the highest pay. The human relations approach assumed that the most satisfying enterprise would be the most efficient. Special attention given to workers had a positive effect on their motivation, morale and productivity.

3.4.2   Human Resource Theorists

3.4.2.1   McGregor

McGregor examined traditional enterprises in 1960 and advanced the argument that traditional approaches to managing, which he labelled "Theory X", grew from the central principle of direction and control through the exercise of authority - an autocratic approach to decision-making which created an organisational climate of distrust, misunderstanding and fear. In formulating an alternative to the Theory X manager, McGregor set forth the underlying assumption's of Theory Y (Andrews & Herschel, 1996:68) which led managers to recognise the untapped creative potential of their employees.

These assumptions call for shared decision-making with working at all levels, encourages upward communication and more opportunities for workers to seek greater responsibility - an empowering philosophy of management.

3.4.2.2   Likert

Rensis Likert was another major contributor to the human resources school of thought. His extensive research program at the University of Michigan's Institute for Social Research led to several major publications (1961:1967) in which he proposed a range of management alternatives. Likert identified four management "systems":

- System 1 - Managers who neither trust nor have confidence in their employees. The organisational climate is characterised by fear, threat, punishment and occasional rewards.

- System 2 - Most power and control is retained at the top. However, some attempt is made to share small decisions. Interaction is more frequent than in a System 1 enterprise but the emphasis remains on downward communication. The relationship between manager and worker might be compared to that of master and servant.

- System 3 - This approach might be characterised as consultative. Managers have substantial (but not complete) trust in their employees. Broad policy decisions are made at the top, but more specific decisions are made throughout the enterprise. Interestingly, Likert reported that many managers who work under this system believe themselves to be more participative than they really are.

- System 4 - Likert's last system directly parallels McGregor's Theory Y. A system 4 manager trusts sub-ordinates implicitly and holds high expectations for their work ethic and sense of responsibility. At the heart of Likert's system 4 is the notion of participative decision-making.

In particular, Likert argued that those individuals who were most affected by a decision, should be the ones to make it (Andrews & Herschel, 1996:73). He reported that system 4 enterprises had the highest level of productivity and system 1 the lowest.

Whereas McGregor focussed largely on managers' attitudes toward workers, Likert identified specified behaviours that should be part of the participative leader's daily conduct (see Table 3.2).

---

* Gives subordinates a share in decision making

* Keeps subordinates informed of the true situation, good or bad, in all circumstances

* Remains aware of the state of the organisation's morale and does everything possible to keep it high

* Is easily approachable

* Counsels, trains, and develops subordinates

* Communicates effectively with subordinates

* Shows thoughtfulness and consideration of others

* Is willing to make changes in the way things are done

* Is willing to support subordinates, even when they make mistakes

* Expresses appreciation when subordinates do a good job

Table 3.2

A Profile of Likert's Participative Manager

Source: Andrews & Herschel (1996:74)

3.4.3   <u>Japanese Management</u>

According to Sashkin (1982:9) the new generation of American managers is the best educated in history and most of them are taught the value of participative management. Yet, despite this educational exposure and emphasis, most of them do not seem to employ participative management approaches.

It is interesting to observe that Japanese managers show superiority in their application of participative management despite the fact that Japan produces about one-tenth as many MBA's as American Colleges (Sashkin, 1982:10). This seem to be the main reason for Japanese business success.

Echoing the views of Likert, for instance, the Japanese embrace the notion of bottom-up decision-making, with the conviction that change and initiative within an enterprise should come from those closest to the problem. Through team interaction, the Japanese justify the time spent on this bottom-up process of consensus-building. They view top management as facilitators and have a concern for their employees' total well-being. Japanese have non-specialised career paths and move workers around across functional divisions of the enterprise.

From the previous historical perspective it is clear that participative management is not a new management style and is an approach which has received attention from writers and academics since 1930. The history has proved that this is the only style which really enhances performance and increases employee motivation and satisfaction. Although participative management is no panacea for all managerial ills, both research and practice clearly indicate that this approach does yield improved performance and productivity (Sashkin, 1982:11). Most managers probably avoid participative management methods simply because they do not know what the methods are and how to implement them. The following section of this chapter is an attempt to clarify this uncertainty.

3.5   KINDS OF PARTICIPATION

According to Bell (1979:1) no one form of participation is viable in isolation, and in any situation the total pattern of participation should be a coherent whole. He further notes that no one pattern of participation will fit every case.

Participation has to grow organically within the enterprise in ways that will match its own particular circumstances. What form it takes will depend, among other things, on the type of enterprise, its history, its size, the level of expectation of its work-force and most important, on the styles and attitudes of its management.

It was earlier mentioned in this chapter that participation can be differentiated along a continuum stretching from one-way information passing through to workers' control, the degree of involvement clearly being better at the latter stages of this. The remainder of this discussion will then deal with a variety of different forms, broadly in line with the escalator principle of Marchington (1992:24). (See Figure 3.2).
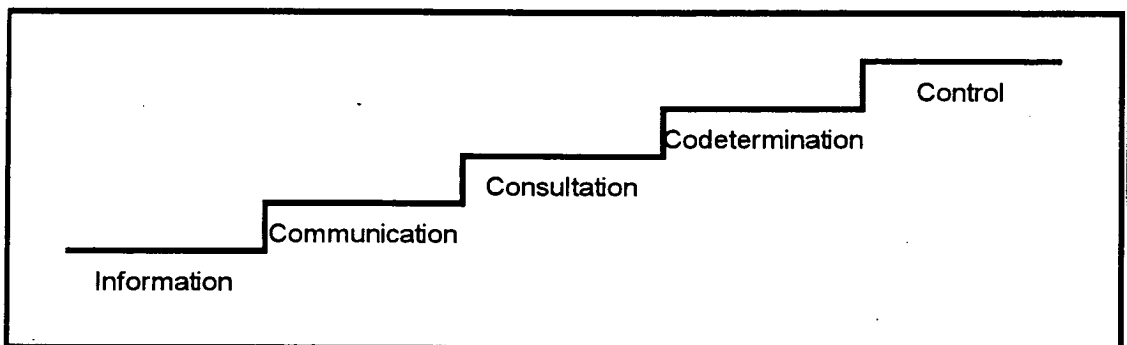
Figure 3.2

The Employee Involvement Escalator

Source: Marchington (1992:24)

Before discussing the various forms, it would be appropriate to point out that participative management can be applied in various contexts:

- with respect to individual sub-ordinates where individuals do not depend on one another in the normal conduct of their work activities.

- in the context of the superior-subordinate relationship which is the most common in today's enterprises because of the security it still offers management in their various positions of control.

- the group context where workers spend most of their time working together as a group (Sashkin, 1982:17).

One feature which emerges from the escalator analysis is that participation often takes a number of different forms in any one enterprise. This mix of participation practises can vary from one enterprise to the next e.g. in one enterprise, virtually all the forms of participation may be in existence at the same time. In others, just one or two different forms may be in operation.

3.5.1   Written and Audio-Visual Communications

It is not apparent that management is beginning to take the area of employee communications more seriously, with a growing awareness that employees can be trusted with information to eventually be applied to the applicable areas of action.

There are some authors who regard the provision of information as the first and basic form or process of participation (Dixon, 1984; Bell, 1979). Certainly without timely feedback on organisational performance any form of real participation is impossible. Employees or employee representatives cannot effectively share in decision-making unless all the necessary information has been disclosed.

Marchington (1992:35) has identified four instruments for written and audio-visual communications:

- Statements in Annual Reports: These include references made to employees for hard work in the company, vote of thanks for services rendered, etc.

- Employee Reports: A simplified yearly report specifically for employees which provides information relating to a financial period of the undertaking.

- House Journals / Newspapers: Are published rather more frequently and offers information about the enterprise, its product markets, long-term plans and new developments. A forum can also be provided through which staff may be able to indicate their views about issues relevant to the enterprise. Commitment can be increased to management objectives and actions and employees can be encouraged to identify with the enterprise.

- Company Videos: The use of videos are lately used by employers as part of an induction programme for new employees, for the dissemination of financial and other commercial information to employees or as a key part of specific change programmes.

3.5.2   Face to Face Communications

This is by far the most common method for communicating information and ideas between managers and their staff such as via team briefing or just regular contact between individuals. The informal communications are bound to remain important in the workplace but need to be supplemented to formally educate staff and to increase employee commitment.

Team briefing is used to make sure that all employees understand what the enterprise is doing and why. To put across information relevant to their work. Other face-to-face communications devices are MBWA - "Management by Walking About", GOYA - "Get Off Your Ass", "Walkabouts", to name a few (Marchington, 1992:70).

3.5.3 Problem-Solving Techniques

The previous two forms of participation have concentrated on employee involvement schemes designed to improve the flow of information down the hierarchy from managers to their staff, with the objective of enhancing employee awareness of business matters and (hopefully) increasing their commitment to the enterprise. In this section, the emphasis is going to shift to the provision of ideas up the hierarchy - to contributions from employees which can help to improve decision-making, whether individually or through the efforts of a team of people. More precisely, four different techniques will be examined as identified by Marchington (1992:81).

3.5.3.1 Suggestion Schemes

A suggestion scheme is a formal definite procedure, established by management, to enable eligible employees to voluntarily communicate their ideas - to investigate, appraise and reward employees for acceptable ideas. These suggestions can lead to improvements in quality, reductions in wastage, increases in productivity, and of course, cost savings.

3.5.3.2 Quality circles

Quality circles consist of small groups of employees who meet voluntarily on a regular basis to identify, analyse and solve quality- and work-related problems. Membership of the circle typically comprises between four and twelve people from the same or associated work areas - who meet under the guidance of a group leader, usually the supervisor. Quality circles are usually introduced in order to improve quality and service, increase productivity and reduce costs. They also have as a further motive, improvements in employee morale and commitment.

3.5.3.3   Total Quality Management (TQM)

In a number of the companies investigated by Hill in Marchington (1992:92), quality circles were either replaced by TQM and quality improvement teams, or they merely became incorporated into the broader organization - wide TQM programme. TQM is more attuned to Japanese developments and presents a more integrated approach to management compared with "grafted-on" quality circles which had been implemented in some situations as a quick fix solution to organisational problems.

Certainly, TQM has become the fashionable management technique of the early 1990's. Its successful operation requires employees to become involved in the process of decision-making at departmental or sectional level. It is seen as consistent with open management styles, delegated responsibility and increased autonomy to staff. It also refers to production aspects such as systematic measurement and control of work, setting standards of performance, using statistical procedures to assess quality. TQM is conceptualised in the form of a triangle - with the three points representing "management commitment", "statistical process control" and "team-working" - and a chain, indicating the interdependence of customer - supplier links throughout the enterprise. TQM can be seen as a systematic way of guaranteeing that all activities within an enterprise happen the way they have been planned.

3.5.3.4   Customer Care Programmes

Whereas TQM focusses on customers both external and internal to the enterprise, customer care / service programmes tend to concentrate on those in the former category alone. The ethos behind these schemes is to improve relations at the enterprise / customer interface, to encourage staff to treat customers in a more positive way. American consultants like Peters, talk of being "close to the customer" or achieving "productivity through people" (Marchington, 1992:96).

3.5.4   Job Redesign

To prevent workers' jobs to remain low in autonomy, meaningless and socially isolated, it is necessary to redesign the tasks themselves so that they incorporate a greater degree of control for the employee and better opportunity to interact with other workers. Job redesign can be seen as a device for reducing alienation at work, improving employee commitment and as a contribution to competitive advantage.

This section is structured along the lines of the classification developed by Kelly in Marchington (1992:105) of flowline reorganisation, vertical role integration and flexible workgroups. Slightly different terminology will be used which offers a more accurate description of these variants of job redesign. Thus, horizontal job redesign, vertical role integration and team-working.

3.5.4.1   Horizontal Job Redesign

Horizontal job redesign relates to the number and variety of operations which an individual performs at the same skill level in the enterprise, and as such it represents the least extensive form of employee involvement to be dealt with in this section. In practice, it can be as little as doubling the number of fairly simple operations performed by an employee or allowing groups of workers to rotate between different tasks on some pre-arranged basis. It is built around the concepts of increased variety in working patterns to counteract the monotony of repetitive short time scale tasks. The keywords associated with this type of horizontal job redesign are variety and task identity.

3.5.4.2   Vertical Role Integration

There appear to be two different forms of vertical role integration (Marchington, 1992:112).

The first refers to increased employee responsibility for supervisory decisions by removing some controls while increasing the accountability of individuals for their own work. A worker can be given a complete natural unit of work (module, division or area), enabling him / her to become an expert.

The second variant is upgrading jobs so that semi-skilled manual workers undertake simple maintenance or diagnostic work in addition to their existing duties (such as ordering new stock).

3.5.4.3   <u>Team-Working</u>

Team-working represents the third and most extensive form of job redesign which is considered in this section. It combines both horizontal and vertical additions to existing jobs such that individual employees not only move between different tasks on a particular operation but also take over some or all the responsibilities for managing the team as well. Work is assigned to the group rather than to particular individuals or roles. The work group is allocated an overall task and given discretion over how it is to be done. The groups are self-regulating and work without direct supervision.

In Chapter four the use of teams in the modern academic information services are going to be discussed in detail. In practice, however, teamwork can even result in fewer management levels in the management hierarchy.

Team-working provides the opportunity for employees to become directly and personally involved in a wider range of activities at work. Andrews & Herschel (1996:199) distinguish between project teams which allow workers from different organisational divisions to keep communicating with and educating one another while completing specific projects and work teams which are responsible for a "whole" work process or segment that delivers a product or service to an internal or external customer.

3.5.5 Joint Consultation

Joint consultation is a more indirect form of employee involvement and most of the time involves representative participation when representatives of employees express opinions prior to decision-making. Consultation may lead to a reduction in industrial action in enterprises, to an increase in employee satisfaction and consultation can enhance efficiency by increasing the stock of ideas which are available within the enterprise - it is an integrative problem-solving approach.

Representative committees and work councils can be appointed by employees to improve communications and greater commitment. The use of Joint Consultative Committees (JCC's) vary significantly across the economy, with some operating in conjunction with collective bargaining and shop steward organisation, whereas others are designed to minimise the influence of trade unions.

3.5.6 Financial Participation

One of the most significant growth areas of employee involvement in recent years has been in the field of financial participation. Since the late 1970's, the number of employees and private sector enterprises which have taken advantage of share ownership or profit sharing schemes has increased considerably in recent years. For ease of clarification, there are basically three types of financial participation:

3.5.6.1 Employee Share Ownership

This is where employee ownership is extended by using part of the profits generated to acquire shares for employees in the company concerned.

3.5.6.2   Cash-based Profit Sharing

This is where a cash bonus or payment is made to employees based upon the share price, profits or dividend accouncement at the end of the financial year. This is an effort to associate employee performance with company success. This scheme is sometimes called Profit-Related Pay.

3.5.6.3   Plant- or Enterprise-wide Bonus Schemes

This is where a bonus or payment is made to employees based upon establishment of company performance. The higher the sales value of production, the greater the bonus or there can be an incentive to keep the costs down. An annual bonus can be paid to employees dependent upon the performance of the unit concerned.

The advantages of share schemes are making employees feel part of the company, making them more conscious of profit and increasing employees' sense of commitment to the company.

It is important to note that employee involvement often takes a number of different forms in any enterprise, depending on a whole range of factors, and it can also change over time as well. Before discussing the implementation of participation, it is necessary to look at the influence of the management style on the degree of participation allowed.

3.6   INFLUENCE OF MANAGEMENT STYLE ON PARTICIPATION

Managerial style is in part a manifestation of the manager's philosophy on the nature of man. If he believes men are naturally lazy, he will provide close supervision and specific instructions.

If he believes men are naturally active and take part in striving and achieving goals, he will manifest his trust by involving his sub-ordinates in decision-making and delegating authority to them to a greater extent (Marchant, 1976:147).

Theorists from the human relations school championed democratic leadership - communicating with workers and involving them in the decision-making process - as the best approach for enterprises to embrace (Andrews & Herschel, 1996:38). According to Andrews & Herschel, three styles of leadership were systematically investigated by Lewin: authoritarian, democratic and laissez-faire. The democratic style of leadership was found to be superior on virtually every measure. The groups led by the democratic counsellors developed high levels of cohesiveness and the quality of their work was usually judged superior to that of other groups.

When looking at these studies, it is clear that a decision is only as good as its implementation, and those who are involved in making the decision are usually much more committed to making it work. This explains why involved workers give better performance. Participation therefore calls for a quite different management style. The manager should become a leader rather than a boss, he becomes a decision-taker rather than a decision-maker, and he recognises the contribution that other people can make to the decision-making process.

We can view management style along a continuum, as depicted in Table 3.3 - from a traditional bureaucratic structure to one permitting / inviting participation, toward one of self-managing teams. In other words, the degree of participation allowed reveals the leadership style of a manager or supervisor.

Autocratic	Participative	Empowering
Tells	Consults	Counsels
Controls	Involves	Coaches
Makes all decisions	Seeks input	Shares decision process

Table 3.3

The Leadership Continuum

Source: Lubans (1996:29)

3.6.1 Participation, Power and Influence

Many managers have a misconception of participative management and believe it is a style that has little power or influence over sub-ordinates. They feel that they loose control and that sub-ordinates will run roughshod over them. Just because managers share their authority and power does not mean they have any less of it.

When managers and sub-ordinates share authority, a "synergistic" effect occurs. The authority of the manager and the group is greater than the authority of the manager and the group viewed separately. In other words, the whole is greater than the sum of its parts. In this game, authority is viewed as fixed - I can't take from you to gain. Here is only so much of it - and either I get it as manager or you get it as sub-ordinate. In other words, we both can share our authority and both win. My authority as manager and your authority as sub-ordinate is greater than mine alone or yours alone. I don't have to give up my authority for you to have authority as a sub-ordinate (Anthony, 1978:14).

So contrary to the belief of many a manager, participation can actually increase the authority, power and influence of managers and their groups, not weaken it.

It is clear that an authoritarian manager will not allow participation while an empowering manager will show full trust in his employees and will allow participation to a large extent. As Maisela (1995:20) states: "A successful management style can best be measured not by what managers do but what they can inspire others to do". This refers to what is called "empowerment".

The implementation of participation is now going to be discussed. Problems or possible pitfalls as well as keys to successful implementation will also be discussed in this section.

3.7   IMPLEMENTATION OF PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT

According to Maisela (1995:20), the key to successful participative management is the way in which it is implemented. Participation is a managed process that cannot occur by itself or be forced into the system. She states that it must be accepted as a long-term effort that will not yield immediate results.

In recent years, many companies have turned to participative management techniques to help boost productivity, improve labour relations etc. but for some, participative management fell short of its promise. According to Juechter (1982:45) there have even been cases of declines in productivity. A more alienated, rather than a more involved work force can also be produced.

It cannot be overemphasised that participative management is more complex than simply allowing employees to make some of the decisions.

According to Dixon (1984:8) the process derives its effectiveness from the following:

- interrelatedness of an information system that is used to give immediate feedback on organisational performance

- dynamic leadership capable of aligning the enterprise around a common vision

- systematic representation of all levels in the decision-making process, and

- organisational leaders' belief in the creativity and responsibility of employees.

Any enterprise wishing to implement this style should be aware of the problems or pitfalls they are likely to encounter, and the reasons why participative management programs often fail.

3.7.1   Problems and Pitfalls

It is important to note that participative management does not provide error-free performance and that failure and errors should be seen as fuel for growth and as a learning experience. The following can be seen as reasons why participative programmes often don't work or don't give expected results.

3.7.1.1   The Programme is "Just for Show"

This was the reason regarded as most important by the respondents of a manufacturing company surveyed by Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell (1992:94) why they did not want to participate in the Employee Involvement Programme. Semler (1989:77) agrees with this statement by saying that about 90 % of the time, participative management is just hot air.

Another point that links with this problem is the fact that management "allow" employees to contribute but just doesn't listen and implement their ideas by ignoring the group's suggestions and action plans. Understandably, this demoralises the participative group. Managers do not necessarily have to approve every contribution but cannot simply ignore it.

There are strong grounds for suspecting that managements "have acted out of desire not to be seen to be out of line with current fashion" and "have not acted out of conviction - and certainly not out of a genuine conversion to the human relations thinking which lies behind the concept" (Ogden, 1992:231) which caused the change process to be merely cosmetic. Thus despite the considerable interest in employee involvement, management appears to be reluctant to pursue it seriously in practice. This can be regarded as conditional participation: it is encouraged only insofar as employees continue to give unequivocal commitment to management's policies and decisions.

3.7.1.2   <u>Not enough Management Support</u>

According to Richardson (1985:36) a participative programme is very much like marriage: you had better be sincere and willing to make it work once the romance has worn off. In this context, executives who are seduced by the apparent glamour of the participative approach should be aware of the underlying effort needed to build a long-lasting relationship. Head office cannot mandate a programme since the essential commitment of operating managers is likely to be lacking unless the managers can perceive benefits from such an activity. Similarly, participative management in itself is more demanding of managers than the traditional directive styles of decision-making. It often requires a rebuilding of trust and a re-education of the management and the work-force, to say nothing of patience and multiple acts of faith by management before employees believe and buy into the process. Participation should not be done <u>to</u> employees but <u>with</u> them (Plunkett & Fournier, 1991:27).

Managers sometimes fear that greater worker participation and involvement will be at the expense of their own authority. Anthony (1978:14) has shown, however, that this loss of power by managers need not be the case (See paragraph 3.6.1). A centralised, bureaucratic structure can be a barrier to effective implementation of participation. Rigid procedures and fixed tradition give management a feeling of security and continuity and very often managerial philosophies and values are not compatible with a participative management approach.

3.7.1.3 Resistance from the Work-force

Plunkett & Fournier (1991:21) stresses the fact that decisions by top management that participative management is going to be implemented, must be mandated. The issue of employees who decide that participation is number one for them is a very tough moral dilemma and is a critical test of management's belief in participative management.

Employees must be prepared for participative management - it's nature and benefits should be specified clearly. Employees, after all, have historically been conditioned to believe that it is neither wise nor acceptable to disagree with a manager. To get employees' full support of participation, management should demonstrate to employees that a high level of commitment to the programme exists and that it is intended as a vehicle for substantive change for meaningful results. Until then, employees will continue to resist it and view it as a manipulative tool of management to use workers for their benefit - as some workers have simply stated: "We are paid to work, not to manage" (Sashkin, 1982:61). This brings us to the barrier / problem of rewarding.

3.7.1.4   Lack of Reward System

Closely tied to the commitment of management to support employees in accepting participative management as beneficial, is the reward system an enterprise uses to encourage top-level employee performance. In the research done by Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell (1992:95), employees complained about inadequate incentives for participative management since they are expected to attend training sessions, to do additional work, have increased responsibility and additional time.

Employees also feel they take the risk of damaging their egos in the sense of when the spark of individual creativity is buried in the group process and the individual contributor is not given credit. Managers or leaders of groups must listen carefully for innovative ideas and should reward their originators. Quite often managers / leaders reward subordinate behaviour they like and penalise behaviour they dislike. Thus, the reward system can work against participation of subordinates directly if not effectively and fairly applied. Managers need to be committed to the pre-stated goals of participation - to preserve a sense of order in decision-making. With so many ideas filling the air, it becomes difficult to stay in focus and not to get tangled in minutiae.

From the above possible problems / pitfalls it is clear that participative management is possible in theory but is difficult to achieve and sustain in practice. If successfully implemented, however, the returns can be substantial in both economic and social terms for both the company and its employees. Still, the initiative involves substantial risk, and may end in failure if it is not well managed.

The last point to be discussed in this chapter is the success factors for effective implementation.

3.7.2   Keys to Successful Implementation

A participative management programme needs to satisfy certain conditions before it can be implemented successfully. From the previous discussion it is clear that a participative programme can easily fail if not successfully implemented and management needs to make sure that the necessary elements are in place and that certain conditions for success are adhered to to ensure that the process is effective and achieves the desired results. The following success factors were derived from the views of various authors on the topic.

3.7.2.1   Commitment of Top-Management to the Approach

The commitment of operational managers is necessary for a participative programme to succeed because the management style needs to be changed before such an approach can be accepted by other members of the enterprise. Not only is commitment necessary for a successful start-up, but top-management interest has a direct influence on the longevity of the approach.

Maisela (1995:20) also stresses that before participative management can be implemented, the entire management team must be trained and prepared to change its management style. Management needs to believe that allowing participation in decision-making will produce the best possible solutions - need to believe in their human resources.

3.7.2.2   Information Openness

The enterprise must be open with its information, particularly with information needed to solve problems and make decisions. There must be a willingness to discuss this information with groups of supervisors or employees.

An air of secrecy and extreme confidentiality will dampen the spirit and enthusiasm of those involved in the participative approach (Phillips, 1987:4). Information is seen as <u>the</u> most important and necessary tool for making decisions.

3.7.2.3   <u>Close Co-operation</u>

According to Bell (1979:123), the oldest mistake in the game is for management to prepare its participation plan and then try to sell or impose it on the work-force. Proposals must be jointly designed in order to secure commitment.

The first requirement is to get alignment on goals and objectives. Objectives for participative programmes need to be clarified at the outset and agreed to by all parties involved. Senior management, line managers and organized labour must become active partners in the development of a participative system.

3.7.2.4   <u>Supportive Atmosphere</u>

Employees and supervisors must be allowed to voice opinions, give suggestions and provide input without the threat of retaliation or criticism. Otherwise, employees will be reluctant to contribute to and participate in the process.

The overall climate in the enterprise must be good if implementation is to be successful. It will be difficult for participative management to work if there are serious problems with employee morale that show up in excessive complaints, grievances, turnover, absenteeism and tardiness. Phillips (1987:5) points out that participative management cannot and will not correct major deficiencies in the employee relations climate. Thus, a high level of trust amongst all parties is necessary before successful implementation is possible.

3.7.2.5   Employees' Abilities

The basic premise of participative management is that employees have useful suggestions that can improve the quality of decisions. This assumes that they possess the skills, knowledge and ability to make a meaningful contribution to the discussion. If they lack these prerequisites, the participative approach will become frustrating and appear to be hopeless.

Employees must also be able to express themselves in an understandable manner. In enterprises where the education level is very low and communication skills are weak, it may be difficult for employees to feel comfortable communicating their thoughts and ideas to higher management. The better the communication skills of employees, the more workable the process will be (Phillips, 1987:5).

3.7.2.6   Education and Training

Any successful implementation of participative management must include a means to prepare the individuals who will be involved in the process. Group leaders must be trained in discussion - leading skills and how to effectively secure input from a varied group. Employees must also be trained in how to provide meaningful input into group discussions and decision-making.

3.7.2.7   Limits of Decisions

The decision-making limits should be well-defined. Obviously, the group cannot be allowed to alter work rules that affect other departments, change company policy or modify union contracts. They must stay within prescribed limits, or their efforts will be fruitless.

According to Juechter (1982:48) one must distinguish between "what" decisions and "how" decisions. "What" decisions have to do with what the enterprise is going to become in the future - strategic issues. "How" decisions, on the other hand, lend themselves more to a participative approach. What makes one idea better than the others is the degree of commitment held among employees about it - work-related issues.

3.7.2.8   Timed Implementation with Meaningful Results

Participative management must be implemented on a gradual basis over an extended period of time, particularly if it represents a significant change in management practices. Employees may resist change if the process is not thoroughly explained and if meaningful results are not achieved within a reasonable period of time. The group's / individual's contributions must be recognised and implemented or rejected for specific reasons which are communicated to employees. Rewards based on performance should be applied to increase participation and worker morale.

This idea is also advocated by Ahlbrandt, Leana & Murrell (1992:97) when they found that positive results are achieved early if the programme or approach is started on a small scale and gradually expanded outward as successes are achieved.

3.7.3   Managing Participation Model

Plunkett & Fournier (1991:223) offer a model for managing participation in which they clearly differentiate between different levels of participation as well as the corresponding management styles. The model (See figure 3.3) attempts to ensure the following:

- Clear definition of those issues that will be dealt with by the leader without fear of challenge by team members (Levels 1 and 2).

- Clear definition of those issues that require input before resolution (Levels 3 and 4).

- Clear definition of empowerment so teams / individuals are not "second guessed" by managers (Levels 5 and 6).

This model offers a summary of the whole process of participation in which optimum commitment is achieved with an empowered decision-making style and the least with an independent decision-making style where the manager makes all decisions himself.

LEVEL E6 - EMPOWER A GROUP

Key Factors

1. Group is willing to accept the responsibility.
2. You are willing to relinquish responsibility.
3. Group has skills to make decisions. ·
4. Guidelines are provided.
5. Commitment concern exceeds quality concern.

EXPECT A DECISION

(E)
EMPOWERED
DECISION-MAKING STYLE

LEVEL E5 - EMPOWER AN INDIVIDUAL

Key Factors

1. Individual is willing to accept responsibility.
2. You are willing to relinquish responsibility.
3. Guidelines are provided.
4. Commitment concern exceeds adequacy concern.
5. Individual has skills to make the decision.

LEVEL C4 - MAKE DECISION YOURSELF BUT ASK
FOR HELP

Key Factors

1. You are responsible.
2. Organisation accepts that responsibility.
3. You are willing to be influenced.
4. Multiple input / discussion will help.

EXPECT A RECOMMENDATION

(C)
COLLABORATIVE
DECISION-MAKING STYLE

LEVEL C3 - MAKE DECISION YOURSELF BUT ASK
INDIVIDUALS FOR HELP

Key Factors

1. You are responsible.
2. Organisation accepts that responsibility.
3. You are willing to be influenced.
4. Individuals can help.

LEVEL I2 - MAKE DECISION YOURSELF BUT
CHECK THE FACTS FIRST

Key Factors

1. You are responsible.
2. Organisation accepts that responsibility.
3. You lack facts to make the decision.

EXPECT INFORMATION

(I)
INDEPENDENT
DECISION-MAKING STYLE

LEVEL I2 - MAKE DECISION YOURSELF

Key Factors

1. You are responsible to make decision.
2. Organisation accepts that responsibility.
3. You possess all data.

EXPECT COMPLIANCE

Figure 3.3

A Participative Leadership Model

Source: Plunkett, L.C. & Fournier, R. (1991:223)

In summary, the guidelines discussed here with the model should help the enterprise proceed with the implementation of participative management. From this discussion it appears that, what is needed is a little imagination, good no-frills management and a genuine willingness to communicate and co-operate.

3.8   CONCLUSION

This chapter has reviewed the whole issue of participative management which is challenging to implement and needs the full commitment of all members involved to be successful and permanent. Enterprises of the future will have to give their full attention to the needs of their employees and should transform the work place into a place where people will be able to grow and be of service to others. Success in the work place should be synonymous with personal fulfilment where people trust each other rather than prisons where they are instructed, controlled and even humiliated and fired.

It is clear from this discussion that participative management is an approach which is complex in nature but, when successfully implemented, can be of benefit to both the enterprise and employees. In short, it's all about excellent leaders, committed to the reality of unseen yet nevertheless present potential at their disposal - leaders who understand the practical meaning of the old Chinese proverb: "Anyone can count the number of seeds in an apple. But who can know how many apples there are in a seed?" (Maritz, 1995:16).

Now that participative management has been discussed in detail, can it be applied to the academic information services. In chapter four participative management in the academic information services is going to be discussed with special reference to the use of self-managed teams.

CHAPTER FOUR

PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN THE MODERN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO SELF-MANAGED TEAMS

> "The best of all leaders is the one who helps people so that, eventually, they don't need him"
>
> (Lao-Tzu in Glaser 1992:276)

4.1   INTRODUCTION

From the previous chapters it is clear that enterprises are in the midst of some revolutionary changes in how people are managed in work situations. The major premise underlying work-force management traditionally has been that efficiency can be achieved best by imposing management control over workers' behaviour. Today in response to massive evidence that control - oriented management models can produce outcomes that subvert the interests of both enterprises and the people who work in them, a new work-force management model is appearing. The premise of the emerging model is that enterprises must elicit the commitment of their employees if they are to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage in contemporary markets. Rather than relying on a "retain and control" management, enterprises in the future will apply a "share and learn" management where they will heavily rely on member self-management in pursuing collective objectives (Herriot & Pemberton, 1995:183).

Herriot & Pemberton (1995:20) further state that management needs to treat the diverse efforts of their workers as the potential source of creativity and innovation; in particular, in terms of the different mental frame works of those in different organisational roles. It was earlier stated that participative management aims to elicit commitment which will lead to enhanced performance by improving the flow of information and enhancing the contributions of employees to decision-making.

A survey of library literature in the areas of organisational structure, decision-making, participation, and power was undertaken in order to guide further discussion and the findings revealed that traditional views of authority and responsibility are usually accepted without question. The decision to permit or to deny participation is treated as a managerial right (Martell, 1987:114). According to Martell (1987:117) few academic information services have moved in the direction of formal participation which extends the right to participate.

Modern academic information services need to realise that their workers need to become self-governed to enable them to get quality to the information user. This approach assumes the people closest to the process know what the problems are to getting quality to the customer. It is only through self-initiated behaviour that enables others to reach their own potential goals (Gilbert & Nelson, 1991:133). The employee needs to be given the expectation and encouragement to take command of the situation for the customer on his / her own.

As enterprises move towards developing a participative style of management, autonomous groups / teams seem a natural evolution. Group decision-making was investigated by Likert and was found to not only affect the quality of decisions positively, but also their implementation (Marchant, 1976:5). Group decisions are found to be especially superior when the group is composed of individuals with different areas of expertise and different points of view but with a common need for a solution. This appears to typify specialists in academic information services.

In this chapter an attempt is going to be made to clarify and explore some of the team issues as applied to academic information services. As teams seem to be the dominant manifestation of participative management, it would be necessary to discuss strategies for academic information services towards high involvement and self-management. These strategies call for paradigm shifts towards aligned purpose, commitment, individual growth, collaboration and involvement - in short, enabling the people in a group or team to generate results and to be empowered by the results they generate (Sullivan, 1991:74).

4.2 STRATEGIES FOR DEVELOPING HIGH INVOLVEMENT AND SELF-MANAGEMENT IN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICES

According to Hackman (in Glaser, 1992:143) the question for today's managers is not whether to design organisations for high involvement and self-management, but how to do it, and how to do it well. The major conceptual question of this section is: what conditions foster and support a kind of self-management that will contribute both to personal well-being and to the achievement of collective objectives?

It is clear that academic information services need to be transformed from being an owner of publications to an integrator of systems (Gerryts, 1995:58). Information technology has an unequalled and drastic influence on conventional collection-centred approaches. A service-based information service can never succeed unless a marketing-orientated approach is followed. Instead of collection building, inspired by a dream of self-sufficiency, the challenge should be accepted rather to provide access and to guarantee document delivery according to agreed norms and standards. It should be realised that new paradigms are now the rules for success. The main challenge of the Academic Information Service is considered to be managing academic information as a resource where information specialists are no longer dominated by traditional views but rather being empowered to use all the new opportunities offered by technology.

The role of the information specialist shifts now from that of a sub-ordinate to a partner or participant in the accomplishment of work and the achievement of organisational goals. This new role for information specialists requires greater, more effective participation as revealed in the following strategies:

4.2.1   Academic Information Services as an Open System

The socio-technical systems theory has emerged as a significant approach for designing the modern enterprise. This theory seeks to improve productivity and human enrichment through a design process that focuses on the interdependencies between and among people, technology and environment (Cummings in Glaser, 1992:44). A concrete outcome of this theoretical perspective is the development of self-regulating work groups. These work designs generally include: a relatively whole task; members who each possess a variety of skills relevant to the group task and worker discretion over such decisions as methods of work.

Academic information services can be seen as a social organism and a co-operative system made up of interrelated sub-parts which interact successfully with its external environment. Poor performance of the one part will affect the performance of the whole system. Managers must become facilitators of communication stimulating high levels of effort. Information services need to adapt to changes in the environment to increase or maintain their effectiveness through the use of non-routine technologies for a non programmed variety of services.

According to Marchant (1982:783), the normal authoritarian management style in use in most academic information services causes a low-keyed feeling of threat among lower professional ranks which results in restricted and less than accurate upward communications.

Consequently, the director often misinterprets the information services' condition and makes less than best decisions. This closed system view has a negative effect on staff morale, relations between managers and staff as well as the quality of service.

4.2.2   Client-centred Market Strategy

In the academic research environment, the keyword is specialisation where specialised information needs are focussed on. Academic information services in future will have to insist on a higher degree of both availability and accessibility of information services. The information specialist challenge lies in providing access to information which is not in his information services (Gerryts, 1991:178). Instead of concentrating on the information service's collection, a new approach should be followed starting with the users' information needs and to proceed from there to appropriate actions to satisfy those needs.

A marketing approach implies that the needs of the market should be determined carefully according to which the services should be provided. The success of the academic information service will not be determined by the size of its collection, but rather how effectively it can serve its clients. The market of any academic information service mainly consist out of the various faculties represented in the institution served. Students with diverse educational- and cultural backgrounds are becoming a professional challenge to academic information services.

From the above it is clear that information specialists need to be empowered to play a more pro-active, assertive and collaborative role. Work activities need to be redesigned to facilitate a more decentralised system where decision-making is taken to the points where the problems occur and clients are served.

4.2.3 Academic Information Services as Learning Enterprises

According to Glaser (1992:379), to the extent that enterprises approach change as a continuing series of learning opportunities, the transition is likely to be successful. If the path of participation is followed, the enterprise and its leaders need to realise that it is only through enhanced empowerment, which comes with learning and growth, that enterprises will find the path to never-ending improvement (See Figure 4.1).
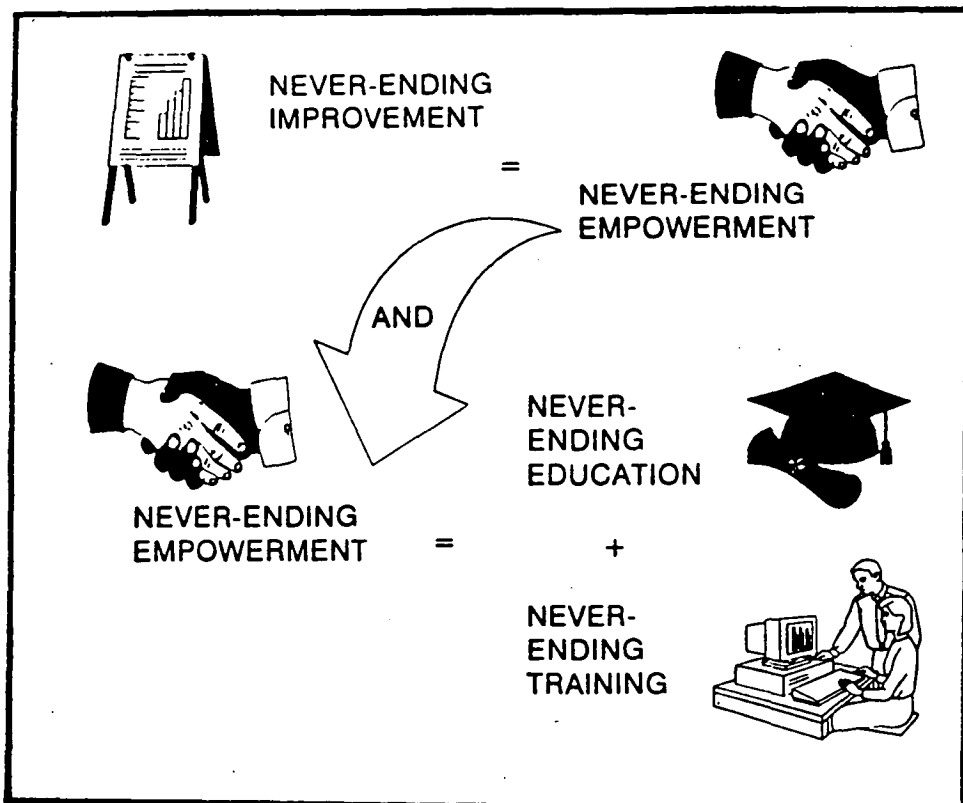
Figure 4.1

The Quality Formula

Source: Gilbert & Nelson (1991:82)

Staff members need to be given the opportunity to become multi-skilled by applying job rotation to improve productivity and work satisfaction. This will help staff members to gain knowledge and skill as well as a better understanding of the service / product being offered.

Self-management is a process rather than an event and will occur more effectively if the process is guided by a facilitator whose goal is to help staff to learn to lead themselves.

It is evident that the quantity of what must be learned increases dramatically under self-management and only self-directed learners can be more responsive to the needs of their clients. Information specialists in academic information services need to be concerned with the structure and quality of the content that goes out over their networks, in what format it is distributed, and to what audience it is directed as well as how the receiver's behaviour will respond to it. The on-line systems integrated many functions causing divisions between service operations to blurr. There is a tendency for greater power equalisation among staff and increased participation with multiple relationships among positions. Crosstraining of staff and temporary exchanges between staff of different work units will broaden job knowledge and improve job satisfaction. Technology helps to socialise information specialists by bringing all staff into decision-making. Departments loose their identity as the respective activities of the workers move closer together.

It is clear that learning information services will be information services without "walls" and a service primarily busy to connect people with information and learning. Information specialists will be dynamic in the information business, will encourage continual change and growth and strive towards flexibility and adaptation.

4.2.4   Participative Leadership

Managers should become leaders willing to step down from their status position and share their authority with their staff. Controlling is no longer done through a power position but rather in terms of a shared vision. If every staff member can become an effective self-manager, then the need for external controls can be eliminated or greatly reduced.

Manz & Sims (in Glaser, 1992:296) summarized participative leadership in the following way: attentive listener, sensitive for member needs and feelings, consultant, advisor, teacher and facilitator. According to Gerryts (1995:67) the new enterprise provides for a more effective and productive mode of control which can be ensured by adoption and internalisation of the vision and values and by the implementation of self-management.

The participative leader now has the role of accomplishing commitments, alignment and empowerment in support of the mutually accepted vision and values. Sullivan (1991:74) sees the new manager as a coach ..... someone who has an on-going, committed partnership with a player / performer and who empowers that person / team, to exceed prior levels of play / performance. This new role of the manager as coach offer the leaders of today's academic information services a means to create a future in which the information service's goals are met through the best performance of its staff. The staff are committed to excellence, assume responsibility for their performance, and develop to their full potential. To achieve this excellence, self-responsibility and development, staff must have greater involvement in the problem-solving and decision-making activities of academic information services.

Manz & Sims (in Glaser, 1992:327) calls this new leadership style, "Super Leadership". Figure 4.2 is a representation of the separate components of Super Leadership, brought together in an organised framework with self-leadership at the core. Each Super Leadership component is of central importance to the development of the self-leadership system within each employee.
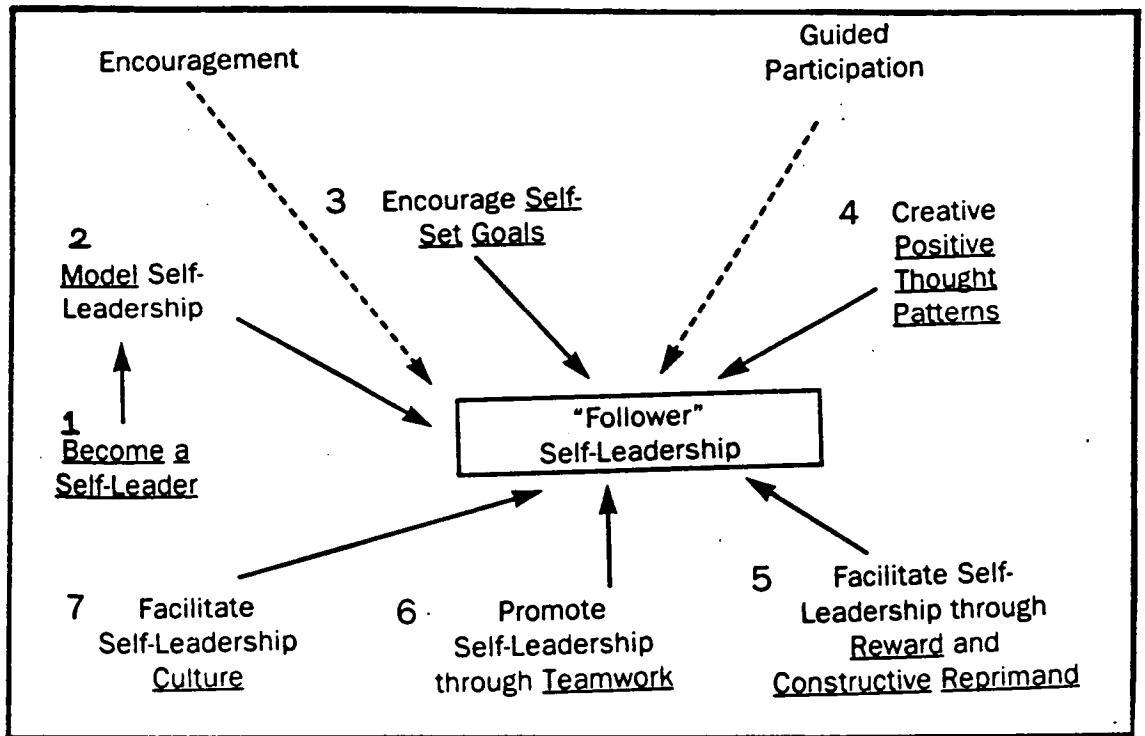
Figure 4.2

The Seven Steps to Super Leadership

Source: Manz & Sims (in Glaser, 1992:327)

4.2.5   Creating Entrepreneurial Structures

The organisational structure is the formal pattern of roles and relationships and provides a common sense of purpose and direction so that diverse interpersonal, organisational and environmental demands can be more efficiently reconciled. Structural hierarchies will constrain decision-making opportunities for those who do not have formal authority and will encourage control of behaviour through rules and standard procedures. This situation will cause the control of outcomes to become secondary which in turn will increase the likelihood of a mismatch between the enterprise and its environment.

The structures at present in most academic information services constrain the scope of the actions of information specialists and limit their responsiveness to users. How do information specialists escape this bind?

The dynamic environment in which academic information services find themselves demand higher degrees of power sharing and increased responsibility with improved access to resources and information for members at lower levels in the hierarchy (Martell, 1987:112). The increasing size, technological complexity and collegial relationships of academic information services require a structure that produces "composite decisions".

To the degree that this condition applies to academic information services today, it both confirms their increasing complexity, and perhaps signals a movement toward their greater professionalisation. Lateral relationships need to replace hierarchy (See Figure 4.3). The new organisational structure will shorten communication lines and one-stop service units will be provided for users. This structure will facilitate alliances, partnerships and close co-operation with clients, brokers and competitors which will lead to a broader vision and a greater connectedness to the whole and eventually to a more productive enterprise.
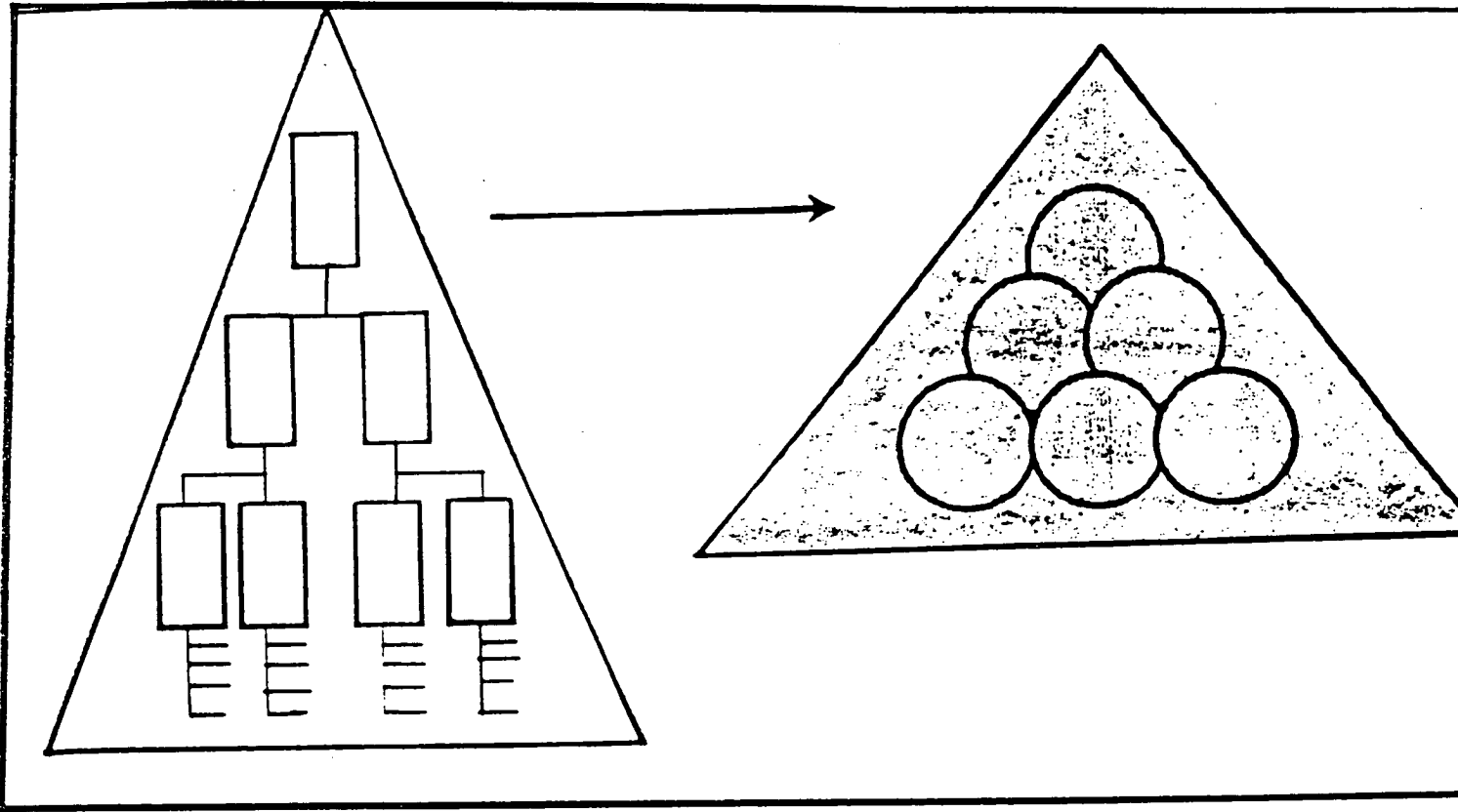
Figure 4.3

Transformation with regard to Structural Aspects and Power Relationships

Source: Gerryts (1995:66)

For tomorrow's enterprise, the rigidities of the structures of the past are serious obstacles to flexibility, adaptability and fast responses. These structures isolated the enterprise and its people from the dynamics and immediacies of a fast-changing world which otherwise would compel them to engage in rapid and continuous learning. Organisational structures can no longer be used to predict and control the future. The issue is primarily one of freeing up resources to be able to perform multiple roles and putting them in a position to respond to the voice of the customer. As stated by Gerryts (1995:67): Academic Information Services are forced to get rid of activities not directly relevant to its mission and leaders should be sensitive to reasons and circumstances which could prevent new ideas getting through.

4.2.6   Commitment through a Shared Vision and Value System

According to Martell (1987:115), lack of agreement on information service's goals and on what constitutes information service effectiveness can lower the quality of decision-making. He further states that building ownership into decision outcomes can facilitate the implementation process by reducing the incidence of low commitment. Senge (1990:206) defines a shared vision as follows: "A vision is truly shared when you and I have a similar picture and are committed to one another having it, not just to each of us, individually having it. When people truly share a vision they are connected, bound together by a common aspiration .....". An enterprise's vision will be the sum of the whole; the leader cannot move the enterprise towards a vision that others do not hold.

The only way towards a shared vision and value system seems to be through increased interdependence which will facilitate aligned action through common visions. The cry has gone out to revamp enterprises to move away from specialised jobs to broader work responsibilities; away from narrow functional perspectives to an enterprise-wide view (Kochan & Useem, 1992:154). Cross-functional teams are an excellent means to react quickly from a broad perspective and to do the tasks in parallel and not sequentially. The pay-off is primarily improved innovation and quality.

From the above strategies, it is clear that self-managed work-teams offer an excellent means of providing greater autonomy, flexibility and personal accountability. Giving people the tools they need to move the enterprise forward and keeping the focus on learning will allow for eradication of the negative morale and lack of self-fulfilment associated with hierarchical control.

To conclude, the view of De Coning (1994:36) can very effectively be applied here: enterprises need to apply the age-old principles of truth, wealth and beauty in terms of their followers - truth in the context of sharing, rather than withholding information from employees; wealth in sharing with followers the fruits of successful entrepreneurship; and beauty by making the enterprise a place where people are empowered to experiment and where they know their opinions and ideas are really taken cognizance of.

The second part of this chapter is going to be devoted to a detailed discussion of the most important team issues as applied to academic information services. Only the most important issues which are most relevant to the topic of this research are going to be catered for.

4.3 SELF-MANAGED TEAM-WORK IN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICES

It would be unnecessary to repeat a detailed discussion on why group decision-making is superior to decisions made by individuals as these advantages have been discussed in previous chapters. The value of group decision-making can be summarised as follows: Available cues are increased, each member feels fully identified with each decision and highly motivated to execute it fully and lastly it offers fulfilment for the basic human need for social interaction.

The results of extensive research as discussed by Andrews & Herschel (1996:38-76) indicate that collective decision-making is a more productive process than individual decision-making (Mayo, 1993; Likert, 1961; Argyris, 1971; Lorsch & Lawrence, 1972; Jewell & Reitz, 1981 and McGregor, 1985). It is clear that team working is specifically designed to make the most of everyone's knowledge and skills.

A true team according to Herriot & Pemberton (1995:82), "is a small number of people with complementary skills who are committed to a common purpose, set of performance goals, and approach for which they hold themselves mutually accountable.

It is first necessary to compare self-managed teams with other forms of group work as there are definite differences to be distinguished.

4.3.1   Why Self-managed Teams?

4.3.1.1   Definition

Before the value of self-managed teams can be assessed, one needs to define a self-managed team. Cummings (in Glaser, 1992:44) states that these work designs generally include: a relatively complete task; members who each possess a variety of skills relevant to the group task; worker discretion over such decisions as methods of work, task schedules, and assignment of members to different tasks; and compensation and feedback about performance for the group as a whole.

According to Harrington-Mackin (1994:5) self-managed teams operate without a visible manager, they control their own operation and they assume management responsibilities in addition to performing its specific jobs e.g. planning, organising, directing and controlling. They set performance standards for the team and even screen applicants for job appointments.

Manz & Sims (in Glaser, 1992:277) see self-managed teams as work innovations mainly characterised by the attempt to create a high degree of decision making autonomy and behavioural control at the work group level. Consequently, a much greater emphasis is placed on control within rather than from outside the group.

4.3.1.2   Self-managed Teams versus Other Groups

In general, what makes these teams different from traditional teams is that they perform many of the functions usually handled by traditional supervisors. Simply put, they manage themselves instead of being managed by others. Self-managing teams may prepare their own budgets, keep their own records and working hours, control the quality of their work, solve their own technical problems, order their own supplies, select their own members and monitor their own performance.

When a work group is converted to a self-managing team, the work responsibilities of everyone are changed. Employees who formerly concerned themselves only with their own jobs suddenly become accountable for the work of the entire team. The planning, organising and controlling previously done by supervisors are now done by group members themselves. Employees are now learning all the jobs of the team, as well as learning to manage the administrative and interpersonal relationships of the group.

There are varieties of organisational self-management based on the degree of authority given to the unit. The following varieties exist presently:

- Quality Circles: are groups from alike work areas who meet usually once a week, usually during company time, to identify, analyse and solve problems in the work area. Management does not determine which problems will be discussed.

Research done by Rafaeli (1985:603) indicated that quality circles do have a significant relationship to employees' perception of influence but no significant effect on job satisfaction. It offers opportunity for interaction with other people but does not always improve employee morale most probably because these groups are not presented on the organisational chart and there is no assurance that their decisions will eventually be implemented.

- Committees: According to Eggleton (1979:271), academic information services in particular have found the committee process an attractive means of implementing a form of participative management but Sheble & Hill (1994:511) reported that the presence of committees does not guarantee that information specialists will have a significant voice in decision-making at the goal- and policy-formation levels. In their survey only 56 % respondents believed that committee service helped them perform their jobs better. Committees do provide opportunity for a broad cross section of information specialists to communicate and learn about administrative procedures and policies but they still lack authority to shape the goals and decisions of their host enterprise. Some information services mainly use committees for fact-finding and information-gathering, while reserving the authority for policy decisions for top management. Most committees have limited impact on policy decisions (Sheble & Hill, 1994:525).

The value of self-managed teams will now be discussed as compared to the above groups / teams.

4.3.1.3   Value of Self-managed Teams

According to Glaser (1992:6) the use of self-managed work teams maximises the utilisation of the human resources in an enterprise by relying on empowerment and self-regulation.

The spread of these teams has been amazing over the past three years. Hackman & Oldham's theory of job design (in Glaser, 1992:50) suggests a framework for understanding how self-regulating groups affect individuals motivationally.

They identify three psychological conditions that lead to both work effectiveness and personal satisfaction: (a) personally meaningful work (b) responsibility for work conditions and (c) knowledge of results.

These states are present when the work content is high on the following five core dimensions: (a) Skill variety (b) Task identity (i.e. the ability to complete a whole piece of work) (c) Task significance (i.e. degree of impact on the lives or work of other people) (d) Autonomy and (e) Feedback.

When the conditions for self-regulation are implemented effectively, they seem to score high on all these work characteristics. They provide group members with the opportunity to use different skills, to complete a meaningful piece of work, to perform tasks that affect other team members, to make important work-related decisions, and to learn how well they are doing.

From the above self-regulating conditions and characteristics, it is clear that self-managed teams have a positive influence on individual motivation as well as the required co-operation and control of technical and environmental variances. Self-managed teams can be used very effectively in modern academic information services today simply because of the various faculties in the university to be served with relevant information. Each faculty has different information needs and needs to be treated uniquely by various service units in the academic information services (Gerryts, 1995:59).

It would be necessary now to discuss effective team work as the implementation of self-managed teams needs to be done correctly and effectively to ensure good results and optimum performance.

4.3.2   Self-managed Team Effectiveness

While the research literature on participation in decision-making is voluminous (Magjuka & Baldwin, 1991:794), relatively scant effort has been made directed towards understanding how to most effectively design and administer a team-based involvement programme.

There are many dimensions on which one could assess effectiveness of self-managing teams. The following three dimensions seem to be most acceptable:

- The degree to which the unit's productive output meets the standards of quantity, quality and timeliness of the people who receive, review or use that output.

- The degree to which the process of carrying out the work enhances the capability of enterprise members to work together interdependently in the future.

- The degree to which work experiences contribute to the growth and personal well-being of unit members - the opportunities for learning and need satisfaction.

From the above it is clear that team effectiveness is much more than simply counting outputs and that creating, maintaining and working in self-managing teams generally requires more expertise and commitment than working needed in traditional units. It appears that certain conditions must be in place for a self-managing unit to have a real chance of achieving a high standing on the three criterion dimensions discussed previously.

4.3.2.1   Conditions for Effective Self-managed Teams

Existing research, theory and organisational practice identifies five general conditions that appear to foster and support unit effectiveness through self-management (Hackman in Glaser, 1992:156):

(a)   Clear, engaging direction

The overall directions for performance are established by representatives of the larger enterprise in which a performing team operates.

Top management still needs to facilitate alignment towards common objectives, thereby facilitating co-ordinated action in pursuing them. It orients enterprise members toward common objectives, it energises people and provides criteria with which unit members can identify appropriate work strategies.

(b)   <u>An Enabling Performing-Unit Structure</u>

Hackman (in Glaser, 1992:159) identified three "hurdles" or as he calls it "process criteria of effectiveness" that can increase the chances of high performance of self-managing units.

•   Task design

As mentioned earlier, the value of self-managed teams depends on three psychological conditions for effective task design:

–   Performers should experience the task as meaningful (a whole piece of work).

–   Performers experience personal responsibility for the outcomes of the work (when they decide how the work will be carried out).

–   Performers experience knowledge of the results of their work - trustworthy and informative feedback about work progress and outcomes.

•   Unit Composition (People)

The previous process criterium depends significantly on how the work itself is designed; the second (knowledge and skill) depends primarily on the people who are assigned to that work.

The best way to increase the knowledge and skill brought to bear on a piece of work is to have one or more highly talented people perform that work. Knowledge and skill are more consequential in self-managing units than in traditional units because what people know has high leverage on unit outcomes and the consequences are higher for the performers themselves.

Osif & Harwood (1995:120) warns that not all employees will fit into a team environment due to a number of reasons such as lack of training or an inability to develop team skills. Enterprises that aspire to self-management generally do take the selection and placement of members extremely serious. Existing evidence suggests that the following factors are significant in considering the composition of a self-managing team: (Hackman in Glaser, 1992:162):

–   Team size (many teams in enterprises are far larger than they need).

–   The balance between homogeneity and heterogeneity of members' skills (when people are either too similar to one another or too different from one another, performance problems often develop).

–   Members' competence in working co-operatively with other people (some minimum level of social skills is required to accomplish tasks that require co-ordination among members and to manage the interplay between individual desires and group goals).

●   Sent Expectations about Behaviour
Two expectations are critical. First, unit members must understand that they are responsible for regulating their own behaviour. This is the core expectation for any self-managing unit. Unless members accept this, they will be unlikely to adjust their performance strategies as circumstances change.

The second critical expectation is that the unit members are obliged to continuously assess the performance situation (with particular attention to changes in the task or environment) and to actively plan work activities based on those assessments. Instead of being mere executors of work, team members are also responsible for decision-making about how and when their behaviours should be adjusted.

When the abovementioned three structural features are present, the chances increase that self-managers will exert sufficient effort on the task, bring sufficient knowledge and skill to bear on it, and choose or develop a performance strategy that is appropriate to the task and the situation.

(c)   A Supportive Organisational Context

The presence (or absence) of organisational support can dramatically foster (or limit) the effectiveness of a self-managing performance unit. Three specific features of the organisational context are significant in supporting self-managing units.

•   The Reward System

A reward system that recognizes and reinforces excellent unit performance can compliment and amplify the motivational incentives of a well designed task. The impact of rewards will be greater if they are really earned, whether a simple recognition of excellence or more tangible in the form of profit-sharing. Semler (1989:82) has a very significant saying; "..... that the creation of wealth should enrich the creator". Gerryts (1995:68) pointed out that the risk of rewarding the individual, when a team effort is involved, should be kept in mind. Team-based reward systems are also recommended by Plunkett & Fournier (1991:174). This system may lead to the elimination of rewards for heroism by individual "experts" which, to some people can be a demotivator. There is also an increased likelihood that more people will increase their contributions.

- The Education System

Education and training is important in self-managed teams as team members need all the knowledge and skill necessary for optimum task performance. Communication-, management- and interpersonal skills are very important for effective group performance. In academic information services, the technical astuteness of information specialists is crucial in offering a dynamic service.

The particular kind of assistance required depends on both task requirements and specific customer needs. Every team member needs to be given the opportunity to decide for himself / herself which educational- or training assistance is needed and need to be allowed to rotate task roles to enable each member to be multi-skilled in all team activities and jobs.

- The Information System

The information system of an enterprise is critical to a performing unit's ability to plan and execute a task-appropriate performance strategy. If a unit cannot obtain clear information about its performance situation, or if it does not have access to data about the likely results of alternative approaches to the task, it may develop a way of proceeding that seems reasonable to group members but that turns out to be grossly inappropriate when executed.

According to Hackman (in Glaser, 1992:168) members need to have information about (a) task requirements, constraints and opportunities that may limit or channel strategic options; (b) the available resources for use; and (c) the people who will receive, review or use the group product, including the standards of service required.

In many academic information services, information is only shared on a "need to know" basis. Strategy-relevant information is now necessary because members are no longer only executors of work but also responsible for monitoring and managing their own performance - a stance that is necessary for team effectiveness, particularly in a fluid and competitive environment as that of Academic Information Services.

(d)   Expert Coaching and Consultation

The organisational supports discussed so far typically are provided relatively impersonally but additional support should be directly provided to self-managers, through hands-on coaching and consultation by their leaders. Coaching is particularly critical for self-managers who must learn how to regulate their behaviour in often uncertain work situations. Leaders help members avoid unnecessary losses of effort, misapplications of talent and to strengthen their commitment to hard, effective work.

Moreover, a coach can help self-managers to shrink any gap between a person's talents and the requirements of the task. The role of the help-provider is not to dictate to group members the "one right way" to go about their collaborative work, but rather how to minimize "process losses" and how to work together as self-managers. It is necessary to distinguish here between the team leader and management in general. An enterprise organised into teams needs corporate leaders as well as team leaders.

Corporate leaders align effort towards a shared vision, empower members to make decisions on their own and provide feedback and information on performance of the team as well as the enterprise. Team leaders develop group members and help the group maintain its boundaries. Team leaders need to be effective listeners, be able to trust, need to have highly developed interpersonal skills and need to know the business. Most importantly, they need to be able to challenge ideas / issues instead of people (Plunkett & Fournier, 1991:220).

Whether a group leader or a corporate leader, they need to ensure that all functions critical to both task accomplishment and group maintenance are adequately taken care of.

(e)   Adequate Material Resources

The fifth and final condition is also the simplest: to have the resources required to get the work done, such as money, space, staff time, technology, etc. A lack of resources often inhibits effective performance in self-managing units. Even if all the other conditions are met, it would be impossible to be effective if they do not have the resources they need to do their work.

The first condition - clear direction - provides the overall frame within which the unit operates, the middle three conditions - structure, context and coaching - together increase the chances of achieving effectiveness while the final condition - adequate material resources - provides the means for getting the work done.

A full summary of the psychology of self-management in enterprises is illustrated in Figure 4.4. The five enabling conditions which have been discussed would serve as criteria for a leader to use in comparing and evaluating alternative behaviours. In this proposed model, a leader can easily determine which behaviours are associated with which outcomes.

Enabling Performance Conditions	Indicators of Performance Processes	Indicators of Performance Outcomes
1. Clear, Engaging Direction	Energized, Aligned Performance	
A Well-designed Performance Situation:	Process Criteria High:	* Clients are Pleased with the Product
2. An enabling unit structure (task, people, expectations)	Ample effort	* The Unit's capability Has Improved
3. A supportive organisational context (rewards, education, information)	Sufficient knowledge and skill	* Individuals' Growth and Well-being are Enhanced
4. Available, expert coaching	Appropriate task performance strategies	
5. Adequate Material Resources	Task Execution Smooth, Unconstrained	
3. Monitoring Performance Conditions	2. Monitoring Performance Processes	1. Monitoring Outcome States

Unit Leader

Figure 4.4

The Psychology of Self-management in Enterprises

Source: Hackman (in Glaser, 1992:179)

The previous discussion on self-management offers more than adequate evidence that academic information services can only benefit from this collaborative approach. This seems to be the most effective approach for both personal satisfaction and effective performance. If all the conditions for effectiveness are met, there is no reason why it can not ensure the possible best outcomes with a satisfied work-force willing to give their best at all times.

The final issue to be discussed in this chapter is the degree of "real" self-control over actions. Information specialists experience the problem of, what Martell (1987:115) calls "mock" participative situations. This happens when members are allowed to give inputs in decision-making but the final say still comes from the supervisor or members are only allowed to deal with matters of lesser importance. The amount of participation allowed by management is thus directly linked to the management style applied by the supervisors.

4.4 MOCK PARTICIPATION VERSUS DIRECT, FORMAL PARTICIPATION

Few information services' managers subscribe to a value structure that calls for the distribution of organisational authority along democratic lines. Participation is generally viewed not as a right but as a strategy to be used, or as a managerial style, Participation can thus be reviewed on a continuum ranging from external management to self-leadership as was done in the empirical survey of this research.

Nightingale (in Martell, 1987:117) lists eight degrees of participation:

• Employees need to be informed about decisions made by management.

• Employees are informed after decisions have been made.

- Employees are given an opportunity to express views but decisions are taken by management in any event.

- Workers are consulted informally before a decision is made.

- Employees must be consulted before a decision is made.

- Employees participate informally with management in decision-making - employees retain the right, through collective agreement, of veto over some issues.

- Management and employees jointly make decisions.

- Employees have the final say in all decision-making - self-management.

Nightingale also indicates an important difference between supervising styles that assume employees have the right to participate directly in decision-making and those that offer only indirect rights through representation. Most managers view direct participation as only useful for a narrow range of issues. Nancy Brown (1979:201) offers a list of issues over which information specialists can exercise control (See Figure 4.5). Items 1 - 5 relate directly to the individual information specialists. Item 6 - 13 are normally covered by collective or voluntary agreements. Items 14 - 19 are typical of policy or operational issues of a somewhat limited scale. Item 20 relates directly to the large number of enabling decisions that must be made before major decisions are implemented and finally, Items 21 - 25 are major decisions affecting the entire information service's system and which are not easily reversible.

25. Major technol Major technological changes
24. Major financial commitments
23. Major organisational changes
22. Responses to severe budget cuts
21. Budget allocations

20. Implementation decisions resulting from major decisions

19. Collection development policies, including weeding policies
18. Quality of the cataloguing
17. Microfilm policy
16. Equipment purchases
15. Amount and type of orientation
14. Library hours

13. Initial appointment
12. Renewal and continuing appointment
11. Promotion
10. Sabbatical
9. Transfer
8. Merit evaluation
7. Salary and benefits
6. Due process

5. Time off the desk to pursue academic contributions, e.g. research, etc.
4. Academic contribution objectives
3. Personal work objective
2. Job descriptions
1. Work standards - how the job is done

Figure 4.5

Issues for decision-making in Academic Information Services

Source: Brown (1979:203)

The conclusion can be made that the degree of participation varies with organisational traditions and managerial styles. Formal participation, i.e. an explicitly recorded system of rules and agreements where members have a right to participate are currently not common practice in academic information services (Martell, 1987:117).

Decisions in the areas of establishing general policies, setting budgets and specifying information service's faculty assignments are mostly reserved for top management, whereas staff are likely to make decisions regarding production methods, scheduling and other work-related issues.

The most democratic form of decision-making unites formal and direct participation. Direct participation signifies the personal involvement of individual staff members on all levels while indirect participation is mediated through some form of representation. By limiting participation to issues surrounding task accomplishment, the traditional perspectives allow management to maintain control. The effectiveness of participation in terms of staff interest can be determined by the number of times that the advice given on important issues is acted upon in proportion to the number of times it is not.

Within academic information services, concerted attention should be paid to the extension of rights to employees for formal and direct participation in key decision-making areas.

4.5   CONCLUSION

The strategies and model of self-management presented in this chapter emphasise paradigm shifts and conditions which very definitely offer a challenge to directors and leaders in academic information services today.

The increasing use of self-managed work teams in enterprises of industrialised countries suggests that they are a unique and viable alternative to traditional forms of work design.

Their popularity, however, should not allow enterprises to over-estimate their general applicability, or to under-estimate the conditions necessary for their implementation and continued effectiveness.

This chapter has attempted to provide a clearer understanding of the conditions, implementation, strategies and supervision needed for effective self-regulation.

Directors and leaders of modern academic information services need to encourage and facilitate direct- and formal participation among information specialists at all levels. This will help to cope more effectively with future challenges of rapid change and technological complexity that now threatens efforts to create more responsive academic information services.

The next chapter will be dedicated to an empirical survey in order to assess the degree to which participative management is effectively practised in academic information services.

CHAPTER FIVE

EMPIRICAL SURVEY

> "Ex ungue leonem ('from a claw, the
> lion') - From a sample we can judge the
> whole". A Latin saying.
> (Doman, 1993:59)

5.1 RESEARCH STRATEGY

5.1.1 Introduction

As stated in the previous chapters, participative management is an issue that attracts a great deal of attention from managers, trade unions and academics alike. For over half a century, participative management has been presented as the 'answer' to the twin problems of productivity growth and work humanization, yet only a small minority of information workers in academic information services today do participate in formal and effective programmes (Martell, 1987:117).

Perhaps because most literature in the area has focussed on the results of participation programmes (e.g. Marchant, 1982), there is a need to assess the degree of participation practised in academic information services today as well as which programmes are in use and whether they are effectively (actually) applied. This is exactly what this survey aims to do.

The major contribution of the research presented here is an extension of the operational model for participation in academic information services presented by Nancy Brown (1979, 201-207).

Not only is the degree of participation going to be assessed in this research, but also the extent to which it relates to the management style or leadership philosophy in practise at the institution. The specific group participation patterns in use are also going to be identified together with their various functions, the staff participating in these and also how often their decisions are accepted and applied by management.

This survey thus attempts to, apart from assessing the degree of participation, also test the presence of actual (formal) participation, to what extent they participate in higher-level decisions and also how often these decisions are implemented. Actual participation in high-level managerial decisions by all levels of staff is under discussion in this survey.

5.1.2   Survey Sample

The data used in this research came from a survey of employees at seven academic information services in Gauteng, universities as well as technicons offering diverse fields of study. All employees, temporary as well as part-time with at least two years experience with the institution and a minimum qualification of standerd 10 were included in the survey sample.

The reason for this being to avoid any compromise with the study's findings due to the employees' limited experience and information in the area of participation. The standerd 10 level of education at least ensured the necessary level of reading- and writing skills to complete the questionnaire. All employees in all departments and levels were involved in the survey except top management as their views might not have been objective in this case.

After initial selection, the relevant management personnel were contacted by telephone seeking their co-operation with and involvement in the survey. The survey instrument was delivered personally by the researcher to the necessary institutions in Gauteng.

During this exercise, the researcher could explain the necessary procedures of the survey clearly to the relevant people and at the same time ensure their commitment to the exercise. Hand made "mail-boxes" were also delivered for return of the questionnaires to protect the anonymity of respondents.

5.1.3   Data-collection Instrument

The survey instrument was a twenty-item questionnaire compiled by the researcher (See Appendix B). Several standard instruments for measuring management style (Marchant, 1976:234-242), degree of participation (Brown, 1979:201-207) and group decision-making patterns (Sheble & Hill, 1994:511-526) were consulted. These however, could not be used for the purpose of this research. Therefore, an instrument was developed specifically for this study. Items for the survey were selected from the above-mentioned instruments as well as from literature on the topics.

The survey instrument was pre-tested with a group of employees in an academic information service representing all levels (except top management) and departments in the institution. Two hundred and fifty of the 440 questionnaires distributed, were returned, yielding a return rate of 56,8 %. A checkoff format was chosen for the questionnaire in an effort to minimize the time respondents needed to complete it and to maximize the probability that the questionnaires would be returned. A cover letter (See Appendix A) accompanied the questionnaire to explain the purpose of the study and to act as proof that the researcher was indeed a registered student doing research in the area of participative management.

The first section of the questionnaire elicited background information, such as gender, post held, service area, highest qualification and complete years of service with that institution.

The questions on qualification and years of service were also used as a control mechanism to ensure that only members with minimum standerd 10 and at least two years service at the institution completed the questionnaire.

The second section of the questionnaire gathered information about the management style in operation at the specific institution to which employees responded on a scale of 1 to 4.

The third section focussed on the amount of participation exercised at a specific institution by using two very important dimensions of participation namely the degree of participation exercised by employees over the decisions taken by management (Nightingale in Brown, 1979:201) and the issues over which employees exercise control ranging from those relating directly to the individual's job to those major decisions affecting the entire system (Brown, 1979:203). The degree / issue interface is used in this survey to determine the amount of participation exercised in a specific institution.

The final section of the questionnaire determined which group participation patterns are in use at the academic information service, who serve in these groups, which functions do they perform and how often are the decisions made by these groups, implemented? Formal participation patterns such as group decision-making extends the right to participate (Martell, 1987:117). Martell also states that the most democratic form of decision-making unites formal and direct participation (personal involvement of individual staff members). The main issue focussed on in this section of the questionnaire is whether "real" participation takes place, whether these patterns are really used to influence the goals and structure of academic information services and whether all levels of employees are allowed to participate (direct participation).

5.1.4   Data Analysis

The responses from the 250 questionnaires were coded and processed by the Statistical Consultation Service of the Rand Afrikaans University.

The data analysis was structured to yield the following information:

- Profile of respondents (Section A).

- Management Style on a continuum 1 - 4; 1 representing an autocratic style which allows very little or no say, to 4 which allows a great deal of say to be called self-management (Section B).

- Degree of participation by determining the amount of influence on a scale of 1 - 4; (from no say to full say) in each of eight decision-making areas ranging from task assignments to major technological changes. Issues are plotted against the degree of participation (Section C).

- Group participation patterns (Section D).

Questions 19 - 21 determined who participated in these groups, which functions they performed and how often were the decisions taken by these groups, implemented. The group options listed in the questionnaire were quality circles, standing committees, temporary task / project teams and self-managed work groups / service units. The researcher wanted to determine whether the participation allowed, was "real" in the sense of allowing these groups to influence the strategic position of the institution and whether all employees were allowed to participate.

Views and attitudes could be quantified because of the 1 - 4 scale used in most of the questions. By averaging the responses, a mean could be determined which represented the majority.

5.2   SURVEY RESULTS

The percentages and number of respondents quoted in the following analysis of the results are the actual number of respondents who have answered that specific question.

It will first be necessary to discuss the response percentages and number of the seven groups who participated in the survey before analysing their responses to the various questions.

5.2.1   Sample Representation (Figure 5.1)

As mentioned previously, 440 questionnaires were distributed to seven groups representing different academic information services in the Gauteng-area (See Figure 5.1). Three of the groups were situated in central Pretoria and the remaining four groups formed part of the Johannesburg and surrounding area. Technicons as well as universities offering diverse subject areas were included in the survey.

Figure 5.1 shows that two of the groups (Groups 3 and 7) represent less than 10 % of the sample because of the fact that the other groups were larger institutions with more employees and therefore returned more questionnaires. The other groups all represented between 14 % and 21 % of the sample.
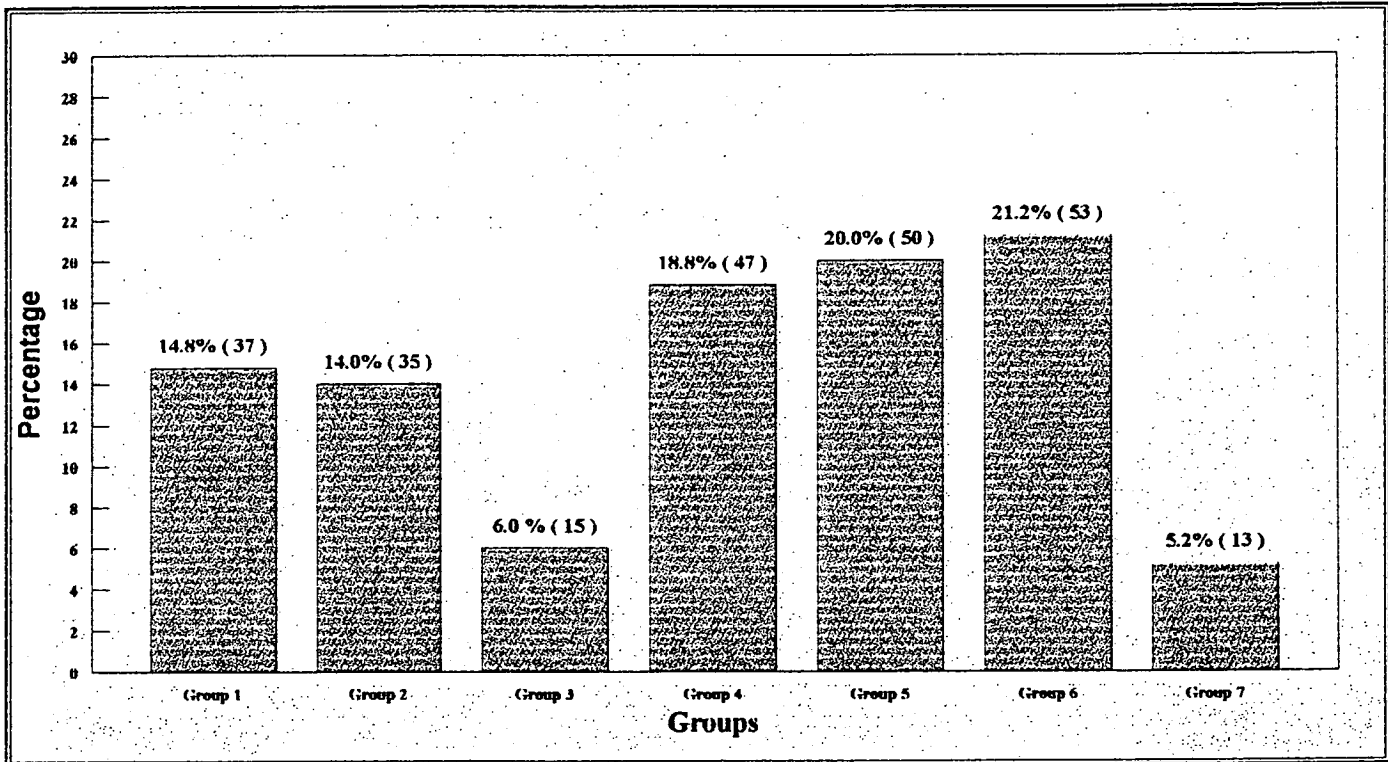
Figure 5.1

Sample Representation

5.2.2   Section A - Profile of Respondents

This section consisted out of five questions which had to be answered by all the respondents. It is important to reveal some of the general characteristics of the responding employees. All the responses to these questions were analysed graphically to make possible comparisons easier.

5.2.2.1   Question 1 : Gender (Figure 5.2)

Figure 5.2 indicates clearly that the majority of respondents were female (85,2 %) while only 14,8 % of the respondents were male.

Although the information services profession is mainly seen in South Africa as a female domain (Irvine, 1985:236), management positions are still occupied by males (the latter were not included in this study).

The conclusion can thus be made that the academic information services in the Gauteng area are still dominantly the work place of females.

(14.8%)

(85.2%)

Male (37)
Female (213)
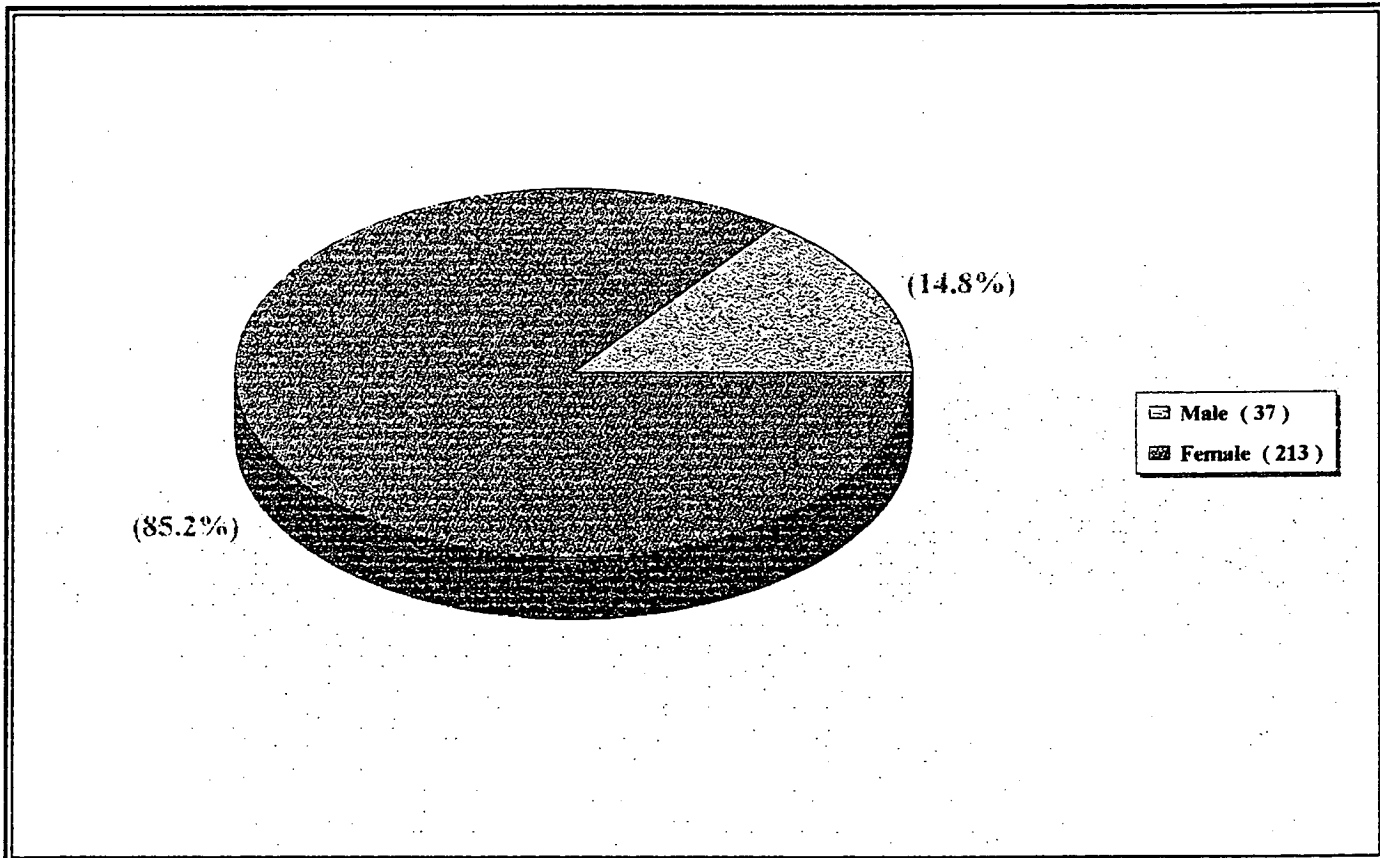
Figure 5.2

Gender

5.2.2.2   Question 2: Post Held (Figure 5.3)

Various ranks and positions were listed in the questionnaire as possible options. For the purpose of analysis, these were reduced to middle management, operational staff and support staff.

Option 3 (Senior librarians, Administration / Finance managers, Section heads) was taken as middle management.

The operational staff included options 1 and 5 (Junior / Assistant librarians, Binders, Assistant binders, Administration officers, Secretaries, Librarians, Cataloguers and Senior administration officers).

Options 2 and 4 on the questionnaire were taken as support staff and consisted out of library assistants, administration assistants, typists, cleaners, drivers and binder assistants.
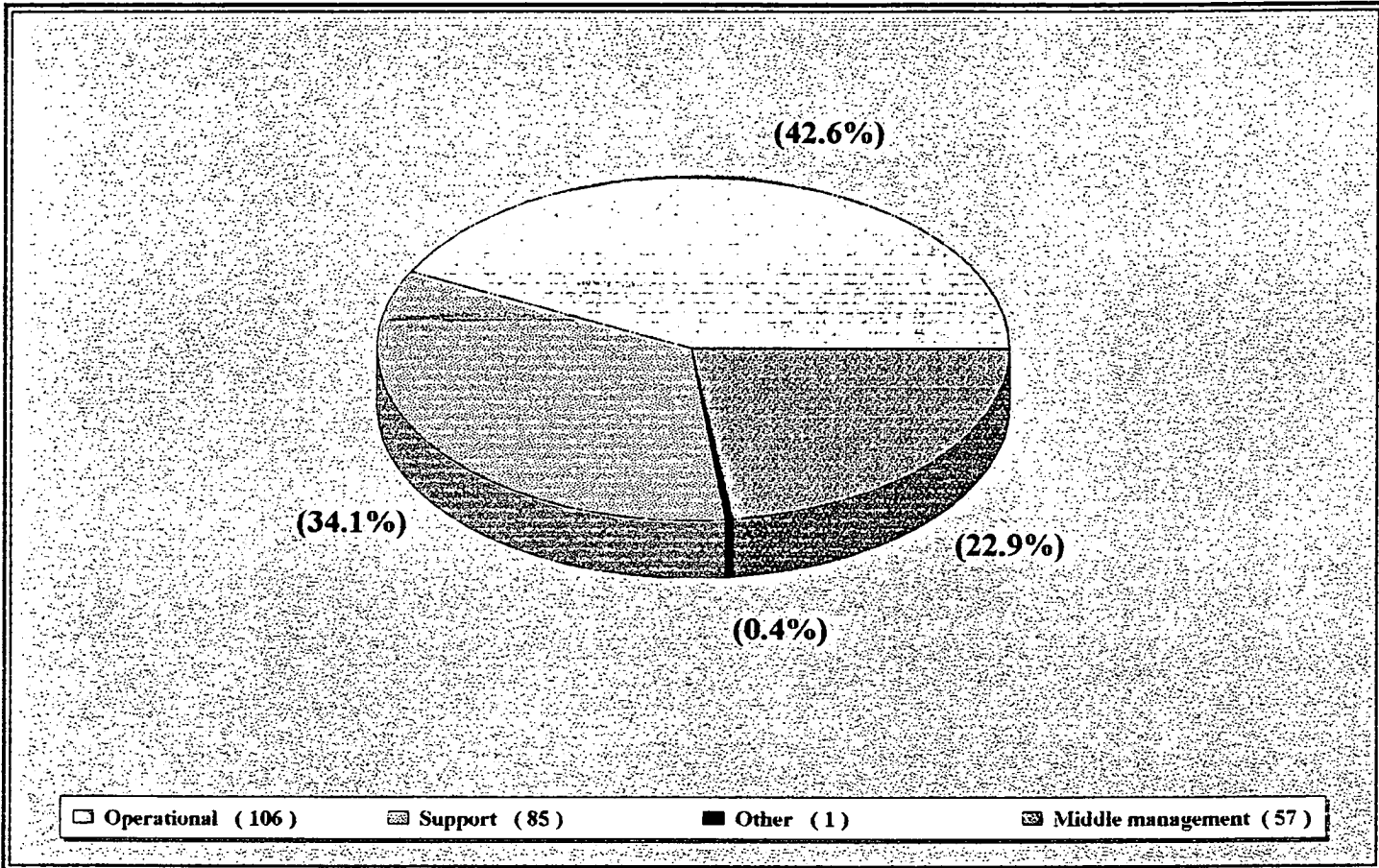
Figure 5.3

Post Held

From Figure 5.3 it is clear that the majority of respondents belong to the operational group (42,6 %), then the support staff which represents 34,1 % and lastly the middle management group (22,9 %). The 0.4 % which represents the "other" posts belonged to one employee who's post did not fit into the structured categories of the questionnaire.

The posts represented in this question covered all the posts in the academic information services and not only information specialists. Only one respondent did not answer this question, from there the total of 249 instead of 250.

The conclusion can be made that the majority of employees in the academic information services in Gauteng belong to the operational workgroup level.

5.2.2.3   Question 3 : Service Area (Figure 5.4)

Seven different possible service areas were listed as options including an option for "other". The results (See Figure 5.4) indicated that most of the respondents belong to the technical services (30,2 %) which include acquisitioning, bindery, the processing of the materials as well as periodicals. Client services represented 29 % of the respondents while administration took up 20,2 % of the responding sample.
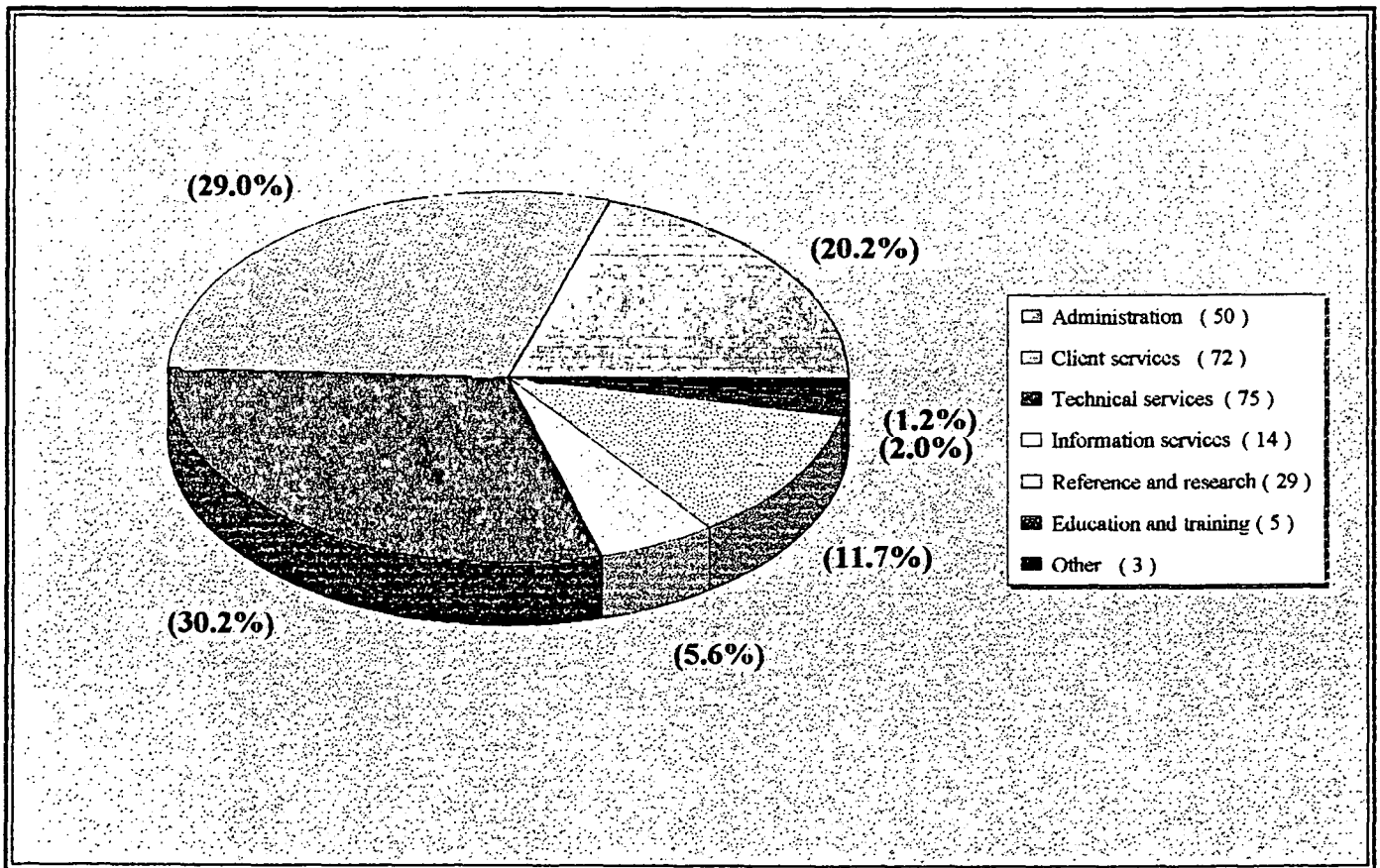
Figure 5.4

Service Area

A great issue of concern is the fact that the other three departments namely computer services, reference, research and education and training were only represented respectively by 5,6 %, 11,7 % and 2 % of the responding sample. Information technology and in-service training do not seem to get the prominence it deserves.

The first question that comes to one's mind when looking at these results is: do academic information services realise the strategic importance of information technology as well as learning in the workplace? It is the researcher's opinion that technical services which was represented by 30,2 % of the respondents should swop places with computer services which was only represented by 5,6 % of the responding sample.

The second question one can ask is: Can the academic information services in the Gauteng area be seen as learning organisations when only 2 % of the responding sample for this survey represents the education and training department. Do they really value the potential of their human resources when only five staff members in seven institutions in Gauteng are employed to educate and train?

5.2.2.4   <u>Question 4: Highest Qualifications</u> (Figure 5.5)

Figure 5.5 shows that workers in academic information services in Gauteng do indeed have different educational backgrounds.
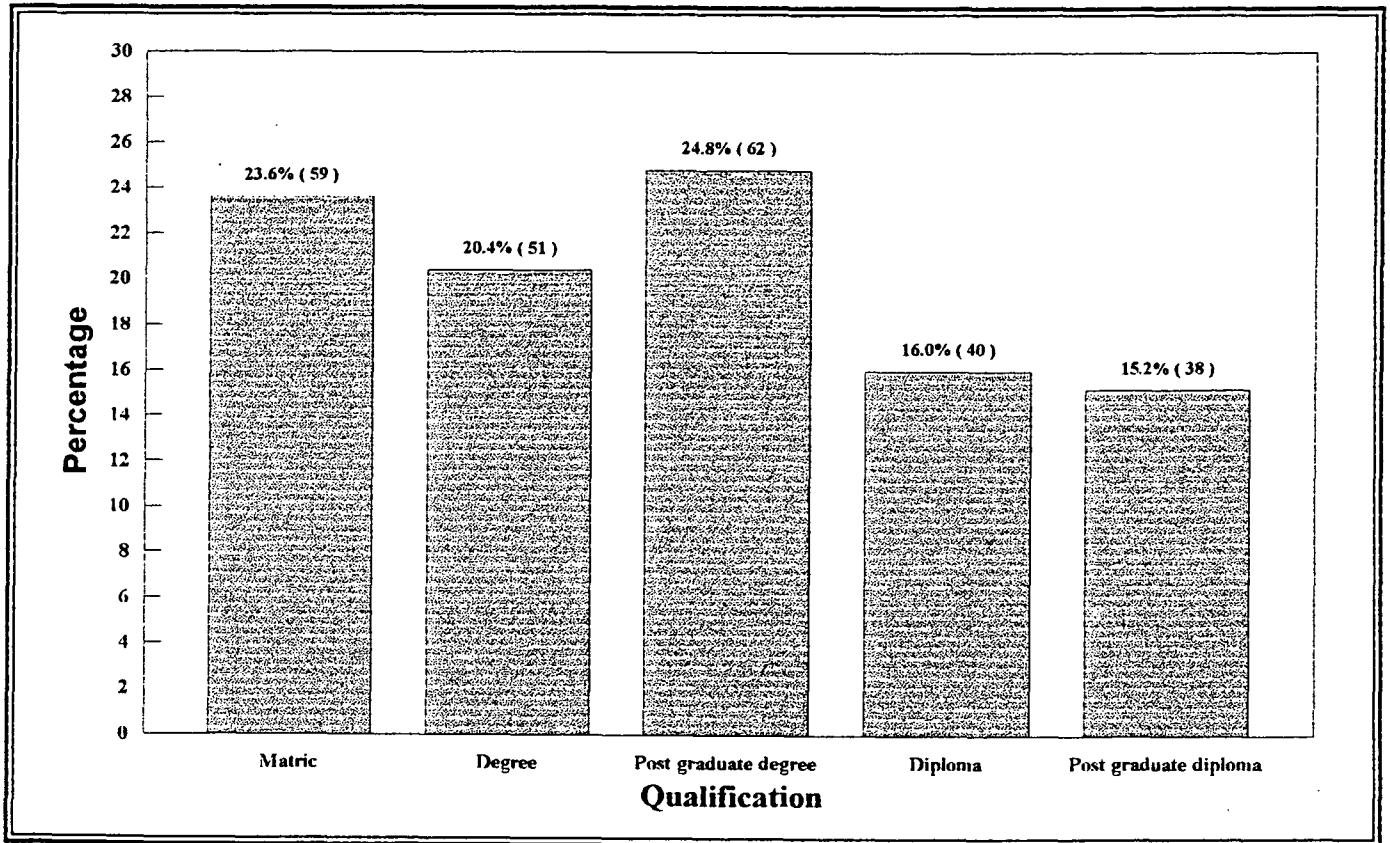
Figure 5.5

Highest Qualification

Most employees have a post graduate degree (24,8 %) while very close are those with a matric qualification (23,6 %). Third are those with degrees (20,4 %), fourth comes diploma's (16 %) and lastly are the employees with a post graduate diploma (15,2 %).

From the above results it is clear that only 39,6 % of respondents do not have degrees which indicates that the majority of employees (60,4 %) in academic information services in Gauteng do have degrees of which 24,8 % are senior degrees. The academic information services in Gauteng do indeed have a lot of expertise at hand and there's no reason why they cannot render a quality service to their customers. It's just a matter of acknowledging their human resources' potential and using it effectively in all levels of decision-making.

5.2.2.5   Question 5: Years of Service with the Institution (Figure 5.6)

It is encouraging to see such an even distribution of experience at the institutions:
Figure 5.6 indicates that 35,6 % of respondents have been with that institution for 5
years and less, 33,2 % have been there for 6 - 10 years and 30,8 % of respondents for
longer than 10 years. Only one respondent did not answer this question.

Most employees (64 %) at academic information services in Gauteng have been longer
than 5 years with the specific institution which indicates that there isn't a big staff-
turnover. This means that employees at academic information services in Gauteng are
relatively satisfied in their jobs or that there are no other job opportunities for these
employees.
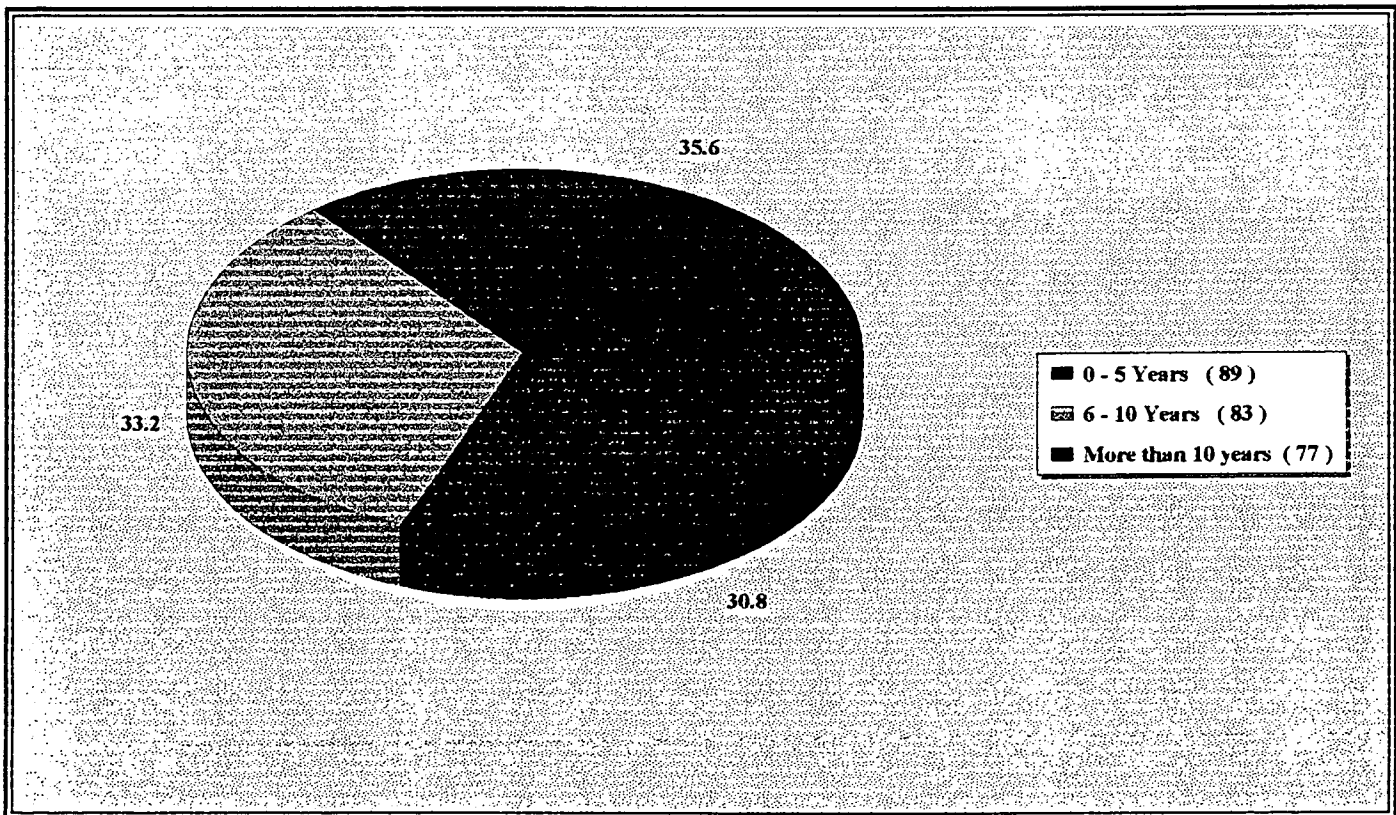
Figure 5.6

Years of Service with the Institution

From the results of Section A, valuable conclusions have been reached on the profile of the respondents of this survey. This information will be necessary to interpret the results of the remaining sections correctly.

5.2.3 Section B - Management Style (Figure 5.7)

Management style is a strong predictor of participation and is in part a manifestation of the manager's philosophy on the nature of man (Marchant, 1976:147). If a manager believes employees are naturally active and take pride in striving to and achieving goals, he / she will manifest his / her trust by involving them in decision-making and by delegating authority to them.

The variables used to measure management style in this questionnaire were:

- Mutual trust and confidence (Question 6 - 8).

- The character of the communication process (Question 9 - 11).

- The leadership philosophy (Question 12 - 16).

It will be necessary to briefly discuss each of the abovementioned variables.

5.2.3.1 Mutual Trust and Confidence (Question 6 - 8)

A leader who trusts subordinates will generally ask their advice and will realise they are more strategically placed than he / she to make some decisions, so responsibility will be delegated to them.

5.2.3.2   <u>Communication Process</u> (Question 9 - 11)

Two characteristics of the communication process were used to determine it's nature namely: the extent to which downward- (Question 9) and upward- (Question 10) communications are accepted and secondly the direction of the information flow.

The nature of communication changes with the managerial style in use.   In an authoritarian enterprise, upward communications are never or hardly accepted and applied while downward communications are accepted with just as much suspicion.

5.2.3.3   <u>Leadership Philosophy</u> (Question 12 - 16)

The variable that appears to be central to management style is the leadership philosophy. The mechanisms used for control (Question 12 and 14) and the character of decision-making (Question 13 and 15), relate strongly to the leadership philosophy in operation.

Question 16 was a control question to assess the respondent's view on the type of leadership philosophy in operation at that time - to what extent management focusses attention on the human aspects of the enterprise.

For the purpose of this study, the above-discussed variables of management style were not measured separately but as a whole by averaging the responses in all three the dimensions together. The reason for this being to determine where on the leadership continuum (1 - 4) does each institution fit in: From autocratic (no say), consultative (some say), democratic (quite a bit) and finally, full say by means of self-management. Figure 5.7 indicates a very interesting similarity amongst all seven groups of respondents: they all fit into a democratic (quite a bit of say) leadership style - number three on the leadership continuum.
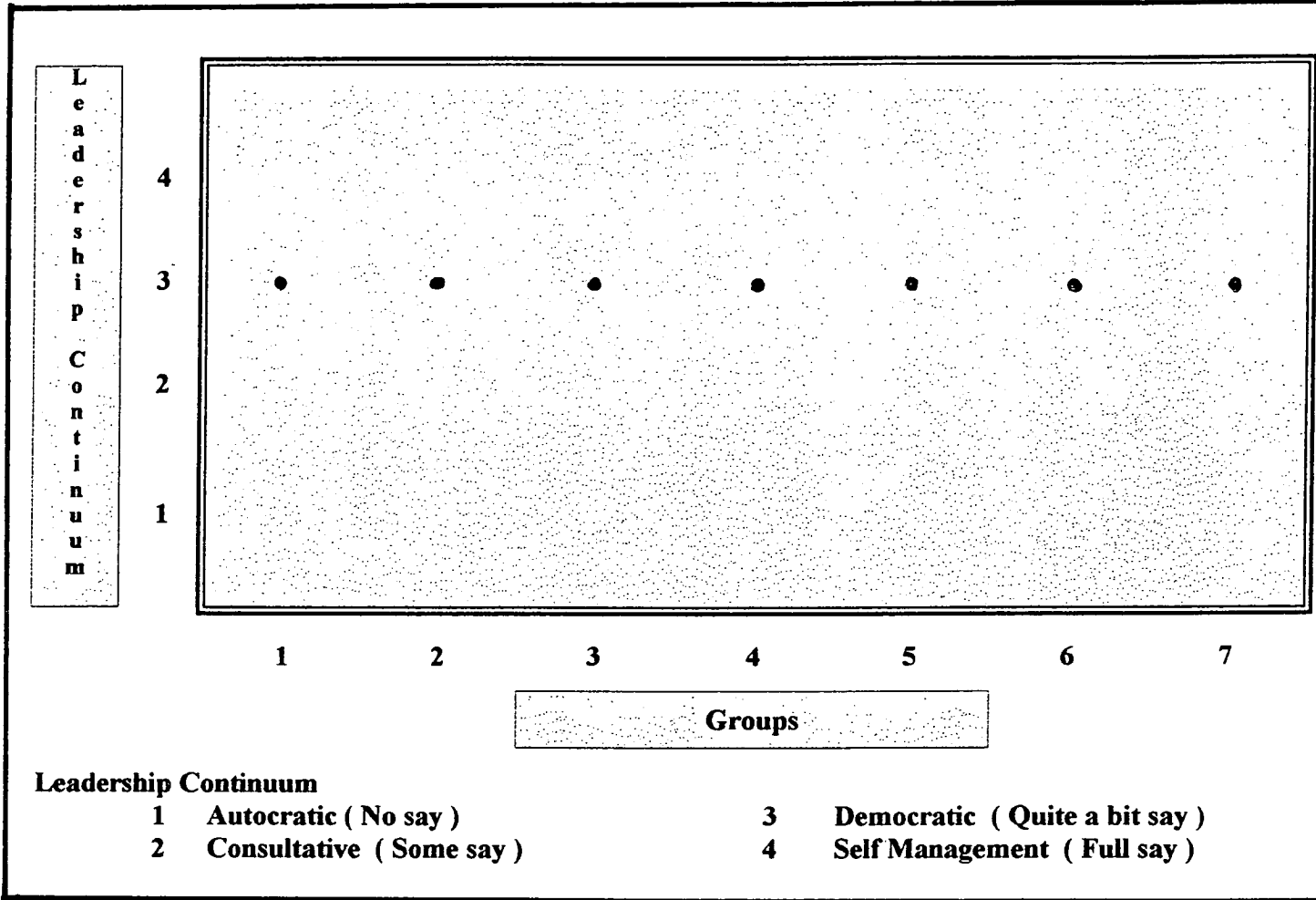
Figure 5.7

Management Style

The conclusion can thus be made that academic information services in Gauteng are closer to a self-management philosophy of leadership than to an autocratic style. They all involve the employees in their decision-making activities to such an extent that they do allow input before decisions are made! It seems as if all seven groups' management are job - as well as employee-centred.

The question which remains unanswered at this stage is whether the contributions of employees are really applied or acknowledged by management, to what extent are all staff members involved and whether they are allowed to decide over strategic matters or high-level decisions.

In short, are there "real" participation or what Martell (1987:115) calls "mock" participation in academic information services?. "Mock" participation happens when employees are allowed to give inputs in decision-making but the final say still comes from management or employees are only allowed to deal with unimportant matters. Management style is indeed a strong predictor of participative management but participation in decision-making can also just be used by management as a strategy or for "show". Sections C and D of the questionnaire are structured to assist in answering the remaining questions.

5.2.4   Section C - Amount of Participation (Question 17)

As stated earlier in the text, participative management is not an absolute word and there is no common understanding of what is meant by participative management (Jeuchter, 1982:47). Participative management can be practised in various degrees (Nightingale in Brown, 1979:202).

This section in the questionnaire aimed at assessing the degree to which participation is practised by academic information services in the Gauteng area. The operational model for participation of Nancy Brown (1979:201-107), was adapted for this purpose.

Martell (1987:116) states that, by limiting participation to issues surrounding task accomplishment, the traditional perspectives allow management to maintain control. He further stresses that participation is generally viewed not as a right but as a strategy. As mentioned earlier in the discussion on management style (Section B), participation is only real insofar as it is viewed as a right (formal patterns of participation) at the highest levels.

Question 17 tests the extent to which employees participate in activities (areas) beyond their immediate day to day work activities.

Figure 5.8 to Figure 5.14 shows the results for the individual groups' degree of participation in eight various decision-making areas ranging from low-level immediate issues to high-level strategic issues.

DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION

DECISION MAKING AREAS

1. Job description / task assignment
2. Work methods
3. Setting of output areas
4. Organisation of workgroups (" whom I want to work with ")

5. Pay
6. Equipment purchases
7. Working conditions
8. Major technological changes

Fig. 5.8 Group 1

Fig. 5.9 Group 2

Fig. 5.10 Group 3

Fig. 5.11 Group 4

DEGREE OF PARTICIPATION

DECISION MAKING AREAS

1. Job description / task assignment
2. Work methods
3. Setting of output areas
4. Organisation of workgroups (" whom I want to work with ")

5. Pay
6. Equipment purchases
7. Working conditions
8. Major technological changes

Fig. 5.12   Group 5

Fig. 5.13   Group 6

Fig. 5.14   Group 7

Fig. 5.15   All Groups

The further to the top and right on the exhibit that the individual groups plot, the greater the amount of influence employees exercise over decisions. When looking at the points plotted for the individual issues, it is clear that for low-level decision-making areas (1 - 4) more influence is allowed than for high-level decisions (5 - 8). What is interesting is the fact that it seems as if the least say is exercised over issue 5 ("whom I want to work with").

Figure 5.15 shows the results for all the groups together. Exactly the same tendency is noticed here with most say in low-level issues and little- or no say in high-level issues. Again, on issue 5 no say is allowed at all and on issue 4 (pay) little say. The conclusion can be made that employees' participation is definitely controlled and limited to low-level decision-making areas. There is no sign yet of any self-management in any of the decision-making areas and it seems as if participation is not yet experienced as a right by employees of academic information services in Gauteng.

When looking at the averages of the responses for all the issues together for the individual groups as well as all the groups together, the picture looks as follows (See Table 5.1):

Groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	All Groups
Degree of Participation	2	2.2	2.4	2	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.2

Table 5.1

Degree of Participation by Comparison

It is clear that Groups 5, 6 and 7 show a higher degree of participation than the rest, while Groups 1 and 4 have the lowest overall figure for participation. Possible reasons for this difference will be assessed only after the results for Section D of the questionnaire have been analysed where the group participation patterns applied by these groups are going to be assessed.

5.2.5 Section D - Group participation Patterns (Question 18 - 21)

In the last decade there has been an explosive increase in the number and forms of employee involvement programmes. In particular, a major trend in the operation of these programmes in business settings is an increased emphasis on the use of team-based programmes in which employees work together in a group setting.

Of most interest in this section of the survey, is the extent to which group participation is used by the responding groups (separately and together) as well as which group participation pattern(s) are used to allow formal participation.

The various group participation patterns are also going to be compared as far as the range of employees allowed as members and the types of decisions made by these groups are concerned.

5.2.5.1 Question 18 : Group Membership

This question had a "Yes" or "No" option and assessed whether the specific respondent belonged to any of the groups listed and explained at the beginning of the question (See Table 5.2). The possible groups mentioned in the explanation were Standing Committees, Quality Circles, Temporary Project / Task Teams and Self-managed Work Groups. Only those respondents who belonged to one or more of these groups, were allowed to continue with the questionnaire.

	N	%
Yes	155	62
No	95	38
Total	250	100

Table 5.2

Group Membership (All Groups)

From Table 5.2 it is clear that nearly two thirds (62 %) of the responding employees at academic information services in Gauteng belong to one or more of the mentioned groups. It seems as if group decision-making is exercised to quite a large extent at these institutions.

The results showing the extent to which group decision-making is applied by the individual groups are displayed in Table 5.3

Groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Yes	12	23	6	27	38	38	11
No	25	12	9	20	12	15	2
Total	37	35	15	47	50	53	13
% "Yes"	32	66	40	57	76	72	85

Table 5.3

Group Membership (Individual Groups)

It is very clear that Groups 5, 6 and 7 have the highest percentage group participation: 76 %, 72 % and 85 % respectively.

The relationship between the extent to which group participation is exercised (Table 5.3) and the degree of participation (Table 5.1) for the individual groups is going to be discussed in detail under the analysis of cross-tables (Section 5.2.6). What's important to note at this stage is the fact that Groups 5, 6 and 7 also had the highest degree of participation (See Table 5.1).

A total number of 155 responded positively to question 18 and continued with the questionnaire.

5.2.5.2   Question 19 : Group Participation Patterns and Range of Employees Involved

This question served a dual purpose by assessing which groups were in use at the specific institutions (Table 5.4 and Table 5.5) and who was allowed to serve on them (Table 5.6). There were five sub-categories for this question according to the five types of groups explained in Question 18.

Next to each group, seven possible staff categories were listed as options including an option for "not applicable" if the specific group pattern was not in use at that institution. The staff categories were:

- Professional staff and Supervisors
- Representatives and Supervisors
- Supervisors only
- Volunteer Staff / Whole Department
- Representatives
- Professional Staff only

First to be discussed are the results showing which group(s) were in use at the various institutions as well as for all the academic information services in Gauteng together. Table 5.4 shows the results for all the responding groups together and clearly indicates a very even distribution amongst the four group-participation patterns. The majority of the respondents listed participation in more than one group.

Group Participation Patterns	N	%
Standing Committees	125	81
Quality Circles	123	79
Temporary Project / Task Teams	129	83
Self-managed Teams	112	72

Table 5.4

Group Participation Patterns (All groups)

From the above information one can make the conclusion that the academic information services in Gauteng do indeed make use of a variety of group participation patterns. Temporary project / task teams have the highest representation (83 %) while self-managed work groups are only represented by 72 % of the group members.

When looking at the results for the individual institutions (See Table 5.5), groups 5, 6 and 7 show the highest percentage representation in self-managed teams. These are also the institutions with the highest degree of participation (See Table 5.1) and the highest percentage for participation in groups (See Table 5.3).

Groups	Group 1		Group 2		Group 3		Group 4		Group 5		Group 6		Group 7	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Standing Committees	8	67	14	61	6	100	25	93	32	84	31	82	9	82
Quality Circles	10	84	19	83	6	100	21	78	34	90	27	71	6	55
Temporary Project / Task Teams	9	75	14	61	5	83	25	93	35	92	32	84	9	82
Self-managed Teams	7	58	11	48	4	67	18	67	33	87	28	74	11	100

Table 5.5

Group Participation Patterns (Individual Groups)

The conclusion can thus be made that self-managed work teams do indeed offer the best opportunity for group participation as well as for proper involvement in decision-making. It seems as if all the group participation patterns are in use at the seven academic information services in Gauteng.

It would be necessary now to assess who served in these groups. It is important to determine whether direct (personal) involvement of individuals was allowed or only indirectly through representation.

The range of employees included in the formal participation patterns applied by academic information services in Gauteng is under discussion here.

Only results for the whole sample is going to be displayed and not for the individual groups as the latter would not be necessary for the purpose of this study.

Table 5.6 very clearly indicates that self-managed work teams allows the best opportunity (43 %) for all employees to participate personally (directly) and second comes quality circles (40 %).

	Standing Committees	Quality Circles	Temporary Project Task Teams	Self-managed Teams
Proffessional Staff & Supervisors	21 %	8 %	10 %	9 %
Rep & Supervisors	22 %	12 %	16 %	7 %
Supervisors Only	9 %	2 %	2 %	3 %
Volunteer Staff / Whole Unit	13 %	40 % ·	20 %	43 %
Representatives	17 %	12 %	36 %	11 %
Professional Staff	3 %	6 %	3 %	1 %

Table 5.6

Range of Employees involved in Group Participation Patterns

(All the Groups)

Standing committees and temporary project teams mostly only allow for staff representation which eliminates direct (personal) involvement of all staff members to a great extent. Participation is then not experienced as a right but as a privilege because employees are not allowed to participate freely in whatever groups they would prefer to.

To complete the picture on group participation patterns, it would be necessary to assess on which level these individual formal groups were allowed to participate.

5.2.5.3   Question 20 : Functions Performed by the Formal Groups

This question aimed at assessing the extent to which the mentioned formal groups were involved in significant decision-making that influenced the goals and standards of their academic information service.

Five levels of functions were listed in the questionnaire as options. More than one option could have been chosen by respondents by simply ticking in the "Yes" or "No" space next to the specific function which ranged from low-level involvement to high-level involvement. The following options were given in the order of strategic importance:

- Exchanging ideas and information
- Problem solving
- Advising and Recommending
- Establishing Policy
- Implementing Policy

Table 5.7 gives an analysis for the whole research sample and shows that formal participation patterns are mainly used for low-level decision-making. The first three options of functions were all responded to by more than 50 % of the respondents belonging to groups, while percentages went as low as 23 % for the last two functions.

	Standing Committees	Quality Circles	Temporary Project Task Teams	Self-managed Teams
Exchanging ideas	69 %	72 %	69 %	61 %
Problem solving	63 %	65 %	68 %	61 %
Advising and Recommending	57 %	65 %	65 %	51 %
Establishing Policy	57 %	34 %	28 %	42 %
Implementing Policy	43 %	37 %	23 %	47 %

Table 5.7

Functions Performed by each Group Pattern (All Respondents)

When looking at the individual group patterns, it seems as if standing committees and self-managed work teams offer the best opportunity for involvement in strategic decision-making. Their percentages show an even decrease as the functions increase in level while the other group patterns show a sudden decrease from function three to four e.g. 65 % to 28 % in the case of temporary project teams and 65 % to 34 % in the case of quality circles.

The following conclusions can be made: mostly low-level decisions are made by formal groups in use at academic information services in Gauteng and standing committees as well as self-managed groups offer the best opportunity for involvement in policy-related functions. It seems as if formal groups in academic information services in Gauteng are primarily used for fact-finding and information-gathering, while reserving the authority for policy decisions for management.

The last question in this section offers valuable information on the "true" participative power exercised by the groups in use at academic information services in Gauteng.

5.2.5.4   Question 21 : Implementation of Group Decisions by Management

According to Martell (1987:116), the effectiveness of participation in terms of staff interest can be determined by the number of times that the advice given on important issues is acted upon in proportion to the number of times it is not.

Question 21 offered a four point scale for options ranging from never, sometimes, usually and always. Table 5.8 shows a majority for option 3 (usually) with a 60 % response which corresponds with the findings of Section B where the management style mostly in use at academic information services in Gauteng also fitted in on 3 on the leadership philosophy continuum.

	%	N
Never	4	6
Sometimes	30	46
Usually	60	93
Always	6	10
Total	100	155

Table 5.8

Implementation of Group Decisions by Management (All the groups)

This question can also be used as a control question whether the amount of participation allowed is only used as a strategy (for "show") or whether the contributions allowed by employees are truly implemented in the system.

The results for Section D give a clear picture on the use of group participation patterns at academic information services in Gauteng. To be able to understand participation and to assess whether effective (true) participation is allowed, it is indeed necessary to determine which group participation patterns are in use, who are their members and to what extent are they allowed to make strategic decisions.

Academic information services in Gauteng do make well use of a variety of group decision-making patterns. Self-managed teams have the lowest representation (See Table 5.4) which indicates that self-management is not yet a reality at these institutions. Self-managed teams definitely offer the best opportunity for direct, personal involvement and together with standing committees the best opportunity to make strategic decisions. It is encouraging to note that the decisions made by the groups in use at the academic information services in Gauteng are usually acknowledged and applied by management.

The last section of this chapter is going to be allocated to a few cross-tables to determine the relationship between a few variables.

5.2.6   Cross-Tabulation

The most familiar form of quantitative grouping is called cross-tabulation where the information is grouped according to two or more characteristics. Cross-tabulation is highly flexible when studying relationships between variables.

5.2.6.1   Relationship between Gender and Group Participation (Question 1 and 18)

	Yes	%
Male	20	13
Female	135	87
Total	155	100

Table 5.9

Relationship between gender (Q1) and group participation (Q18)

Table 5.9 shows that 87 % of the respondents who participated in groups, were female. The reason for this being that 85 % of the respondents in this study were female and 14,8 % male (See Figure 5.2) and the conclusion was made that most employees in academic information services in Gauteng are female.

5.2.6.2   Relationship between Post Held and Group Participation (Question 2 and 18)

	Yes	%
Operational	72	46.5
Support	35	22.6
'Middle 'Management	46	29.7
Other	1	0.6
Total	154	99.4

* One group participant did not respond to this question

Table 5.10

Relationship between Post held and Group Participation

There does not seem to be a relationship between post held and group participation because operational staff seem to be in the majority when it comes to group participation (See Table 5.10) and not middle management. Support staff and middle management have nearly equal (22,6 % and 29,7 %) representation in groups.

5.2.6.3   Relationship between Qualification and Group Participation (Question 4 and 18)

	Yes	%
Matric	24	15.5
Degree	38	24.5
Post Graduate Degree	49	31.6
Diploma	15	9.7
Post Graduate Diploma	29	18.7
Total	155	100

Table 5.11

Relationship between Qualification and Group Participation

Table 5.11 indicates a definite relationship between qualification and group participation because the majority (49 %) of members of groups do have post graduate degrees and 24,5 % have degrees while only 9,7 % have diplomas and 15,5 % have matric. It seems as if the majority of group members in academic information services in Gauteng have senior degrees.

5.2.6.4   Relationship between Degree of Participation (Table 5.1) and Group membership (Table 5.3) amongst the individual groups (Question 17 and 18)

Groups	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
% Group Participation	32	66	40	57	76	72	85
Degree of Participation	2	2.2	2.4	2	2.5	2.5	2.5

Table 5.12

Relationship between Degree of Participation and

Group Membership (Individual Groups)

Group 5, 6 and 7 showed the highest percentage for group participation as well as the highest degree of participation. The conclusion can thus be made that group participation does indeed offer opportunity for more participation of employees in decision-making.

5.2.6.5   Relationship between Management Style (Section B) and Degree of Participation (Section C)

	Median for all Groups
Degree of Participation	2.2
Management Style	3

Table 5.13

Relationship between Management Style (Figure 5.7) and

Degree of Participation (Table 5.1) (All Groups)

When looking at the results for the management style in practice at academic information services in Gauteng (Section B) and the degree of participation measured in Section D of the questionnaire for all the responding groups together, both fit in on more or less the same point on the "amount of say" continuum but not exactly.

The average result for Section B (Management Style) for all the responding groups together was "3" (See Figure 5.7) which indicated a democratic leadership style with "quite a bit" of say.

The average result for Section C (Degree of Participation) for all the groups together (See Table 5.1) was 2.2 which indicated a position closer to "little say" (2) than "quite a bit" of say (3).

The conclusion can be made that management style can not exactly be taken as a "real" indicator of the amount of participation allowed to employees because managers can "appear" to have a participative style but can eventually only allow little say in low level decisions which is not significant to the strategic position of the enterprise.

The only way thus to be sure of "real" participation in an enterprise is by assessing the amount of say employees really have in the various decision-making areas (low- as wel as high-level issues). Management style is often used only as a strategy or as a manipulative tool and not as a vehicle for substantive change for meaningful results.

5.3   CONCLUSION

In this chapter the results of the empirical survey were discussed in detail aiming at assessing the degree to which effective (real) participation is practised in the academic information services in Gauteng. The researcher also wanted to determine which management style is primarily applied in these institutions and whether it correlates with the amount of participation allowed.

While assessing the extent of participation allowed, attention was also given to the extent to which group decision-making was applied, the specific types of groups in use, range of employees serving in these groups and the types of decisions they make. Finally, the researcher wanted to assess how often were the decisions made by these groups, implemented by management.

The following results came forth out of this empirical survey:

• The majority of employees in academic information services in Gauteng are female.

• The majority of employees in academic information services in Gauteng have senior degrees.

• The majority of respondents in this study belonged to the operational work level and the smallest number to the middle-management level.

- The majority of employees at academic information services in Gauteng have 5 years and less experience at that specific institution.

- The majority of employees belonged to the technical service area and very close followed the client service area.

- A mainly democratic leadership style is applied in academic information services in Gauteng. Decisions are thus jointly made by employees and management.

- More influence (participation) is allowed in low-level decisions (issues) in academic information services in Gauteng and the conclusion can be made that participation is not yet experienced as a right by these employees and no sign of self-management is evident yet.

- Academic information services in Gauteng apply group decision-making to quite a large extent.

- The majority of members of groups in use at academic information services in Gauteng have senior degrees.

- Participation (self-management) expresses itself best through group / team decision-making because the results showed a clear relationship between the extent to which group decision-making is applied and the degree of participation experienced by employees.

- Academic information services in Gauteng do make use of a variety of group participation patterns but make the least use of self-managed teams.

- The institutions which used self-managed teams effectively, had the highest degree of participation and the highest percentage of group membership. Thus can the conclusion be made that self-managed teams give the best opportunity for self-management.

- Self-managed work teams also allows the best opportunity for all employees to participate personally (directly).

- Formal participation patterns (groups) in academic information services in Gauteng are mainly used for low-level decision-making (fact-finding and information-gathering) while reserving the authority for policy decisions for management.

- Self-managed teams offer the best opportunity for involvement in strategic decision-making (implementing policy).

- Decisions made by groups in use at academic information services in Gauteng, are usually implemented by management.

- Management style cannot be taken as an absolute indicator for the amount of participation allowed at an enterprise but correlates to a certain extent with it. A participative style of management does not guarantee full involvement of employees in strategic decision-making.

Academic information services in Gauteng do apply effective participation but do not offer enough opportunity for self-management yet - employees' contributions are still mainly allowed for lower level decisions and self-managed groups need to be implemented to a much greater extent.

In the next and final chapter of this study, final conclusions and recommendations are going to be made concerning the implementation of self-regulation and the effective application of formal participation in academic information services in Gauteng.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 CONCLUDING REMARKS ON THE RESEARCH

From this study it is clear that employee potential needs to be mobilised by management and can only show up as performance when employees are given the opportunity to contribute to decision-making with the minimum interference of management.

This study calls for a transformation in leadership willing to empower staff to participate fully and freely in the creation of the future. The time has come to transform the way in which leaders work with and provide leadership to staff in academic information services.

The implementation of the participative management style in the academic information services environment needs to be promoted and leaders in academic information services need to be convinced that a participative management style will enhance commitment and performance for both employees and management if applied effectively.

Chapter 1 presented the background and aim of the study and clearly explained the relevancy of the problems to be addressed in the study. The research methodology, which included a literature study as well as an empirical survey, was also discussed in this chapter.

In **Chapter 2** strategic transformation in academic information services was discussed with special reference to the forces initiating this change, the disabilities of information services today as well as possible strategies for effective change.

Chapter 3 paid attention to the nature of participative management, kinds of participative programmes and the effective implementation thereof.

Participative management specifically in academic information services was the theme of **Chapter 4** with special reference to effective self-managed team work. Strategies for developing high involvement and self-management in academic information services were also discussed. A clear distinction was made between mock participation and direct, formal participation which should give employees an opportunity to truly participate, even in issues which affect the enterprise strategically.

Chapter 5 discussed the results of the empirical survey which aimed at assessing the degree to which participative management is practised in seven academic information services in the Gauteng region as well as to what extent and which group participation patterns are in use at these institutions.

The broad thrust of the findings reported in this paper may be summarised as follows:

Participative management is more than only a willingness to share influence or a positive attitude of management towards employees - structured formal patterns of participation need to be implemented where employees have a right to contribute at all levels of decision-making and where these decisions are acknowledged by management.

According to Magjuka & Baldwin (1991:794), the focus of attention has shifted away from the question of whether to initiate a team-based employee involvement programme and is now centred around how to implement such programmes most effectively. The major principle of the participative style of management is the involvement of a wide cross section of employees in significant decision-making (Sheble & Hill, 1994:520).

Academic information services in Gauteng seem to allow employees some say in decision-making but more in low-level decisions which indicates that their employees do not experience formal participation. Management still reserves the right to limit participation and to exercise control over final decisions to be implemented.

The following guidelines are offered to assist managers in the effective implementation of a participative management approach.

6.2 GUIDELINES FOR THE EFFECTIVE IMPLEMENTATION OF SELF-REGULATION IN ACADEMIC INFORMATION SERVICES

It was very clearly stated earlier in this study that participation in the work place is not an absolute term. There are various degrees of participation and types of involvement programmes to apply. It is even possible for management to "pretend" they involve their workers only to control all final outcomes - the so-called "mock participation".

It cannot be overemphasised that participative management is more complex than simply allowing employees to make some of the decisions. According to Maisela (1995:20), the key to successful participation is the way managers implement it. It is a process that cannot occur by itself or be forced into the system.

- The commitment of operating managers is necessary for a participative programme to succeed. Management needs to be truly willing to share their influence and to allow employees to influence outcomes. The participative leader now has a role of facilitating self-management instead of controlling outcomes.

- The institution must be an open system especially as far as information required for decision-making and problem-solving is concerned. There must be a willingness to discuss information with employees and vice versa.

Employees must feel free to voice opinions and give suggestions without the threat of retaliation or criticism.

- There must be alignment on purposes and objectives between management and employees. Participation programmes need to be clarified at the outset and agreed by all parties involved. Proposals must be jointly designed in order to secure commitment and prevent resistance from the work force.

- Employees need to be prepared for meaningful contributions by means of creating learning opportunities to assist members to gain knowledge and skills. Job rotation can also improve productivity and work satisfaction by providing opportunity to become multi-skilled. Quality decisions require useful suggestions which can only come from employees with the necessary skills, knowledge and abilities.

- Self-regulation occurs most effectively through self-managed teams. As proved in the empirical survey of this study (See Chapter 5), these teams offer a high degree of decision-making autonomy to all levels of staff. Academic information services in Gauteng need to use self-managed teams to a greater extent to maximise the utilisation of their human resources as well as to increase personal satisfaction.
Self-managed teams can be used very effectively in modern academic information services today simply because of the various faculties in the university / technicon to be served with relevant information. Each faculty has different information needs and can be treated uniquely by the various service units (self-managed teams) in the academic information service (Gerryts, 1995:59).

- The management style "demonstrated" at academic information services needs to be "practised" to the same extent. As mentioned before, management style can be used as a strategy where management still controls the outcomes of decisions although on paper or in meetings they are willing to allow contributions just "for show". A participative management style does not guarantee true (effective) participation.

- Self-managed team effectiveness is much more than simply counting outputs - it requires alignment towards common objectives, competent members with suitable knowledge and skill, hands-on coaching, co-ordination and consultation by a group leader and adequate material resources.

- The extension of rights to employees in academic information services for formal and direct (personal) participation in key decision-making areas will provide these institutions with a valuable new resource to assist in coping with rapid change and technological complexity.

- Participation in decision-making should not only be reserved for certain levels of staff and or certain decision-making areas - all members of staff need to be allowed to participate in low- as well as high-level decisions.

- Academic information services are undergoing internal transformation with reference to their technical procedures, work flow and assignment of personnel. The on-line systems integrate many functions causing divisions between public and technical service operations to blurr and the breakdown of traditional barriers. There is a tendency of greater power equalisation among staff and increased participation.

- Organisational structures which allow for lateral relationships, more independence, decentralised activity, close user contact, more autonomy with co-responsibility and the optimum co-ordination of diversity should replace the hierarchical systems still in use in many academic information services today.

The guidelines and concluding remarks presented in the above discussion emphasise paradigm shifts and conditions which definitely offer a challenge to directors and leaders of academic information services today.

The growing use of self-managed teams in enterprises suggests that they are a unique and viable alternative to traditional forms of work design.

Their popularity, however, should not allow academic information services to over-estimate their general applicability or to under-estimate the conditions necessary for their implementation and continued effectiveness.

Directors and leaders of modern academic information services need to encourage and facilitate direct- and formal participation among employees of all levels. This will help to cope more effectively with future challenges of rapid change and technological complexity that now threaten efforts to create more responsive academic information services.

6.3   FUTURE RESEARCH

This study specifically addressed participative management in academic information services in Gauteng. However, the researcher sincerely hopes that these findings will provide impetus for additional research, which is crucial if participative management is to take centre stage in continuous improvement efforts.

Possible studies on participative management to be undertaken by the research community are the following:

- Participative management in academic information services in other provinces in South Africa could also be assessed.

- It would also be necessary to investigate participative approaches in other types of information services such as public libraries or corporate information services.

- Specific research studies on the effective use of self-managed teams in academic information services.

- Remuneration of team work should also be investigated as this is an issue of concern to enterprises applying self-managed teams. Should the team be rewarded or it's individual members?

- An in-depth research can be undertaken on participative leadership - the role of the participative leader in academic information services today.

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APPENDIX A

COVER LETTER
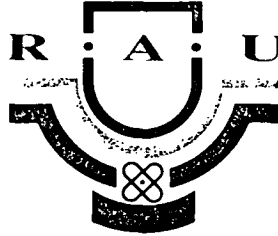
24 July 1997

The Director

....

....

Dear

Mrs G J Oosthuizen is a registered student in this Department and is busy with research on *Participative management in academic information services* in order to fulfill the requirements for a Masters degree in Information Science.

Because little research has been done about this specific topic in South Africa, the results of the study will benefit managers of academic information services. According to management research, enterprises tend to neglect the employees as one of their most valuable assets in favour of the more efficient use of raw materials and capital assets. The primary goal of this study is to determine if this is also the situation in academic information services and to show that by the effective implementation of a participation management program, it will lead to certain advantages for both the management and the employees.

I realise that we are all short of time, and that by letting your employees complete the questionnaires will take up some of your time. However, we do need your cooperation, without which Mrs Oosthuizen shall be unable to complete her research. All the information will be treated as strictly confidential and the anonymity of information services will be guaranteed.

Mrs Oosthuizen will feed back the results of her research to participating information services so that these information services can select ideas and facts which could be useful to their particular needs.

Thank you very much for your kind cooperation.

Yours sincerely

Dr Adeline du Toit
Department of Information Studies

APPENDIX B

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. You are about to contribute towards research for a masters thesis in the area of participative management in academic information services.

2. This questionnaire must be completed by staff members in all departments and levels with at least two years service at the institution and a minimum qualification of standard ten.

3. Your responses will be confidential and can in no way be connected to your identity.

4. Remember this is not a test, so no right or wrong answers can be given. It is important to answer each question the way you truely experience things or the way you feel about them.

5. Some of the questions may look similar. Please do not page back or try to remember what you answered previously. Answer each question immediately without hesitation.

6. Every section will be preceded by a short detailed instruction and no time limit is set.

7. Since all questions are pre-structured and answers only require a circle, the completion of the questionnaire will not take much of your time

8. Should you experience any problems in completing some of the questions, please feel free to contact the researcher, Mrs G.J. Oosthuizen in Rustenburg, TEL: 0142-29390 or CELL: 082 200 5948.

8. Please put the completed questionnaire in the "mailbox" provided to be collected within one week.

Section A

Please respond to each question below by either circling the applicable code or by answering in the space provided (choose <u>one</u> option only).

1. Gender   Male   _ _1_ _
                     Female   _ _2_ _   (5)

2. Post held:

       Junior/assistant librarian, binder, assistant binder
       admin officer , secretary   _ _1_ _

       Driver, cleaner, shelver, assistant   _ _2_ _

       Senior librarian, admin/finance manager,
       section head   _ _3_ _   (6)

       Library assistant + senior, admin/clerical
       assistant + senior, binder assistant, typist   _ _4_ _

       Librarian, chief binder, cataloguer, senior admin
       officer, senior personnel officer   _ _5_ _

       Other :   Specify _____ _ _6_ _

3. Your department or service area :

Administration   _ _1_ _
Client Services: Circulation , ILL , Self-managed teams/
                service units.   _ _2_ _
Technical Services: Acquisition , periodicals , bindery,
                 processing (eg. cat. & class.)   _ _3_ _   (7)
Information Technology/Computer Services   _ _4_ _
Reference and Research   _ _5_ _
Education & Training   _ _6_ _
Other: Specify:_____ _ _7_ _

4. Highest Qualification:

       Matric   _ _1_ _
       Degree   _ _2_ _
       Post graduate degree   _ _3_ _
       Diploma   _ _4_ _   (8)
       Post graduate diploma   _ _5_ _
       Other.   _ _6_ _
              Specify:_____

5. Complete years of service with this institution:_____
           eg. 3 years <u>03</u>

<u>Section B</u>

Please answer by circling the applicable code which , in your experience , describes your situation best at the present time.   (Choose only <u>one</u> option for <u>each</u> question)

6. Extent to which supervisors have confidence and trust in subordinates.

None	_ _ 1 _ _
Some	_ _ 2 _ _
Quite a bit	_ _ 3 _ _
A great deal of	_ _ 4 _ _

(11)

7. Degree to which subordinates feel free to discuss/disagree on important issues with their superiors

Do not feel free at all	_ _ 1 _ _
Do not feel very free	_ _ 2 _ _
Feel rather free	_ _ 3 _ _
Feel completely free	_ _ 4 _ _

(12)

8. Extent to which supervisors encourage subordinates to contribute own ideas

Never	_ _ 1 _ _
Sometimes	_ _ 2 _ _
Usually	_ _ 3 _ _
Always	_ _ 4 _ _

(13)

9. Extent to which downward communications are accepted by subordinates

Viewed with great suspicion	_ _ 1 _ _
Some accepted	_ _ 2 _ _
Often accepted	_ _ 3 _ _
Generally accepted	_ _ 4 _ _

(14)

10. Extent to which upward communications from subordinates are accepted and applied by supervisors

Never	_ _ 1 _ _
Sometimes	_ _ 2 _ _
Usually	_ _ 3 _ _
Always	_ _ 4 _ _

(15)

11. Direction of information flow. (Who communicates with who?)

Downward only (always from managers to workers)	_ _ 1 _ _
Mostly downward (Mostly from managers to workers)	_ _ 2 _ _
Down and up (from managers to workers and vice versa)	_ _ 3 _ _
Down and up and with colleagues (managers to workers, workers to managers as well as between workers in the same department and other departments.)	_ _ 4 _ _

(16)

12. Extent to which management controls.

      Top management controls   _ _ 1 _ _

      Some control delegated to lower levels   _ _ 2 _ _   (17)

      Moderate downward delegation   _ _ 3 _ _

      Self - management by teams/groups   _ _ 4 _ _

13. Workers' attitudes developed toward the institution , its goals and its leadership.

      Usually hostile and counter to . (Usually negative)   _ _ 1 _ _

      Sometimes hostile   _ _ 2 _ _   (18)

      Usually favourable and supportive of   _ _ 3 _ _

      Strongly favourable and motivational to impliment   _ _ 4 _ _

14. Amount of self control by employees over work-related activities.

      None   _ _ 1 _ _

      Some   _ _ 2 _ _   (19)

      Quite a bit   _ _ 3 _ _

      A great deal of   _ _ 4 _ _

15. To what extent are decisions made by superiors or by group participation?

      By superiors with no opportunity for comment   _ _ 1 _ _

      By superiors with opportunity for reaction afterwards   _ _ 2 _ _   (20)

      By superiors after discussion with subordinates   _ _ 3 _ _

      By group/team participation and consensus.   _ _ 4 _ _

16. The leadership philosophy in operation at your workplace

      Mainly job-centred (concerned about the work)   _ _ 1 _ _

      Mainly job-centred with little concern for employees   _ _ 2 _ _   (21)

      Job- and employee-centred   _ _ 3 _ _

      Mainly employee-centred (concerned about the workers)   _ _ 4 _ _

P.T.O.

Section C

17. Indicate the amount of influence you experience in <u>each</u> of the following decision - making areas by circling the applicable code. (choose only <u>one</u> option for <u>each</u> decision-making area)

<u>Explanation of options:</u>
<u>No say</u>: Managers make decisions
<u>Little say</u>: Employees' views are sought before decisions are made but management still make final decisions
<u>Quite a bit</u>: Joint decision-making
<u>Full say</u>: Employees make decision

<u>Decision-making areas.</u>	<u>No say</u>	<u>Little say</u>	<u>Quite a bit</u>	<u>Full say</u>	
Job descriptions/task assignment	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(22)
Work methods	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(23)
Setting of output targets	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(24)
Organisation of work-groups (whom I want to work with)	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(25)
Pay	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(26)
Equipment purchases	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(27)
Working conditions	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(28)
Major technological changes	_ _ 1 _ _	_ _ 2 _ _	_ _ 3 _ _	_ _ 4 _ _	(29)

P. T. O.

Section D

Before responding to questions from this section , please study the explanation for the various types of groups very carefully.

Explanation of groups:

Standing committees:	Representatives from diverse work units
Quality circles:	Employees from the same work unit/department meeting regularly to discuss work-related issues .
Temporary project teams / task forces:	Workers from diverse work units working temporary together to investigate/solve issues/problems
Self-managed work groups /service units	Workers permanently together in a group/unit taking full responsibility for all their activities eg. work standards and methods, budgeting, controlling, staffing, etc.

18. Are you a member of any of the above-mentioned groups? Please answer by circling the applicable code.

Yes	_ _ 1 _ _
No	_ _ 2 _ _

(30)

NOTE:

If you answered "no" to question 18, you have reached the end of the questionnaire
THANK YOU ! YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED.

If you answered " yes " to question 18, please continue with the questionnaire on the next page

Question 19-21 should only be answered if "yes" was answered in question 18.

19. Identify the group(s) in use at your academic information service and then indicate
    who serve or participate on each by choosing only one option for each group
    Please consult explanation for groups on previous page (p.6)

Who serve/participate

Standing
committees

Professional staff and supervisor(s)	_ _ 1 _ _
Representatives and supervisor(s)	_ _ 2 _ _
Supervisors only	_ _ 3 _ _
Volunteer staff/whole unit or department	_ _ 4 _ _
Representatives	_ _ 5 _ _
Professional staff only	_ _ 6 _ _
This group is not applicable	_ _ 7 _ _

(31)

Who serve/participate

Quality
Circles

Professional staff and supervisor(s)	_ _ 1 _ _
Representatives and supervisor(s)	_ _ 2 _ _
Supervisors only	_ _ 3 _ _
Volunteer staff/whole unit or department	_ _ 4 _ _
Representatives	_ _ 5 _ _
Professional staff only	_ _ 6 _ _
This group is not applicable	_ _ 7 _ _

(32)

Temp. Project/Task teams

Professional staff and supervisor(s)	_ _ 1 _ _
Representatives and supervisor(s)	_ _ 2 _ _
Supervisors only	_ _ 3 _ _
Volunteer staff/whole unit or department	_ _ 4 _ _
Representatives	_ _ 5 _ _
Professional staff only	_ _ 6 _ _
This group is not applicable	_ _ 7 _ _

(33)

Self-managed
work groups

Professional staff and supervisor(s)	_ _ 1 _ _
Representatives and supervisor(s)	_ _ 2 _ _
Supervisors only	_ _ 3 _ _
Volunteer staff/whole unit or department	_ _ 4 _ _
Representatives	_ _ 5 _ _
Professional staff only	_ _ 6 _ _
This group is not applicable	_ _ 7 _ _

(34)

P. T. O.

20. Which function(s) are performed by each of the identified group(s)? Please circle the applicable code(s) (<u>More than one function can be chosen for each group</u>)

<u>Standing committees</u>

Functions

	Yes	No	
Exchanging ideas and information	_1_	_2_	(35)
Problem solving	_1_	_2_	(36)
Advising and recommending	_1_	_2_	(37)
Establishing policy	_1_	_2_	(38)
Implimenting policy	_1_	_2_	(39)

<u>Quality circles</u>

	Yes	No	
Exchanging ideas and information	_1_	_2_	(40)
Problem solving	_1_	_2_	(41)
Advising and recommending	_1_	_2_	(42)
Establishing policy	_1_	_2_	(43)
Implimenting policy	_1_	_2_	(44)

<u>Temp. project/ task teams</u>

	Yes	No	
Exchanging ideas and information	_1_	_2_	(45)
Problem solving	_1_	_2_	(46)
Advising and recommending	_1_	_2_	(47)
Establishing policy	_1_	_2_	(48)
Implimenting policy	_1_	_2_	(49)

<u>Self-managed work groups</u>

	Yes	No	
Exchanging ideas and information	_1_	_2_	(50)
Problem solving	_1_	_2_	(51)
Advising and recommending	_1_	_2_	(52)
Establishing policy	_1_	_2_	(53)
Implimenting policy	_1_	_2_	(54)

21. How often are the decisions made by the above group(s) implimented ?

Never	_ _ 1 _ _	
Sometimes	_ _ 2 _ _	(55)
Usually	_ _ 3 _ _	
Always	_ _ 4 _ _	

THANK YOU ! YOUR CONTRIBUTION IS HIGHLY APPRECIATED.