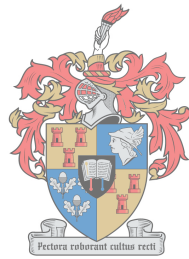


Collaboration and Organisation

- a case study of competing values in public
service organisations

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DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis electronically, I declare that the entirety of the work contained herein is my own, original work, that I am the sole author thereof (except where otherwise stated), that reproduction and publication thereof by Stellenbosch University will not infringe upon any third-party rights, and that I have not previously, either in its entirety or in part, submitted it for any other qualification.

Date: March 2018

OPSOMMING

Die doel van die navorsing was om te bepaal tot watter mate 'n staatsdepartement in die Vrystaat provinsie 'agile' samewerkingspraktyke nakom. Die aanname is dat staatsdiensorganisasies normaalweg gekenmerk word deur onbuigsaamheid, rigiditeit en formalisme. In die era van die kennis-ekonomie kan sodanige organisasies nie effektief funksioneer nie.

Hoofstuk 1 beskryf die navorsingsvraag en die rasionaal daarvoor. Dit handel ook oor die teoretiese raamwerk, metodologie en die betekenis van die studie.

Hoofstuk 2 gee 'n oorsig oor die begrip "samewerking" en dek definisies wat van nut is vir die navorsing in die tesis.

Hoofstuk 3 behandel die Competing Values Framework (CVF) in besonderhede. Dit beskryf die oorsprong van die teorie, die inhoud en ook sommige gebruike daarvan in ander studies.

Hoofstuk 4 sit die gevallestudie uiteen, nadat die ontwerp van die navorsingsinstrument verduidelik is.

Hoofstuk 5 rapporteer die resultate van die gevallestudie.

Hoofstuk 6 bespreek die konklusies wat gemaak is op grond van die data.

SUMMARY

The objective of the research was to determine the extent to which a public service department in the Free State Province exhibits pockets of agile collaboration as praxis. This was done against the supposition that public service organisations are normally characterised by inflexibility, rigidity and formalism. In the knowledge economy, such organisations do not achieve their objectives.

Chapter 1 focuses on the research question and rationale. It further centres on the theoretical framework and methodology employed in the study and the significance of undertaking the study.

Chapter 2 gives an overview of the theoretical aspects of collaboration. The chapter further covers definitions of concepts that are central to the research topic.

Chapter 3 offers an extensive introduction of the Competing Values Framework (CVF). It deals with the origins of the framework, its composition and its applicability in the study of organisations.

Chapter 4 presents the case study. It also outlines the instrument design process using the CVF as the basis thereof.

Chapter 5 reports on the results of the research based on the analyses conducted on the data collected.

Chapter 6 presents the findings and conclusions emanating from the research. It sets out to demonstrate the connections between theory and practice, and concludes by proposing recommendations for further research.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to thank my family, friends and colleagues for their support during the course of the research. I also wish to express my sincere appreciation to all the participants who took the time and trouble to respond to the survey instrument. My heartfelt gratitude goes to Prof. Johann Kinghorn for his invaluable guidance and support during the difficult times. He taught me not to have tunnel vision, and reminded me of the importance of acquiring advanced analytical and interpretive skills. A sincere word of thanks goes to all those who, in one way or another, contributed to this study.

“It always seems impossible until it is done” – Nelson Mandela

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Abbreviations

AC	Agile Collaboration
CoPs	Communities of Practice
CVF	Competing Values Framework
LM	Lower Management
MM	Middle Management
PLCs	Professional Learning Communities
PS	Public Sector
SM	Senior Management
TBOs	Team-Based Organisations

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Chapter 1

Research question and rationale

1.1 The challenge of agile collaboration

It is widely accepted that organisations in the 21st century face the challenge of being agile and responsive so that they are able to sustain competitiveness. Among other things, this means that they have to develop efficient information systems, and manage their knowledge sensibly. Over the past few decades, large infrastructures of hardware, software and related organisational practices have been built up in organisations to support the information and knowledge distribution and application in organisations.

A point that is not immediately evident, in all of this, is that the efficacy of information and knowledge distribution infrastructures is largely dependent on a “soft” factor in the life of organisations, namely *the specific collaborative culture and practices of the particular organisation*. None of the formal systems to distribute information and knowledge in an organisation will be productive unless a collaborative culture that is *conducive* to the flourishing of knowledge and information exists in the organisation. From this point of view, one could even speak of collaboration culture as an integral component of the infrastructure of an organisation.

However, this thesis does not focus on collaboration in general, but takes as its point of departure the assumption that in the 21st century, all organisations need to develop practices and infrastructures based on an organisational culture of *agile* collaboration. The distinction is not between collaboration or not, but between “old style” and agile collaboration.

The thesis takes the view that only on this basis, will organisations benefit from the technologies of information and knowledge and, in so doing, be able to deliver effective and efficient services.¹

For a very long time in the 20th century, the bureaucratic organisational model was accepted as the standard format within which work processes had to fit. As all organisations, per definition, are collaborative in nature, the bureaucratic organisational model has its own distinctive format for collaboration – internally between staff, and externally in relation to society and other organisations. It is generally known that the bureaucratic model is a “top- down” and largely regimental model.² Hence, collaboration is hierarchical, rule-based and very often inflexible.

It is particularly the inflexibility that has become a burden over the last few decades. The combination of globalisation, democratisation and digitisation that has swept the world has created a context for people, societies and organisations alike, where agility is crucial. In organisations, agility means that they operate on the basis of the mature knowledge management principles of continuous learning, innovation and speedy decision-making processes. To adapt to new circumstances, new technologies, and changing environments require organisations to develop agile management processes, as well as organisational structures that sustain agility.³

Obviously, all of this impacts the organisation’s collaborative culture. In fact, the collaborative culture that is practised in an organisation is the observable manifestation of the organisation’s ability to function in an agile manner.

1.2 Public service organisations and collaboration

Public service (PS) organisations differ from private organisations in important ways. They are “owned” by all of society which, in turn, constitutes their “clients”. They are, therefore, subject to the full range of societal pressures to which they are forced to respond. If any organisation needs to be agile, it is a public service organisation.

¹ Omotayo, Funmilola Olubunmi. 2015. Knowledge management as an important tool in organisational management: A literature review. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 5.

² Jain, A. 2004. Using the lens of Max Weber’s theory to examine e-government research. *Proceedings of the 37th Hawaii International Conference on Systems Sciences*, 2.

³ Economist Intelligence Unit. 2009. Organisational agility: How business can survive and thrive in turbulent times. A report from the Economist Intelligence Unit sponsored by EMC. *The Economist*, 17.

The problem, however, is that of all organisations, public service organisations seem to be the most hierarchical and inflexible. In addition, they are notoriously slow or incapable of adapting their own work processes, as well as in response to the changing environments.

This is not a new problem. A number of studies have been conducted in this respect. These cover a number of different aspects of organisational design and structure in public service organisations. However, there seems to be very little attention paid to collaborative cultures and structures in public service organisations. This is, perhaps, because it is still a general assumption that public service organisations ought to be hierarchical, in which case there is not much scope for collaborative culture experimentation.

But public service organisations are exposed to the same environment as private organisations. They, perhaps more than the private organisations, face the challenges of adaptation and the need for agility. They cannot choose their clients, but have to cope with the full spectrum of societal expectations and needs. If private organisations need to improve agility, then public service organisations need to do so even more, which would entail exploring alternative collaborative models for public service organisations.

1.3 The research question

Against the background described above, this thesis locates itself inside the broad question as to what the state of collaborative culture is in public service organisations in South Africa. By focusing on collaborative culture, the question with respect to the most appropriate organisational structure for public service organisations hoping to improve their agility, is somewhat narrowed down.

In this thesis, the general question stated above, is pursued by means of a single case study. The case study was conducted in the Free State Department of Education and is set out in detail later in this thesis. Two basic assumptions governed the entire research process. Firstly, it was assumed that the general consensus that public service organisations are deeply bureaucratic was factually correct. The second assumption was that, despite the former assumption, it would be impossible for such an organisation to function in the contemporary environment unless some aspects of alternative collaborative cultures are followed in real practice.

It follows from the two assumptions above that the case study would focus primarily on real-life practices in the department (as opposed to a study of organisation theory in general, and formal organisational policies and regulations in particular). Without such an approach, it

would be impossible to determine any deviation from the formal picture – as presented in organisational charts – of a strictly hierarchical collaboration format.

In light of the above, the research question addressed by this thesis can be formulated as follows: *To what extent does the Free State Department of Education demonstrate a collaborative culture that is consistent with a hierarchical organisational model, and to what extent does this support or restrict agile collaboration in the department?*

1.4 Methodological considerations and limitations

The research question stated above can be approached from a number of vantage points. In this thesis a qualitative assessment, using a survey, was done of *perceptions* of selected employees in the department with respect to the above question.

The targeted population of the case study are all employed in managerial positions. One would assume that the restriction to managerial levels would result in a probe of perceptions by those who are best situated to express reflected opinions on the organisation.

The qualitative nature of the survey is most evident in the way in which the respondents were asked to reflect on their experiences. Respondents were asked to *weigh* their responses as a percentage in relation to alternative options. Weighted responses make more nuanced expressions by the respondent possible, and require a respondent to reflect more on statements than is the case when only an indication of agreement or disagreement is required.

The use of a weighted survey was made possible by the use of the Competing Values Framework of Cameron and Quinn which formed the theoretical basis of the survey, and therein lies the second indication of the qualitative nature of the empirical study. As the name indicates, the focus is on *values*. Values are deep convictions that people hold and embed in their relations with other people.⁴ The way in which an organisation structures its collaborative practices is, therefore, an expression of the values of the organisation. Employing the Competing Values Framework in this thesis is an excellent way of identifying the deepest nature of the organisation.

However, at the same time, it must be emphasised that the values exposed by the case study are those of the organisation *in as much as they are understood and experienced by the respondents*. As such, this thesis cannot claim to make pronouncements on the Free State Department of Education. It can only claim to systematise the opinions about the

⁴ Barrett, R. 2010. The importance of values in building a high performance culture, 2.

organisation's values as held by the managerial layer at the time of the case study, and as framed by the Competing Values Framework. Any conclusions about the nature of collaboration in the department are, therefore, inferred from the picture that is displayed by managers in the department.

Moreover, this thesis cannot claim to speak on behalf of all public service organisations in South Africa. Any such attempt will require a repeat of the empirical study in a number of locations and departments. Therefore, this thesis suffers from the disadvantage of all case studies in that its generalisability is highly restricted.

There is a further restriction in terms of the delimitation of the actual survey. The Free State Education Department is comprised of twenty-five Directorates and five Education Districts. To make the survey logistics manageable, it was limited to the Provincial Office and only five Directorates. They were chosen due to their critical centrality for service delivery by the department. It is conceivable that a department-wide survey would have painted a different picture. On the other hand, the centrality of managers to any organisation means that they probably best represent the pulse of that organisation.

1.5 Mitigation of bias

The researcher is an employee in the department. The following steps were taken to minimise bias during the case study. A trial run of the survey was done with a select few colleagues to test for bias on the part of the researcher, and whether the questions would be deemed as compromising or embarrassing by the respondents.

The data analysis plan was developed in advance to avoid the temptation of tainting the data with subjectivity. This was done primarily by utilising the weighted method of response elicitation. As the respondents themselves assigned a weight to their opinions, it was not left to the researcher to attach a value to an expressed opinion. The analysis of the results is based on the weighted data, regardless of the researcher's own opinion as to the validity of a given weight by a respondent.

1.6 Significance

Collaboration is the counter side of the coin of information and knowledge management. At the same time, describing collaborative culture is tantamount to describing the structure of an organisation. In this way, a study of collaboration provides a unique entry into the heart of an organisation.

Applying this approach to the Free State Education Department contributes to a much-needed extension of organisational research into public service organisations. The tendency to assume that public service organisations can be adequately understood by applying private organisational theory as is leads to less than optimal results.

1.7 Layout of thesis

Chapter 2 discusses collaboration as an organisational value.

Chapter 3 introduces the Competing Values Framework.

Chapter 4 discusses the construction and implementation of the survey instrument.

Chapter 5 reports on the results obtained in the survey.

Chapter 6 discusses the most significant implications of the research.

Chapter 2

Collaboration

2.1 Introduction to collaboration

The purpose of this literature review is to provide an overview of different aspects of collaboration. It intends to focus on the role that collaboration plays in organisations. It also indicates the importance of the literature review in the construction of the survey instrument. Finally, it presents a section that deals with agile collaboration.

Collaboration plays a critical role in organisations because of its potential in the sustenance of competitive advantage in the 21st century. The concept of collaboration is said to be interdisciplinary, complex and multidimensional due to its applicability. The numerous viewpoints result in a lack of consensus on a definite definition of the concept.⁵

Zamanzadeh, Irajpour and Valizadeh argue that the concept of collaboration should be seen as a process, whereas others maintain the perspective that it is a structure.⁶ The discussion that follows puts forth several definitions of collaboration. Collaboration, according to Gray in Callahan, Schenk and White, “is a process through which people who see different aspects of a problem can constructively explore their differences and search for solutions that go beyond their own limited vision of what is possible”.⁷ Montiel-Overall defines collaboration as “the process of shared creation: two or more individuals with complementary skills

⁵ Thomson, A.M. 2007. Conceptualizing and measuring collaboration. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 1-2.

⁶ Zamanzadeh, V. 2014. The meaning of collaboration, from the perspective of the Iranian nurses: A qualitative study. *The Scientific World Journal*, 3.

⁷ Gray, B. 2014. In Callahan, S., Schenk, M. & White, N. Building a collaborative workplace. Available from: www.anecdote.com [Accessed: 24 October 2014].

interacting to create a shared understanding that none had previously possessed or could have come to on their own”.⁸ Lai posits that collaboration is the “mutual engagement of participants in a coordinated effort to solve a problem together”.⁹ Thomson, Perry and Miller postulate that collaboration may also mean “a process in which autonomous or semi- autonomous actors interact through formal and informal negotiation, jointly creating rules and structures governing their relationships and ways to act or decide on the issues that brought them together; it is a process involving shared norms and mutually beneficial interactions”.¹⁰

According to Kozuck, “Inter-organizational collaboration, that is positive cooperation, covers lasting and well-structured relationships, resource flow and other interactions between specific organizations seeking to attain both common as well as individual targets”.¹¹ The common denominators that come to the fore with regard to collaboration are, among others, the elements of shared or common goal(s), trust, communication, interaction, teamwork, reciprocal respect and joint decision making.

Collaboration in organisations may be initiated either mandatorily or voluntarily by the participants. Kozuch argues that collaborations could be “of a one-off or lasting character. It is also important whether they are voluntary or imposed, e.g. by the rules of law”.¹² Salonen proposes that collaboration can be measured by its two dimensions, namely openness and governance. Embedded in the two dimensions are the types of collaboration. The dimension of openness denotes whether collaboration is open or closed. The dimension of governance indicates whether the collaboration is flat or hierarchical, depending on organisational structure.¹³ Figure 2.1 below is a schematic summary of the dimensions of collaboration and their associated types.

⁸ Montiel-Overall, P. 2005. Toward a theory of collaboration for teachers and librarians. *Research Journal of the American Association of School Librarians*, (8), 4.

⁹ Lai, E.R. 2011. Collaboration: A literature review – Research Report. *Always Learning*, 2.

¹⁰ Thomson, A.M. 2007. Conceptualizing and measuring collaboration. *Journal of Public Administration Research and Theory*, 3.

¹¹ Kozuck, B & Sienkiewicz-Małyjurek, K. 2013. Inter-organizational collaboration as a source of Innovation in public management. *Make learn*, 247.

¹² Kozuck, B. 2009. The culture of collaboration: Theoretical aspects. *Journal of intercultural management*, 18.

¹³ Salonen, E. 2012. Designing collaboration. *MA Communication Design*, 12.

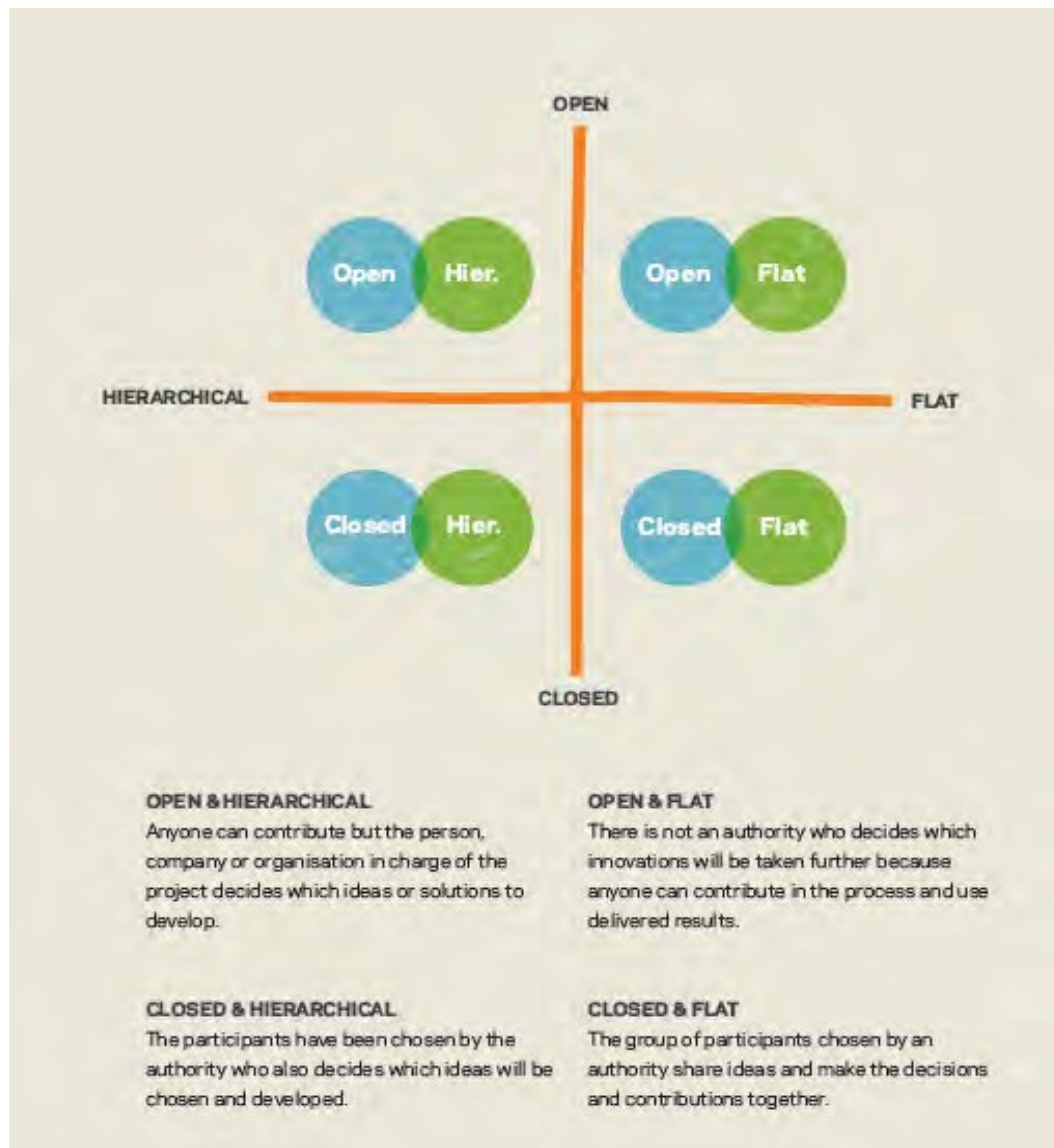


Figure 2.1: Dimensions of collaboration¹⁴

2.2 Forms of collaboration

Several forms of collaboration can be established. For the purpose of this research, only the major forms of collaboration that feature predominantly in the study of organisations will be dealt with in the subsequent discussion. Collaboration may occur either through formal arrangements or informal channels and platforms. A brief description of each of the forms of collaboration will be proffered as they will be referred to in the succeeding sections.

¹⁴ Salonen, E. 2012. Designing collaboration. *MA Communication Design*, 15.

2.2.1 Collaborative Teams

The definition of collaboration provided in this discussion is underpinned by principles that include, among others, achievement of a common goal. Collaboration teams are comprised of individuals who share common beliefs and work towards common goals.¹⁵ It is imperative that individuals who are engaged in collaborative teams also trust one another and that there is explicit clarification of roles.¹⁶ Collaboration, unlike traditional bureaucratic organisations, enables organisations to transcend boundaries and silo mentality. Thus, the strengths of collaborative teams draw individuals with varying levels of expertise, resources, responsibilities and leadership.¹⁷ The strength of skills and knowledge accumulated in collaborative teams affords organisations the opportunity to sustain competitive advantage.

2.2.2 Collaborative Communities

Collaboration is, by implication, a communal phenomenon. It is underpinned by the principles that do not promote negative competition among members of an organisation. Collaborative communities may be described as those in which parties (including individuals and organisations) work together to share information and resources in order to accomplish a shared vision.¹⁸ As can be discerned from the description of collaborative communities, there are bound to be a number of disagreements when groups of individuals are brought together for the purpose of collaborating. However, collaborative communities work optimally if the principle of shared decision making is consistently and constantly implemented.¹⁹ Furthermore, collaborative communities also transcend silos and divisions in communities, comprise of distributive leadership, and are highly adaptive and inherently creative.²⁰

2.2.3 Collaborative Networks

Collaboration beyond communities takes the form of networks. Collaborative networks refers to networks “consisting of a variety of entities (e.g. organizations and people) that are largely autonomous, geographically distributed, and heterogeneous in terms of their operating

¹⁵ Fisher, K., Rayner, S. & Belgard, W. 1997. Tips for teams: A ready reference for solving common team problems. *OPM.GOV*.

¹⁶ Fisher, K., Rayner, S. & Belgard, W. 1997. Tips for teams: a ready reference for solving common team problems. *OPM.GOV*.

¹⁷ Tarricone, P. & Luca, J. 2002. Successful teamwork: A case study. *HERDSA* 641.

¹⁸ London, S. 2012. Building collaborative communities. London: Tate.

¹⁹ London, S. 2012. Building collaborative communities. London: Tate.

²⁰ London, S. 2012. Building collaborative communities. London: Tate.

environment, culture, social capital and goals, but that collaborate to better achieve common or compatible goals and whose interactions are supported by computer network”.²¹ These networks are distributed over a vast geographical area. Information and Communication Technologies and Web-based 2.0 tools, in particular, enable individuals to collaborate on a global scale. The ever-improving broadband connectivity speeds imply that communication occurs in a matter of milliseconds. Hence, a greater level of agility and resourcefulness is required if organisations are to benefit optimally from collaborative networks.²² Organisations that have adopted collaborative networks realise invaluable benefits from the implementation thereof. Two major types of collaborative networks will be dealt with briefly below.

2.2.3.1 Electronic social networks

The phenomenon of globalisation has brought about new challenges for organisations. While one part of the world goes to sleep, another wakes up to the start of the work day. Thus, organisations in the 21st century find themselves traversing the information superhighway that is characteristic of the knowledge-based economy. Electronic social media, also referred to as online social networks, “offer a powerful environment in which knowledge sharing and collaboration can take place – one that transcends traditional internal organisational and divisional boundaries as well as physical boundaries in organisations situated in geographically dispersed locations”.²³

It is imperative to expand a little further on electronic social networks so as to direct the discussion towards a proper perspective. ICTs are also regarded as electronic social networking, while Web 2.0 technologies are viewed as Social Networking 2.0, to distinguish them from earlier forms of Web-based electronic social networking. Van Zyl defines Social Networking 2.0 as “applications or websites that support the maintenance of personal relationships, the discovery of potential relationships and should aid in the conversion of potential ties into weak and strong ties, by utilising emergent Web 2.0 technologies.”²⁴

²¹ Camarinha-Matos, L.M. & Afsarmanesh, H. 2006. Collaborative networks: Value creation in a knowledge society. In *Proceedings of PROLAMAT '06*, 4.

²² Shuman, J. & Twombly, J. 2010. Collaborative networks are the organization: An innovation in organization design and management. *VIKALPA*, 35(1), 3.

²³ Stafford, C. & Mearns, M.A. 2009. What happens when organisations embrace social networking? Knowledge sharing at a multinational business solutions corporation. *South African Journal of Information Management*, 2.

²⁴ Van Zyl, A.S. 2008. The impact of social networking 2.0 on organisations. *The Electronic Library*, 27(6), 909.

Therefore, the potential benefits of electronic social networks are immeasurable to organisations that practise collaboration as employees may freely cultivate collaborations for the benefit of the organisation. This is made possible because Social Networking 2.0 enables two or more of the following modes of computer-mediated communication to be used: one-on-one (e.g. e-mail), one-to-many, one-to-few (e.g. blogging), many-to-many or few-to-few (e.g. wikis).²⁵

Organisations that view electronic social networks in a positive light are likely to benefit from the powerful influence of these platforms on their users. For instance, experts maintain that it is through the use of social media “tools such as blogs, Wikis, forums, virtual communities and instant messaging that employees are able to collaborate and share their ideas and knowledge in an informal setting”.²⁶

2.2.3.2 Communities of Practice

Communities of Practice (CoPs) are also referred to as Professional Learning Communities (PLCs). The formation of Communities of Practice is underpinned by the principle of the need to address a common problem that is experienced by members of the group. Communities of Practice are formed when members who wish to volunteer are brought together by a common purpose. Therefore, Communities of Practice may not be prescribed by leadership and/or management in order to realise their benefits. Wenger, McDermott and Snyder (2002) in Blankenship and Ruona define communities of practice as “groups of people who share a concern, a set of problems, or a passion about a topic, and who deepen their knowledge and expertise in this area by interacting on an ongoing basis”.²⁷ Communities of Practice may range in size from small to large groups; their life spans may be short- or long term; they may be face-to-face or virtual; and they may be located inside the organisation or transcend organisational boundaries.²⁸

²⁵Van Zyl, A.S. 2008. The impact of social networking 2.0 on organisations. *The Electronic Library*, 27(6), 910.

²⁶Stafford, C. & Mearns, M.A. 2009. What happens when organisations embrace social networking? Knowledge sharing at a multinational business solutions corporation. *South African Journal of Information Management*, 2.

²⁷Blakenship, S.S. & Ruona, W.E.A. 2007. Professional Learning Communities and Communities of Practice: A comparison of models, literature review. Available from: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504776.pdf> [Accessed: 16 October 2014].

²⁸Blakenship, S.S. & Ruona, W.E.A. 2007. Professional Learning Communities and Communities of Practice: A comparison of models, literature review. Available from: <http://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED504776.pdf> [Accessed: 16 October 2014].

2.3 Collaborative and organisational culture

The definitions of collaboration foregrounded earlier do not adequately assist in streamlining the concept of “collaborative culture”. Therefore, it is imperative at this point in the discussion to make an attempt at proffering a description of the concept “collaborative culture” so as to put the subsequent discussion into proper perspective. A collaborative culture may be loosely described as the one wherein assumptions, beliefs, and values of members of the organisations are underpinned by “mutual trust and respect and a strong sense of equality”.²⁹

Organisational culture plays a key role with regard to organisational performance. That is, for improvement or any change to happen implies that inevitably, organisational culture is impacted. Therefore, this creates the need to define the concept “organisational culture”.

This concept eludes a clear-cut definition because “organisational culture’ is extremely broad and inclusive, comprising complex, interrelated, comprehensive and ambiguous factors.^{30/31} However, in spite of this contention, definitions of the concept are advanced. According to Ovseiko and Buchan, organisational culture is “an organization-level construct constituted by assumptions, ideas, beliefs, values, norms, and rules that are shared by an organization’s members”.³² Shih and Huang propound that organisational culture is “its set of shared ideas and values that serve as a means of accomplishing its mission”.³³ Edgar Schein defines organisational culture as “the pattern of basic assumptions that a given group has invented, discovered or developed in learning to cope with its problems of external adaptation and internal integration, and have worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think and feel in relation to those problems”.³⁴ The common denominator from the definitions that have been outlined indicates that organisational culture is a shared social construct. It is about values, beliefs and ideas

²⁹Beyerlein, M.M, Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization. *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 20.

³⁰ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 32.

³¹ Ghosh, S. & Srivastava, B.K. 2014. Construction of a reliable and valid scale for measuring organisational culture. *Global Business Review*, 15(3), 585.

³² Ovseiko, P.V. & Buchan, M. 2012. Organizational culture in an academic health center: An exploratory study using a Competing Values Framework. *Institutional Issues*, 87, 709.

³³ Shih, C.C. & Huang, S.J. 2010. Exploring the relationship between organisational culture and software process improvement deployment. *Information & Management*, 47, 272.

³⁴Schein, E.H. 2004. *Organisational culture and leadership*. 3rd ed. 17.

that are practised in organisations.

From the point of view of inter-organisational collaboration, organisational culture is of critical importance in the sense that it serves as a “reference point for the process of goal and strategy formulation and also a pattern of evaluation, interpretation and selection of joint action programmes, and a factor that models the behaviour and actions of people not only in an organisation but also in interpersonal relations...it plays an integrating role that leads to standardising the actions of the participants of an organisation and also an adapting role, since the people of a given organisation bring in their own patterns and norms of action, and the existent cultural patterns modify their former systems of values by influencing the culture of the environment. Understanding organisational culture allows the members of cooperating organisations to know how to act within the framework of a given organisational culture.”³⁵

2.4 Characteristics of organisations with an agile collaborative culture

Organisations need to be agile and adaptive. This would ensure that they maintain competitiveness and strive towards meeting the demands of the knowledge economy. Organisations are faced with challenges of complexity and constant change brought about by the knowledge economy. Competition for limited resources, as well as slowing economies across the globe, require organisations to revisit the way in which operations are carried out internally so as to respond to the external environmental demands and realities. The external environment presents the organisation with a plethora of opportunities and threats. These pose challenges to leadership in traditional, bureaucratic organisations. Beyerlein et al. are of the view that “although pure bureaucracies are less common, the assumptions that underlie them continue to have a strong influence on managers”.³⁶ This requires a new breed of leadership who will be able to facilitate change in the organisation in order to adapt to new external challenges. It is for this reason that the developments faced by organisations of the 21st-century environment require “new ways of thinking about how to structure and manage the people and the components of today’s organization”.³⁷

To transform organisational life, the response of both the leadership and employees will, to a large extent, determine whether or not an organisation can be characterised as practising

³⁵ Kozuck, B. 2009. The culture of collaboration: Theoretical aspects. *Journal of intercultural management*, 21.

³⁶ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization. *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 13.

³⁷ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 12.

collaborative culture. A collaborative culture jolts organisations to become agile and creative in spite of operating within bureaucratic structures. If an organisation is able to successfully implement such a change in its operations, only then will be it able to adapt optimally in the knowledge economy.

A collaborative culture presents an organisation with numerous benefits that help it maintain competitive advantage. There are characteristics which distinguish organisations that implement a collaborative culture from their traditional bureaucratic counterparts. The former promotes “working together efficiently and effectively” while the latter are dominated by the practice of “‘repeat’ rather than ‘create’”.³⁸ The subsequent discussion sets out to highlight those elements that characterise organisations with collaborative cultures. It will become very clear afterwards as to whether public service organisations have adapted some or all of the traits that have come to be associated with organisations of the 21st century.

For the purpose of this thesis, the adopted definition of collaboration as previously outlined in this discussion underscores the importance of working together in order to achieve a common goal. Collaborative organisations enable their employees to establish networks. These networks could take the form of face-to-face or virtual sessions with the help of various collaboration tools alluded to earlier on. It is, therefore, imperative that leadership and management in these organisations embrace the potential advantages that are brought about by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). ICTs will ensure that there is “improved flow of information and other resources across boundaries”.³⁹

Leadership and management play a critical role in the sustenance of a collaborative culture in an organisation. They need to set out and encourage members of the organisation to implement collaboration. Therefore, they should reward members of the organisation who continue to adapt to and adopt collaborative culture practices. This could be achieved by, among others, “intentional efforts to create structures, cultures, forums, and practices that reinforce collaboration”.⁴⁰ Forums such as communities of practice, wikis and the like are but a few of the many strategies that could be employed by leadership and management to sustain collaboration.

³⁸ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 13.

³⁹ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 14.

⁴⁰ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 13.

Furthermore, organisations that practice a collaborative culture are characterised by the presence of teams. Organisations that practise a collaborative culture are also referred to as team-based organisations (TBOs) in the literature on organisational study. A team-based organisation is defined as that which performs in a “non-traditional, innovative work environment relying on teams to achieve its objectives”.⁴¹ Teams are made up of “interdependent contributors” working together to achieve a common organisational goal.⁴² The teams could be temporary or permanent, functional or cross-functional, and local or distributed.⁴³ As is the case with networks, leadership and management have to ensure that the available ICT infrastructure acts as a catalyst to enable teams to function optimally.

Organisations are faced with the challenges of information overload and complexity which are concomitant with the knowledge economy. These challenges may, to some extent, be managed through the use of ICTs. However, it is very critical that members of organisations become innovative and creative when facing these challenges. Teams are an effective way of ensuring that members of organisations are able to circumvent these challenges. Moreover, teams provide platforms and forums where employees share information and thereby learn and grow at the same time.⁴⁴

As previously mentioned, traditional, bureaucratic organisations promote repetition and/or routine over creativity and innovation. This state-of-affairs adversely affects the competitiveness of an organisation, including its employees. Organisations that practise collaborative cultures are a breeding ground for employees who can think, are caring, and who are ultimately committed to their work as they get a sense of belonging and being valued.

There are public service organisations that have embraced collaborative culture in spite of the bureaucracy at play in such organisations. A case in point is the Canadian government’s

⁴¹Business Dictionary. Available from: <http://www.businessdictionary.com/definition/team-based-organization-TBO.html> [Accessed: 22 January 2014].

⁴²Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 14.

⁴³Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 13.

⁴⁴Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 14.

efforts to become “responsive to future challenges and opportunities”.⁴⁵ As previously mentioned, it is critical for public service organisations to embrace the benefits of ICTs. The Canadian government has adopted “workplace innovation” as its theme.⁴⁶ Through the workplace innovation theme, the Canadian government strives to take advantage of new technologies and nurture more performance-oriented, collaborative and innovative culture. In so doing, the senior management were of the view that workplace innovation would enable employees to work anytime, with anyone and anywhere.⁴⁷

2.5 The benefits of an agile collaborative culture in organisations Organisations, let alone public service, are faced with challenges with regard to limited resources. As a result, service delivery presents a predicament when it comes to prioritisation and budget allocations. It is against this backdrop that public service organisations have to pool their resources together in order to maximise the impact of what little is available to meet the needs of citizens. Traditional, bureaucratic organisations such as government departments are characterised by a silo approach to service delivery. There is an unprecedented need for public service organisations to remove barriers and create platforms where employees work seamlessly, including horizontally and vertically, inside and outside the organisation, locally and across boundaries (virtually).⁴⁸

Change is one of the many difficult phenomena that leadership and management in organisations have to communicate and cultivate among employees. Organisations of the knowledge economy require high levels of adaptability and agility due to the complexity that faces them constantly. Therefore, it is, to a large extent, those organisations that practise an agile collaborative culture that will better handle change management. Employees who work in collaborative organisations adapt quickly “to changes in products and services, customer requirements, changes in work processes, and changes in the competitive environment”.⁴⁹

⁴⁵ Good, A. & Brown, M.R. 2011. Workplace innovation in Canada’s public service: How collaborative approaches, dynamic workspaces, and enabling technology can deliver greater value to Canadians, 1.

⁴⁶ Good, A. & Brown, M.R. 2011. Workplace innovation in Canada’s public service: How collaborative approaches, dynamic workspaces, and enabling technology can deliver greater value to Canadians, i.

⁴⁷ Good, A. & Brown, M.R. 2011. Workplace innovation in Canada’s public service: How collaborative approaches, dynamic workspaces, and enabling technology can deliver greater value to Canadians, 1.

⁴⁸ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 14.

⁴⁹ Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 15.

The ecosystems in which organisations operate in the knowledge economy are in a constant state of flux. The knowledge economy, on the other hand, requires better management of knowledge as a resource in order for organisations to sustain their competitive edge. Collaborative organisations enable employees to work seamlessly as was alluded to earlier in this argument. Thus, contrary to what happens in those organisations that adopt a silo approach in their operations, a collaborative culture enables employees to share ideas and information across boundaries both inside and outside the organisation.⁵⁰ This is because employees in collaborative organisations maximise cooperation over non-productive competition.⁵¹

Organisations may not completely know the extent of their employees' loyalty in the work place. Furthermore, it is of paramount importance that employees subscribe to and uphold the vision, mission and values as members of the organisation. It is by putting these aspects into practice that an organisation will be able to meet its obligations to its customers. The benefit of an agile collaborative culture in an organisation is that it ensures that employees develop an increased sense of ownership and involvement, and thereby strive towards the achievement of organisational goals.⁵²

Employees in organisations bring with them a diversity of backgrounds in relation to “nationality but also age, educational level, and even tenure”.⁵³ These factors may affect the extent to which a shift towards collaborative practices occurs in organisations. For instance, it has been found that “the higher the proportion of strangers on the team and the greater the diversity of background and experience, the less likely the team members are to share knowledge or exhibit other collaborative behaviours”.⁵⁴ The term “strangers” refers to those who are drawn from other sections inside the organisations or even externally.⁵⁵ People networks are a good indicator of with whom and how employees interact during their working lives. They also give a sense of their impact on the way in which people perform

⁵⁰Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 18.

⁵¹Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 15.

⁵²Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: Building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 18.

⁵³Gratton, L. & Erickson, T.J. 2007. Eight ways to build collaborative teams. *Harvard Business Review*.

⁵⁴Gratton, L. & Erickson, T.J. 2007. Eight ways to build collaborative teams. *Harvard Business Review*.

⁵⁵Gratton, L. & Erickson, T.J. 2007. Eight ways to build collaborative teams. *Harvard Business Review*.

their duties and the effects thereof on those with whom they interact and vice-versa. Networks benefit an organisation as they afford its employees opportunities to share resources. These could include tangible and intangible resources that could make a positive impact on employee performance.

Traditional, bureaucratic organisations and their characteristic protocols often create bottlenecks that waylay service and/or product delivery. Given the plethora of needs that must be met by public service organisations, communities sometimes resort to protest in order to deal with perceived indecision and systemic paralysis to address their demands. A collaborative culture provides organisations with the advantage of decreasing “the influence of position power and increase the influence of expertise in decision making”. Thus, the organisation reaps the benefit of increased capacity to “identify and respond to relevant changes in its environment”.⁵⁶ Due their high level of agility and adaptability, collaborative organisations arguably become more responsive and relevant than their traditional, bureaucratic counterparts.

2.6 Barriers to an agile collaborative culture

As is the case with other transformations, introducing a collaboration culture in an organisation is not a smooth intervention strategy. Several reasons have been advanced in the literature with regard to this aspect of organisational culture. The main barriers that cut across most collaboration initiatives have been identified but are not limited to the following, namely: power struggles, institutional inertia, lack of passion and changes in leadership. Some experts in the literature on organisational studies have packaged these barriers into the interpersonal, organisational and contextual domains.⁵⁷ Graf and Rothlauf in Mishan and Prangley maintain that these barriers can be overcome by implementing collaboration management efforts that include “commitment, prior experience with collaboration, trust between partners and on-going performance evaluation”.⁵⁸ The barriers that will be dealt with appear in the majority of the literature on collaboration in organisations. A brief overview of the way in which these barriers manifest follows in the subsequent discussion.

⁵⁶Beyerlein, M.M., Freedman, S., McGee, C. & Moran, L. 2002. Beyond teams: building the collaborative organization - *Volume 1 of Collaborative Work Systems Series*, 18.

⁵⁷ Mishan, M. & Prangley, A. 2014. Barriers to inter-organisational collaboration amongst performing arts organisations in South Africa. *South African Theatre Journal*, 127.

⁵⁸ Mishan, M. & Prangley, A. 2014. Barriers to inter-organisational collaboration amongst performing arts organisations in South Africa. *South African Theatre Journal*, 128.

2.6.1 Power Struggles

This aspect relates to how leadership and management manifest themselves in organisations. This could be a reflection on the attitude and behaviour on leadership and management, among the many other attributes. Some leaders and managers may feel that collaboration will render them impotent because of the perceived threat of losing control.⁵⁹ Miles and Trott are of the opinion that power struggles may manifest themselves in the form of what they term “baronial behaviour”, the “me-them” as opposed to “us” thinking. This, they maintain, may waylay collaboration.⁶⁰

2.6.2 Institutional Inertia

The ecosystem within which an organisation exists plays a critical role with regard to embracing new interventions such as collaboration. Due to their nature of cultural diversity, any transformation is likely to bring about resistance. Institutional inertia is defined as “the failure of an inefficient organizational form to evolve into an efficient organization”.⁶¹ Organisations and employees, in particular, do not want to step out of their comfort zones. They want to maintain the status quo with regard to organisational processes, procedures, structures and systems. These were birthed and, in turn, continue to nurture the prevalent organisational culture. Thus, the behaviour that exists presents a mammoth task of turning the culture around for the better and hence efficacy in the organisation.

2.6.3 Lack of Passion and Time

Collaboration requires buy-in across the whole spectrum of what constitutes the organisation. Ensuring that a sense of ownership is created and infused into all collaborative initiatives will go a long way in circumventing negative attitudes, especially lack of passion and making time for collaboration. Organisations that take a Band-Aid approach to collaboration do not fully realise the benefits thereof. This approach inevitably becomes a stumbling block to adopting a collaborative culture in the organisation. For instance, an organisation that collaborates with others on the basis of lack of funds may experience resistance from within as the quick-fix solution does not give employees enough time to assimilate the collaboration. As a result, making collaboration a routine act becomes very difficult as well.⁶²

⁵⁹ Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 47.

⁶⁰ Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 49.

⁶¹ Valderramma-Ferrando, L. 2006. Institutional inertia, 4.

2.6.4 Leadership and Management

Leadership and management can be a catalyst and/or stumbling block with regard to the involvement of an organisation in collaboration initiatives. An organisation would naturally have leadership and management level employees who are characterised by diverse opinions pertaining to collaboration. Thus, collaboration may be embraced at one level only to be confronted with resistance at another level of leadership and management in the organisation. For instance, accountability in government departments in particular, is linear and vertical. In some other instances, leadership and management at the level where collaboration is fully embraced may be changed for some reason. Thus, the verticality may engender an unintended challenge because “where collaborative effort relies on vertical accountability to make it work, then changes in leadership can have an extremely detrimental impact on collaboration”.⁶³

The hierarchical bureaucratic nature of public service organisations such as government departments also has an adverse effect on the adoption of a collaborative culture. For instance, experts are of the view that “the bureaucratic model of management associated with the public service has made it difficult to support culture change initiatives”.⁶⁴ Morgan contends that “one of the most basic problems of modern management is that the mechanical way of thinking is so ingrained in our everyday conceptions of organization that it is often very difficult to organize in any other way”.⁶⁵ Therefore, it is imperative that for an organisation to circumvent this obstacle, a new crop of leadership should be introduced. Furthermore, some sort of organisational re-engineering should be embarked upon by leadership. A new concept referred to as the “New Public Management” (NPM) has emerged in the study of organisational life. New Public Management is a paradigm shift aimed at reinventing government by focusing less on command-and-control approaches and paying

⁶² Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 50.

⁶³ Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 51.

⁶⁴ Drumm, M. 2012. Culture change in the public sector, 12.

⁶⁵ Morgan. 1997. Images of organization, 6.

more attention to efficiency, effectiveness and quality of services delivered to citizens.⁶⁶

2.6.5 Impatience

As previously alluded to, a Band-Aid approach does not assist in ensuring that a collaboration culture is initiated and carefully nurtured in an organisation. Voters and taxpayers, in particular, expect government to deliver on the promises and pronouncements made by politicians. Leaders in government, whether political or administrative, want to see immediate results.⁶⁷ This is because ruling political parties have limited time in office and would, therefore, want to be seen to be delivering on their promises and manifestos. Whereas collaboration requires a long-term development approach, political leaders do not have the patience for the realisation thereof.⁶⁸ It has been discovered that “political agendas support quick-wins over ongoing change initiatives that can take time”.⁶⁹

2.6 The role of leadership and management in creating collaborative cultures

The creation of a collaboration culture in organisations is affected by several factors. These could have either a positive or negative impact on fostering a collaboration culture among members of an organisation. Leadership is one of the most essential elements that play a critical role in steering an organisation towards the adaptation to and adoption of a collaborative culture. Therefore, the subsequent argument will deal with the role played by leadership in the creation of a collaborative culture in the organisation. It is very rare, if at all, for an organisation to comprise of leadership and management that portray and practise homogenous cultures. Leadership across the spectrum in organisations manifests itself heterogeneously. Research has unearthed three levels of leadership culture. These are dependent, independent and interdependent leadership cultures. Dependent leadership cultures maintain that only people in positions of authority are responsible for leadership.

Proponents of independent leadership cultures are of the view that leadership emerges from “a variety of individuals based on knowledge and expertise”.⁷⁰ Interdependent leadership

⁶⁶ Hope, K.R, Sr. 2001. The new public management: context and practice in Africa. *International Public Management Journal*, 120-123.

⁶⁷ Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 52.

⁶⁸ Miles, E. & Trott, W. Collaborative working: How publicly funded services can take a whole systems approach, 53.

⁶⁹ Drumm, M. 2012. Culture change in the public sector, 11.

⁷⁰ McGuire, J.B., Palus, C.J., Pasmore, W. & Rhodes, G.B. 2009. Transforming your organisation: Global organisational development white paper series, 7.

cultures propound that “leadership is a collective activity that requires mutual enquiry, learning and capacity to work with complex challenges”.⁷¹ It is the latter type of leadership cultures that is required in organisations of the knowledge economy. The figure below is a diagrammatical representation of the three leadership cultures.

The organisation of the 21st century is faced with more complexity than has ever been the case before. Thus, the calibre of leadership that is cultivated in organisations needs to be able to respond to the demands of the knowledge economy. Organisations of the 21st century require transformational leadership that will enable them to remain competitive. McCloskey defines transformational leadership as “the process of creating, sustaining and enhancing leader-follower, follower-leader and leader-leader partnerships in pursuit of a common vision, in accordance with shared values”.⁷² Transformational leadership aims to transform followers into leaders. Transformational leaders influence followers to “look beyond self-interest and focus on the needs of the organization”.⁷³ The hierarchical nature of public service organisations continues to be an incubator for predominantly transactional leadership. The ideal situation is to gradually adopt some elements of the adhocracy cultures which, by implication, require the presence of transformational leadership traits.⁷⁴

Leadership in an organisation plays a critical role in the type of culture that predominates. Leadership creates and, in turn, the development of leadership is influenced by organisational culture.⁷⁵ Thus, the type of leadership that exists in an organisation will, to a large extent, determine the type of cultural change that will be implemented. Experts in the study of organisations have identified three types of change that might be introduced by leadership in the organisations. These include, but are not limited to, developmental, transitional and transformational cultural change.⁷⁶

The importance of the development of leadership in an organisation cannot be stressed

⁷¹ McGuire, J.B., Palus, C.J., Pasmore, W. & Rhodes, G.B. 2009. Transforming your organisation: Global organisational development white paper series, 7-8.

⁷² McCloskey, M.W. What is transformational leadership? Available from: <http://people.bethel.edu/~pferris/otcommon/TransformationalLeadership.pdf> [Accessed: 14 October 2014].

⁷³ Moynihan, D.P., Pandey, S.K. & Wright, B.E. 2011. Setting the table: How transformational leadership fosters performance information use. *Journal of Public Administration Research Theory Advance Access*, 5.

⁷⁴ Schimmoeller, L.J. 2010. Leadership styles in Competing Values Framework. *Leadership Review*, 9.

⁷⁵ Schimmoeller, L.J. 2010. Leadership styles in Competing Values Framework. *Leadership Review*, 2.

⁷⁶ Drumm, M. 2012. Culture change in the public sector, 7.

enough if it is to face up to the challenges presented by the knowledge economy. Below is a schematic representation of the nature of transformation, which is ideal for ensuring that an organisation gradually adopts a collaborative culture.

2.8 Collaboration tools

The introduction of Information Technology (IT) brings about opportunities for new tools that may assist in enhancing collaboration in organisations. There has been a major paradigm shift with regard to platforms such as the Internet. Companies have developed software that goes beyond basic communication. Consequently, web-based collaborative software such as wikis, whiteboards, and many other applications has resulted from such developments.⁷⁷

These web-based tools are also referred to as Web-based 2.0 tools. Web-based 2.0 technologies were first introduced in 2004 by Dale Dougherty, a Vice-president of O'Reilly Media Inc. as an inclusive concept to describe collaborative software already alluded above.⁷⁸ However, research has found that IT alone is not enough because “collaboration behaviours do not change without addressing issues of corporate culture”.⁷⁹ Once the issue of organisational culture has been adequately addressed, employees can begin to realise the advantages that IT has for collaboration within and outside the organisation. Anything to the contrary will imply a total waste of company resources as little or no return will be realised, as a result.

Globalisation presents new opportunities and challenges to organisations. IT collaboration tools can help to mitigate these challenges as well as optimise opportunities that are brought about by globalisation. The use of collaboration tools such as teleconference, videoconference and e-mail, among others, will enable employees to work with others whom they do not know, to deal with issues of travelling cost containment measures, and capture and transfer knowledge to the next generation through collaboration tools such as wikis.

There are collaboration tools that are freely available as well as those for which organisations will have to pay in order to utilise. However, organisations that practise a collaborative culture stand to gain invaluable benefits from utilising collaboration tools. For instance, these

⁷⁷ McDonough, M. 2011. Make collaboration easier with these 5 free online tools. Available from: <http://www.brighthub.com/office/collaboration/articles/70475> [Accessed: 16 January 2015].

⁷⁸ Anderson, P. 2007. What is Web 2.0? Ideas, technologies and implications for education. *JISC Technology & Standard Watch*, 7-9.

⁷⁹ Yehuda, G. 2009. What it takes to foster a culture of collaboration: Making leaders successful every day. *Forrester research*, 2.

collaboration tools provide an opportunity for employees involved in a common project to solve common tasks or problems easily. This takes place regardless of spatiality and/or locality. Consequently, organisations realise savings with regard to travel time and budgets. These collaborative software and tools are advantageous to collaborative organisations as they may apply them in their operations as a value-adding catalyst for the sustenance of competitive advantage.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs), alluded to elsewhere in this discussion, have the potential to optimise collaborations within and between organisations. ICTs become potentially beneficial to organisations composed of geographically-dispersed and/or distributed teams.⁸⁰ ICTs could afford such teams the opportunity to hold tele- and video conferences, thus saving on travelling costs. It should, however, be mentioned that ICTs may not always proffer organisations the benefits for which they were intended as a result of questions and problems that may arise during their utilisation as a medium of communication.

Experts have, on the basis of the preceding argument, put forth a proposal that ICTs should be implemented to achieve a sensemaking perspective in organisations in order to gain maximum benefit from their use. It is imperative to mention that sensemaking, as a concept, is defined in various different ways depending on the context within which it is investigated.⁸¹ For instance, Weick postulates that “sensemaking is about such things as placement of items into frameworks comprehending, redressing surprise, constructing meaning, interacting in pursuit of mutual understanding, and patterning”.⁸² Others describe sensemaking as “the process of understanding an unfamiliar situation in order to act effectively”.⁸³ Sensemaking should, for the purpose of this discussion, be treated as an exercise in which employees will be engaged on a continuous basis when collaborating so that they do not lose focus on the importance of engaging in collaborative practices. It is imperative to deal with the critical importance of sensemaking in organisations since collaboration may be especially unfamiliar to employees in public service organisations.

⁸⁰ Paul, S.A., Reddy, M. & Abraham, J. 2007. Collaborative sensemaking during emergency crisis response: How do ICTs help? 1.

⁸¹ Weick, C.E. 2003. Sensemaking in organizations: Foundations for organizational science, 4.

⁸² Weick, C.E. 2003. Sensemaking in organizations: Foundations for organizational science, 6.

⁸³ Paul, S.A., Reddy, M. & Abraham, J. 2007. Collaborative sensemaking during emergency crisis response: How do ICTs help? 1.

Thus, for organisations to benefit from collaborating, they need to infuse sensemaking into the use of ICTs from the outset.

The importance of sensemaking for successful collaborations cannot be overemphasised exhaustively. Some experts have coined concepts such as collaborative sensemaking in order to underscore the importance of sensemaking for organisations. Collaborative sensemaking, it is maintained, “occurs when multiple actors with different thoughts about the world engage in the process of making sense of ‘messy’ data or information which has a high degree of uncertainty”.⁸⁴ As mentioned in the preceding argument, collaboration may present employees with unfamiliar territory due to new sets of information with which they have to deal. Collaborative sensemaking may be one of those intervention strategies that organisations may employ to maximise the benefits of collaborative practices.

2.9 Agile collaboration

There are different types of collaboration in the study of organisations. However, to put the thesis into proper perspective, this study will not deal with all of the possible forms. For the purposes of differentiation and application, this thesis will focus on the sub-set of collaboration, namely “agile collaboration”, in the department. This will be done through the application of a case study. Agile collaboration (AC) is the act of working together, by allowing for more flexibility when planning and responding to change, in order to achieve a common goal.⁸⁵ To detect whether or not agile collaboration praxis is being realised, individuals in organisations have to demonstrate completeness, flexibility and efficiency in the use of knowledge, skills and competencies.⁸⁶ Adaptive organisations are an ideal platform whereby individuals may be able to demonstrate these attributes.

⁸⁴ Paul, S.A., Reddy, M. & Abraham, J. 2007. Collaborative sensemaking during emergency crisis response: How do ICTs help? 2.

⁸⁵ McIntyre, J. Agile collaboration: Tools, techniques & games. Available from: <http://study.com/academy/lesson/agile-collaboration-tools-techniques-games.html> [Accessed: 2 September 2017].

⁸⁶ Essawi, M. & Tilchin, O. 2012. Adaptive collaboration model for organisational change. *American Journal of Industrial and Business Management*, 146.

Chapter 3

The competing values framework

3.1 Introduction

The Competing Values Framework (CVF) is the theoretical basis on which this thesis rests and the means by which it approaches the case study as explained in Chapter 1. In this chapter, the CVF is described in detail. In most cases, it was deemed to be a useful theoretical construct. The CVF was, like most organisational theories, developed for private organisations. In spite of this, however, the framework has found applicability in public service organisations as shall be demonstrated in this chapter. The basic notion of competing values is relevant to all organisations. That is, there are no values that are the exclusive domain of either private or public service organisations. For that reason, the thesis makes use of the values in the CVF while not expecting public service organisations to behave like their private sector counterparts.

3.2 Selected review of studies based on the competing values framework

Extensive research studies have been undertaken in both the private and public service organisations employing the CVF approach. The CVF has been used in various contexts pertaining to the analyses and interpretation of a wide range of organisational phenomena.⁸⁷

⁸⁷ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2003. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 3

The framework is used extensively in the study of organisational culture and organisational effectiveness, the latter of which is its characteristic founding principle. Cameron and Quinn developed the Organizational Cultural Assessment Instrument (OCAI) based on the CVF.⁸⁸ Numerous studies have been conducted in both private and public-sector organisations to test the validity and reliability of the CVF.

Cameron and Quinn have utilised the CVF in the study of organisational leadership in thousands of organisations.⁸⁹ Furthermore, the framework has been applied to the study of organisational effectiveness based on the criteria of effectiveness applicable to a particular culture type.⁹⁰ The framework has been applied in studies aimed at organising the various factors of Total Quality Management (TQM).⁹¹ It has been used by Davis Ulrich in the study of human resources management. In this study, the framework was used to “identify the changing roles of the human resources manager”.⁹²

Other equally important applications of the CVF in the study of organisations exist. For example, the use of the framework in research has revealed that new or small organisations tend to undergo a predictable pattern of organisational culture changes.⁹³ Conversely, when applied to older and more mature organisations, it became evident that these types of organisations were less predictable with regard to their organisational culture changes.⁹⁴ In South Africa, the CVF has been used as a conceptual guide in studying the way in which the cultural orientation of the private security industry impacts its functioning and competitive advantage.⁹⁵ Reliability studies have been conducted using the OCAI, a derivative of the CVF. Reliability is used here to refer to “the extent to which the instrument measures cultural types consistently”.⁹⁶ In addition, the OCAI has been put to the test with regard to its validity

⁸⁸ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 39.

⁸⁹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 46.

⁹⁰ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing 48-49.

⁹¹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing 49.

⁹² Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing 51.

⁹³ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing 53.

⁹⁴ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing 57.

⁹⁵ Kock, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 343.

⁹⁶ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 153.

in organisational studies. Validity is used here to denote “the extent to which phenomena that are supposed to be measured are actually measured”.⁹⁷ In this instance, the phenomena that are referred to are the four organisational culture types.

PS organisations, like their private sector counterparts, continue to evolve. This evolution compels them to initiate reforms. The framework, “which was not explicitly developed for the world of government leadership”, is a useful heuristic tool for understanding management and leadership values in the public service context.⁹⁸ Many studies have been conducted to test the validity and reliability of the CVF and OCAI in PS organisations. The CVF has been used in research on the relationships between organisational culture and other variables such as the implementation of total quality management and surveys on job satisfaction.⁹⁹ The framework was used in the study to assess academic physician-scientists’ views on current and preferred future organisational culture in their organisations.¹⁰⁰ Evidence on the use of the CVF and OCAI for empirical studies in Asian countries has also emerged. These studies ranged from the impact of organisational culture on organisational performance to the CVF as a differentiating tool for the four organisational cultural types. The studies were applied to the transformation of state-owned companies in China.¹⁰¹ In Hong Kong, the framework was used in the study to differentiate government-funded institutions of higher learning from one another on the basis of the four organisational culture types, namely hierarchy, clan, adhocracy and market. The study was conducted among academic staff. The results of the study supported the validity of the CVF as a tool for the differentiation of organisational culture types.¹⁰²

The CVF has also found extensive applicability in PS organisations that were starting to initiate public service reforms through the New Public Management (NPM). Countries such

⁹⁷ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 155.

⁹⁸ Lindquist, E. & Marcy, R. 2016. The competing values framework: Implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 12(2), 168.

⁹⁹ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 39-40.

¹⁰⁰ Ovseiko, P.V. & Bucha, A.M. 2012. Organisational culture in an academic health center: An exploratory story using the Competing Values Framework. *Academic Medicine*, 87(6), 709.

¹⁰¹ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 40.

¹⁰² Kwan, P. & Walker, A. 2001. Validating the competing values model as a representation of organizational culture through inter-institutional comparisons. *Organizational Analysis*, 12(1), 21.

as the United States of America applied the CVF approach to the NPM. In the final analysis, it became evident that public service reforms were no more “cleaning up the bureaucracy” than the introduction of entrepreneurial government as advocated by Osborne and Gaebler.¹⁰³ When the CVF approach was applied to PS organisations in the United Kingdom, it was discovered that the NPM could not fit accurately onto the CVF. As was the case in the United States of America, there was nothing more radical in PS organisations in the United Kingdom other than “cleaning up the bureaucracy and reinstating proper levels of delegation”.¹⁰⁴ Further analysis revealed that the reformation of PS organisations in the United Kingdom tended to concentrate on the Hierarchy (control) and Market (compete) quadrants of the CVF.¹⁰⁵ Applying the CVF approach to PS organisations in Ireland demonstrated a pattern of reforms that concentrated on the Hierarchy (control) quadrant, with fairly little effort being made in the other three quadrants.¹⁰⁶ The framework has been utilised to investigate the views expressed by senior managers and those in organisational units in PS agencies in Queensland and Victoria. The study focused on the opinions of the respondents with regard to current and ideal organisational culture, the importance of a range of strategic objectives and job satisfaction.¹⁰⁷ The analysis indicated that PS organisations in Queensland were predominantly hierarchical and had a strong internal process culture.¹⁰⁸ PS organisations in Victoria were more inclined towards the rational goal culture, i.e. oriented towards the market (compete) culture type.¹⁰⁹ The responses from Queensland indicated that the ideal culture was the clan culture.¹¹⁰ The preferred culture as expressed by the respondents in Victoria was the

¹⁰³ Talbot, C. 2008. Measuring public value: A competing values framework approach – a paper for the work foundation. Manchester Business School, 14.

¹⁰⁴ Talbot, C. 2008. Measuring public value: A competing values framework approach – a paper for the work foundation. Manchester Business School, 1.

¹⁰⁵ Talbot, C. 2008. Measuring public value: A competing values framework approach – a paper for the work foundation. Manchester Business School, 16.

¹⁰⁶ Talbot, C. 2008. Measuring public value: A competing values framework approach – a paper for the work foundation. Manchester Business School, 17.

¹⁰⁷ Bradley, Lisa & Parker, Rachel. Organisational culture in the public sector: report for the Institute of Public Administration Australia: 3

¹⁰⁸ Bradley, Lisa & Parker, Rachel. Organisational culture in the public sector: report for the Institute of Public Administration Australia: 7

¹⁰⁹ Bradley, Lisa & Parker, Rachel. Organisational culture in the public sector: report for the Institute of Public Administration Australia: 9

¹¹⁰ Bradley, Lisa & Parker, Rachel. Organisational culture in the public sector: report for the Institute of Public Administration Australia: 11

compete culture.¹¹¹ The CVF has been criticised for applying a private sector-centred framework to the public service. There were debates that the framework lacks terminology, context and particular debates and tensions associated with the public service. Contrary to these arguments, a number of PS organisation values which characterise the government and public administration do find expression in the CVF at different levels.¹¹²

PS organisations are multifunctional entities that have to respond to a multiplicity of often conflicting needs from the citizenry. It is precisely this point that makes the CVF one of the relatively few models that are sufficiently reliable for utilisation in the study of public administration. The few case studies cited in the preceding discussion on PS organisation reforms that were envisaged ended up being mere clean-ups of bureaucracies. The multi-dimensional nature of PS organisations implies that they are faced with issues of diversity pertaining to values, leadership and management styles, among others. A relatively neutral framework, such as the CVF, enables leadership and management in PS organisations to ameliorate these challenges through increased “personal and organizational self-awareness”.¹¹³ The framework has been used in research on PS organisations in New York State entitled *Competing Values Framework of Managerial Leadership*. The study involved interviewing employees from various hierarchical levels of the organisation. This study demonstrated the efficacy of the framework as a common language for managers. The study also found that there were many parallels with regard to the roles played by managers at different levels of the hierarchy.¹¹⁴ As PS organisations undergo reforms, there are values that fall by the wayside while new ones emerge. Figure 3.1 below is an archetypical schematic representation of how the CVF approach may enable PS organisations to unearth the values that are often taken for granted. These extracted values are crucial in transforming PS organisations from their present situations to where they ought to be as 21st-Century entities. The CVF, which is a powerful organisational diagnostic tool for leadership, empowers

¹¹¹ Bradley, Lisa & Parker, Rachel. Organisational culture in the public sector: report for the Institute of Public Administration Australia: 12

¹¹² Lindquist, Evert & Marcy, Richard. 2016. The competing values framework: implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership* 12(2): 173

¹¹³ Lindquist, E. & Marcy, R. 2016. The competing values framework: Implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 12(2), 173.

¹¹⁴ DiPadova, L.M. & Faerman, S.R. 1993. Using the Competing Values Framework to facilitate managerial understanding across levels of organisational hierarchy. *Human Resources Management (1986-1998)*, 32(1), 3-4.

managers to achieve this endeavour as has been proved in the studies outlined above. Thus, Figure 3.1 below is a summary of “what is” and “what ought” to be for PS organisations.

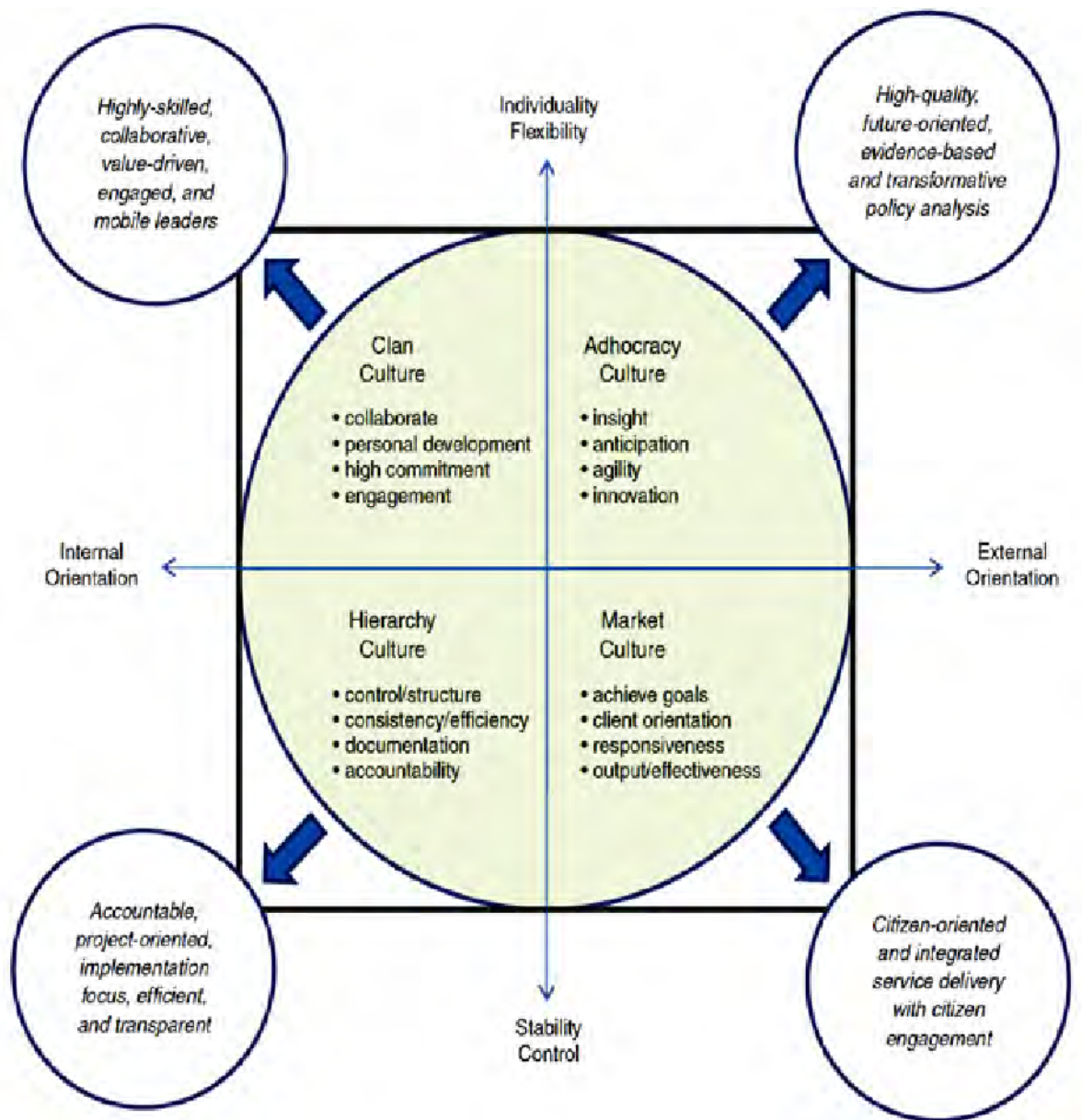


Figure 3.1 CVF and 2010 Australian public service reform¹¹⁵

3.3 The origins of the competing values framework

The results from the research were analysed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh, who were faculty members at the University of Michigan Business School, to identify patterns pertaining to

¹¹⁵ Lindquist, E. & Marcy, R. 2016. The competing values framework: implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 12(2), 173.

organisational effectiveness. The CVF originated from a research study on organisational effectiveness in the early to mid-1980s. The research was undertaken by Quinn and Rohrbaugh of the University of Michigan Business School.¹¹⁶ The framework was developed based on research that was conducted on a list of major indicators of effective organisations.¹¹⁷ The list of thirty-nine organisational effectiveness indicators was created by John Campbell and his colleagues.¹¹⁸ The list of indicators was too long and cumbersome to be of any practical applicability. The results from the research were analysed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh to identify patterns relating to organisational effectiveness. Subsequent to the analysis, a diametrically-contrasting cluster of values emerged, namely coordination, predictability, control versus challenge, variety, and stimulation; standardisation, measurement, objectivity versus compensation, recognition, and rewards; direction, purpose, role clarity versus sensitivity, consideration, and support; and productivity, impact, achievement versus belonging, teamwork, and affiliation.¹¹⁹ These clusters of values or value sets were, in turn, further refined and positioned into what was later referred to as the two dimensions of the CVF. The two dimensions are composed as follows: flexibility versus control, and internal versus external focus.¹²⁰ Further clarification of the two dimensions follows in the subsequent section. The preceding discussion presents evidence indicating that the framework is fundamentally a juxtaposition of positive opposites. The CVF therefore creates awareness among members that organisations are, inherently, characterised by nuances. Therefore, this framework becomes an empowerment tool that provides members of the organisation with a common language. The common language assists members in observing each other's behaviour and deciding whether there is a need to intervene. The intervention, in this instance, could be a call to modify certain behaviours in order to attempt to take the organisation in a new direction. In practical terms, the framework may assist organisations to integrate disparate thoughts by its members

¹¹⁶ Cameron, K.S. 2004. A process for changing organizational culture, 4.

¹¹⁷ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 33.

¹¹⁸ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 34.

¹¹⁹ Lindquist, E. & Marcy, R. 2016. The competing values framework: Implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 12(2), 170.

¹²⁰ Panayotopoulou, L. & Bourantas, D. 2003. Strategic human resource management and its effects on firm performance: An implementation of the competing values framework. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 14(4), 682.

pertaining to the issue of organisational culture.

The CVF also comprises the third value dimension called the *means-end*. This dimension was used by the developers of the framework to explain “why each culture type is associated with a specific strategic thrust and a unique set of effectiveness criteria”.¹²¹ Arguably, this dimension appraises the strategic plan of an organisation. This dimension addresses itself to processes that are applied in organisations and their subsequent outcomes. The third dimension clarifies the behaviours that emanate from values and beliefs.¹²² Therefore, this dimension is underpinned by the prevailing “organisational values” at any given time. The dimensions are illustrated in Figure 3.2 below. The CVF has evolved and been remodelled in many forms, but the fundamental principles have remained the same.¹²³

The definitions of organisational culture presented in Chapter 2 explicitly foreground values and beliefs as the fundamental principles. It follows, then, that organisational culture and “organisational values” are closely-related constructs. The concept “value” escapes outright definition. One of the reasons for this evasive definition is as a result of value that is metaphorically expressed as a moving target and hence difficult to measure. This, by implication, suggests that value is phenomenally subject to complexity. To further complicate the issue, what is regarded as value by one organisation may not necessarily be the case with the next.¹²⁴ However, some pointers are put forth¹²⁵ to assist in describing how value can be created in organisations. Value creation takes place on two fronts in organisations. Firstly, it occurs at the level of individuals and, secondly, at the level of the organisation. At individual level, people realise self-fulfilment and potential when they create value. At organisational level, organisations become successful if they are able to create value in the form of goods and/or services.¹²⁶ Value may then be articulated as those competencies that are developed by

¹²¹ Hartnell, C.A., Ou, A.Y. & Kinicki, A. 2011. Organisational culture and organisational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the Competing Values Framework’s theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 678.

¹²² Hartnell, C.A., Ou, A.Y. & Kinicki, A. 2011. Organisational culture and organisational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the Competing Values Framework’s theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 679.

¹²³ Talbot, C. 2008. Measuring public value: A competing values framework approach – a paper for the work foundation, 10.

¹²⁴ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 22.

¹²⁵ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 21.

¹²⁶ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 22.

both individuals and organisations in the Control, Compete, Create and Collaborate quadrants of the CVF which lead to collective achievement of the outcomes. The outcomes would not ordinarily become achievable should individuals strive to achieve them on their own.¹²⁷

The concept “organisational values” is defined here in order to unravel this connection. Organisational values are criteria according to which employees make decisions about priorities, and are often defined as the shared values of all employees.¹²⁸ Barrett maintains that values are “the deeply held principles, ideals, or beliefs that people hold or adhere to when making decisions”.¹²⁹ Miller and Yu posit that organisational values “are the values staff are expected to observe collectively when representing the organisation”.¹³⁰ Hill and Jones (2001)¹³¹ define organisational values as “beliefs and ideas about standards of behaviour that organizational members should exhibit in the endeavour to achieve organizational goals within the organizational community”. As can be deciphered from the definition of organisational values, both concepts share close correlations. The two concepts address themselves to the issue of shared beliefs and ideas. Thus, it could be argued that they are fundamental catalysts for organisational effectiveness which is a tenet of the CVF. That is, both organisational culture and organisational values have a bearing on performance in organisations. Martins and Coetzee argue that organisational culture effectiveness is often the function of the values and beliefs held by employees of the organisation.¹³² Obviously, the successful application of the CVF in the measuring and profiling of organisational culture will require a thorough understanding of organisational values. Consequentially, organisational values are one of the fundamentals of organisational culture.¹³³

¹²⁷ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 29.

¹²⁸ Zhang, X., Austin, S.A. & Glass, J. 2006. Linking individual and organizational values: A case study in UK construction, 2.

¹²⁹ Barrett, R. 2010. The importance of values in building a high performance culture, 2.

¹³⁰ Miller, P. & Yu, H.C. 2003. Organisational values and generational values: A cross cultural study, 3.

¹³¹ Thomas, T.P. 2013. The effect of personal values, organizational values, and person organization fit on ethical behaviors and organizational commitment outcomes among substance abuse counsellors: A preliminary investigation, 14.

¹³² Martins, N. & Coetzee, M. 2011. Staff perceptions of organisational values in a large manufacturing company: Exploring socio-demographic differences. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 37(1), 2.

¹³³ Gorenak, M. & Kosir, S. 2012. The importance of organizational values for organization. *Management, Knowledge and Learning*, 564.

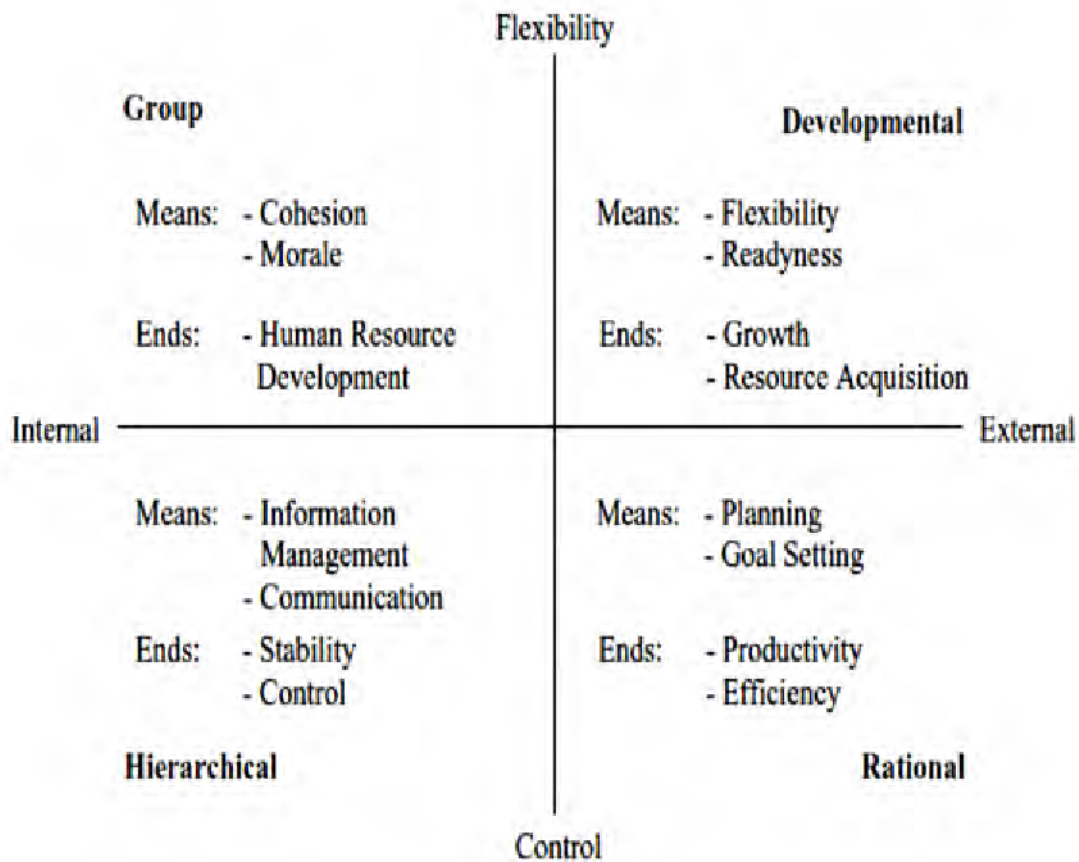


Figure 3.2: Dimensions of the Competing Values Framework¹³⁴

Quinn further saw the need for a framework that could be used to integrate the paradoxes and contradictions inherent in the clusters of values emanating from the two dimensions. The resultant developments were the quadrants comprising four “information” processing models as follows: Human Relations Model, Internal Control Model, Rational Goal Model and Open System Model. These are depicted schematically in Figure 3.3 below.

¹³⁴ Buschgens, T., Bausch, A. & Balkin, D.B. 2013. Organizational culture and innovation: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 30(4), 767.

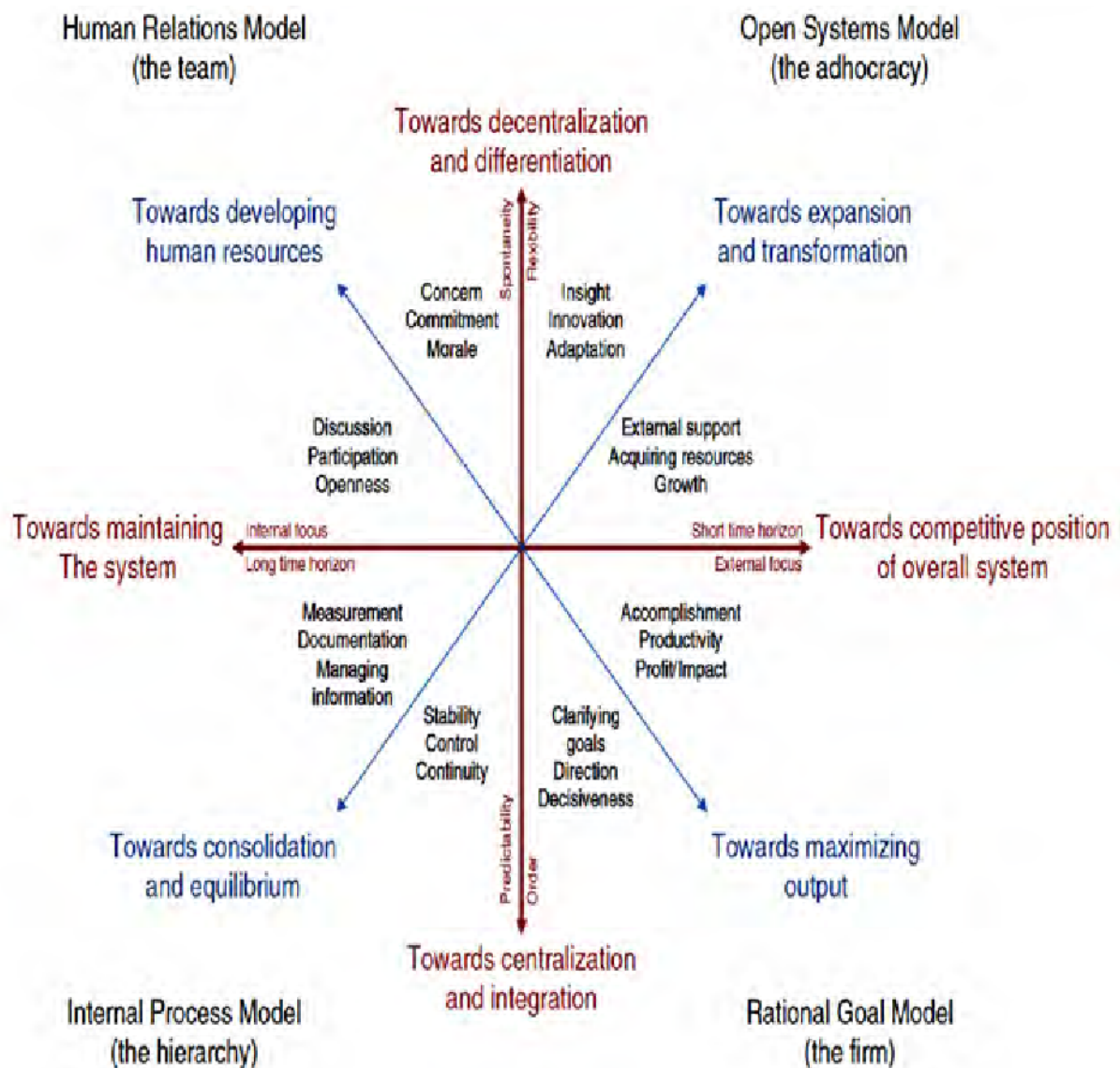


Figure 3.3: Competing Values Framework and theories of organisation¹³⁵

Further developments of the CVF led to the emergence of the quadrants referred to as Clan, Adhocracy, Market and Hierarchy. Each of the quadrants embodies a particular culture type based on the competing value sets embedded therein. The Clan occupies the upper-left quadrant; the Adhocracy can be found in the upper-right quadrant; the Market is situated in the lower-left quadrant; and the Hierarchy is situated in the lower-right quadrant of the framework.¹³⁶ It is as a result of these cultural archetypes that the framework has been used

¹³⁵ Lindquist, E. & Marcy, R. 2016. The competing values framework: Implications for strategic leadership, change and learning in public organisations. *International Journal of Public Leadership*, 12(2), 170.

¹³⁶ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the

widely to measure and profile the cultures of organisations. These are summarised graphically in Figure 3.5. The CVF “focuses on the competing tensions and conflicts inherent in any human system: primary emphasis is placed on the conflict between stability and change, and the conflict between the internal organization and external environment”.¹³⁷ Due to the two sets of values which present dilemmas with regard to the model, it is referred to as the Competing Values Framework in organisational theory.¹³⁸ Furthermore, this principal feature of the framework gives it the ability to empower organisational leadership and management to handle conflict and turbulence that may emerge. That is, leadership and management are able to pursue organisational goals with disregard to the welfare of the employees. In addition, leaders and managers are able to afford employees the opportunity to engage in innovation while maintaining control and stability, simultaneously.

The CVF might be one of the most-utilised, reliable and valid frameworks in organisational studies. However, it should be noted that the framework has not escaped criticism due to its limitations. In fact, Cameron and Quinn have expressed the view that they do not “claim that our framework or our methodology represents the one best or the one right way to diagnose and change organizational culture”.¹³⁹ The framework has received positive reviews in studies into organisational culture and organisational effectiveness. However, there are also some associated hindrances emanating from the applicability of the framework. The CVF postulates that the cultural types present contradictions on the diagonal. That is, they are characterised by negative correlations. However, Hartnell, Ou and Kinicki have discovered from their research results that, in fact, the four cultural types of the CVF are positively correlated, co-exist and work together.¹⁴⁰ The quadrants of the framework embody value sets which give rise to the cultural archetypes of each. However, this has resulted in the CVF being criticised. Hartnell, Ou and Kinicki are of the view that this narrow set of values and behaviours limits the framework’s ability to measure them and thereby fully capture the full

competing values framework, 36-37.

¹³⁷ Denison, D.R. & Speitzer, G.M. 1991. Organizational culture and organizational development: A competing values approach. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 5, 3.

¹³⁸ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 37.

¹³⁹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 19.

¹⁴⁰ Hartnell, C.A., Ou, A.Y. & Kinicki, A. 2011. Organisational culture and organisational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the Competing Values Framework’s theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 686-687.

spectrum of organisational culture.¹⁴¹

3.4 The two dimensions of the organisational spectrum

As mentioned in the preceding discussion, the CVF comprises two dimensions, the first of which involves organisational structure, i.e. flexibility *versus* control; and the second of which addresses itself to organisational focus and is referred to as the internal *versus* the external focus. The first dimension involves the extent to which an organisation accentuates change or stability. The second dimension deals with the extent to which an organisation chooses to focus on activities occurring internally as opposed to those happening external to its operations.^{142/143} Burns and Stalker (1968) in Denison and Speitzer argue that the dimensions that underpin the framework represent “a familiar distinction in organizational theory between organic and mechanistic forms of organisation”.¹⁴⁴

Furthermore, Denison and Speitzer¹⁴⁵ purport that when juxtaposed, the two dimensions give rise to four types of cultural orientations, namely group culture, developmental culture, rational culture and hierarchical culture. The four cultural types are embedded in the framework as follows: the group culture is found in the Clan quadrant (upper-left), the developmental culture is located in the Adhocracy quadrant (upper-right), the rational is found in the Market quadrant (lower-right) and the hierarchical culture is embedded in the Hierarchy quadrant (lower-left) of the CVF. These cultural orientations are depicted schematically in Figure 3.4 below.

¹⁴¹ Hartnell, C.A., Ou, A.Y. & Kinicki, A. 2011. Organisational culture and organisational effectiveness: A meta-analytic investigation of the Competing Values Framework’s theoretical suppositions. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 96(4), 688.

¹⁴² Shih, C.C. & Huang, S.J. 2010. Exploring the relationship between organisational culture and software process improvement deployment. *Information & Management*, 47, 272.

¹⁴³ Arsenault, P. & Faerman, S.R. 2014. Embracing paradox in management: The value of the Competing Values Framework. *Organization Management Journal*, 11(3), 148.

¹⁴⁴ Denison, D.R. & Speitzer, G.M. 1991. Organizational culture and organizational development: A competing values approach. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 5, 3.

¹⁴⁵ Denison, D.R. & Speitzer, G.M. 1991. Organizational culture and organizational development: A competing values approach. *Research in Organizational Change and Development*, 5, 3.

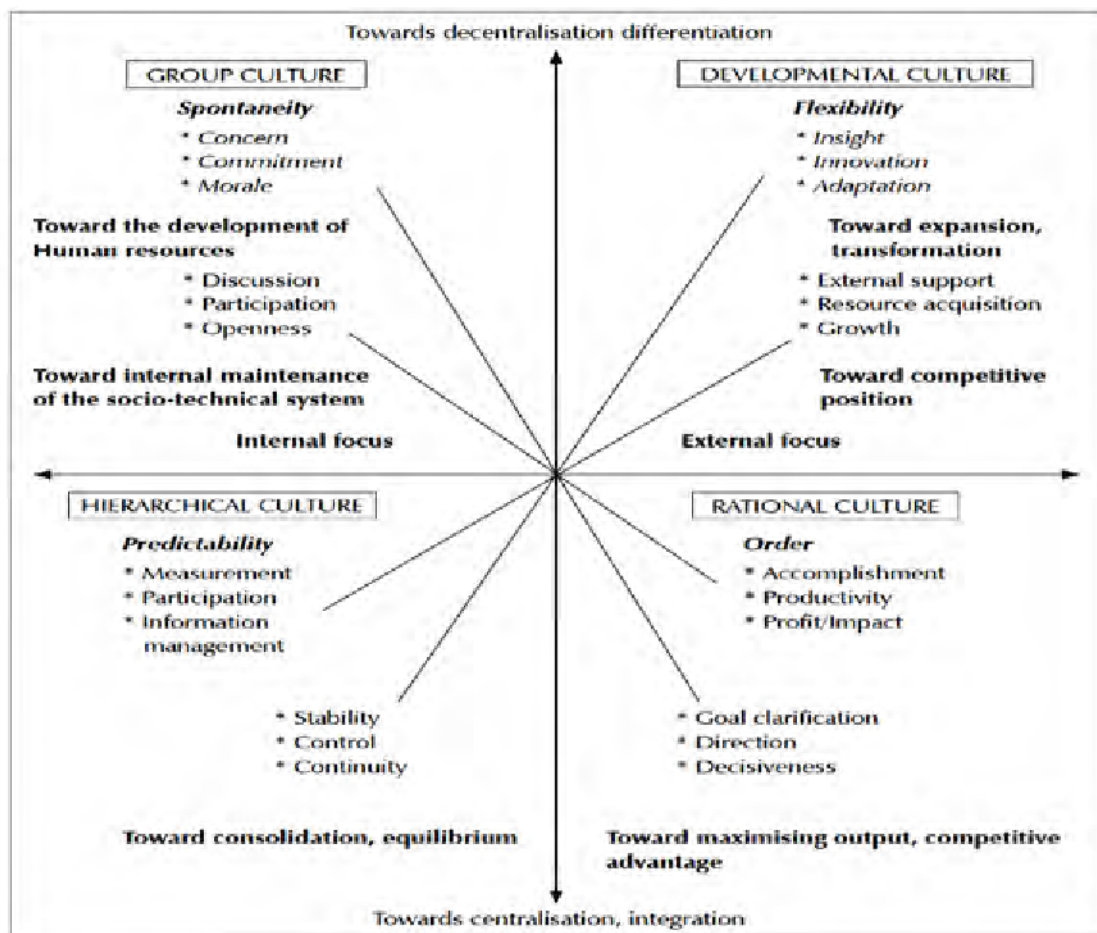


Figure 3.4: Cultural orientations of the Competing Values Framework¹⁴⁶

3.4.1 The Effectiveness Factors

Quinn and Rohrbaugh concluded that the list of effectiveness factors produced by John Campbell and his peers was too long to understand and/or useful to draw any patterns after analysis. Ultimately, the thirty-nine effectiveness indicators were statistically analysed, then structured into two dimensions that, in turn, begot the quadrants. It became clear from the analysis that the one dimension gave rise to a continuum that ranged from flexibility, discretion and dynamism to stability, order and control with regard to organisational structures. The second dimension depicts a dichotomy between organisations that have a strong internal orientation as opposed to those that are predominantly externally focused.¹⁴⁷

¹⁴⁶ Kock, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 345.

¹⁴⁷ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 34.

The section that follows below deals with the dimensions of the framework.

The effectiveness factors have implications with regard to the way in which organisations are perceived. For instance, some organisations are considered to be effective if they are flexible (agile) and dynamic. Others are thought to be effective if they are stable, predictable and controlled.¹⁴⁸ Furthermore, some organisations are perceived to be effective if they are predisposed to internal focus and integration, whereas others are considered to be effective if they are predominantly externally focused and oriented towards differentiation.¹⁴⁹

3.4.2 Dimension One

The first dimension, organisational focus, ranges from internal focus inside the organisation itself to external focus whereby the organisation focuses on itself in relation to the external environment.¹⁵⁰ Organisations that are internally focused are inclined towards collaboration and control, on the one hand, whereas organisations that are externally focused are inclined to emphasise creativity and competition, on the other.

3.4.3 Dimension Two

The second dimension, organisational structure, involves practices where emphasis is placed on stability, order and control in contrast to flexibility, discretion and dynamism.¹⁵¹ Organisations whose structures are dominated by stability and control are those whose cultural profile could be a hierarchy and/or market. Organisations whose structures subscribe to flexibility and discretion are those whose cultural types are inclined towards the clan and/or adhocracy. More will be explained about the different culture types in the section that deals with the composition of the CVF below.

3.5 The composition of the framework

The quadrants, also referred to as organisational culture types or profiles, are the Clan culture, the Adhocracy culture, the Market culture and the Hierarchy culture.¹⁵² Due to their orientation, the quadrants are also referred to as collaborate, create, compete and control,

¹⁴⁸ Cameron, K.S., Quinn, R.E. & DeGraff, J. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating values in organizations, 8.

¹⁴⁹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 34-35.

¹⁵⁰ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 37.

¹⁵¹ Cameron, K. 2004. A process for changing organizational culture, 4.

¹⁵² Drumm, M. 2012. Culture change in the public sector, 5.

respectively. The names of the quadrants were derived from scholarly literature to denote how, over time, organisational values have become associated with different forms of organisations.¹⁵³

3.5.1 The Four Poles of the Framework

The framework is composed of the following axes. The vertical axis comprises flexibility and discretion, on the one end, and control and stability on the opposite end. Conversely, the horizontal axis is made up of internal focus and integration, on the one end, and external focus and differentiation on the opposite end. The vertical axis is indicative of the dimension of the framework which deals with organisational structure, whereas the horizontal axis demarcates the framework to indicate the other dimension of the framework, namely organisational focus (see Figure 3.5 below).

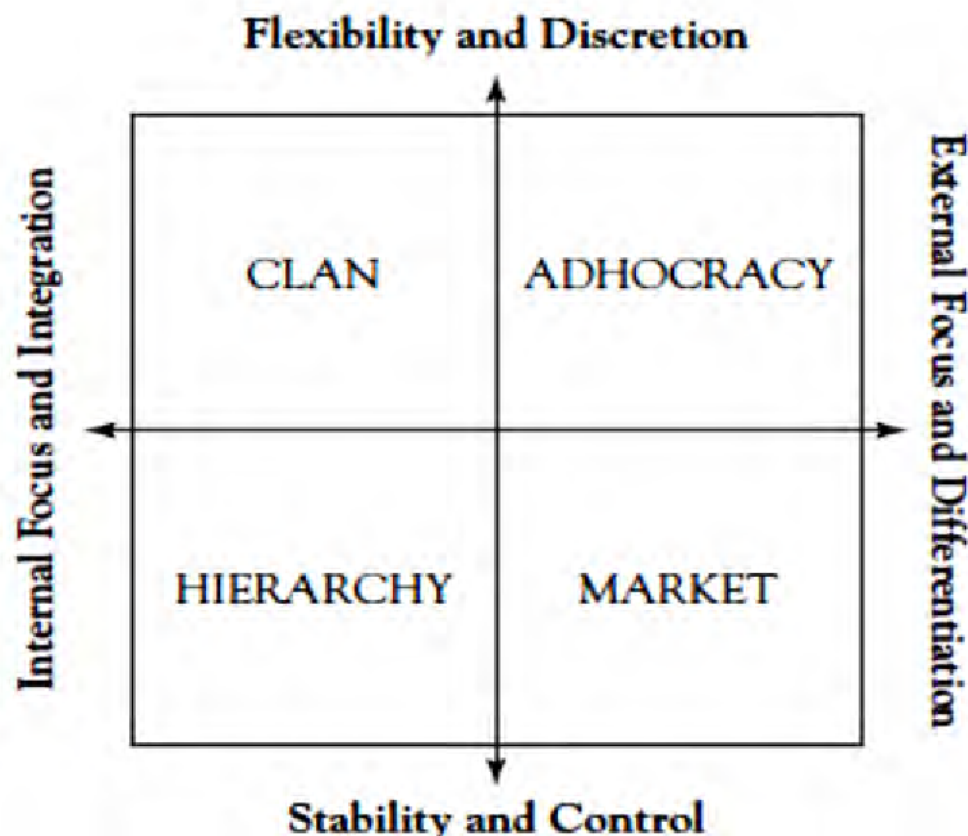


Figure 3.5: The Competing Values Framework¹⁵⁴

¹⁵³ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 36.

¹⁵⁴ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 35.

3.5.2 The Values of the Clan Quadrant

The Clan quadrant occupies the upper-left side of the CVF, and leans towards a culture characterised by “shared values and common goals, an atmosphere of collectivity and mutual help”.¹⁵⁵ The Clan quadrant mimics a family-type setting in organisations. In this quadrant, members of the organisation experience a relatively high sense of belonging. The values that underpin the Clan quadrant include collaboration, team-building, mentoring, commitment, communication and development. Other values that are entrenched in the Clan quadrant include discussions, participation and openness.¹⁵⁶ The Clan quadrant is positioned diagonally across from the Market quadrant which, essentially, leads to contradiction or competition between the values rooted in the Clan quadrant and those in the Market quadrant, on the diagonal as depicted in Figure 3.6.¹⁵⁷

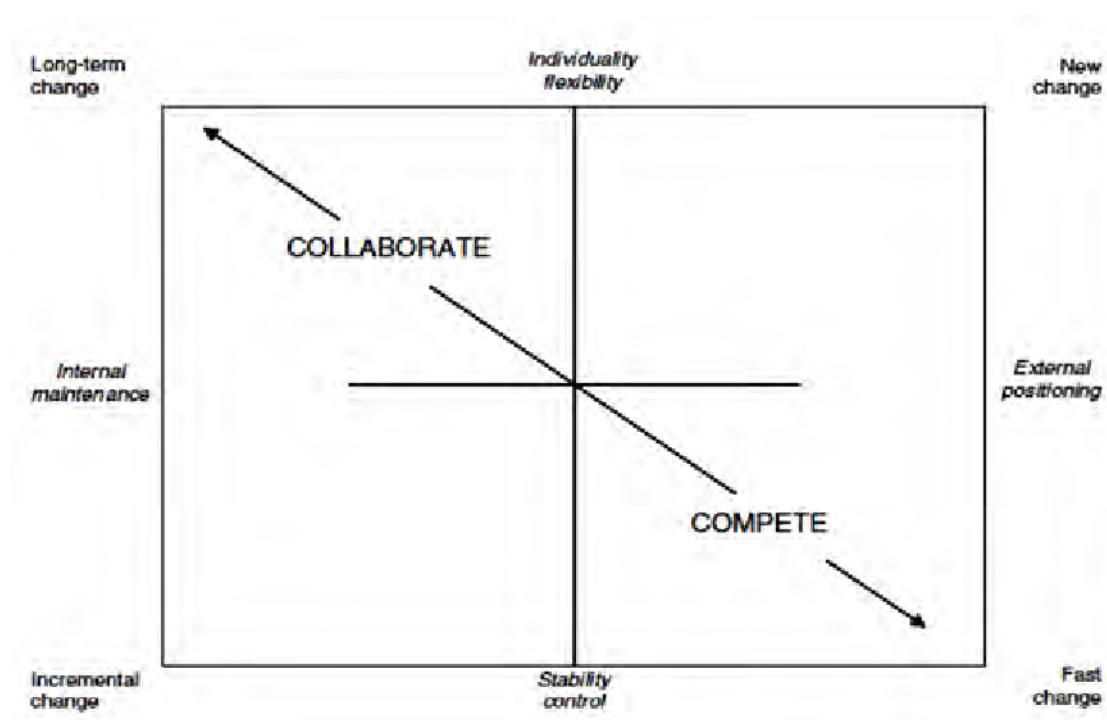


Figure 3.6: The Compete versus Collaborate quadrants¹⁵⁸

¹⁵⁵ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 38.

¹⁵⁶ Kock, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 344.

¹⁵⁷ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 36.

¹⁵⁸ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 35.

3.5.3 The Values of the Adhocracy Quadrant

The Adhocracy quadrant occupies the upper-right side of the CVF, and embodies traits such as creativity and innovation. It is like a temporary institution because, once a task has been completed, it is disbanded only to be assembled when a new task emerges.¹⁵⁹ It portrays the elements of a project management approach to doing work in the organisation. The quadrant includes values such as innovation, entrepreneurship, transformation and agility. Furthermore, values such as insight, adaptation, growth, external support and resource acquisition play a critical role in ensuring effectiveness in organisations.¹⁶⁰ The Adhocracy quadrant is situated diagonally across from the Hierarchy quadrant. This implies that there is a contradiction or competition between the values entrenched in the Adhocracy quadrant and those in the Hierarchy quadrant, on the diagonal as can be seen in Figure 3.7.¹⁶¹

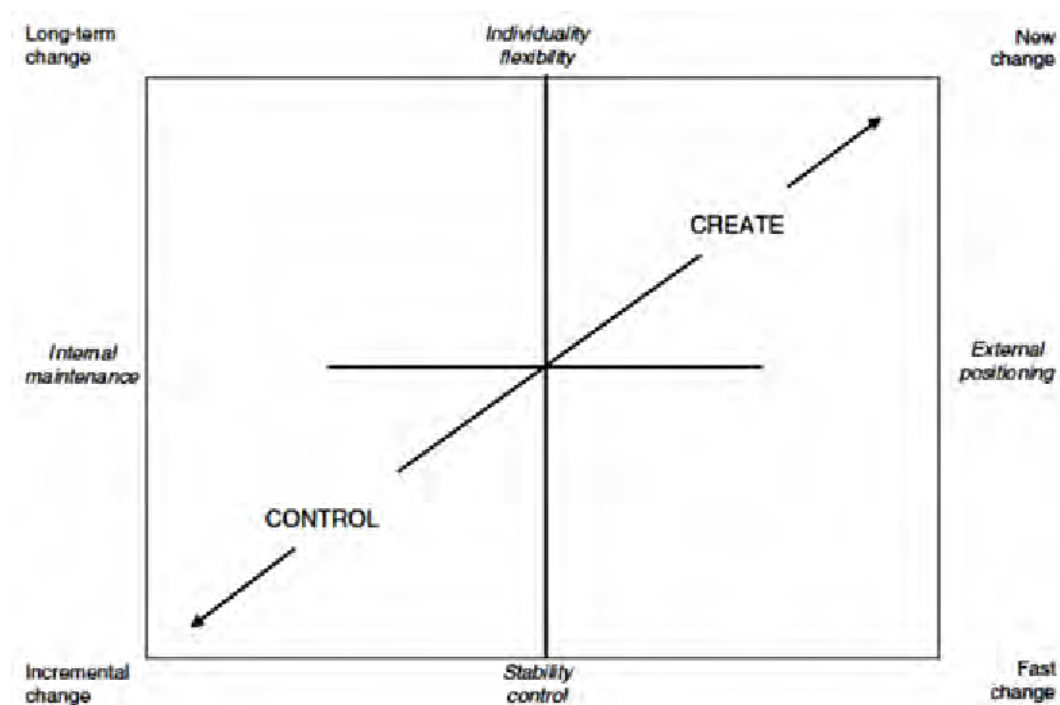


Figure 3.7: The Create versus Control quadrants¹⁶²

¹⁵⁹ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 38.

¹⁶⁰ Kott, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 346.

¹⁶¹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 36.

¹⁶² Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 35.

3.5.4 The Values of the Market Quadrant

The Market quadrant is found in the lower-right side of the framework, and “focuses on the transactions with the environment outside the organisation instead of on the internal management”.¹⁶³ The Market quadrant is underscored by values such as competition, productivity, market-share, goal achievement and profit. Moreover, values such as accomplishment, impact, direction and decisiveness are also featured in this quadrant.¹⁶⁴ Leaders in this quadrant are hard drivers, producers, competitors, tough and demanding.¹⁶⁵ This quadrant is diagonally in contradiction to or in competition with the Clan quadrant.

3.5.5 The Values of the Hierarchy Quadrant

The Hierarchy quadrant is located in the lower-left side of the CVF, and is characterised by a culture that is steeped in “clear organizational structure, standardized rules and procedures, strict control, and well-defined responsibilities”.¹⁶⁶ The values of the Hierarchy quadrant include coordination, monitoring (measurement), organising, efficiency, timeliness, consistency and uniformity. Other values that also find space in the Hierarchy quadrant are participation, information management, stability, control and continuity.¹⁶⁷ Leaders in this quadrant regard themselves as being good coordinators and organisers.¹⁶⁸ This quadrant is diagonally in contrast to the Adhocracy quadrant.

As can be discerned from Figure 3.5, the Adhocracy and Market cultures are both characteristic of organisations that are externally focused, while the Clan and Hierarchy cultures are associated with organisations that are internally focused. In contrast, the other dimension that emerges is that both the Clan and Adhocracy cultures are underpinned by

¹⁶³ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 38.

¹⁶⁴ Kokt, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 346.

¹⁶⁵ Hooijberg, R. & Petrock, F. 1993. On cultural change: Using the Competing Values Framework to help leaders execute a transformational strategy. *Human Resources Management (1986-1998)*, 32(1), 31.

¹⁶⁶ Yu, T. & Wu, N. 2009. A review of study on the Competing Values Framework. *International Journal of Business and Management*, 4(7), 38.

¹⁶⁷ Kokt, D. & Van der Merwe, C.A. 2009. Using the competing values framework (CVF) to investigate organisational culture in a major private security company. *South African Journal of Economic and Management Sciences*, 3, 346.

¹⁶⁸ Hooijberg, R. & Petrock, F. 1993. On cultural change: Using the Competing Values Framework to help leaders execute a transformational strategy. *Human Resources Management (1986-1998)*, 32(1), 31.

flexibility and dynamism. Conversely, the Market and Hierarchy cultures portray the elements of organisations that are inclined towards control and stability. Cameron assigns the four cultures to theorists who are pioneers in this realm. For instance, the culture types are expressed in the following manner, namely: Weber's (1947) Hierarchy, Wiliamson's (1975) Market, Ouchi's (1981) Clan, and Mintzberg's (1986) Adhocracy.¹⁶⁹

3.6 Applications and usefulness of the framework

Any organisation espouses certain values which, in turn, have an impact on the predominant culture that is practised in the pursuit of competitiveness. It should, however, be noted that there is no right or wrong model when it comes to dealing with the attributes and dimensions of organisational culture.¹⁷⁰ In spite of this argument, the CVF has emerged as one framework that is able to deal meticulously with a variety of organisational culture dimensions and attributes where others are lacking. This ability, it is argued, derives from its applicability in “empirical research studies as well as numerous organizational interventions using the competing values approach”.¹⁷¹ The framework has found its applicability extended to secondary or supplemental dimensions. These secondary dimensions were uncovered during the course of applying the framework to guide change.¹⁷² Essentially, the framework has two most important applications. Firstly, the framework may be applied to guide change or in dynamics, which is the first of the secondary dimensions, in organisations. Secondly, the framework can be implemented by leaders in organisations to create value, which encompasses the second secondary dimension. The two applications of the CVF are explained in more detail below.

The first of the secondary dimensions, dynamics or approaches to change, acts as a catalyst to improve performance in organisations. The dimension deals with approaches to change in two ways. It puts the spotlight on both the scope (magnitude) of and speed (velocity) with which change occurs to bring about improved performance as can be seen in Figure 3.8.¹⁷³

This, in turn, assists the dynamics dimension in dichotomising the CVF in two ways. Firstly, the dynamics dimension splits up the scope (magnitude) of change in organisations along a

¹⁶⁹ Cameron, K.S. 2004. A process for changing organizational culture, 4.

¹⁷⁰ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 32.

¹⁷¹ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 32.

¹⁷² Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 12.

¹⁷³ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 13.

continuum that stretches from the Adhocracy quadrant (upper-left) to the Hierarchy quadrant (lower-left) of the framework. This dissection distinguishes change that is new and innovative (in the Adhocracy quadrant) from that which is small, incremental and predictable (in the Hierarchy quadrant). Secondly, the dynamics dimension distinguishes change that happens in organisations and the speed (velocity) with which it occurs. The continuum indicative of this change stretches from the Market quadrant (lower-right) to the Clan quadrant (upper-left) of the framework. This segmentation distinguishes change that is fast, short-term and sudden (in the Market quadrant) from that which is slow, developmental and long-term (in the Clan quadrant).¹⁷⁴

The dynamics dimension, therefore, proposes that both the scope and speed with which change is approached in organisations are critical in determining the extent to which performance is improved.

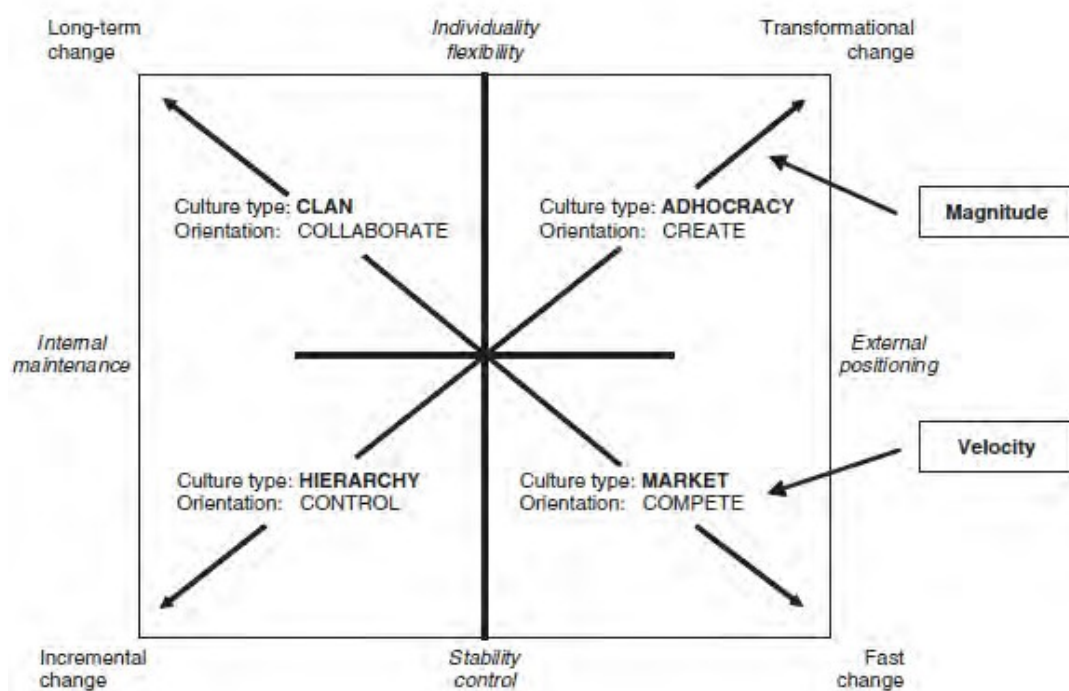


Figure 3.8: Secondary dimensions of the Competing Values Framework and change¹⁷⁵

The second of the secondary dimensions, namely level of analysis, acts as an enabler for leaders to create value in organisations. The analyses that are dealt with under this dimension

¹⁷⁴ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 12.

¹⁷⁵ Cameron, K.S. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations, 13.

include the external outcomes, internal organisational and individual levels as depicted in Figure 3.9.¹⁷⁶ These levels of analysis are in congruence with the basic tenet of the CVF, namely organisational effectiveness. That is, organisational effectiveness requires motivated employees and organisations to implement internal measures aimed at the sustenance of competitiveness to achieve the requisite outcomes including value creation. At external outcomes level, organisations should strive to create value through innovation and global competitiveness among the many factors, beyond their own boundaries. The internal organisational level includes factors inside organisations such as organisational design and production processes, among others that, once implemented, have the potential for the creation of value. At the individual level, factors such as leadership competencies, skills, abilities, attitudes and so on, have to be considered as imperative for organisations that yearn to achieve value creation.¹⁷⁷ It is imperative for leadership and management to ensure that they consciously incorporate all these levels into organisational design if any effectiveness is endeavoured. Furthermore, employees' competencies, skills knowledge and attitudes should be harmonised with the internal requirements of the organisation so that it can produce the necessary outcomes that transcend its boundaries..¹⁷⁸

¹⁷⁶ Cameron, K.S. 2006. *Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations*, 14.

¹⁷⁷ Cameron, K.S. 2006. *Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations*, 14-16.

¹⁷⁸ Cameron, K.S. 2006. *Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations*, 17.

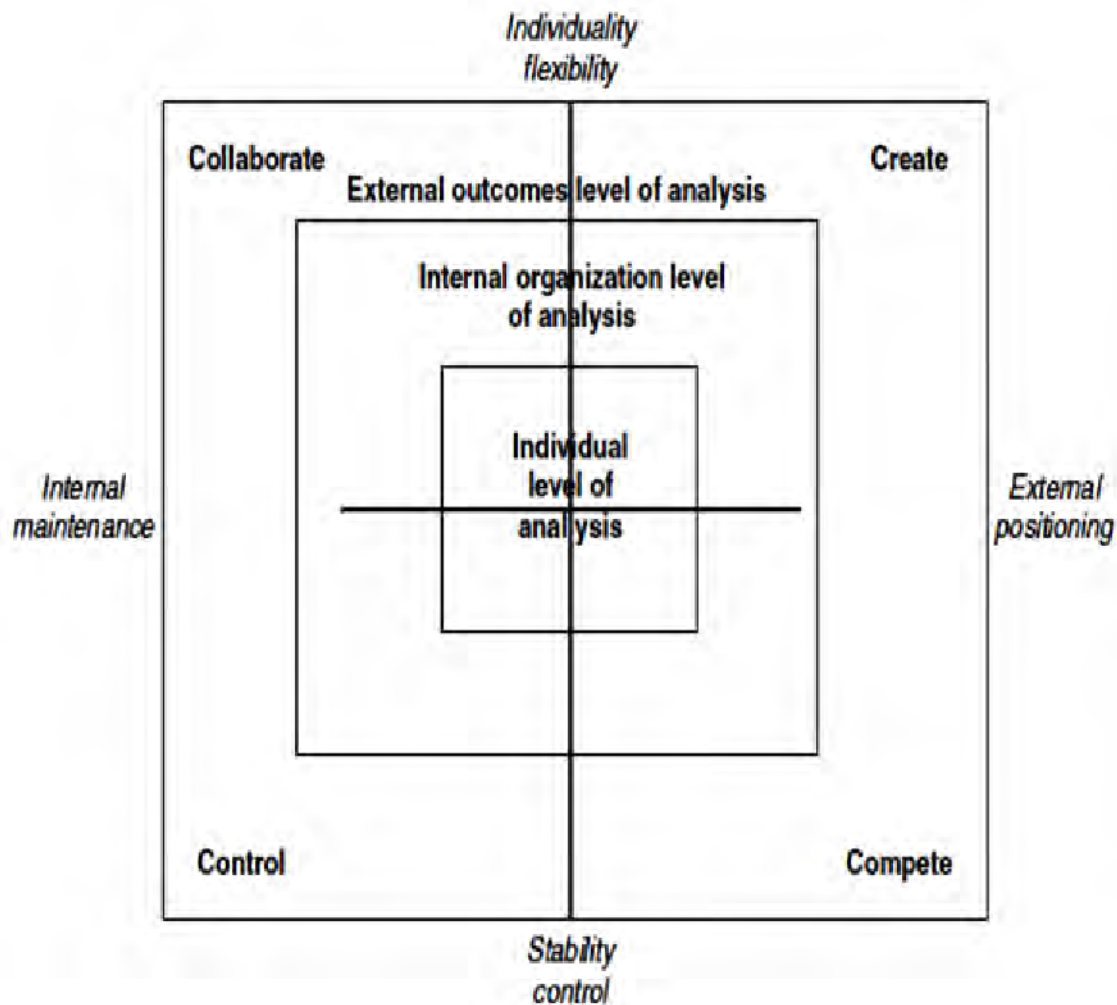


Figure 3.9: Secondary dimensions of the Competing Values Framework levels of analysis¹⁷⁹

The versatility of the framework makes it applicable and useful in the area of Total Quality Management (TQM) as depicted in Figure 3.10. The CVF assists in organising the various aspects and highlighting the comprehensive nature of TQM.¹⁸⁰ By integrating an aspect of the CVF, namely cultural change, when dealing with TQM issues, some measure of success may be realised. Failure to integrate the CVF into TQM matters has led to project failures in some organisations.

¹⁷⁹ Cameron, K.S. 2006. *Competing values leadership: Creating value in organisations*, 15.

¹⁸⁰ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. *Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework*, 49.

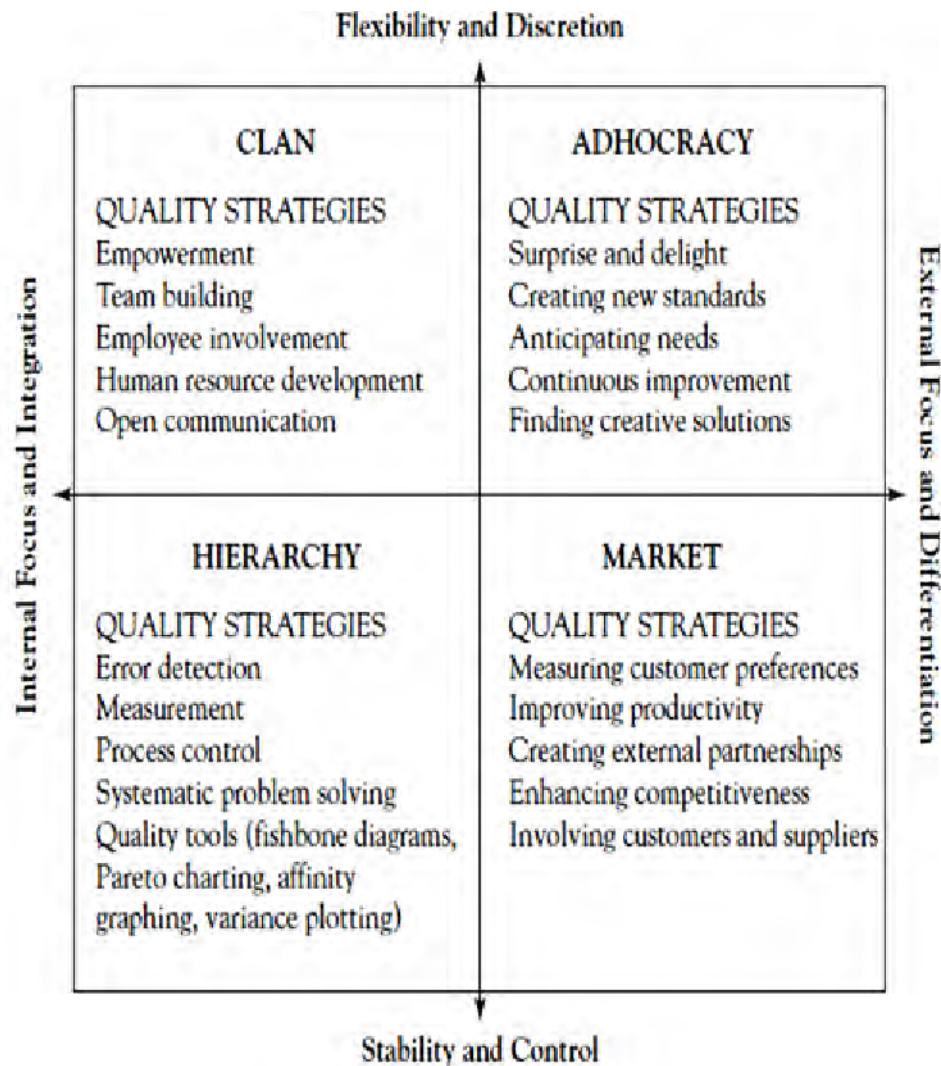


Figure 3.10: The Competing Values of Total Quality Management¹⁸¹

The CVF has also demonstrated resourcefulness in the field of human resources management (Figure 3.11 below). The framework was used by David Ulrich to identify the changing roles of the human resources manager based on the findings emanating from research.¹⁸²

¹⁸¹ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 50.

¹⁸² Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 50.

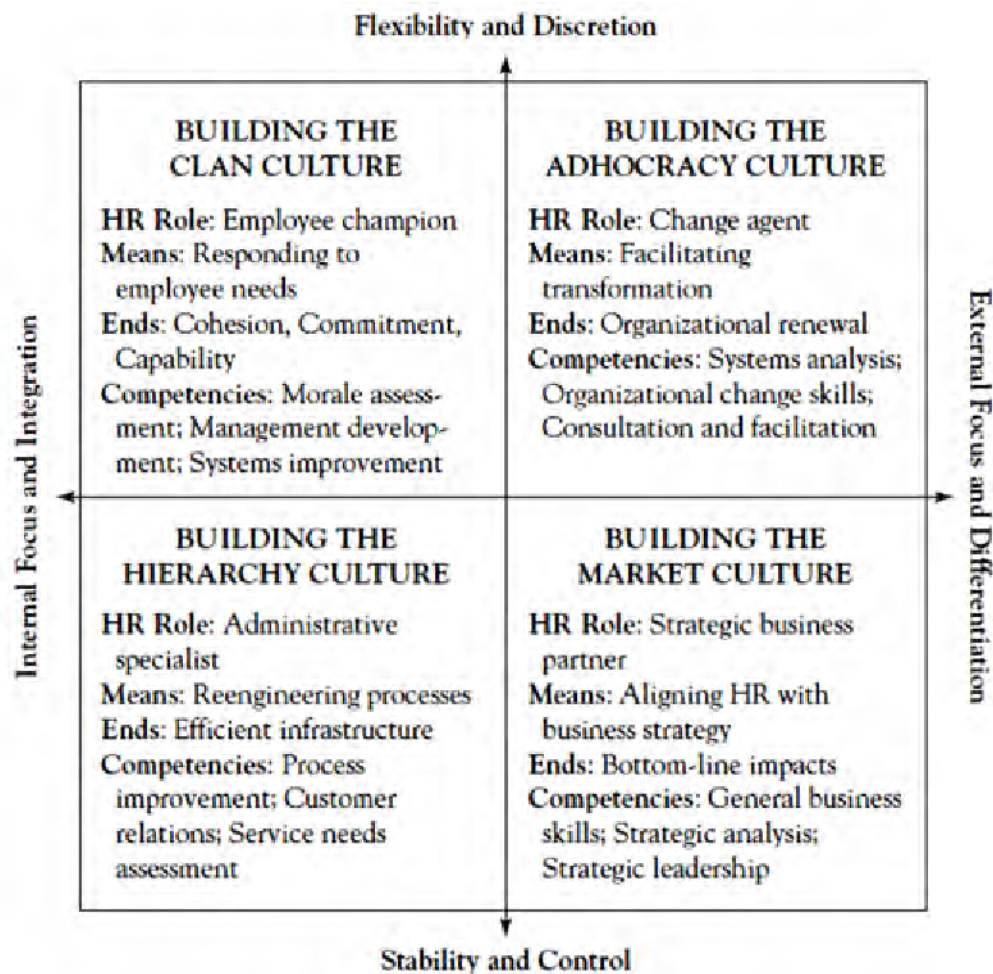


Figure 3.11: The Competing Values of Human Resources Management¹⁸³

¹⁸³ Cameron, K.S. & Quinn, R.E. 2006. Diagnosing and changing organisational culture: Based on the competing values framework, 52.

Chapter 4

The case study and instrument design

4.1 From competing values to collaboration

The theory of the Competing Values Framework (CVF) was described in detail in the previous chapter. This framework has been chosen as the platform theory from which this thesis departs in its investigations.

The CVF cannot, however, be used directly for the case study. The aim of this thesis is not to comprehensively categorise all the values that are operative in the organisation, which is the object of the case study. As outlined in Chapter 1 and followed up in Chapter 2, the focus of this thesis is to investigate only the organisational *value of collaboration* in a specific environment.

Although there are numerous perspectives on collaboration in the general literature, there does not seem to be a definitive framework which links notions of collaboration to the structure and systems of organisations. For that reason, the CVF was chosen to provide a platform theory of different organisational structures. However, as the CVF offers a comprehensive profile of values for each of its four organisational types, it is necessary for the purpose of this thesis, to filter such values so as to be able to focus the CVF specifically on the factor of collaboration.

Collaboration comes in a variety of forms and practices. One of the advantages of using the CVF as the framing theory for the investigation of collaboration is that it gives one the

opportunity to differentiate between the collaborative practices of different organisational types.

Firstly, this chapter explains how the CVF was narrowed down to those values that shed light on collaboration. The outcome of the narrowing-down process is a set of eight (8) factors. The chapter also shows how the chosen values were adapted into a survey instrument for the purpose of the case study. Finally, the chapter offers a brief description of the case study process.

4.2 Filtering values from the competing values framework

Each of the four value sets in the CVF can be described in terms of a number of constituent or characteristic values. For the purposes of this thesis, the first step in the appropriation of the CVF was to select appropriate values. The value sets for each of the four organisational types can be summarised as follows:

Table 4.1: Value sets

CLAN	Value 1	General involvement and participation
	Value 2	Focus on teamwork
	Value 3	Consensus
	Value 4	Mentoring
	Value 5	Cohesiveness
	Value 6	Nurturing
	Value 7	Transparency
	Value 8	Employee empowerment
	Value 9	Harmony
	Value 10	Compromise (give and take)
	Value 11	Commitment
	Value 12	Development
	Value 13	Communication
	Value 14	Compassion (caring)
ADHOCRACY	Value 1	Transformation and change
	Value 2	Organisational learning
	Value 3	Improved flexibility
	Value 4	Innovation
	Value 5	Risk-taking
	Value 6	Creativity

	Value 7	Employee initiative
	Value 8	Improvisation
	Value 9	Experimentation
	Value 10	Agility
	Value 11	Freedom
	Value 12	Continuous improvement
HIERARCHY	Value 1	Delegation of authority
	Value 2	Coordination
	Value 3	Adhere to best practice (tried and tested)
	Value 4	Extensive oversight
	Value 5	Control
	Value 6	Efficiency
	Value 7	Incremental change
	Value 8	Predictability
	Value 9	Orderliness
	Value 10	Systematic approach
	Value 11	Uniformity
	Value 12	Timeliness
	Value 13	Consistency
	Value 14	Accountability
	Value 15	Procedures
	Value 16	Standardised rules
	Value 17	Decision-making authority
MARKET	Value 1	Outsourcing
	Value 2	Cooperation
	Value 3	Cost savings
	Value 4	Timeous delivery (Speed)
	Value 5	Mitigation of complexity
	Value 6	Improved efficiency
	Value 7	Increased networking
	Value 8	Diversification
	Value 9	Partnering
	Value 10	Access to new markets
	Value 11	Productivity
	Value 12	Competitiveness

There are two reasons why not all values could be incorporated into the survey instrument. Firstly, not all constituent values necessarily speak directly to the factor of collaboration. Secondly, a survey instrument which tries to encapsulate all the values of the four organisational value systems would simply be too large to yield any useful and definitive results.

Therefore, it was decided that two values from each of the four value sets would be selected for the purposes of the survey. Each of the two values, per value set, was deemed most relevant to the factor of collaboration. This means that the survey was designed around eight (8) specific, identifiable data points, each expressing some perspective on collaboration. On that basis, a survey could be constructed to collect clearly-defined data, while not suffering from respondent fatigue. The eight (8) data points deliver enough factors for meaningful comparison between the four different value sets, thus making reliable interpretations possible. However, eight (8) data points are not enough to cloud the results to the point that no reliable conclusions can be drawn.

The survey instrument is, however, not only about selected values from the CVF. As previously outlined, the final aim of this study is to investigate the modes of collaboration. It must, therefore, be made explicit as to what each of the data points contributes to the understanding of collaboration that the thesis seeks to investigate.

4.3 Explanation of the eight data points

The discussion that follows sets out to elaborate on the critical role played by each of the data points in decrypting collaboration in organisations.

4.3.1 General Involvement and Participation

Organisations that hanker for the optimisation of employee productivity consciously involve them in decisions that affect their areas of operation. Therefore, the involvement and participation of employees have the potential to create a positive work environment whose basis is underpinned by trust, creative problem solving and high levels of motivation. Once this aspect has been well-catered for, employees are not only able to demonstrate but also operationalise a shared vision and goals as espoused by the organisation.

4.3.2 Focus on Teamwork

Teamwork provides an interactive platform whereby employees in organisations are able to understand one another better. High levels of teamwork allow organisations to benefit in areas such as efficient work performance, improved employee relations, increased

accountability to both the team and organisation, and provides opportunities for learning by employees. Ultimately, employees whose organisations embrace collaboration have a propensity for teamwork.

4.3.3 Transformation and Change

Successful transformation and change in organisations may be realised if employees have a sense of full ownership of the process. Thus, the onus is on leaders and managers to ensure that employee buy-in is put in place from the outset of the process itself. Therefore, both employees and management play a crucial, combined role in facilitating organisational transformation and change in order to benefit from this value which has a bearing on the impact of collaboration.

4.3.4 Organisational Learning

Organisations should continuously strive for the sustenance of competitive advantage. This may be made possible by ensuring that conditions that promote organisational learning are created in order to facilitate the production of new knowledge and innovation. Thus, organisations need to afford employees platforms to experiment with new ideas. In this instance, it is of vital importance that organisations view failure in a positive light as this is a good catalyst for creativity and innovation on the part of employees.

4.3.5 Delegation of Authority

Line functions play a vital role in organisations that are predominantly hierarchical in their operations. However, it is imperative for organisations to allow for delegation of authority by superiors to their subordinates. This will go a long way in ensuring that the subordinates feel included and therefore develop a sense of belonging in the organisation. Thus, collaboration is embraced through vertical delegation of authority between superiors and subordinates in line with official organisational policy.

4.3.6 Coordination

Coordination has an impact on the nature of relationships between superiors and subordinates in organisations. Ideally, good coordination plays a role in harmonising relationships between superiors and their subordinates. For organisations that embrace collaboration, coordination enables them to integrate work and task performance, act in unison and ensure some degree of uniformity.

4.3.7 Outsourcing

Organisations may not possess all the requisite expertise to perform and deliver on the expected outcomes.

To ensure that they remain competitive, it may become necessary for organisations to collaborate with external entities in order to access their talents and expertise. Through this collaboration, organisations may mitigate matters such as risk and high costs. Outsourcing is imperative for collaboration in that it also enables organisations to carry out tasks quicker and use the available talents and expertise on the core functions. Ideally, employees should not view outsourcing as a threat but as an enabler to gain new knowledge and expertise for the benefit of the organisation.

4.3.8 Cooperation

Cooperation is vital as it facilitates maximum interaction between organisations aimed at the delivery of value-added services and/or products. Organisations collaborate by acting together. Collaboration, in this instance, is buttressed by the principle of mutual inclusivity by The table below summarises the eight (8) selected data points, and shows their putative relation to the factor of collaboration.

Table 4.2: Eight selected data points

Value set	Selected values	Collaboration effect
The Clan	General involvement and participation	Generally shared vision and goals
	Focus on team work	Propensity for teamwork
Adhocracy	Transformation and change	Facilitating change together
	Organisational learning	Production of new knowledge and innovation
Hierarchical	Delegation of authority	Authority as per official policy prescripts
	Coordination	Relationships are between supervisors and subordinates
Market	Outsourcing	Access to external talents and capabilities
	Cooperation	Acting together

4.4 Translating selected values into survey questions

On the basis of the above table, the construction of the survey can now be set out in detail. The survey consists of 24 questions. Each value is tested in sequence as illustrated in the

table below.

Table 4.3: Selected values and corresponding questions

Value C1	General involvement and participation	Questions 1 to 4
Value C2	Focus on teamwork	Questions 5 to 7
Value A1	Transformation and change	Questions 8 to 10
Value A2	Organisational learning	Questions 11 to 13
Value H1	Delegation of authority	Questions 14 to 15
Value H2	Coordination	Questions 16 to 18
Value M1	Outsourcing	Questions 19 to 21
Value M2	Cooperation	Questions 22 to 24

4.4.1 General Involvement, Participation and Collaboration

A Clan type organisation is characterised by a high degree of general participation across different levels of authority and ranks. One of the crucial moments in organisational life where the degree and generality of participation comes to the surface is when important decisions affecting the organisation as a whole are taken. Questions 1 to 4 therefore zoom in on different aspects of decision making. In each case, the options for respondents cover a spectrum, ranging from very low (negative) to very high (positive) participation. In question 1, the focus is on the mode of individual consultation. In question 2, the focus is on the weight given to participation. Question 3 tests for communication modalities, and question 4 for the extent of involvement. In combination, the results of the four questions provide a basis on which a researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of a widely-shared vision for the organisation. The assumption is that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of trust in a widely-shared vision for the organisation.

4.4.2 Focus on Teamwork and Collaboration

Clan type organisations mimic a large family-like setting that promotes teamwork. Questions 5 to 7 focus on the various facets of teamwork. Respondents were asked to assign scores to the options for each of the questions ranging from very low (negative) to very high (positive) teamwork. In question 5, the focus is on how teams are set up and operate.

Question 6 focuses on discussions during teamwork sessions. Question 7 focuses on disagreements that occur during teamwork sessions and the handling thereof. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which teamwork is implemented in the organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of productive and effective teamwork.

4.4.3 Transformation, Change and Collaboration

An Adhocracy type is a flexible, agile and adaptable organisation that affords members (employees) opportunities to engage, to a large degree, in innovative and creative ventures. Organisations face the challenges of the 21st century which emanate from the demands presented by the knowledge economy. Organisations have to keep producing new knowledge in order to mitigate the challenges presented by imminent changes. Questions 8 to 10 draw attention to the different facets of transformation and change. In each case, the options for respondents range from very low (negative) to very high (positive) involvement when dealing with change. Question 8 focuses on opportunities afforded to employees to make contributions to imminent change. Question 9 focuses on decision making in the department to address impending change. Question 10 focuses on employee initiative during planning sessions. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption that it is a flexible, agile and adaptable organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of affording employees opportunities to actively influence impending change in the organisation.

4.4.4 Organisational Learning and Collaboration

An Adhocracy type organisation allows employees to take risks and experiment with a view to producing new ideas, knowledge and products. Questions 11 to 13 accentuate organisational learning. In each case, the options for respondents cover a scale, ranging from very low (negative) to very high (positive) opportunities for organisational learning. Question 11 deals with opportunities to improve knowledge and capabilities. Question 12 tests opportunities to gain new knowledge and capabilities. Question 13 deals with the extent of information-sharing and information flows. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of extensive organisational learning inside the organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of creating an enabling environment conducive to organisational learning.

4.4.5 Delegation of Authority and Collaboration

A Hierarchy type organisation is regarded as a highly-formal, structured and procedural work environment. Line functions play a critical role with regard to the performance of duties. Questions 14 to 15 put the spotlight on matters pertaining to vertical delegation of authority. The scores of the various options range from very low (negative) to very high (positive) levels of delegation of authority. In question 14, the focus is on the nature of employees' performance of duties. Question 15 pays attention to employees' area of work. In combination, the results of the two questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of delegation of authority in the organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of vertical delegation of authority.

4.4.6 Coordination and Collaboration

Organisations which are characterised as hierarchies place emphasis on the maintenance of professional relationships governed by systematic and process-controlled workflows. Questions 16 to 18 address different aspects of coordination. In each case, the options for the respondents range from very low (negative) to very high (positive) coordination processes. Question 16 focuses on the perception of professional relationships between subordinates and their supervisors. In question 17, the focus is on the view of professional relationships between supervisors and their subordinates. Question 18 tests how professional relationships impact employees' attitudes towards the work environment. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of broad coordination in the organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of wide-ranging coordination across the organisation.

4.4.7 Outsourcing and Collaboration

A Market type organisation is characterised by outsourcing. One of the crucial moments in organisational life where outsourcing comes to the fore is when the need arises to access external talents and capabilities in order to produce goods and/or services. Questions 19 to 21 therefore zoom in on different aspects of outsourcing. In each case, the options for respondents cover a spectrum, ranging from very low (negative) to very high (positive) with regard to their views on outsourcing. In question 19, the focus is on how employees are

impacted by decisions to embark on outsourcing. In question 20, the focus is on employees' feelings about decisions to outsource services. Question 21 tests for how employees feel about the utilisation of their capabilities and talents against the backdrop of outsourcing of services. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of outsourcing. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of efficient outsourcing.

4.4.8 Cooperation and Collaboration

A Market type organisation is characterised by cooperation. One of the essential elements in organisational life where cooperation comes to the fore is when the need arises for organisations to act together. Questions 22 to 24 therefore zoom on how cooperation plays itself out. In each case, the options for the respondents cover a spectrum, ranging from very low (negative) to very high (positive) with regard to their views on cooperation by the respondents. In question 22, the focus is on how employees are included in communication during cooperative agreements. In question 23, the focus is on the weight given to the way in which employees are invited to participate in cooperative agreements. Question 24 tests for the way in which employees perceive the extent to which the concept of mutual inclusivity is successful during cooperative agreements. In combination, the results of the three questions provide a basis on which the researcher may infer the extent to which the organisation operates on the assumption of cooperative agreements by the organisation. It is assumed that the more positive the combined responses are, the more the organisation operates on the basis of fruitful cooperative agreements.

Chapter 5

The case study and findings

5.1 Introduction

This chapter starts with a report on the case study profile and process. It then presents the results of the survey per question in its raw format. This is done graphically only as the individual graphs contain all of the relevant data. Thirdly, the survey results are interpreted by means of a further set of graphs and are accompanied by discussion.

5.2 The case study process

The case study was conducted in the Head Office of the Free State Education Department among the managers in five Directorates. The case population comprised of:

- a) 40 Lower Management officials (Senior Education Specialists and Assistant Directors);
- b) 15 Middle Management officials (Deputy Chief Education Specialists, Chief Education Specialists and Deputy Directors); and
- c) 5 Senior Management officials (Directors).

Full participation was achieved from Senior and Middle management, while 36 Lower management responses were received. The questionnaire was distributed on hard copy to all participants and collected anonymously. The results were captured and analysed using MS Excel.

5.3 Interpretation of the data

Of the total number of respondents, the full participation by middle, and a very high percentage

of lower managerial staff, allowed for the use of statistical applications in Excel.

However, with only five senior managers, such analyses become pointless if the purpose is to identify comparative deviations or differences.

In the graphic representations of answers to each question (in the rest of this chapter), senior managers' responses are included to provide an overall picture of the responses. However, in the comparative analyses (presented at the end of the chapter), only comparisons between lower and middle management are done.

It must be emphasised, again, that respondents were asked to provide weighted answers to questions (see the questionnaire). This approach mitigates, to some extent, the influence of comparability between fairly unequal numbers. Weights, rather than heads were "counted". Regardless of the underlying numbers, the general trends can be reliably presented.

Finally, none of the profiling questions yielded statistically significant numbers. Therefore, comparisons were made only on the basis of lower and middle management and other personal factors are ignored. The organisational profile of respondents is presented below:

Management level	Number of Managers	Years of Experience in Department						Academic Qualifications					Personal Experience in:			
		0-2	3-4	5-8	9-14	15-20	21+	Post-School Diploma	Bachelor's Degree	Honours/PG Diploma	Master's Degree	Doctoral Degree	Business	Community Dev.	Pre-/Primary Teaching	Sec./Post-Sec
SM	5	0	0	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	4	0	0	1	1	4
MM	15	0	0	0	4	4	7	0	1	9	4	1	2	2	7	9
LM	36	3	2	4	8	10	9	0	15	18	3	0	1	9	13	21

5.4 Presentation of survey results per question

The responses to each question are presented below. As respondents were asked to weigh their reactions to each option as a percentage out of 100, the graphs below are all calibrated on a percentage scale. The results are presented in graphic form and the numbers of the figures correspond with the question numbers.

5.4.1 Responses to Questions on General Involvement and Participation

When decisions are taken that impact my area of work, I am consulted:

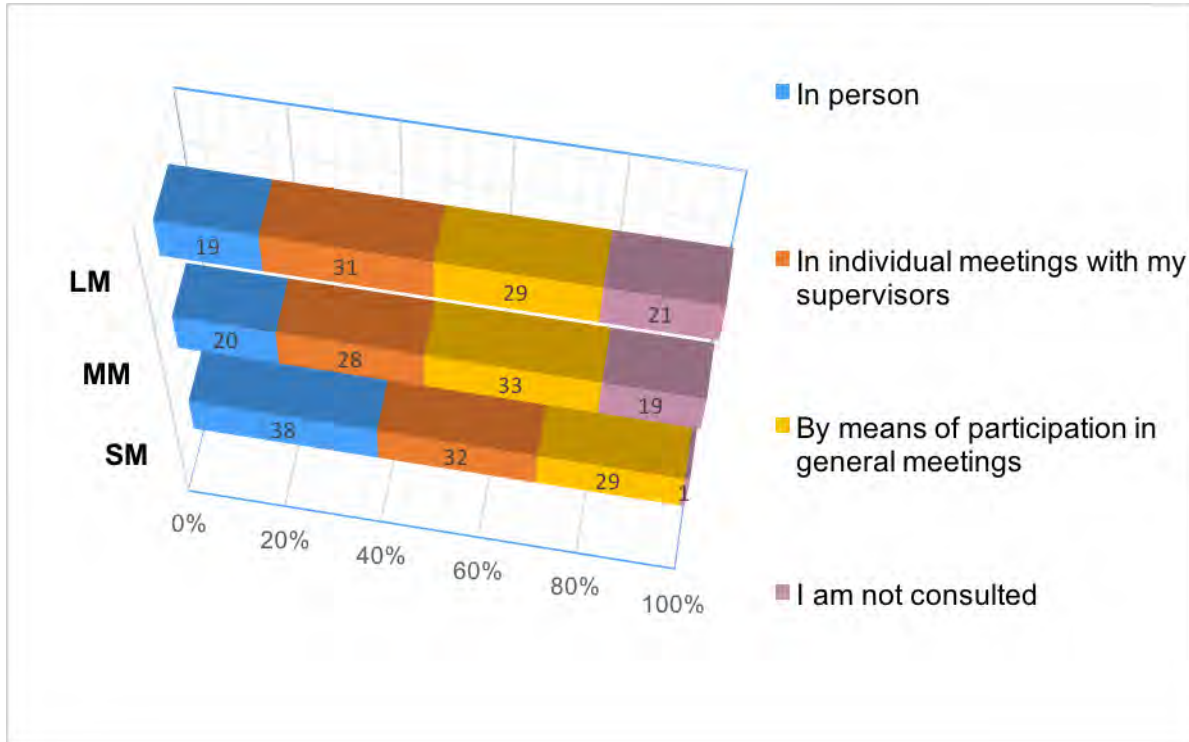


Figure 5.1: When decisions are taken that impact my area of work, I am consulted

When decisions are taken that impact my area of work:

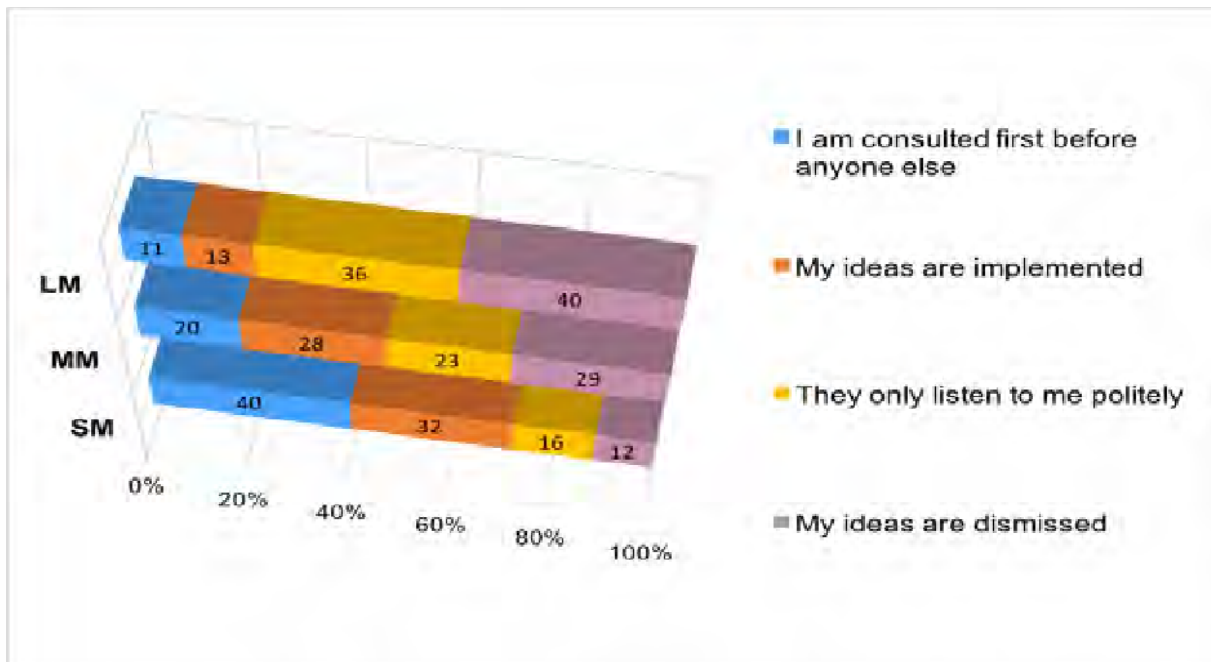


Figure 5.2: When decisions are taken that impact my area of work

When decisions are taken that affect the organisation at large

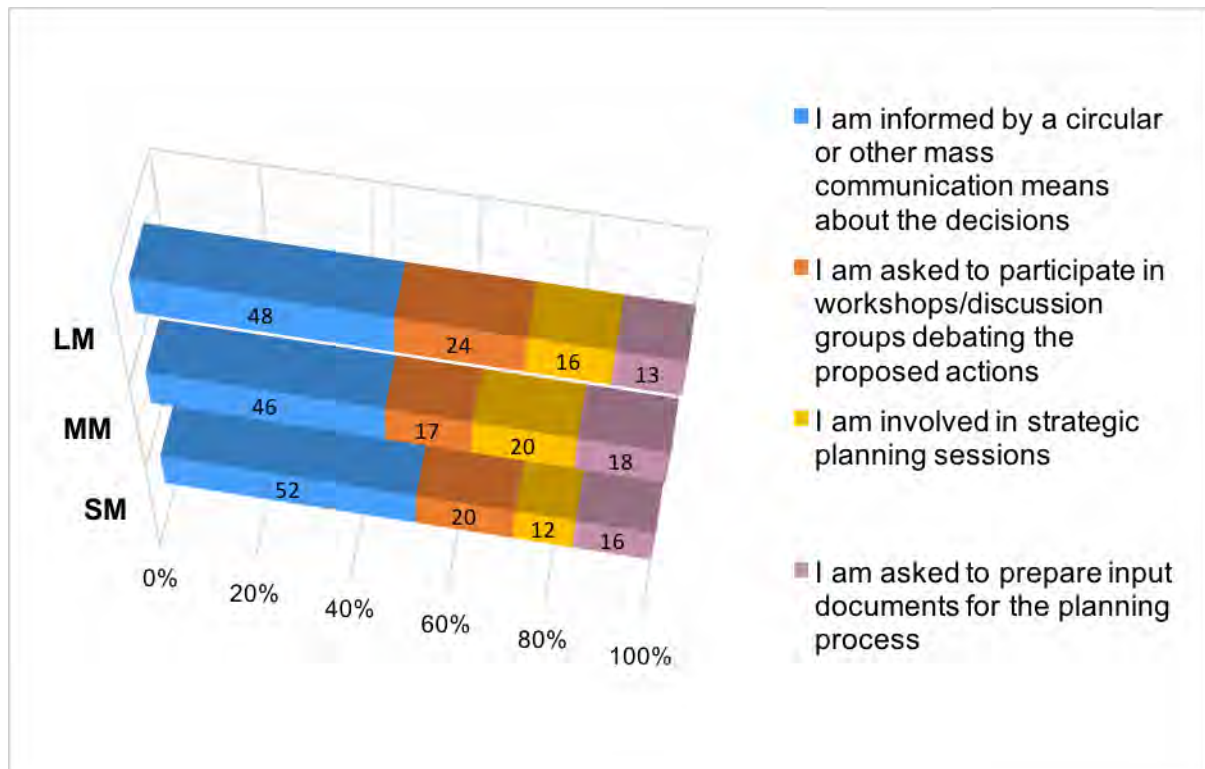


Figure 5.3: When decisions are taken that affect the organisation at large

When decisions are taken that affect the organisation at large

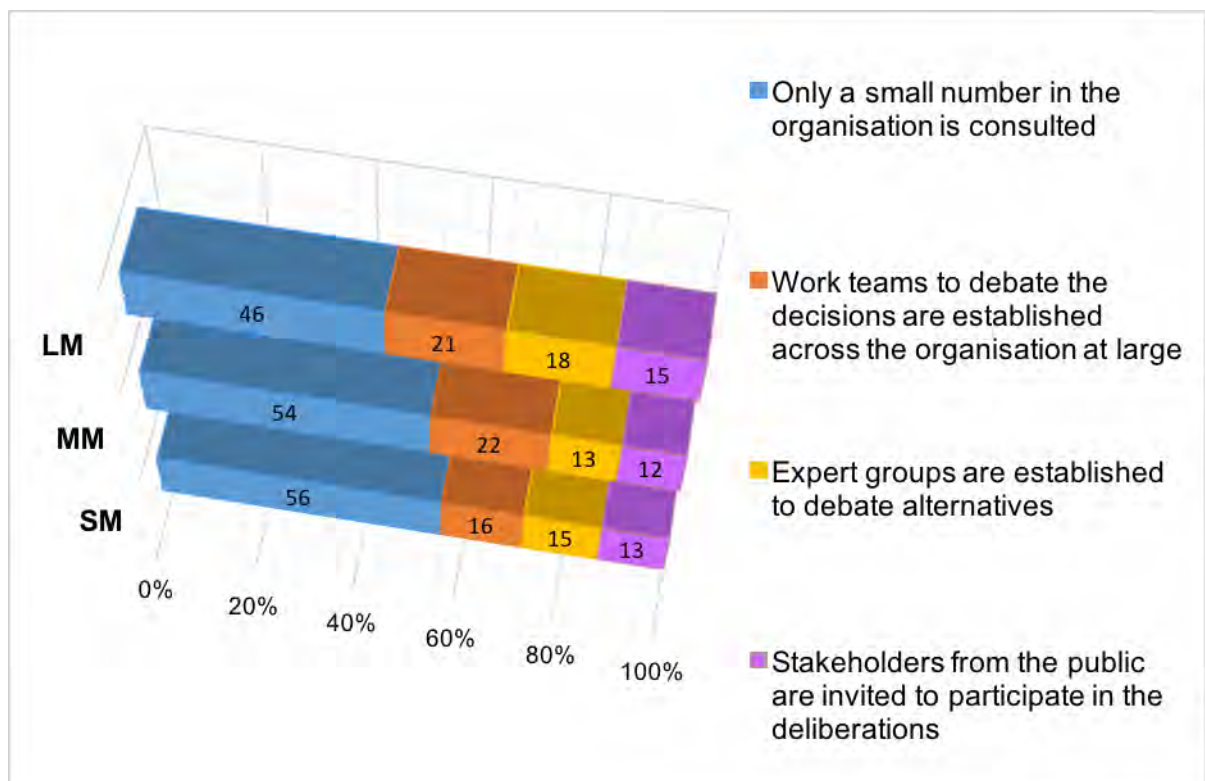


Figure 5.4: When decisions are taken that affect the organisation at large

5.4.2 Responses to Questions on Teamwork

When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation to get the work done

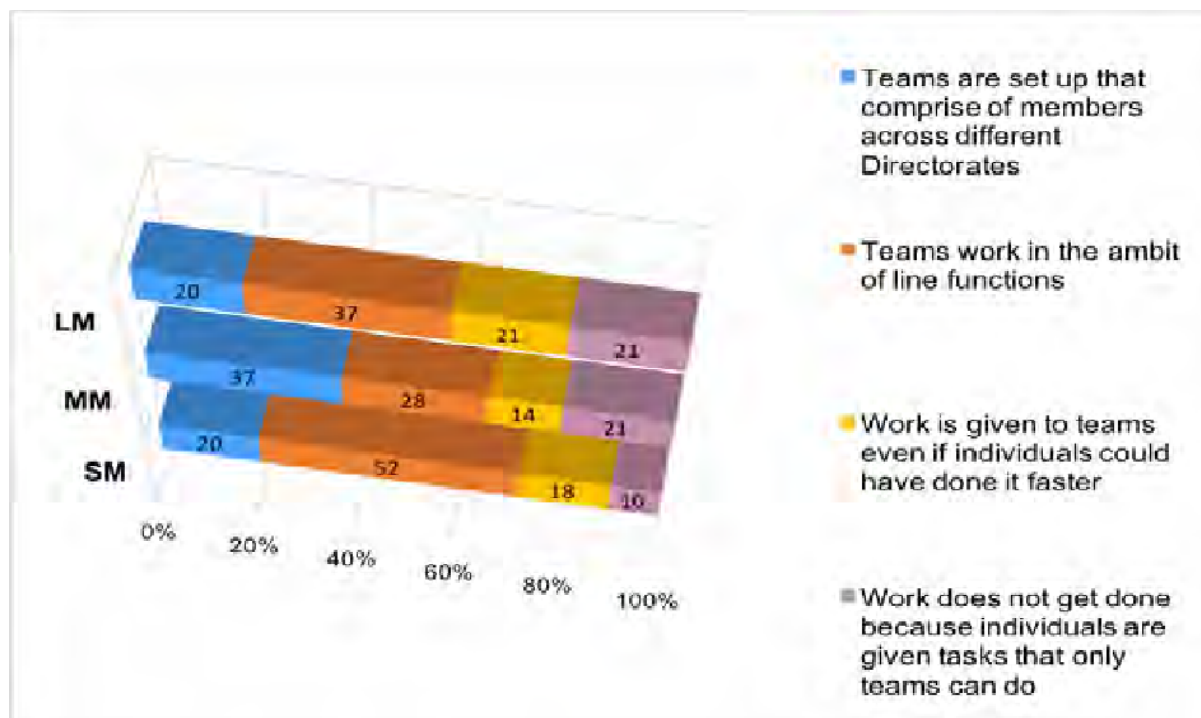


Figure 5.5: When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation to get the work done

During teamwork sessions in the organisation

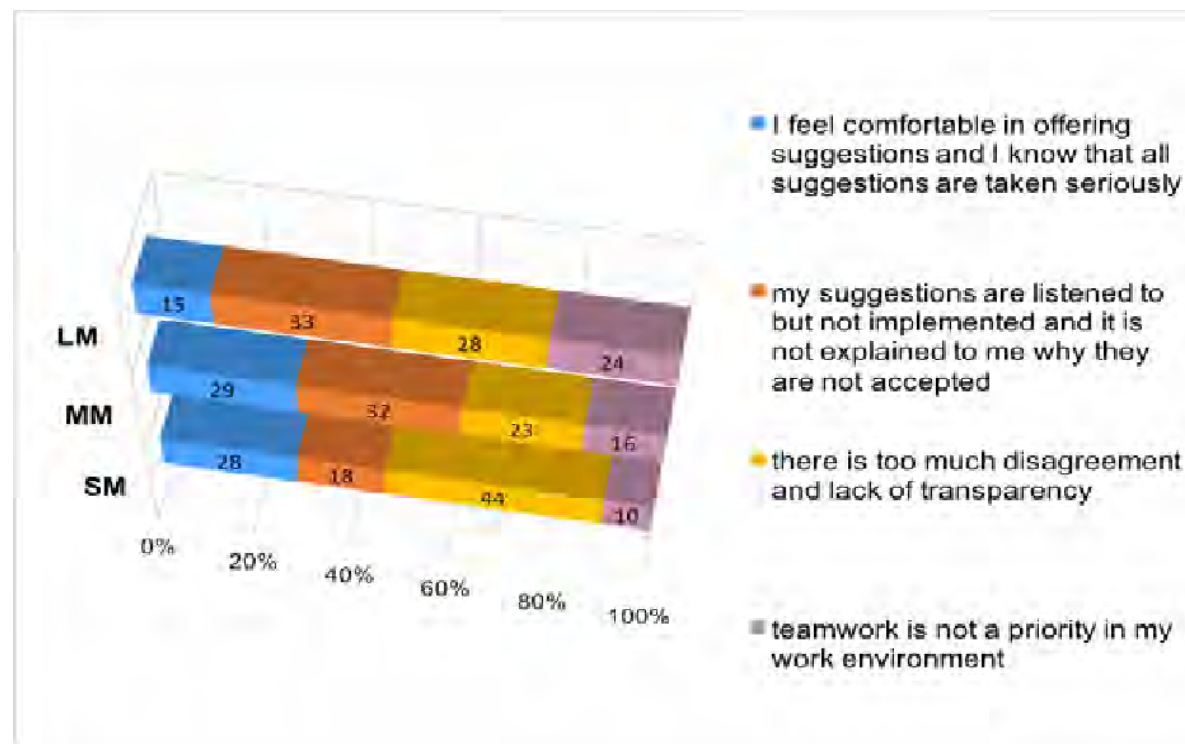


Figure 5.6: During teamwork sessions in the organisation

When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation and disagreements occur

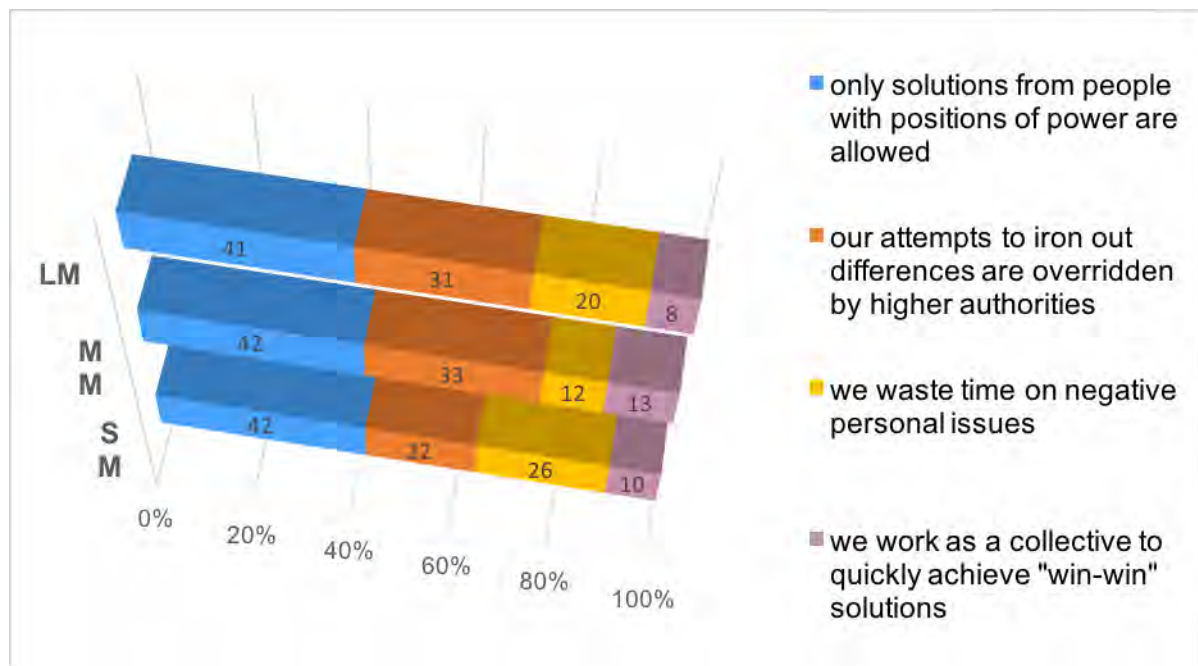


Figure 5.7: When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation and disagreements occur

5.4.3 Responses to Questions on Transformation and Change

When needs or opportunities for change arise in the organisation

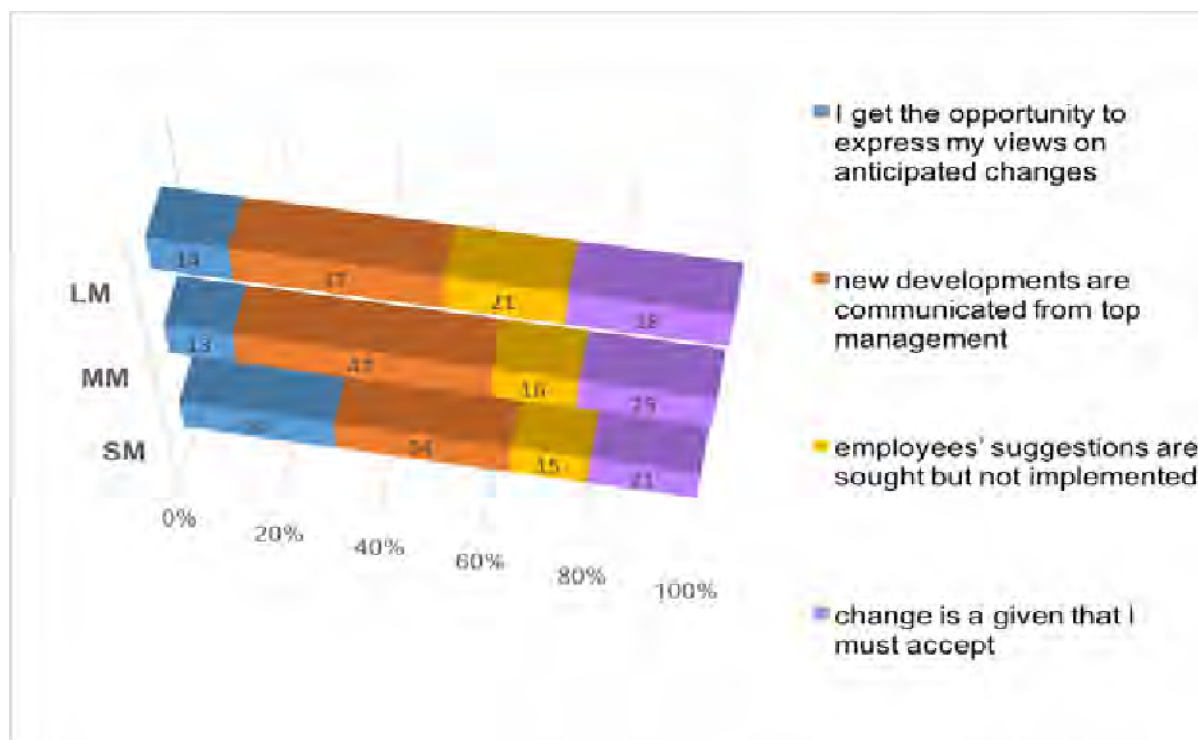


Figure 5.8: When opportunities for change arise or we have to address changing needs in the organisation

When there is imminent change in the organisation and decisions have to be made, I feel that

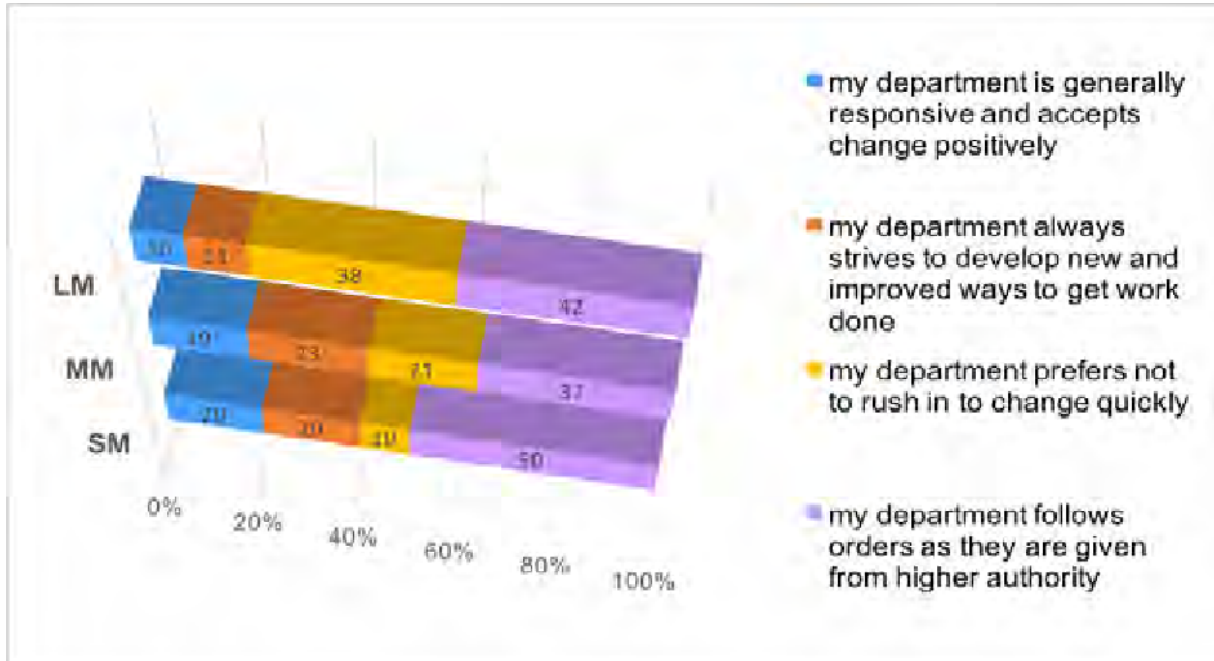


Figure 5.9: When there is imminent change in the organisation and decisions have to be made

When annual plans are developed in the organisation

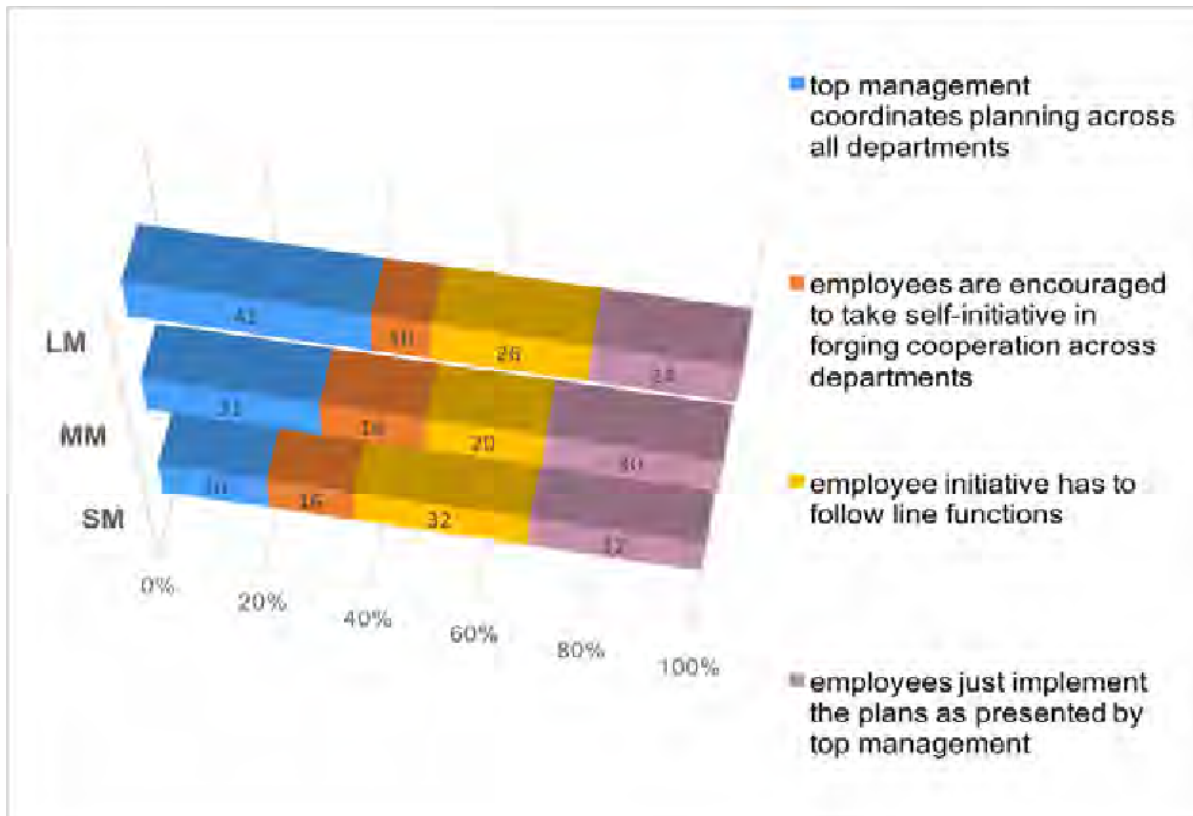


Figure 5.10: When annual plans are developed in the organisation

5.4.4 Responses to Questions on Organisational Learning

When there is need or opportunity to improve the Department's knowledge, I feel

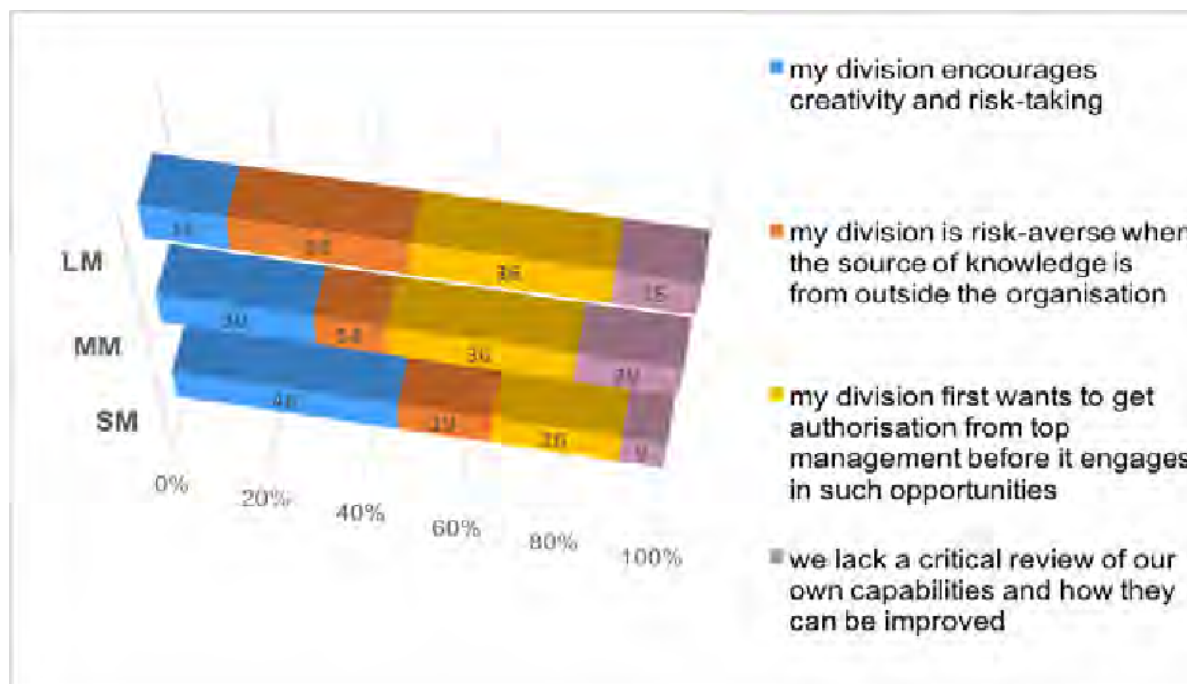


Figure 5.11: When there is a need or opportunity to improve the Department's knowledge

When opportunities arise in the Department to gain new knowledge, I feel that

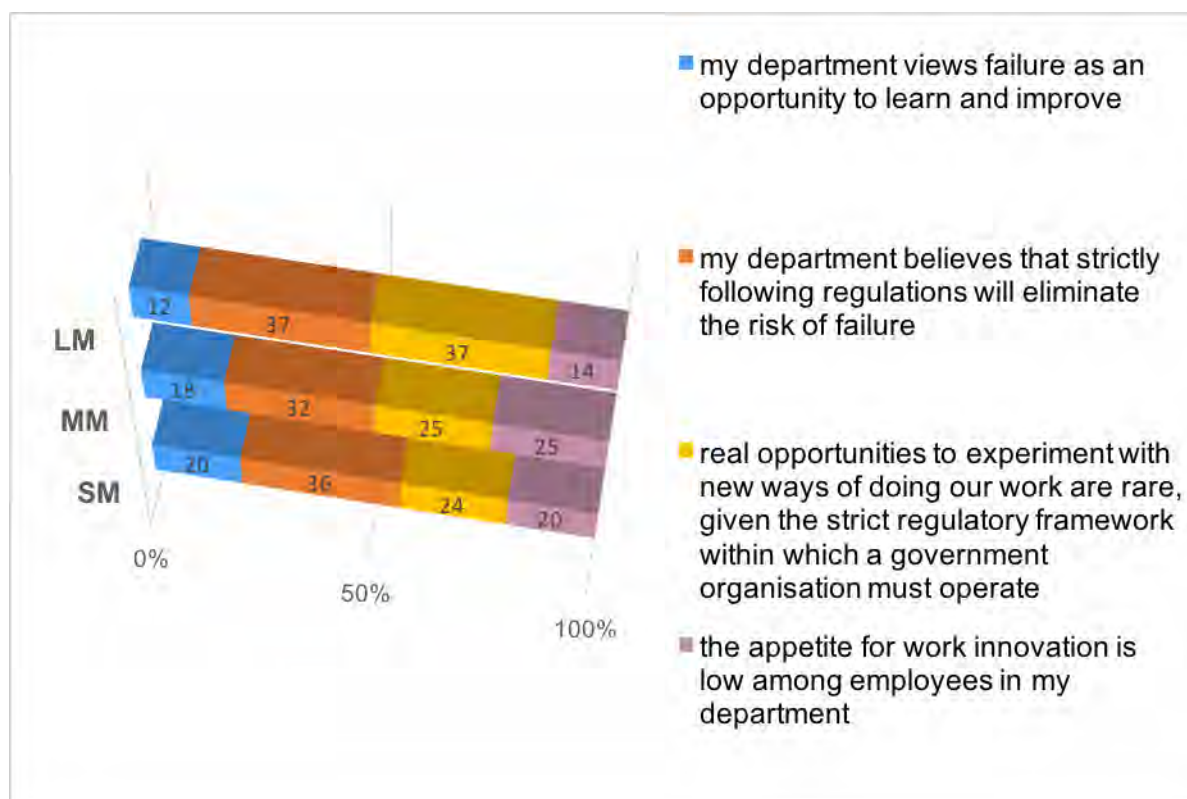


Figure 5.12: When opportunities arise in the Department to gain new knowledge, I feel that

To what extent are information flows in the Department successful? I think

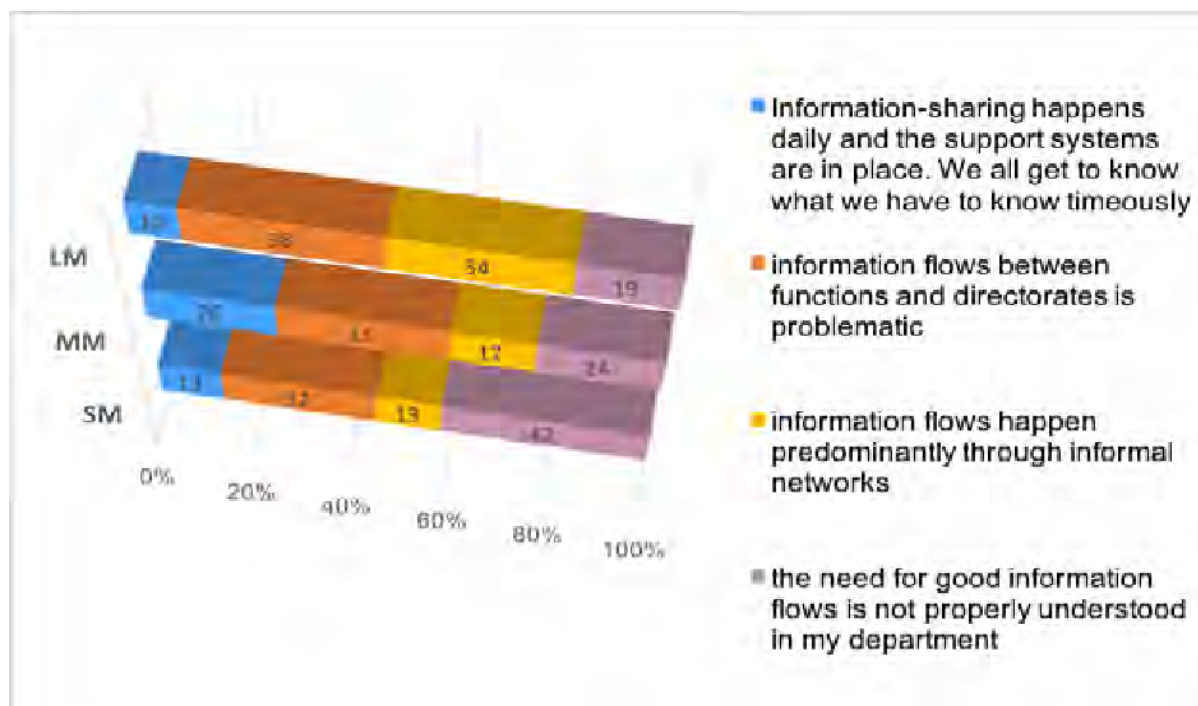


Figure 5.13: To what extent are information flows in the Department successful? I think

5.4.5 Responses to Questions on Delegation of Authority

When carrying out my official duties at work

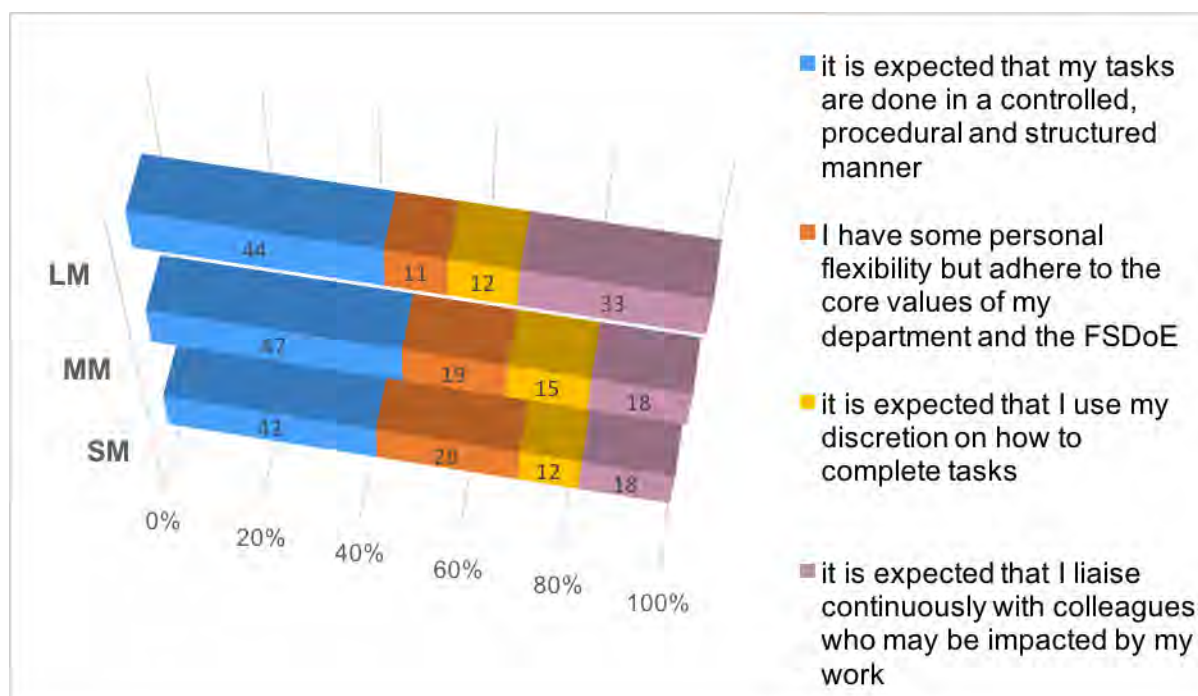


Figure 5.14: When carrying out my official duties at work

When carrying out my official duties at work, I work from the assumption that

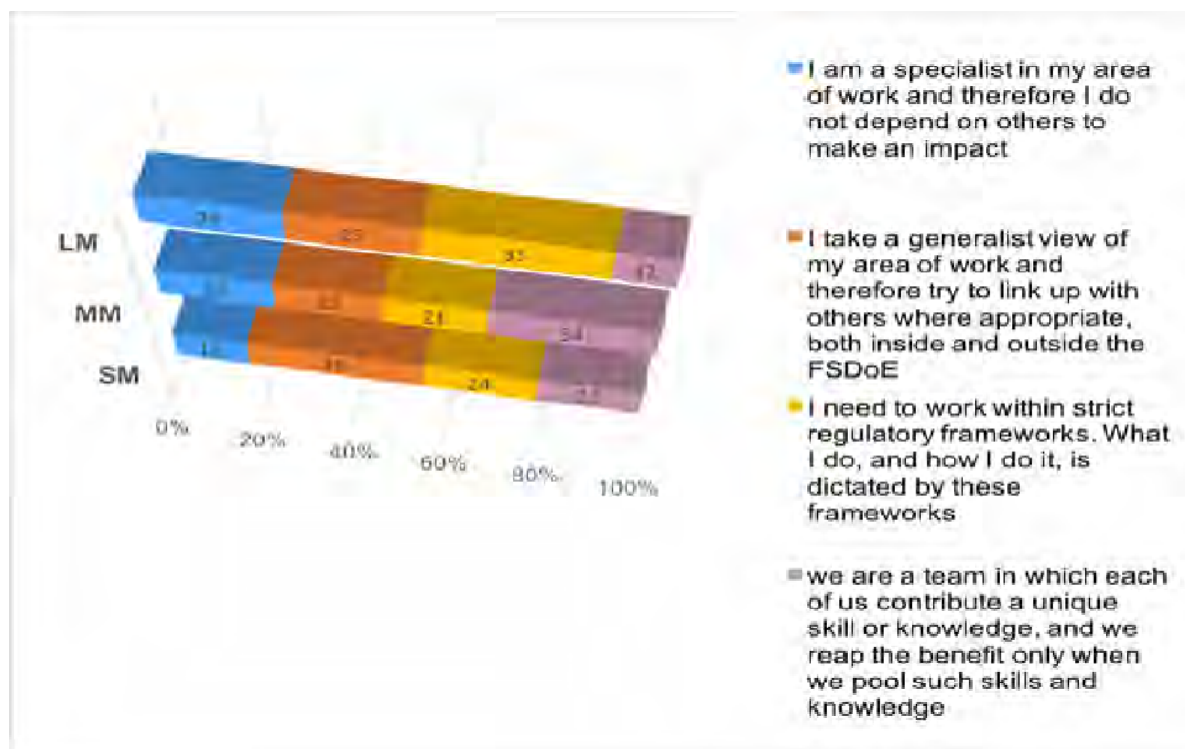


Figure 5.15: When carrying out my official duties at work, I work from the assumption that

5.4.6 Responses to Questions on Coordination

The professional relationships between myself and my superiors is such that

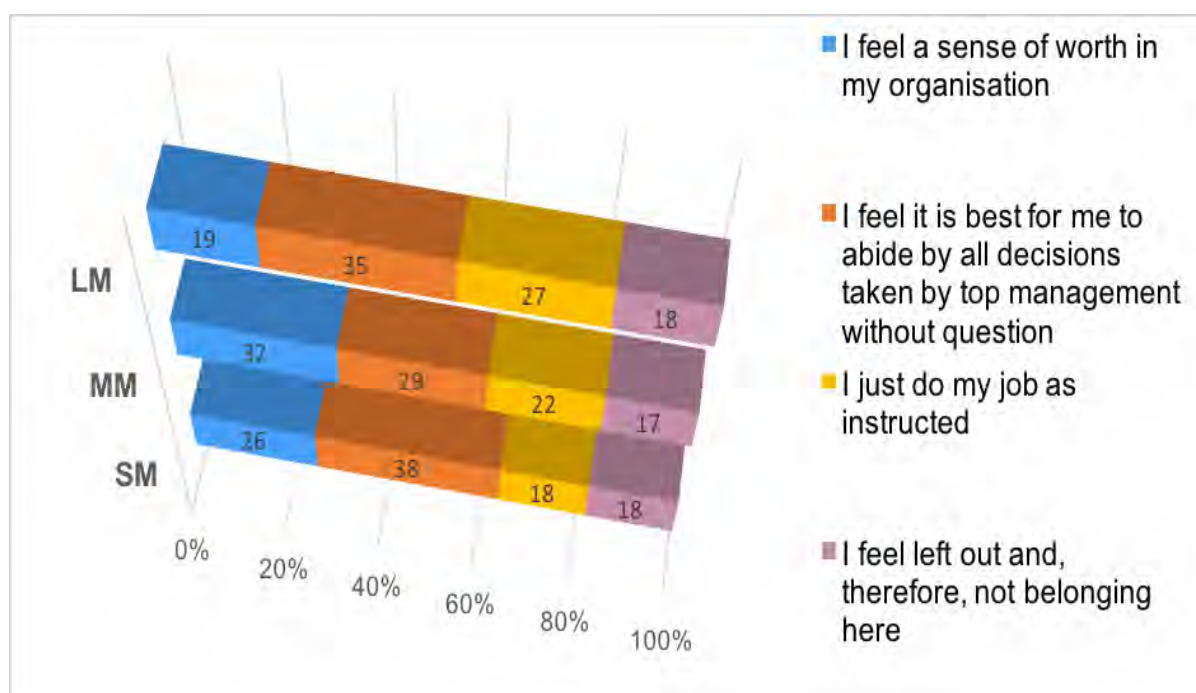


Figure 5.16: The professional relationships between myself and my superiors is such that

The professional relationships between myself and those under my jurisdiction is such that

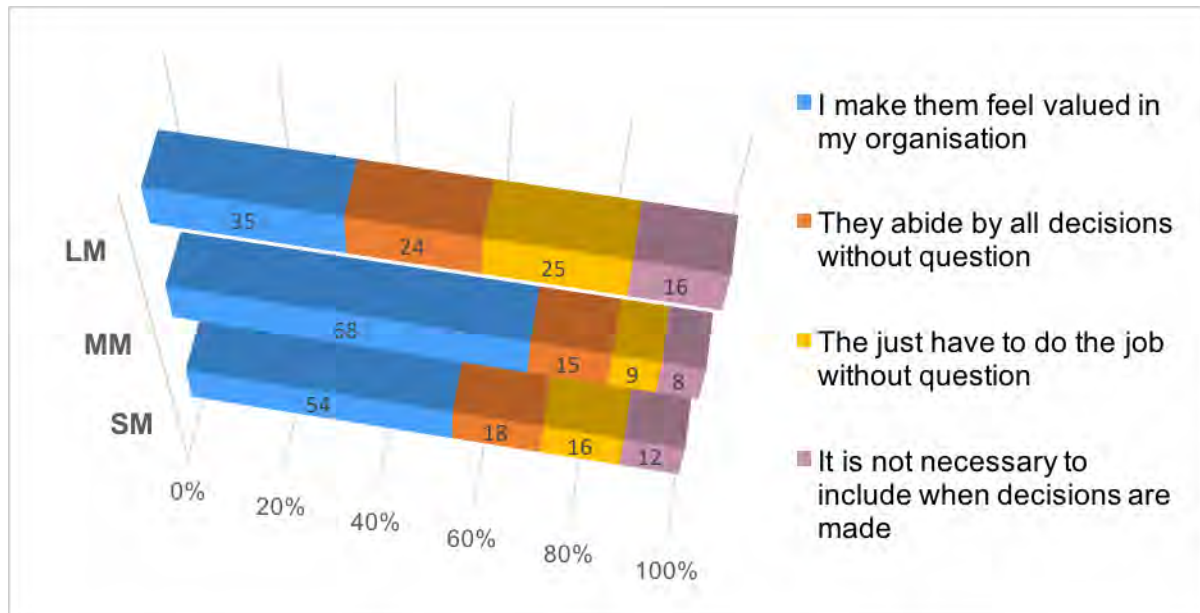


Figure 5.17: The professional relationships between myself and those under my jurisdiction is such that

The impact of my professional interactions affect my attitude as follows

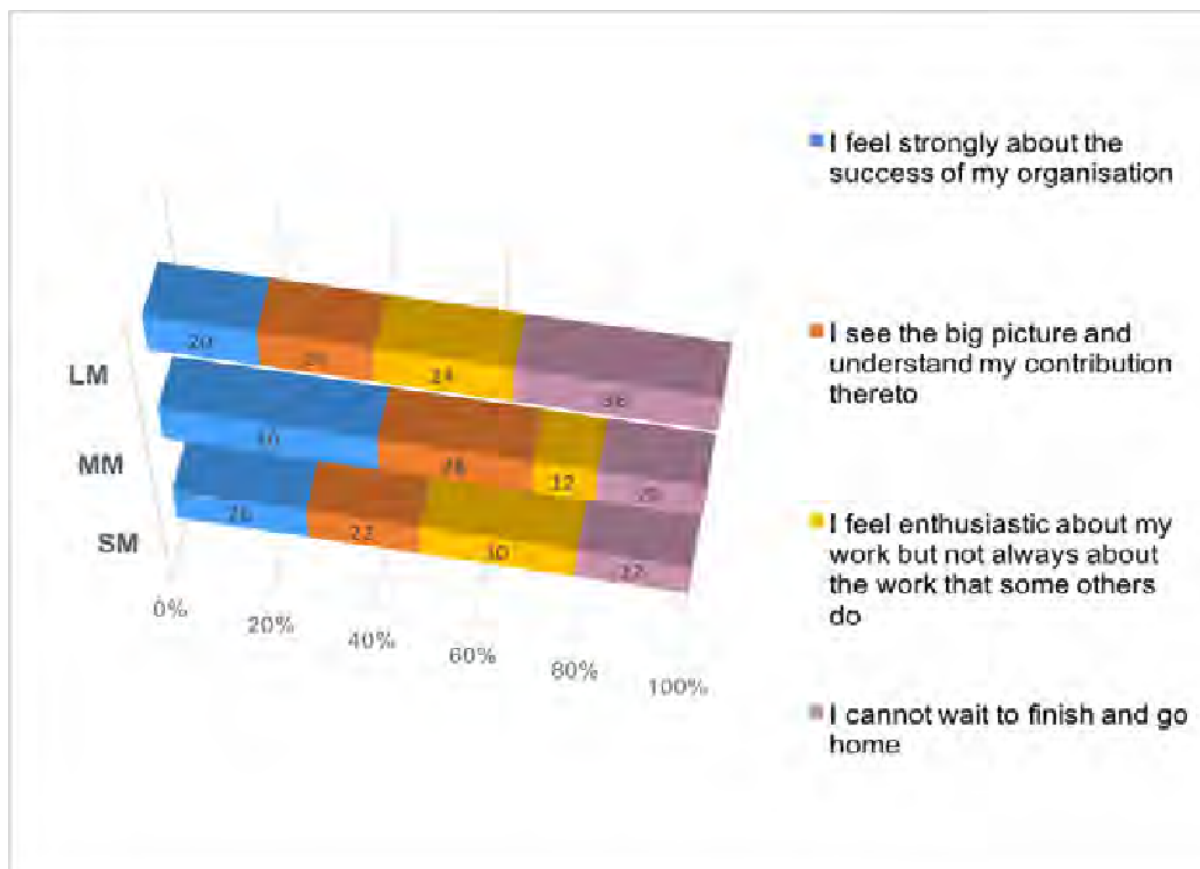


Figure 5.18: The impact of my professional interactions affect my attitude as follows

5.4.7 Responses to Questions on Outsourcing

When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

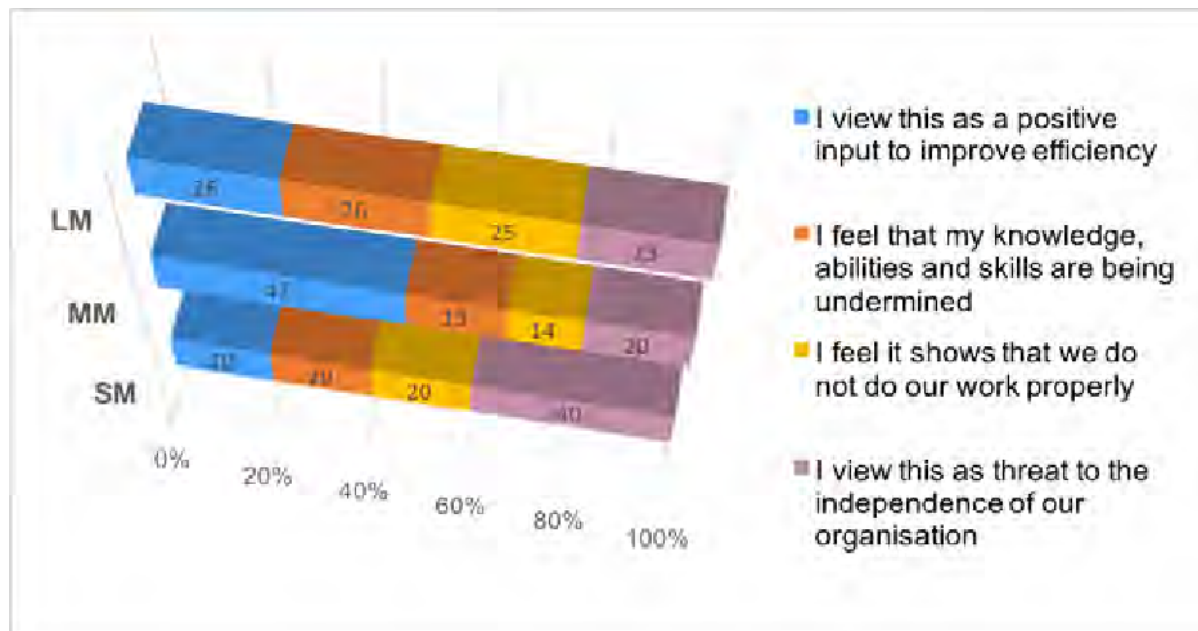


Figure 5.19: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

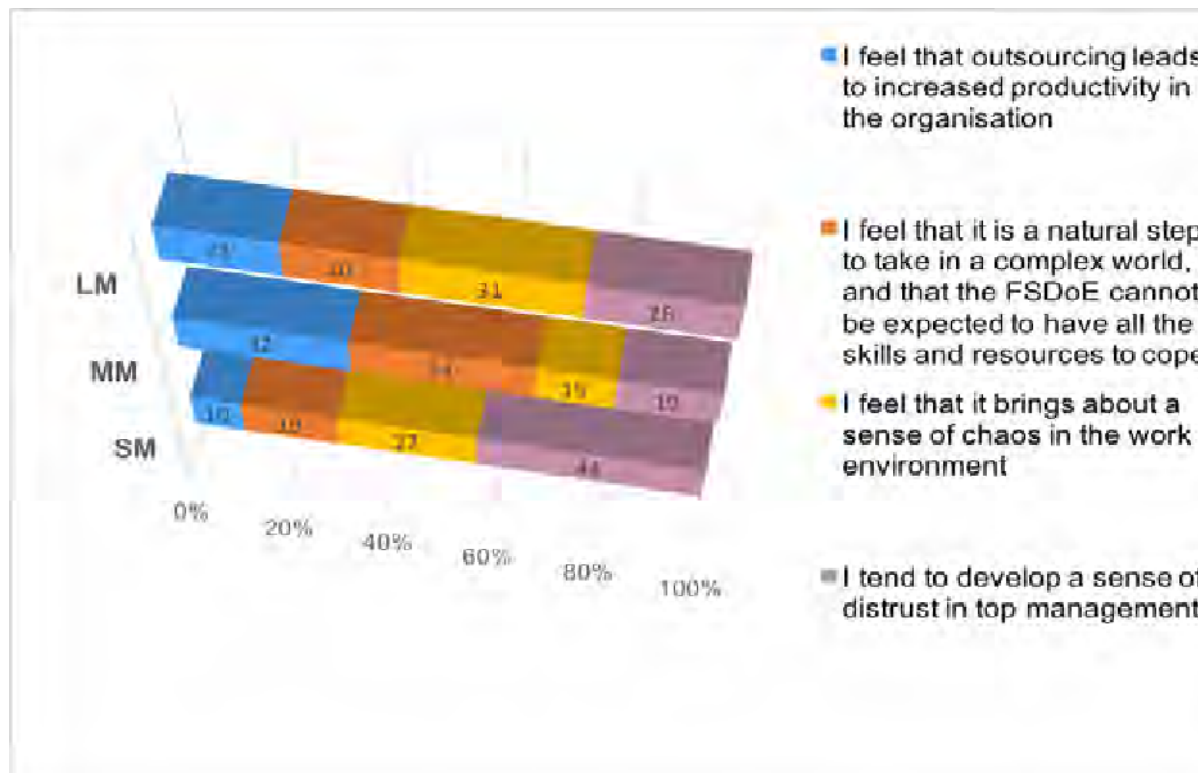


Figure 5.20: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

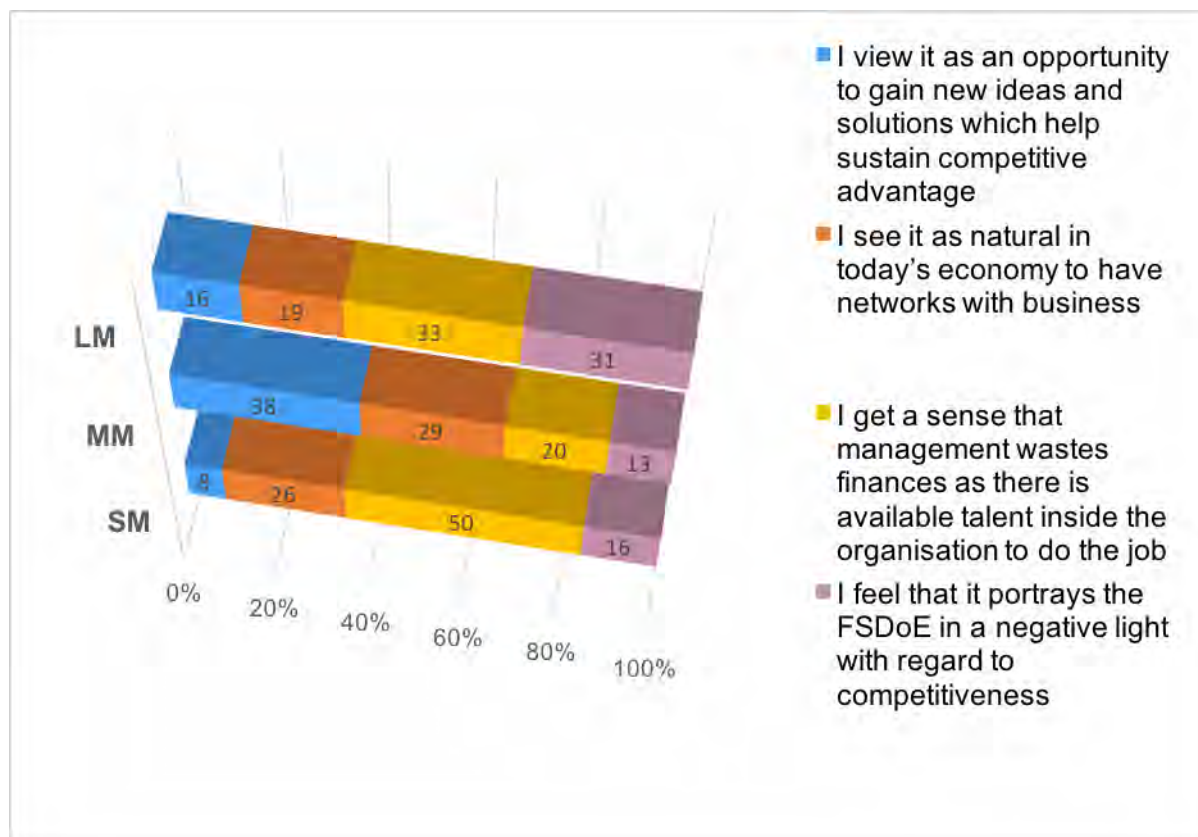


Figure 5.21: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers

5.4.8 Responses to Questions on Cooperation

When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

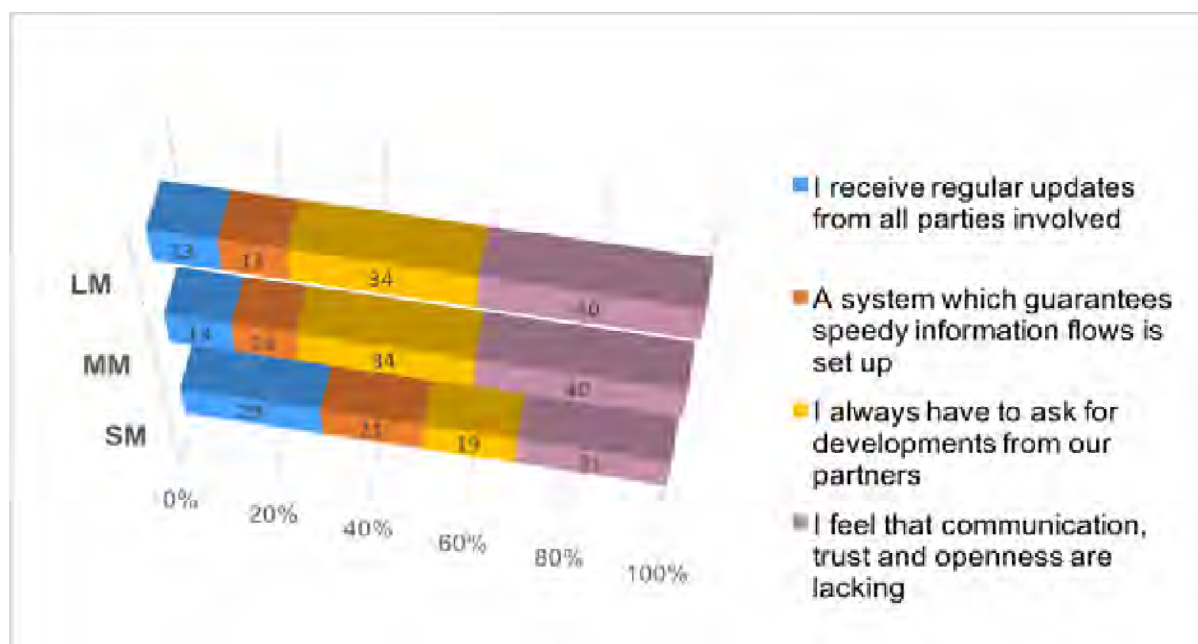


Figure 5.22: When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

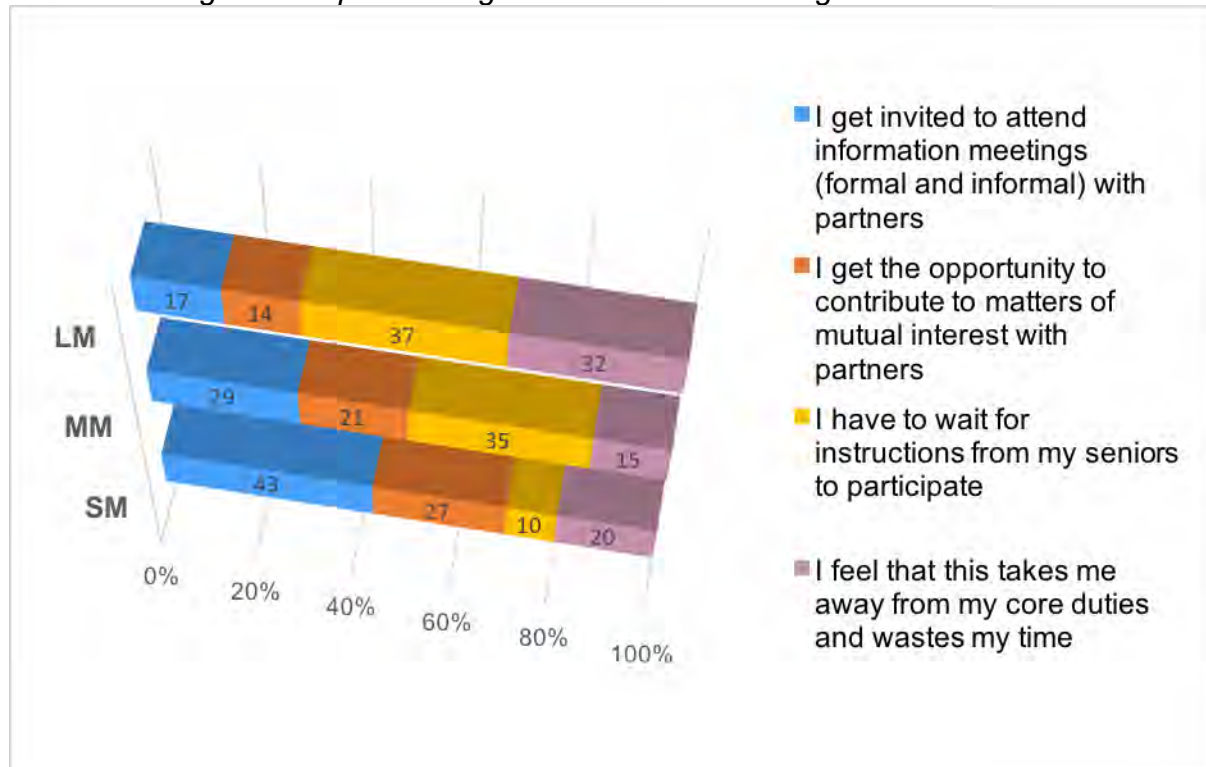


Figure 5.23: When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

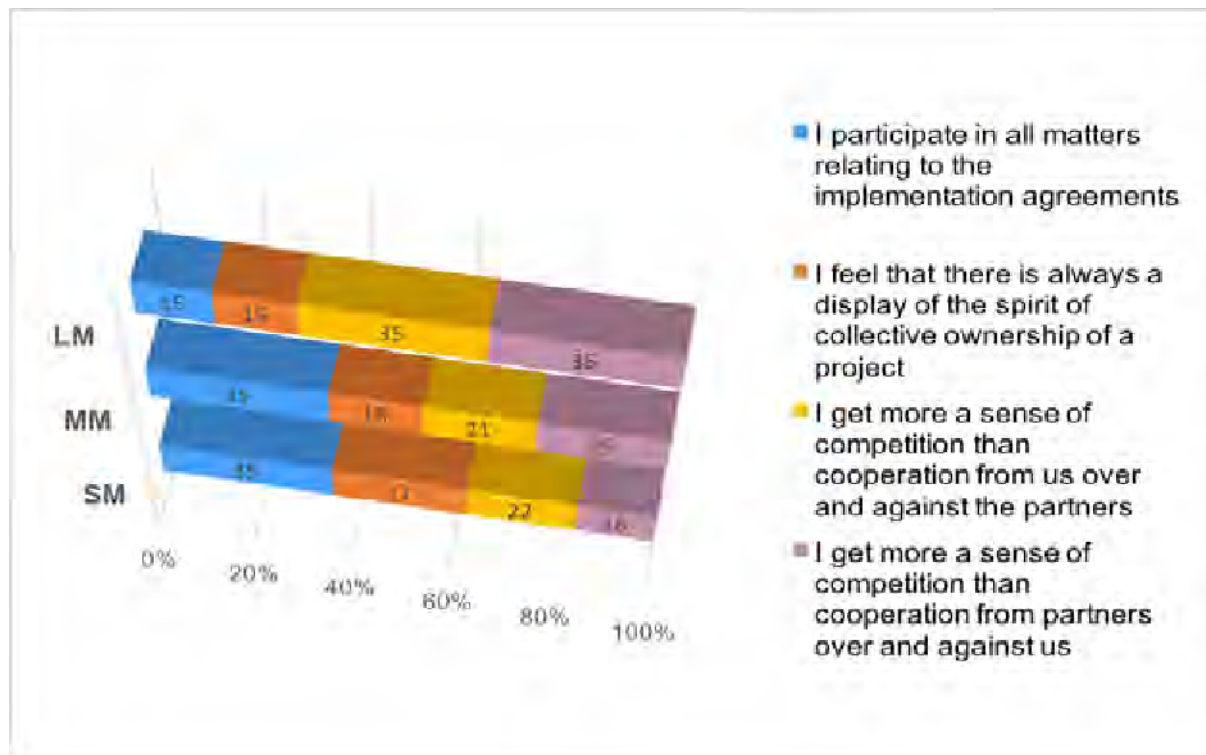


Figure 5.24: When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations

5.5 Comparisons between lower and middle management

The results of the second-round comparisons are presented in this section. Due to the low number of senior management respondents, no statistical comparisons involving them could be made. Only qualitative conclusions can be drawn from the answers by senior managers as presented above. However, comparative analyses of answers by lower and middle management produced a number of significant outcomes. These are presented below.

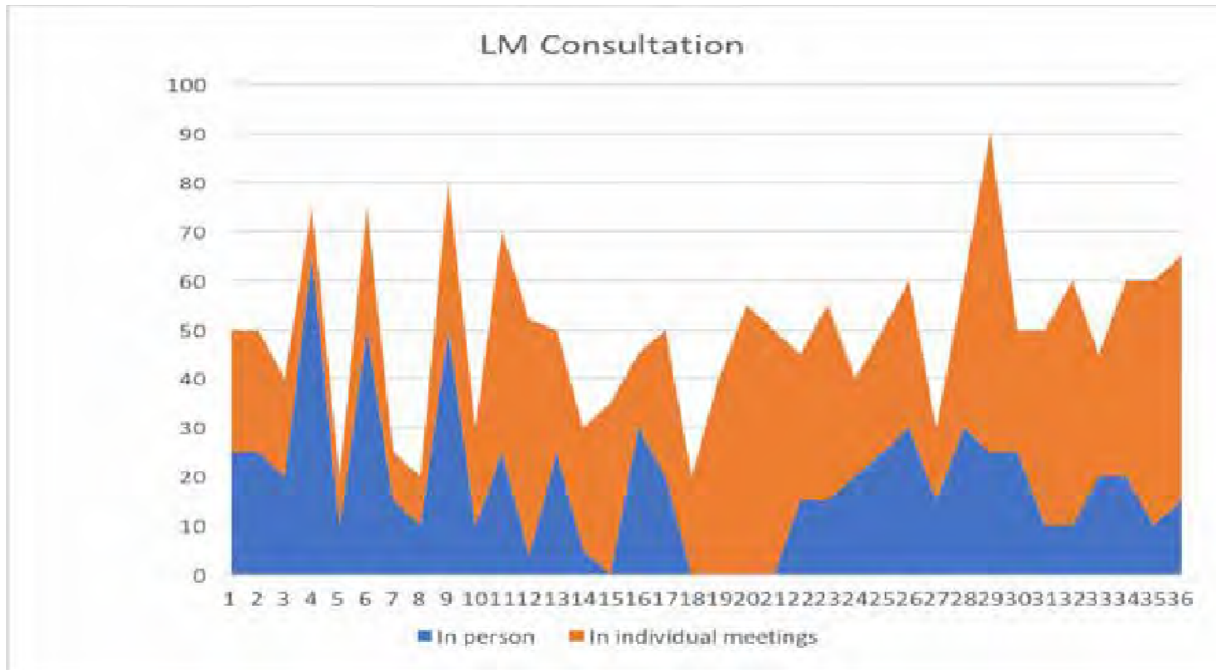


Figure 5.25: Consultation in person and individual meetings: Lower Management

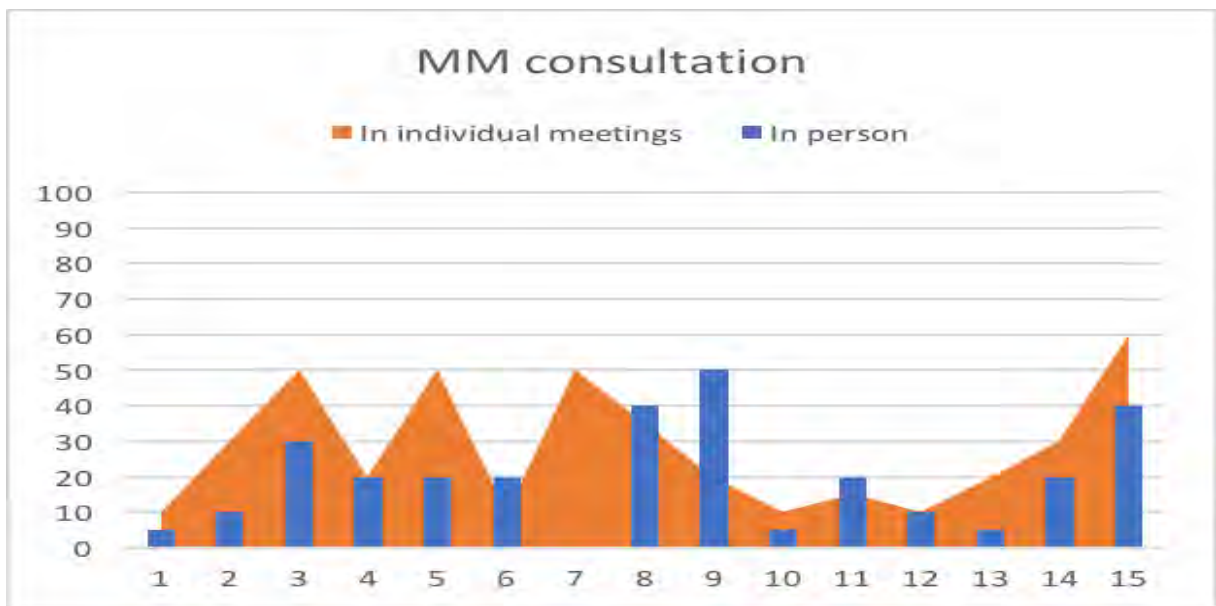
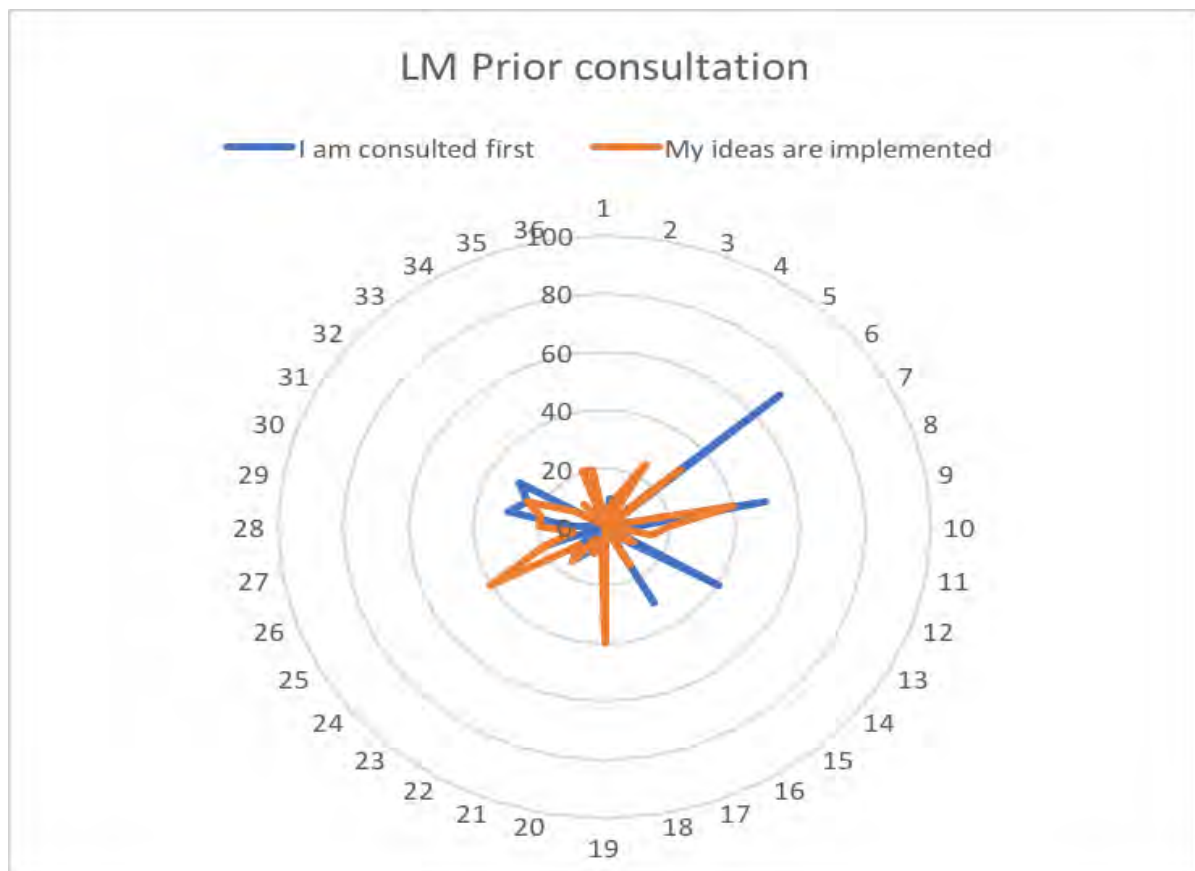


Figure 5.26: Consultations in person and individual meetings: Middle Management

Figures 5.25 and 5.26 above provide schematic representations of the data on consultation collated from the responses to Question 1 of the survey instrument. Generally speaking, the graphs show that LM, as seen in Figure 5.25, is consulted more in individual meetings by its supervisors who are MM, represented in Figure 5.26, during decision making. The graphs also depict that MM is more open to consulting LM, its subordinates, than it is to experiencing consultation by its own superiors. That is, MM experiences relatively fewer consultations, either individually or in meetings, from its supervisors who are Senior Management.

Figure 5.27: Prior consultation: Lower Management



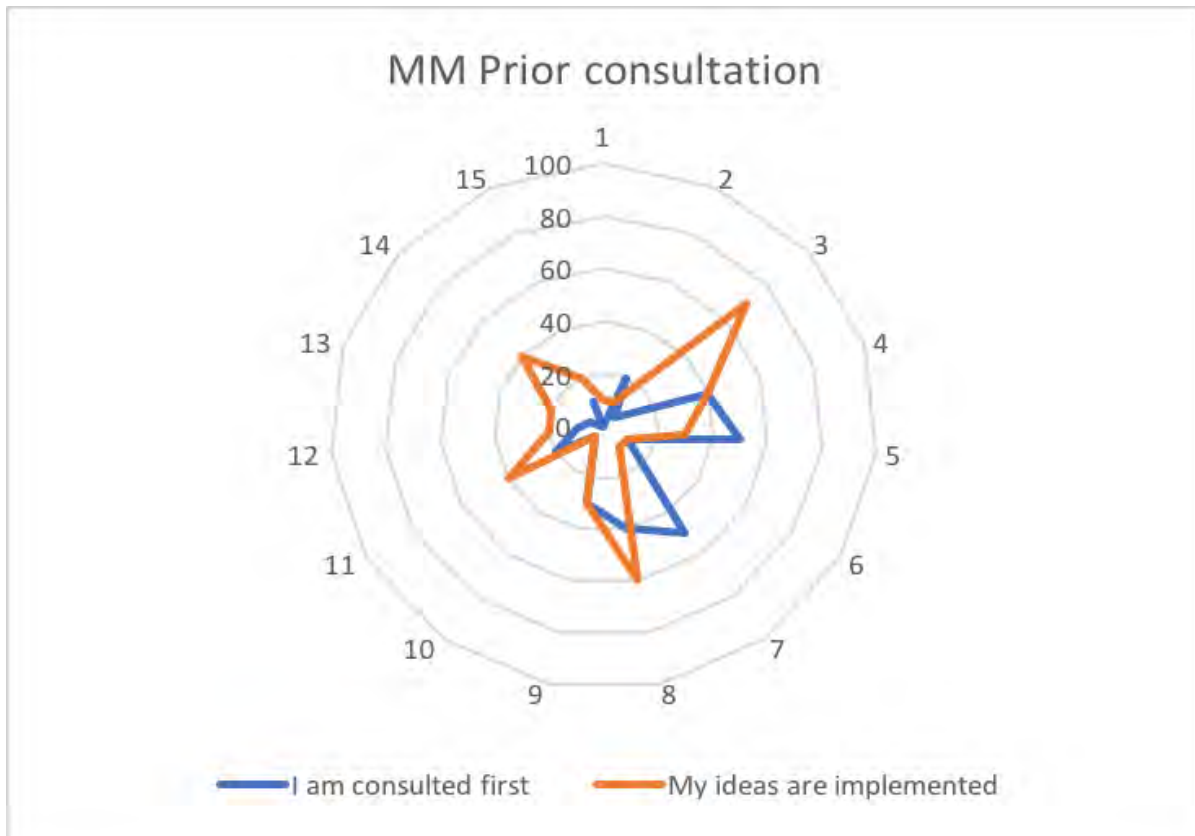


Figure 5.28: Prior consultation: Middle Management

Figures 5.27 and 5.28 above are a representation of the responses from Question 2 of the survey instrument. Figure 5.28 shows that MM is consulted first more than LM, as depicted in Figure 5.27, as can be expected except for one LM who is consulted first in comparison with the responses from peers. There is an indication that the ideas of MM are implemented more than those of LM as indicated by Figure 5.28.

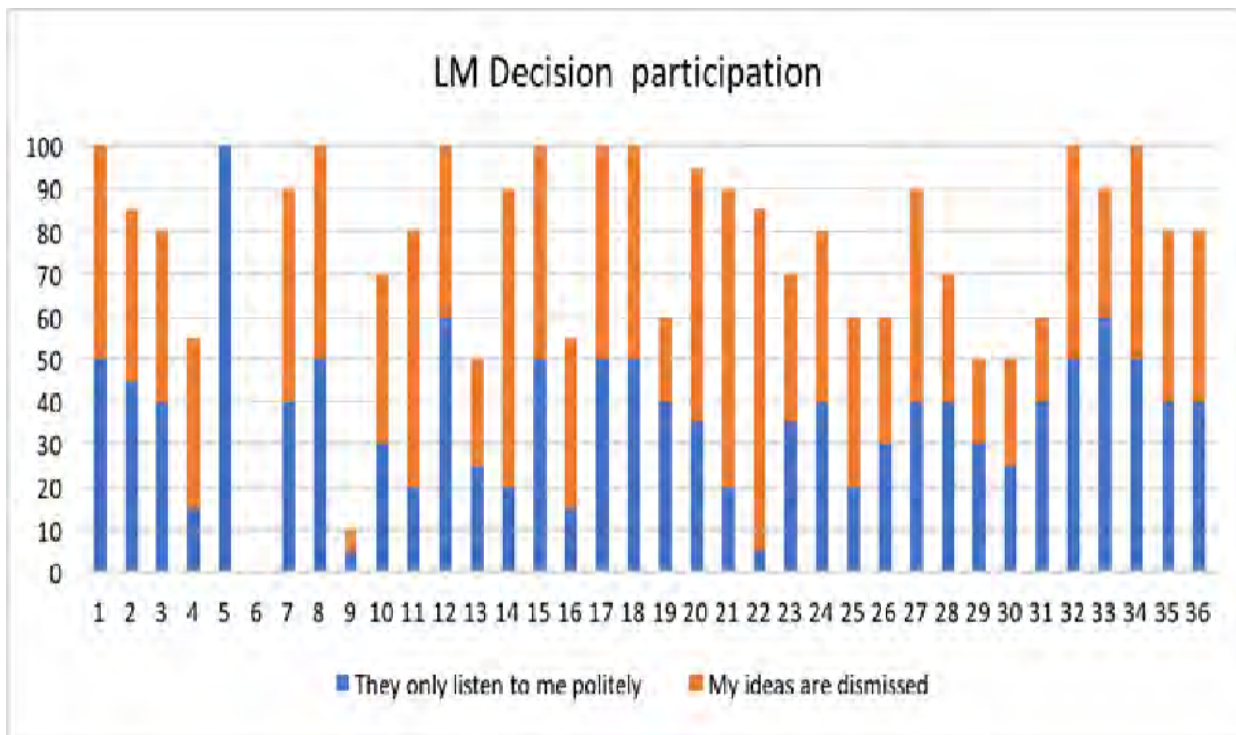


Figure 5.29: Participation in decisions: Lower Management

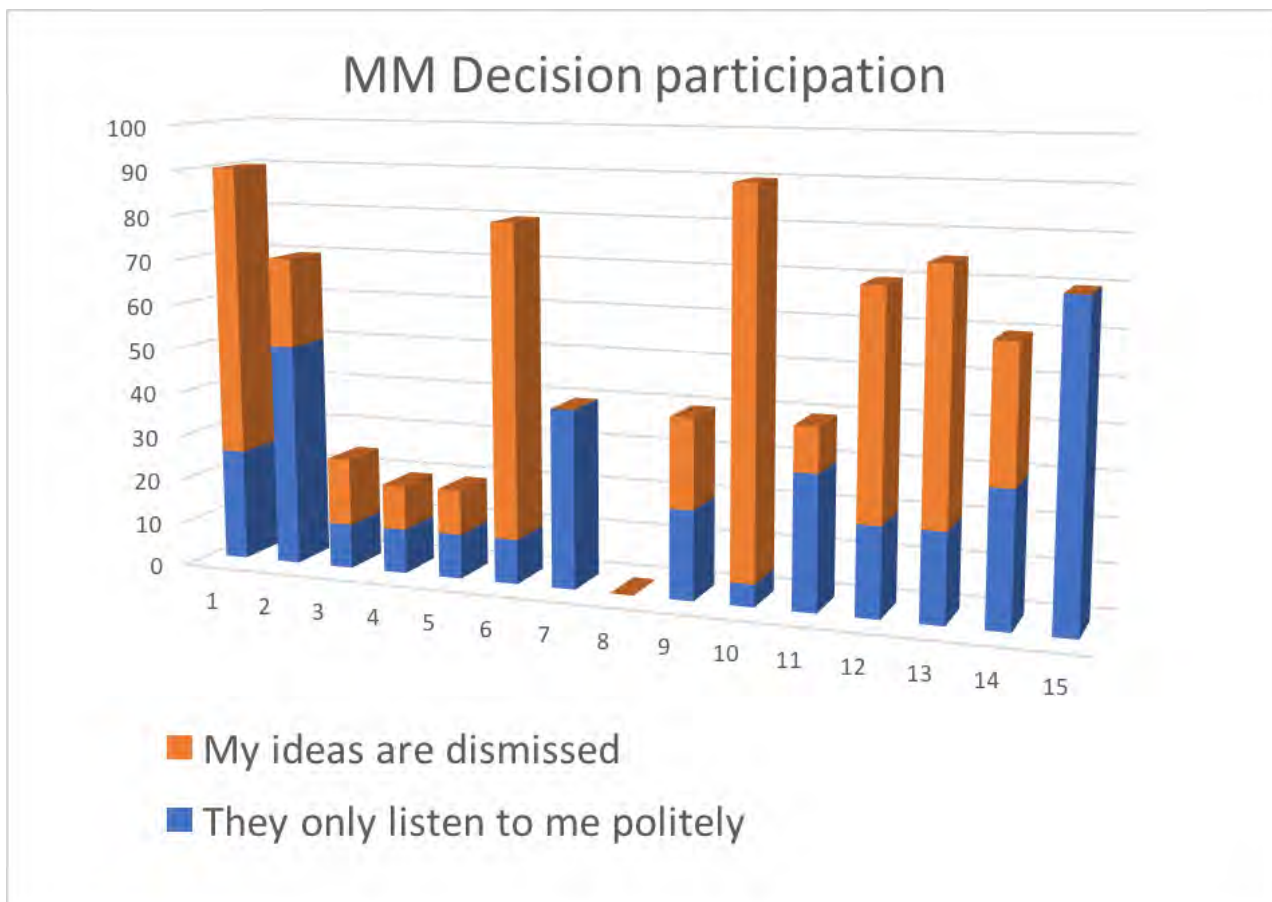


Figure 5.30: Participation in decisions: Middle Management

Figures 5.29 and 5.30 above are a summation of the data from Question 2 of the survey instrument. Generally speaking, Figure 5.29 shows that LM experiences more positive participation in decision making than MM, depicted in Figure 5.30. This represents a cumulative effect of LM being more positive than MM continuing from Figure 5.25. However, Burkus postulates that in a hierarchy, as an idea moves through the different levels of management, the likelihood of its rejection increases.¹⁸⁴

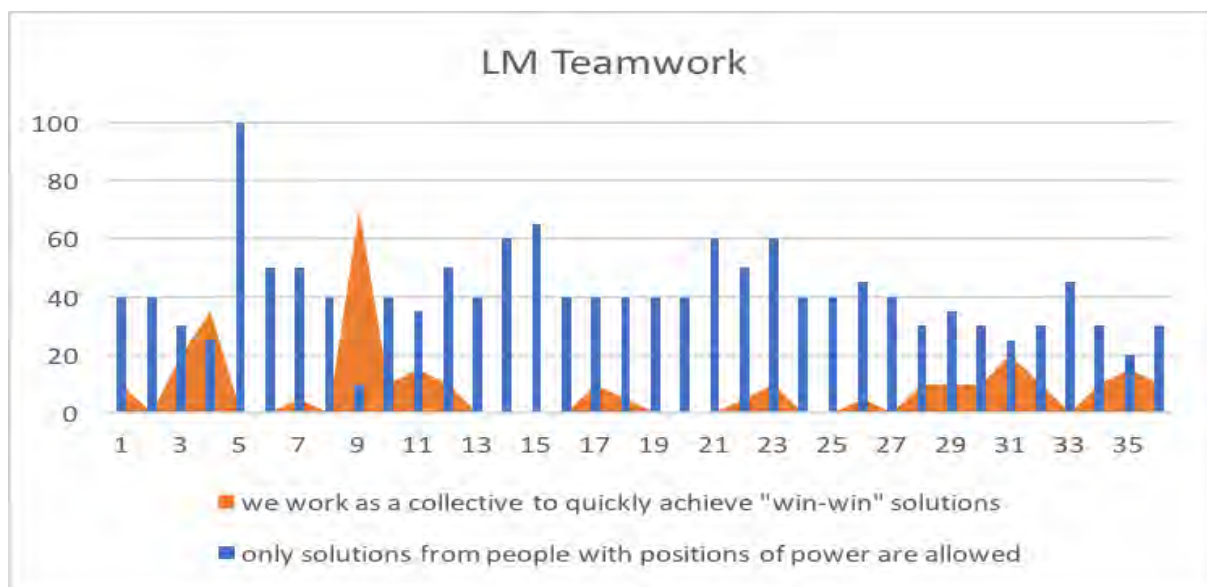


Figure 5.31: Focus on teamwork: Lower Management

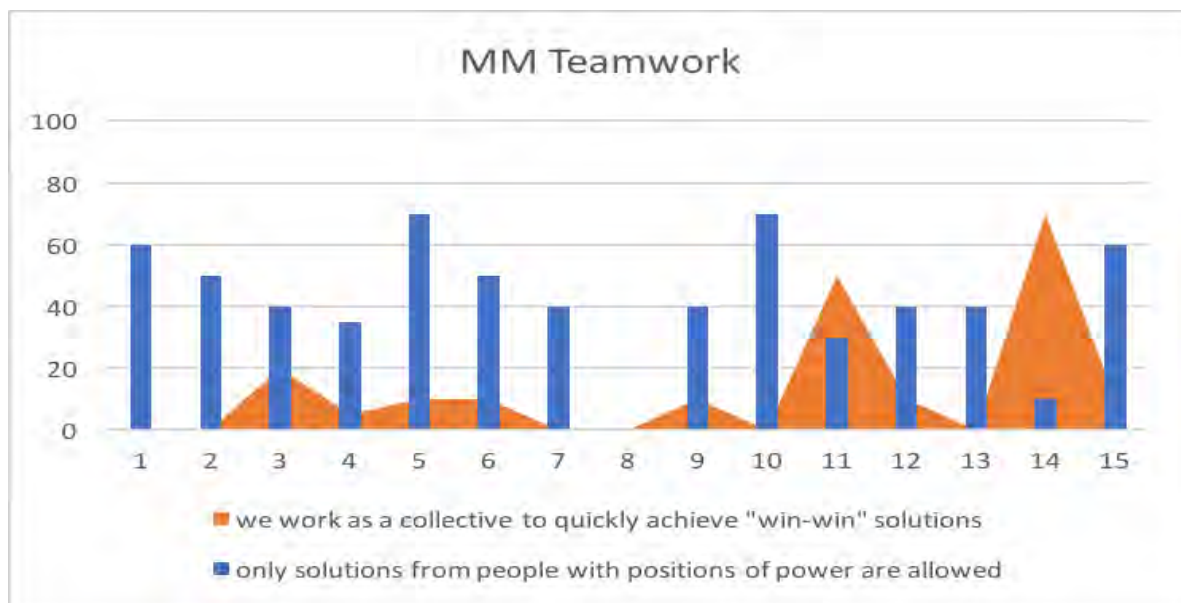


Figure 5.32: Focus on teamwork: Middle Management

¹⁸⁴ Burkus, D. 2014. Why hierarchy stifles creativity. *Psychology Today*.

Figures 5.31 and 5.32 above are schematic representations of the data on teamwork by LM and MM, respectively, collated from the responses to Question 7 of the survey instrument. The graphs show that authority plays a predominant role in teamwork activities. These figures still indicate the cumulative effect of the omnipresent role played by top management. The graphs indicate a disturbing depiction for both LM and MM with regard to how they experience teamwork.

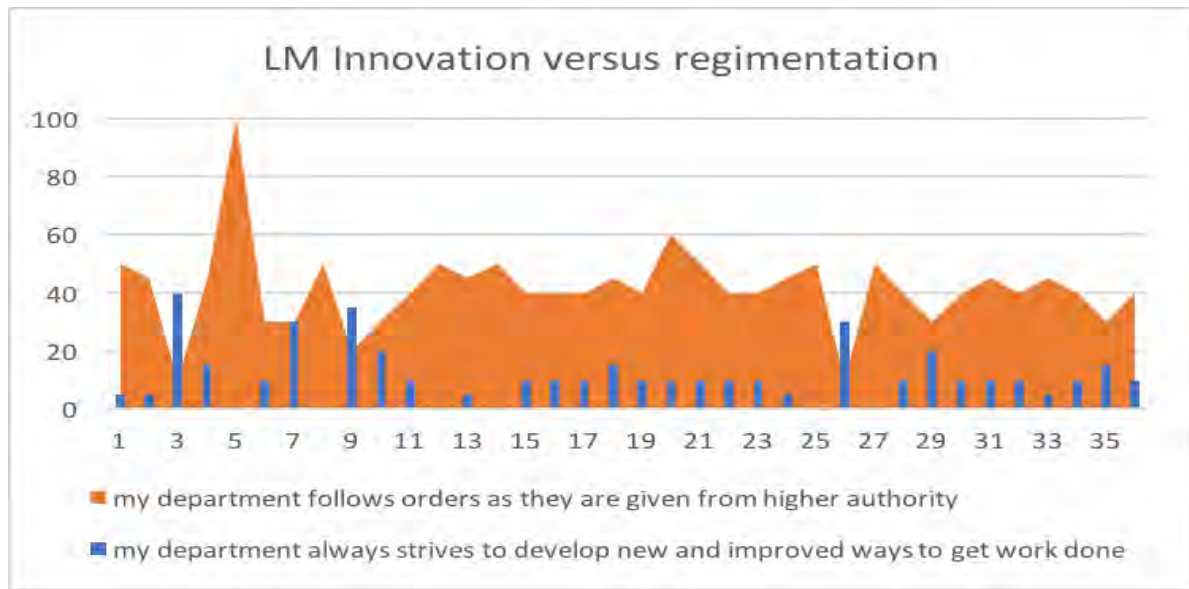


Figure 5.33: Innovation versus regimentation: Lower Management

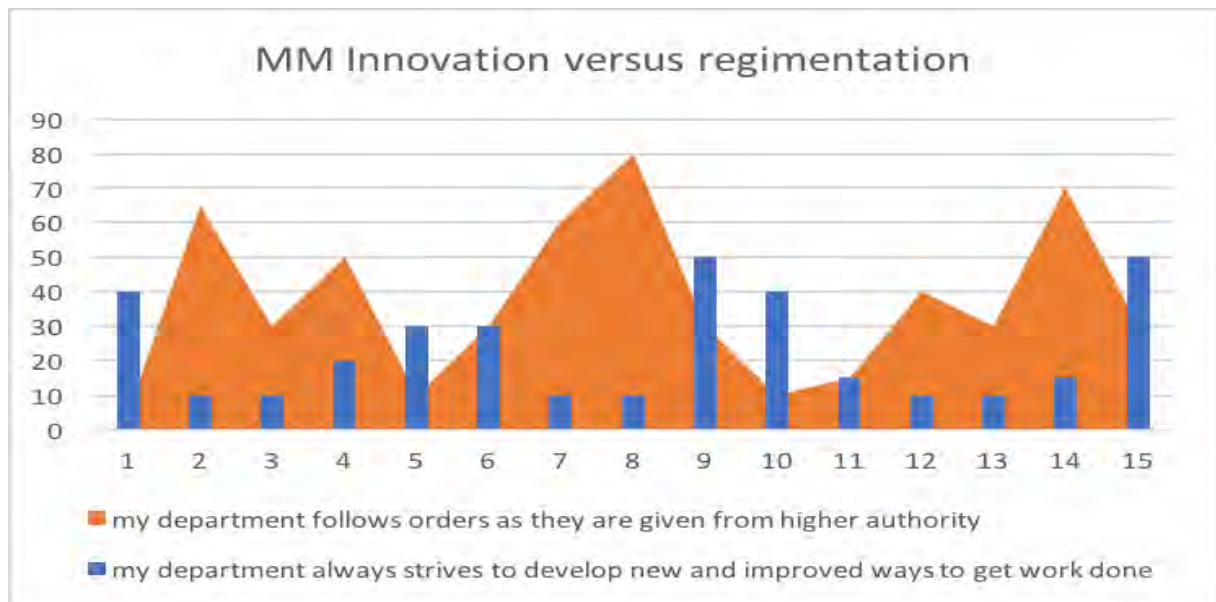


Figure 5.34: Innovation versus regimentation: Middle Management

Figures 5.33 and 5.34 show the data collated from Question 9 of the survey instrument. The

graphs show that authority plays a central role. That is, there is more regimentation than innovation. The graphs portray a gloomy picture for both LM and MM as shown in Figures 5.33 and 5.34 respectively, with regard to innovation. Again, the cumulative ever-present role by top management is evident from the data. This is to be expected in a hierarchy.

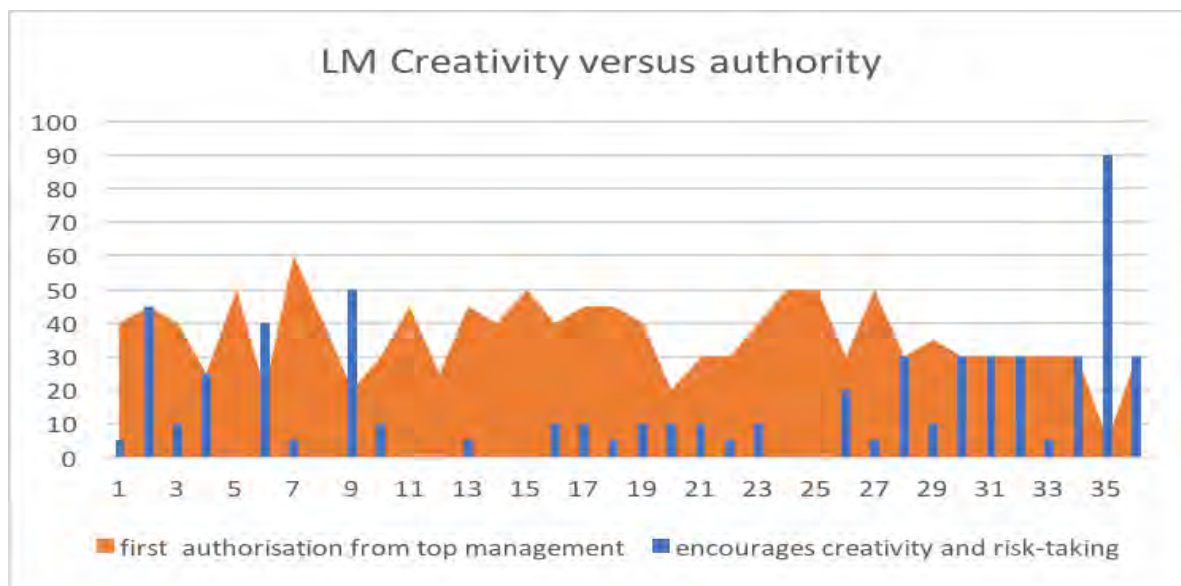


Figure 5.35: Creativity versus authority: Lower Management

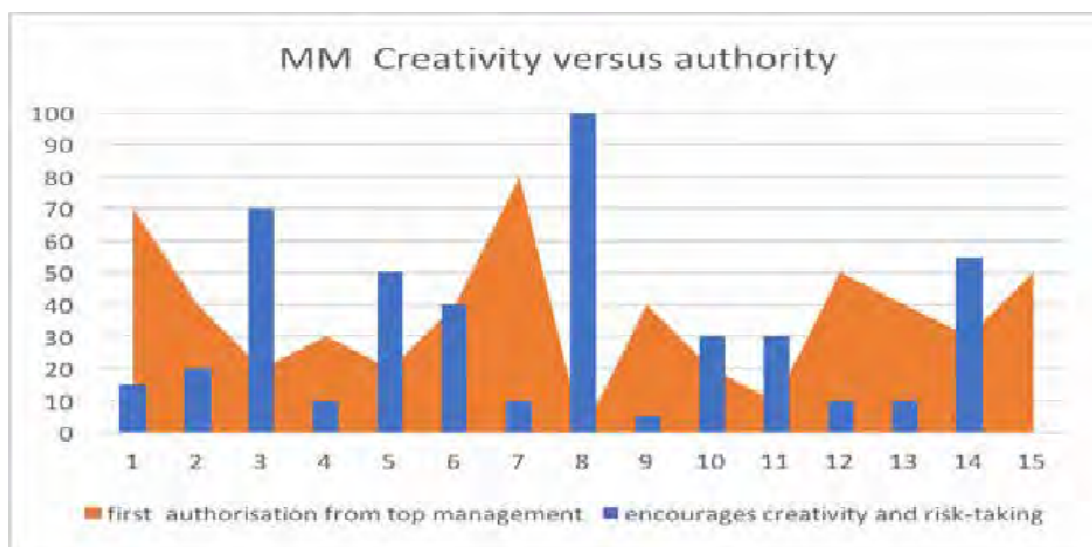


Figure 5.36: Creativity versus authority: Middle Management

Figures 5.35 and 5.36, representing LM and MM respectively, derive from the data collated from Question 11 of the survey instrument. The results presented indicate a cumulative pattern of the ubiquitous role played by top management. The graphs indicate that authority plays a principal role with fewer opportunities for creativity and risk taking.

This is done in the pursuit of organisational control and stability and, thus, authority plays a dominating role.¹⁸⁵

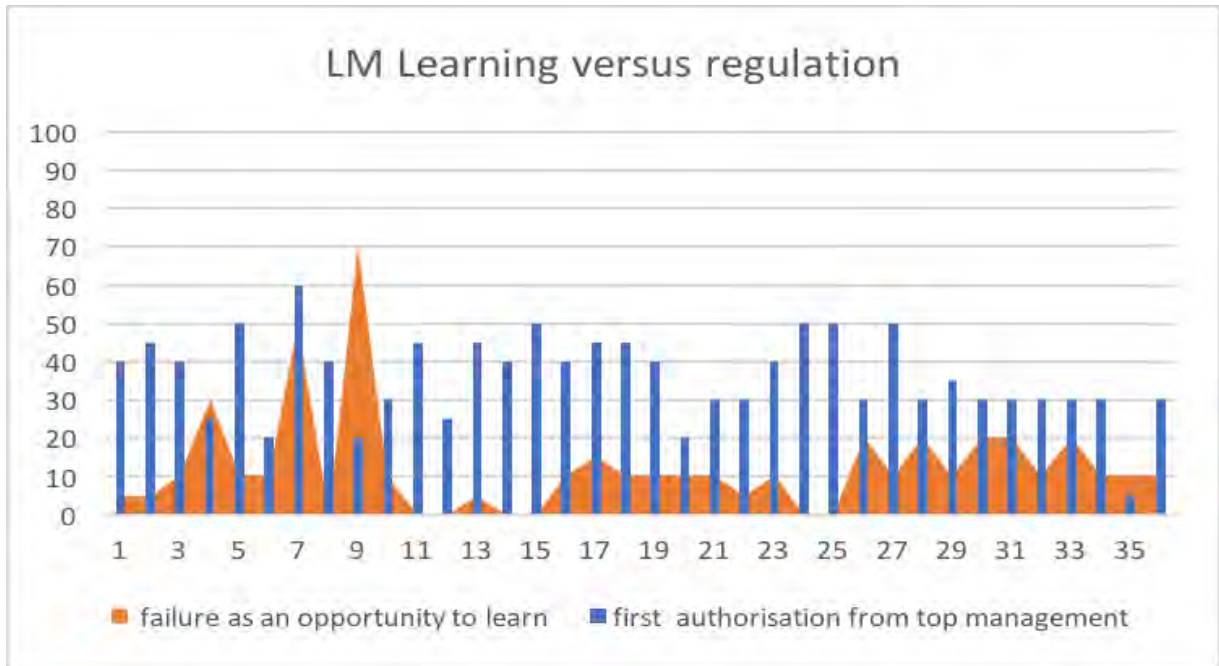


Figure 5.37: Learning versus regulation: Lower Management

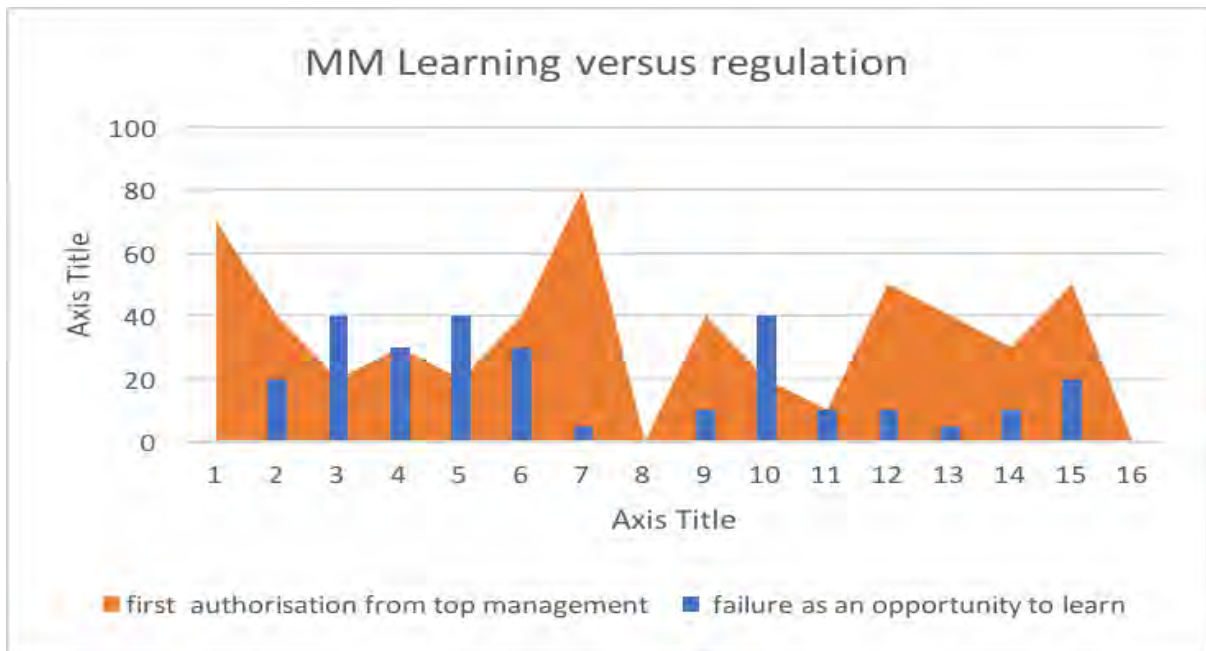


Figure 5.38: Learning versus regulation: Middle Management

¹⁸⁵ DiPadova, L.M. & Faerman, S.R. 1993. Using the Competing Values Framework to facilitate managerial understanding across levels of organisational hierarchy. *Human Resources Management (1986-1998)*, 32(1), 10-12.

Figures 5.37 and 5.38 above stem from the data collated from Question 12 of the survey instrument. The graphs, once again, indicate a cumulative pattern for both LM and MM where authority continues to play a primary role. That is, there is more regulation in respect of organisation learning by the higher authority. Buschgens, Bausch and Balkin postulate that organisational learning enables organisations to accumulate knowledge and thereby become flexible and adaptable to the changing environment.¹⁸⁶ However, what can be discerned from the data is that there are relatively lower levels of learning opportunities experienced by the level where the majority of management are situated.

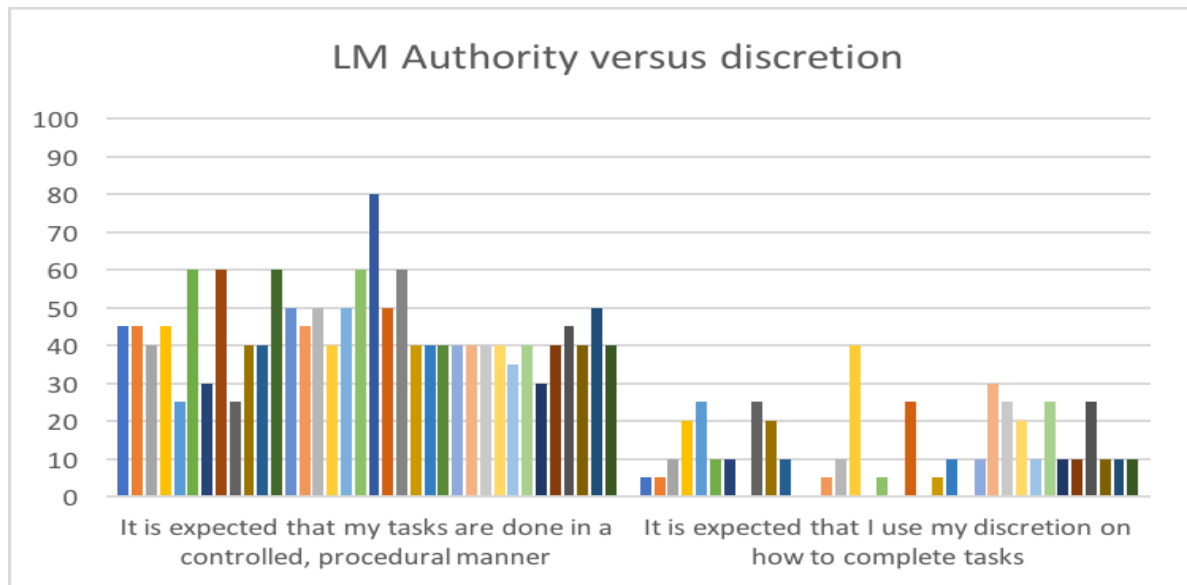


Figure 5.39: Authority versus discretion: Lower Management

¹⁸⁶ Buschgens, T., Bausch, A. & Balkin, D.B. 2013. Organizational culture and innovation: A meta-analytic review. *Journal of Product Innovation Management*, 30(4), 768.

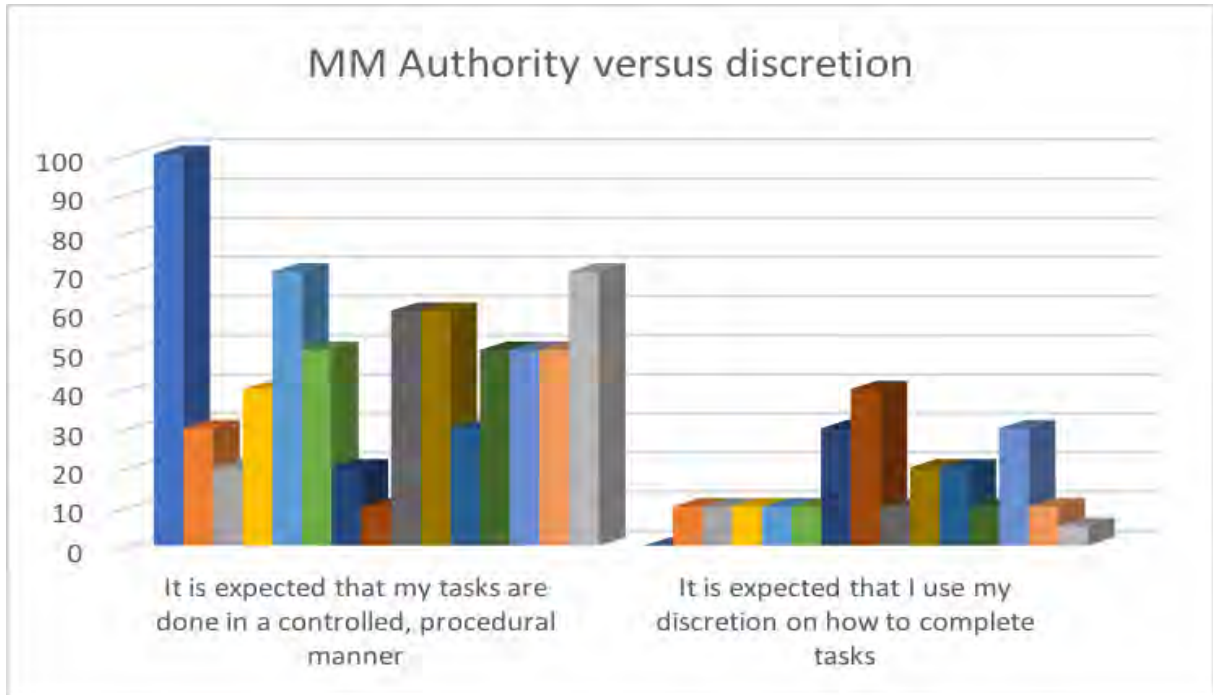


Figure 5.40: Authority versus discretion: Middle Management

Figures 5.39 and 5.40 address themselves to Question 14 of the survey instrument. The graphs still indicate the cumulative pattern of the role played by authority in the operations of the organisation. The data for LM and MM indicate that, to a large extent, authority controls the carrying out of tasks and, to a relatively lesser degree, opportunities to apply own discretion in carrying out tasks. Again, these data attest to the cumulative pattern of the primary role played by authority in organisational processes as can be expected in a bureaucratic organisation.

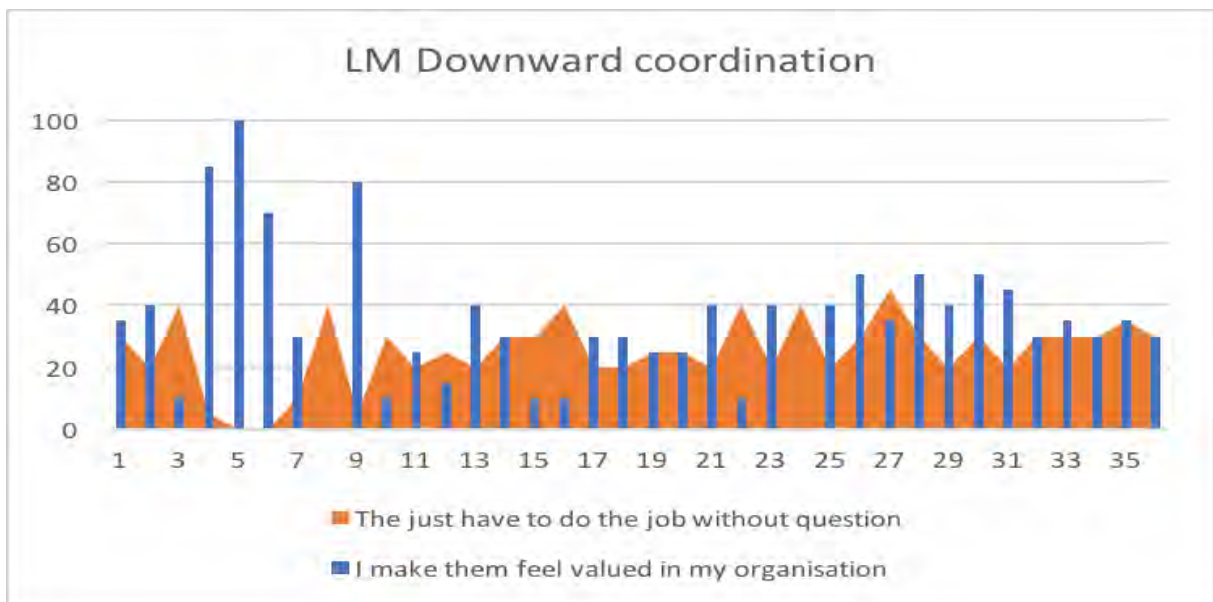


Figure 5.41: Downward coordination: Lower Management

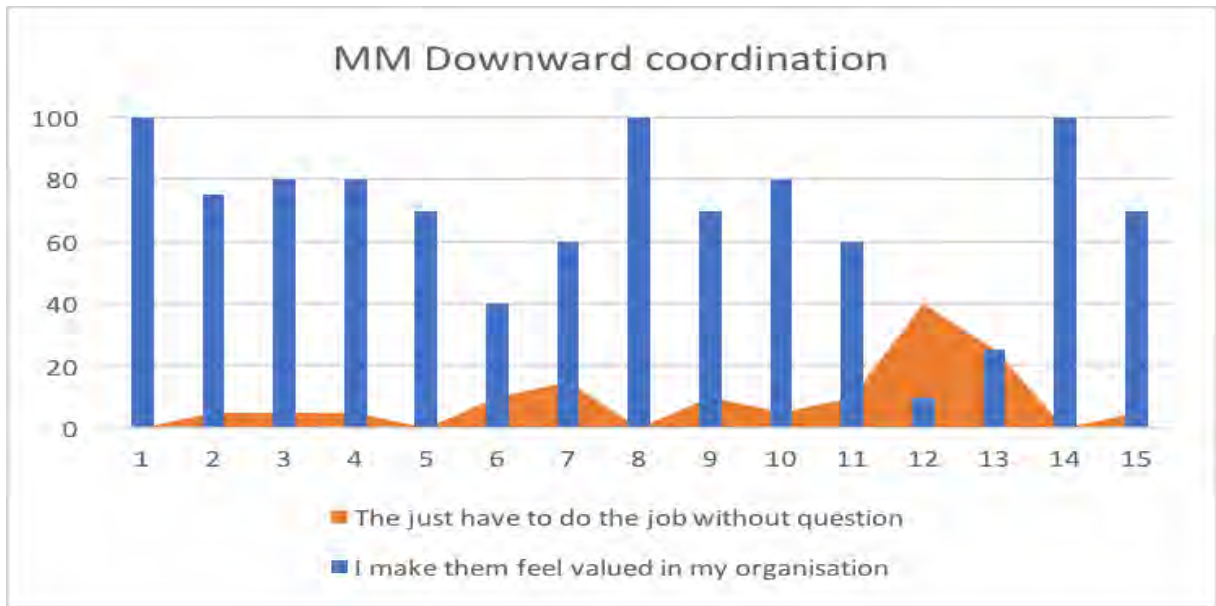


Figure 5.42: Downward coordination: Lower Management

Figures 5.41 and 5.42 are a representation of the data derived from Question 17 of the survey instrument. The graphs indicate that LM does not feel valued by its supervisor; the MM. However, in contrast, the graphs show that MM is of the view that it makes the LM feel valued. For LM, unfortunately, it cannot be proven as to whether those who are below them feel valued as they are not the subjects of the survey.



Figure 5.43: Upward coordination: Lower Management

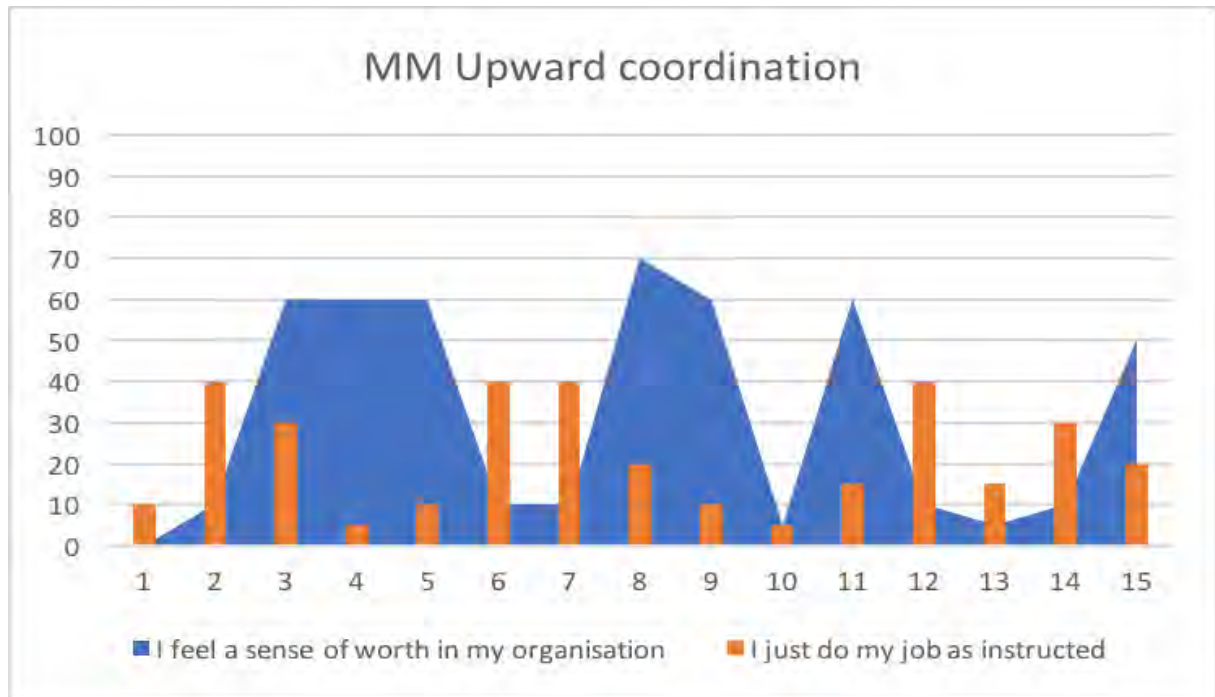


Figure 5.44: Upward coordination: Middle Management

Figures 5.43 and 5.44 provide a graphic representation of the data derived from Question 16 of the survey instrument. This time, the analysis of the data focuses on upward coordination. Figure 5.43 shows that, in large measure, LM does not feel a sense of worth. This is a disturbing exposé since LM comprises the largest majority of management in the organisation. Figure 5.44 indicates that MM has a positive sense of worth.

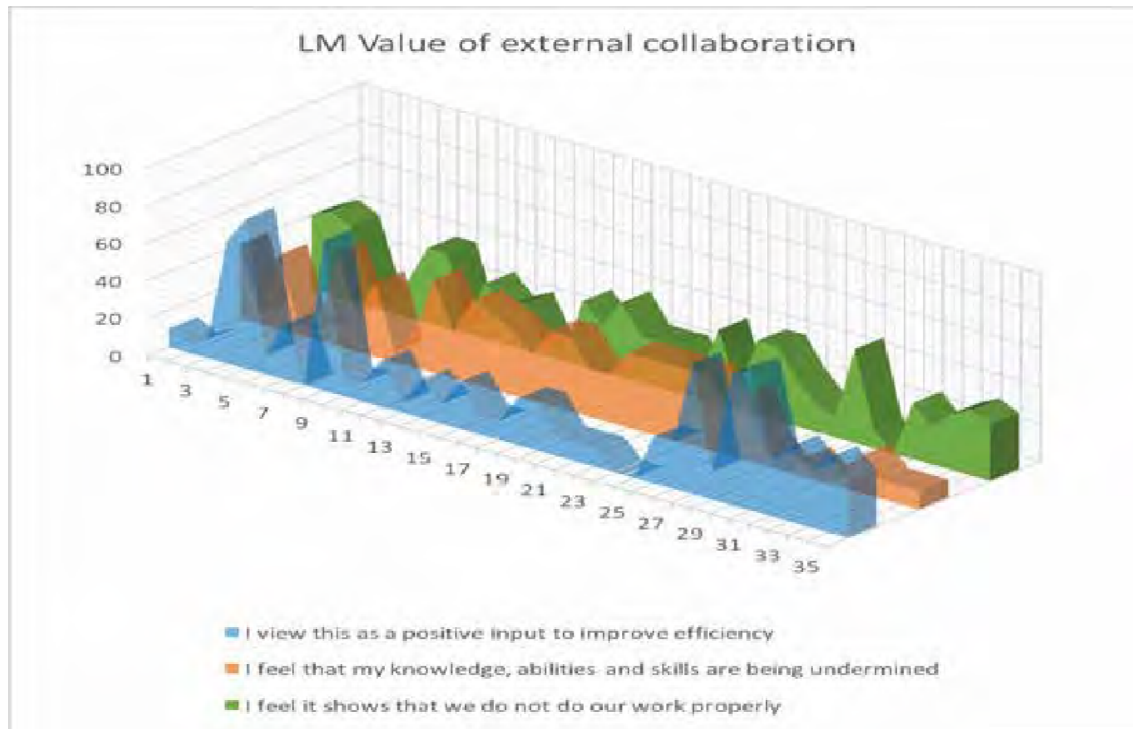


Figure 5.45: Value of external collaboration: Lower Management

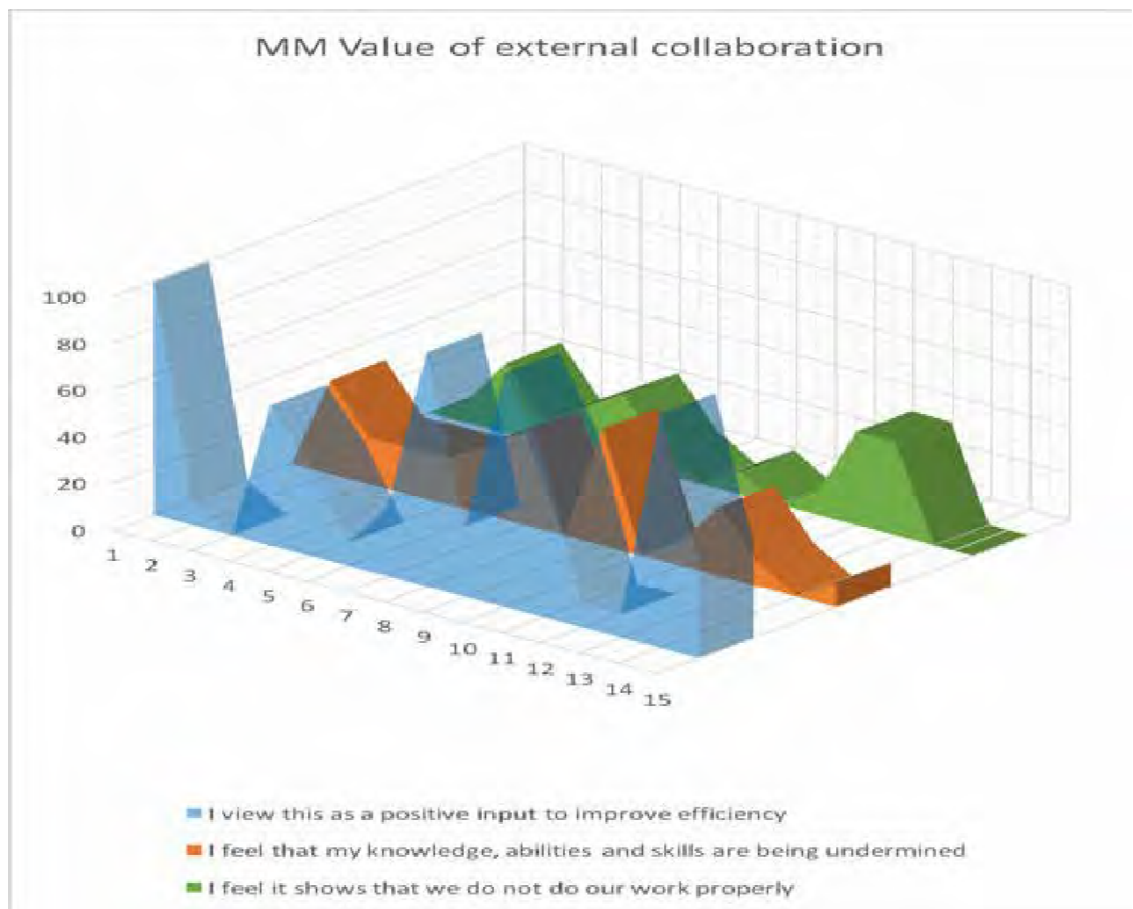


Figure 5.46: Value of external collaboration: Middle Management

Figures 5.45 and 5.46 are schematic representations of the data derived from Question 19 of the survey instrument. By and large, as shown in Figure 5.45, LM is more negative than MM with regard to the value attached to external collaboration. Moreover, the graph shows that LM feels that its skills, abilities and knowledge are being undermined. Figure 5.46 indicates that MM views external collaboration as an opportunity to improve efficiencies.

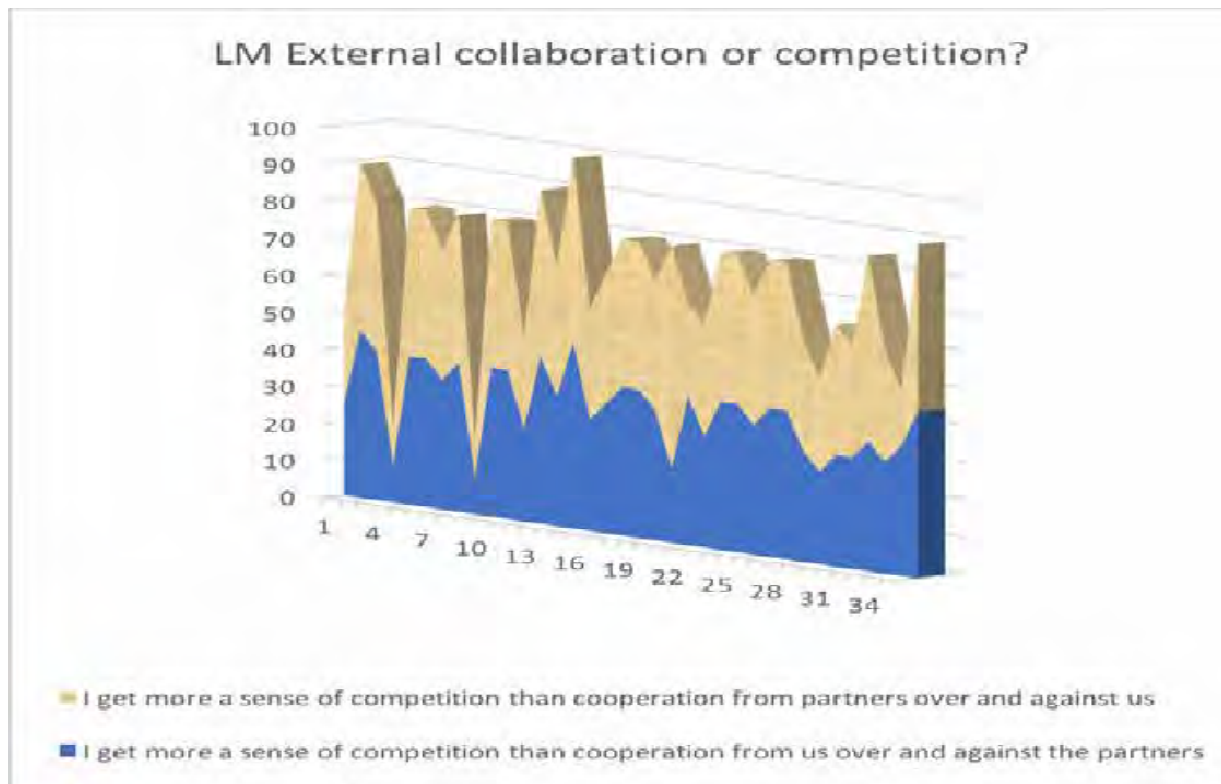


Figure 5.47: External collaboration or competition: Lower Management

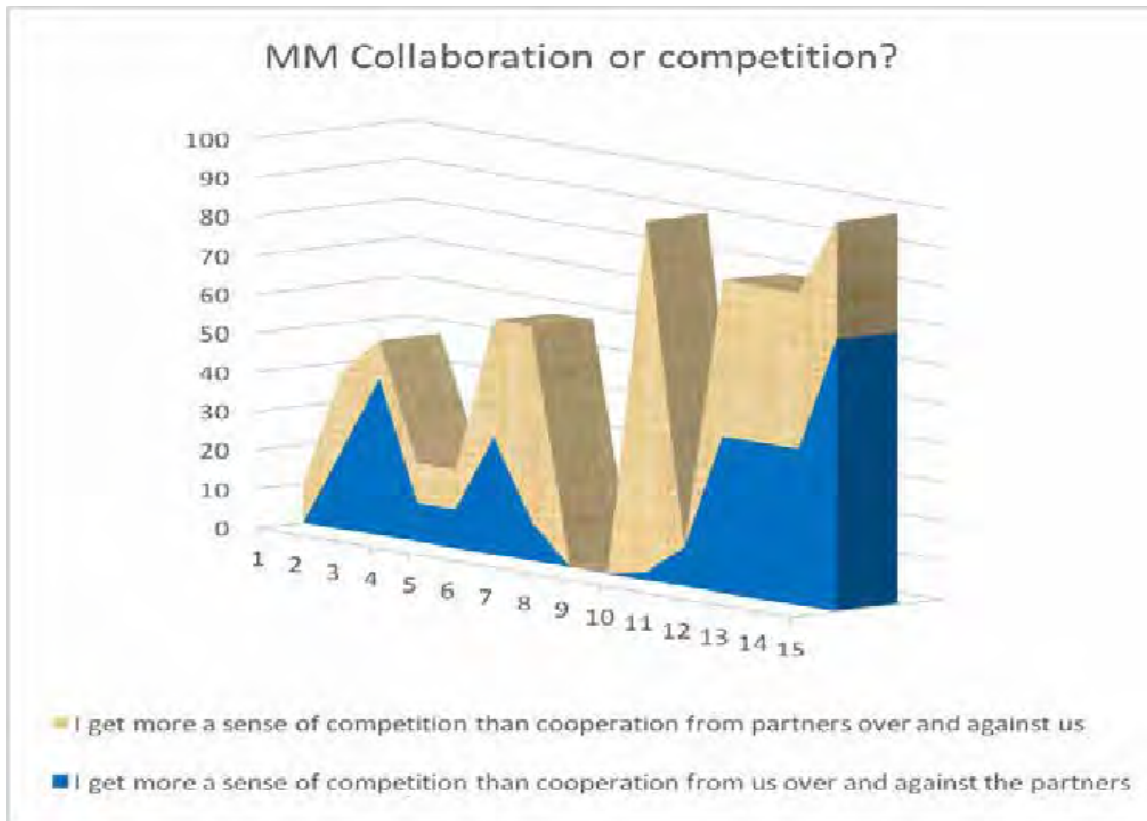


Figure 5.48: External collaboration or competition: Middle Management

Figures 5.47 and 5.48 are a diagrammatic representation of the data derived from Question 24 of the survey instrument. In general, the graphs show a greater sense of competition than collaboration by both LM and MM as depicted in Figures 5.47 and 5.48 respectively, when engaged in cooperative agreements with other organisations.

Chapter 6

Towards agile collaboration in public service organisations

6.1 Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the accuracy of the general concurrence that public service organisations are deeply bureaucratic. The public service organisation under investigation is one of the largest government departments in the Free State Province comprising the Provincial Office and five District Offices. The second purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of a collaborative culture, or lack thereof, on the functioning of modern-day public service organisations in the current environment. Employees from the three management levels in the department, namely Senior Management, Middle Management and Lower Management, were selected as the respondents to the survey.

A literature review was undertaken to obtain a better understanding of the aspects of collaboration in organisations. This included foregrounding aspects of collaboration. Among several aspects, various forms of collaboration were dealt with and brief descriptions or definitions of each were provided so as to give them appropriate perspective. The review also dealt with collaborative and organisational culture. A brief overview of these concepts was provided as they are imperative in the formulation of assumptions outlined at the outset of the research study. The literature review emphasised the benefits of collaboration in laying the foundation for the researcher to be on the lookout once the data was subjected to analysis. It was also crucial to highlight some of the adversities that affect collaboration by illuminating a

few of the barriers. The introductory chapter of this thesis also explained the critical role played by ICTs. Thus, the literature review also briefly dealt with the importance of ICTs in enhancing collaboration in organisations. The role of managerial leadership in organisations was emphasised as this aspect is indispensable when discussing organisational culture. The literature review also focused on agile collaboration to distinguish it from quotidian modes of collaboration. It became vitally important to deal with this concept so that its theoretical basis could be utilised in deciphering the extent to which public service organisations ought to embrace agility as was hypothesised at the outset of the research.

Subsequent to the literature review, the research focused on the Competing Values Framework. The framework was chosen as the theoretical basis for the investigation of the case study. This included a review of previous studies in which the framework was used in both the private sector and public service organisations. In addition, an overview of the development of the Competing Values Framework was proffered. All of this was done to demonstrate that the framework is one of the most versatile, among the many theoretical frameworks, in the study of organisations. That is, previous studies have proved that the framework is one of the most adaptable with regard to applicability to various aspects of organisations. The profiling of the framework was also done so that it could assist in formulating a solid foundation for the construction of the survey instrument, namely the questionnaire. In spite of the positive reviews received by the framework, some limitations of the model were also highlighted.

Consequently, the collected data were used to generate tables and charts from which the preliminary patterns of collaboration could be deciphered. Subsequently, a discussion of the responses to the questions around the eight data points in relation to the Clan, Adhocracy, Hierarchy and Market Values were analysed and presented. Finally, a representation emerged, indicating the patterns of collaborative culture in the department.

Public sector organisations are faced with the challenge of meeting multifaceted service delivery needs of the citizenry. It is against the backdrop of these societal pressures that public service organisations need to embrace agility. Previous studies evaluating the applicability of the Competing Values Framework in public service organisations were dealt with in Chapter 3. These studies present strong evidence pointing to testimonies of movements such as New Public Management (NPM), and were able to prove that some public service organisations around the world have applied the Competing Values Framework to the NPM with the intention of cleaning up their bureaucracy.

On the basis of the literature review, the profiling of the Competing Values Framework, data collection and the presentation of the results, this chapter sets out to outline the following: summary of the research findings, conclusions drawn from the study and recommendations for further research.

6.2 Summary of the research findings and highlights

The research set out to determine the extent to which public service organisations exhibit pockets of collaborative culture as praxis. It was of particular importance to establish the extent to which public service organisations portray agile collaboration amid the modern-day conditions facing them. This was done against the supposition that public service organisations are characterised by inflexibility, excessive adherence to routine and formalism. It was also done on the basis of the need for public service organisations to embrace agility in spite of the bureaucratic hierarchical model associated with them. Several highlights emanating from the research are put forth in the subsequent discussion.

Firstly, the results of this study indicate, in large measure, that consultations in large public service organisations do not happen to the satisfaction of all employees. The available resources do not allow for the consultations to be extended to every employee in large organisations. Therefore, consultations occur in various formats across hierarchical levels of organisations. Thus, a perception arises that only a few individuals in positions of power are afforded opportunities to participate in decision making.

Secondly, teamwork in public service organisations is regulated. This happens especially in public service organisations as the authority hankers after the maintenance of control and efficiency.

Thirdly, innovation, creativity and discretion are highly regimented in public service organisations. Managerial leadership in public service organisations takes this stance in order to ensure that proper coordination is sustained.

Fourthly, in order to eliminate risk-taking, failure is not regarded as an opportunity to learn. Knowledge-intensive organisations invest in organisational learning to produce new knowledge. However, evidence from both the literature studies and this research suggests that public service organisations are risk-averse. They are more concerned about maintaining tried-and-tested methods in their quest to achieve results.

Fifthly, public service organisations are strict with regard to upward and downward coordination. Organisations preserve this to ensure that there is stability of and control over

operations. Consequently, this results in employees not feeling valued by their supervisors.

In the sixth place, there is a negative perception when external collaboration initiatives are entered into. Collaboration is viewed as competition by participating organisations, and is seen as a threat to the internal operations of the organisation. For instance, evidence emanating out of this research indicates that external collaboration is perceived as the undermining of the competencies of employees.

Finally, top-down and/or command-and-control approaches to managerial leadership predominate public service organisations. This results in a skewed profile of public service organisations that are largely oriented towards the hierarchical culture.

6.3 Conclusions from the study

The research study set out to assess how 21st-century public service organisations rise to the challenge of being agile and responsive in order to sustain competitive advantage. This study has demonstrated that there is some semblance of collaborative culture taking place in public service organisations. However, the research has proved that collaboration praxis is skewed towards bureaucratic posture that characterises public service organisations. That is, the department, like many other public service organisations, is largely rooted in the Hierarchical quadrant of the CVF with regard to systems, structures and processes. Top management in the department continues to play a principal role in the operations of the organisation. Although some degree of agility and/or creativity occurs, it takes place within the confines of the line functions. Collaboration that takes place in the department is, arguably, driven by individuals whose personal value system persuades them to link up with other sections in the organisation. Collaboration, therefore, is implemented more as praxis than structure since it does not happen as a predominant phenomenon in the operations throughout the department. Ultimately, supervisors and line managers play a critical role in ensuring that collaboration that is entered into is in line with departmental policies, in particular, and governmental processes at large. These findings add to a growing body of knowledge in the study of organisational theory and practice.

Literature studies have found that public service organisations of the 21st century are faced with the challenge of sustaining competitiveness. Public service organisations need to come to terms with the challenges brought about by the knowledge economy. This includes being able to deal with the issue of the generational mix of its employees and its effect on organisational culture. This then calls on public service organisations to embrace

collaboration to mitigate the demands of the knowledge economy. The investigation has also demonstrated that, to some extent, the respondents were experiencing collaboration differently based on the managerial level occupied in the department. For example, with regard to the issue of consultation during decision making, Senior Managers were more involved than the other managers as was to be expected in a bureaucratic organisation. There is sound evidence that years of experience in the department, as a factor, plays an important role with regard to the involvement and participation in decision making. For example, managers who have worked in the department for more than nine years have expressed their opinions that they were consulted more than those with fewer than nine years' experience.

The research study mentioned, from its incipience, that the productive utilisation of information and knowledge distributions infrastructure depends on the prevalent collaborative culture and praxis of an organisation. The study examined the use of electronic collaboration tools in the department. From the investigation, it can be revealed that the use of electronic collaboration tools such as WhatsApp, Facebook and MS Office 365 is high with regard to personal use. However, evidence emanating from the data analysis reveals a rather low usage of these platforms for work purposes. A possible explanation for this may be ascribed to the relatively, arguably, low levels of collaborative culture and practices in public service organisations. Not only are these tools efficient, but they are also a cost-effective way of facilitating collaboration among employees. Public service organisations should, assiduously, embrace the use of electronic tools to promote collaboration among employees. It should make these platforms available for use by employees to do their work. These are relatively more efficient to utilise than conventional media such as circulars and telephones. As mentioned in Chapter 2, progressive public service organisations such the Canadian Government have adopted a concept called work place innovation. In so doing, they are able to take advantage of the benefits of ICTs and, in turn, nurture a collaborative culture among employees.

Furthermore, top management could consider nurturing collaboration by supplementing vertical with lateral communication of decisions across the organisation. As mentioned in the preceding section, organisations should be able to adapt to and adopt practices which will assist them in sustaining their competitive advantage in the knowledge economy. Public service organisations could ensure that they remain competitive by employing some of the practices that are characteristic of organisations that find themselves in the Collaborate and Create quadrants of the framework. That is, managerial leadership should, conscientiously,

nudge employees in the direction of utilising discretion, creativity and innovation, while guarding against risks to the organisation. After all, this is one of the powerful characteristics of the Competing Values Framework. It aims at empowering managers and leaders to handle oxymora and/or contradictions, simultaneously.

Some degree of agility is required to enable these organisations to cope with the demands of the 21st century. It is through the adaptation to and adoption of some elements of agile collaboration that organisations may be able to survive fast-paced change. By embracing a collaborative practice to service delivery, public service organisations will ensure that this is done in an efficient and effective way. While it is understandable that public service organisations are risk-averse, they need to gradually afford employees opportunities to become creative and innovative rather than being restricted by bureaucratic bottlenecks. Knowledge-intensive organisations should create opportunities for organisational learning. This implies that they should view failure as a catalyst for creativity, innovation and the production of new knowledge.

Public service organisations should implement structures that will serve as platforms for consultation and inclusive decision making. Such structures could include, but should not be limited to, consultation committees, joint working groups, and the creation of face-to-face opportunities between managers and employees to voice their opinions on decisional matters that affect them. In the medium to long term, the inclusion of aspects that are precursors to collaboration could be suffused into the strategy of the department.

Professional relationships play a fundamental role among supervisors and job holders. If employees are of the view that they do not feel any sense of belonging, this could erode a chance for them to engage in collaborative practices. Ensuring that quality professional relationships are of an authentic nature could accentuate collaboration practices in public service organisations. To ensure that collaboration as praxis becomes a success factor, leadership has to inculcate a sense of trust and openness among employees. Thus, factors that are perceived by employees to be wanting such as consistency, honesty, and transparency to name a few, have to be demonstrated unfailingly across the organisation.

Collaboration as both praxis and structure should conscientiously be imbued into the organisational strategy and corporate values of public service organisations. Furthermore, interventions such as the creation of well-established employee participation structures in order to reap the benefits of employee involvement could be put in place. This could alleviate

doubts that only certain employees were involved in decision making at the expense of others. Finally, on the basis of the findings highlighted and the conclusions arrived at, a few speculative suggestions are propounded. The research findings, in general, indicate a discrepancy between the ideal and the reality pertaining to collaborative culture. That is, there is incongruity between what is desirable and the reality in public service organisations. The contemporary organisation should ideally embrace the values embedded in all the quadrants of the Competing Values Framework. However, the research findings indicate that the department, as well as a number of other public service organisations that have been studied in the past, lean heavily towards a hierarchical culture as illustrated in Figure 6.1 below.

The most obvious finding of this study is that there is a strong top-down approach to managerial leadership in public service organisations. This raises the question as to whether public service organisations can become agile without loosening their ties with political executive levels of management.

Moreover, it raises the following questions:

1. If these ties cannot be loosened, is it possible to widen the scope of public service organisations so that they are able to become agile?
2. Are public service organisations able to set their own targets and therefore devise their own measures for achieving these with their political masters?
3. Will there ever be a time when public service organisations will not be perceived as organisations servicing a political agenda?

The diagram below provides a graphic illustration of the organisational profile of a government agency. This diagram is a good illustrative summary of the explanations proffered in the preceding argument.

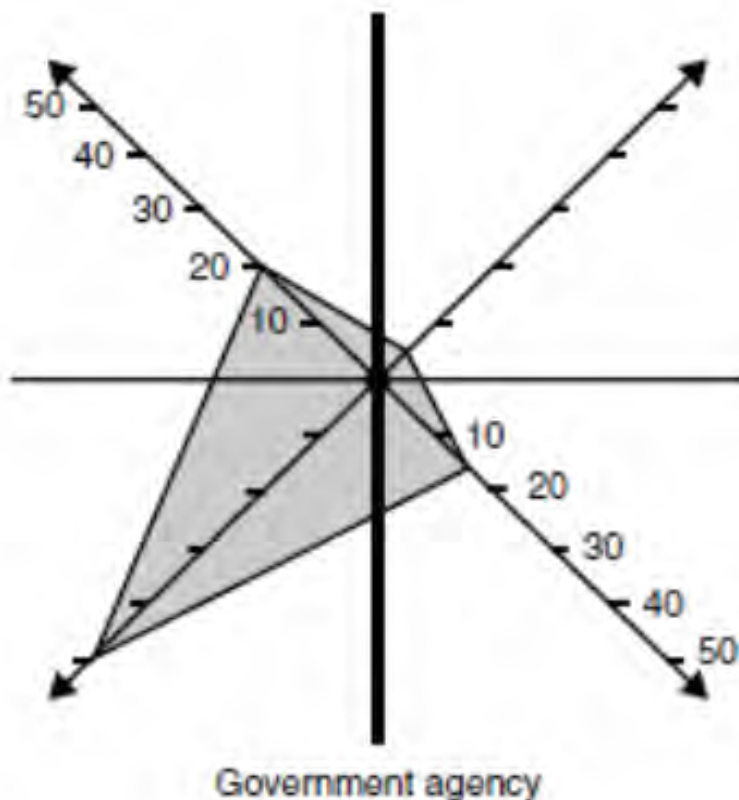


Figure 6.1: Government agency organisational cultural profile¹⁸⁷

6.4 Recommendations for further research

Studies conducted in the field of organisations have put forth the notion that public service organisations need to embrace a new framework or paradigm in order to modernise and thereby bring about a public service re-engineering. It should, however, be noted that it is not the intention of this research to call for a revolution of organisational culture of public service organisations. However, it proposes that public service organisations adopt practices of collaboration that will be beneficial to the organisation. There is a need to employ a paradigm shift and/or re-engineering to mirror the thrusts publicised in the current literature on organisations such as New Public Management.

During the interpretation phase of the research, some anomalies were pointed out. This compelled the researcher to eliminate some of the respondents, whose responses displayed some inconsistencies, from the data analysis. It is such nuances that may adversely affect the

¹⁸⁷ Cameron, K.S., Quinn, R.E. & DeGraff, J. 2006. Competing values leadership: Creating values in organizations, 121.

final analyses of the data. As a result, further research may produce some slightly dissimilar findings than is the case at present. The focus of the research was targeted exclusively at lower to senior management in the department. Different findings may be arrived at should future research include employees at all levels in public service organisations. It would be interesting to assess the perceptions of those on various levels of public service organisations with regard to collaborative culture and practices.

The discussion in section 6.3 of this study indicates that the department, like many other public service organisations, operates predominantly in the Hierarchy quadrant of the Competing Values Framework. This orientation presents several challenges that may waylay the agility and responsiveness of organisations that hanker for the sustenance of competitiveness. For instance, the results have demonstrated that this hierarchical posture stifles general participation and, therefore, communication, in decision making, as well as innovation and creativity. Therefore, managerial leadership needs, within reason, to put in place continued exertions that could lead to more agile and responsive public service organisations.

The department, which is the object of this study, is a knowledge-intensive organisation. In addition, information and knowledge-sharing infrastructures enhance collaborative culture and practices in organisations. The results of the survey indicate that information-sharing and information flows are problematic. Furthermore, the results from the data analysis have also demonstrated that the use of collaboration tools was, in large measure, for personal purposes. To this end, it is recommended that targeted interventions aimed at availing the use of a variety of collaboration tools be optimised.

The extension of this research study to other public service organisations, whether it is at National, Provincial or Local Level, might produce more useful insights. It could reveal the extent to which collaboration is embraced as praxis in the operations of other public service organisations in South Africa. This could make for an interesting comparison with regard to the experiences of individuals working within similar public service organisations.

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APPENDIX

QUESTIONNAIRE ON COLLABORATION

SECTION A: My Organisational Profile

1. My years of work experience in the Provincial Government Department

0 - 2	3 - 4	5 - 8	9 - 14	15 - 20	21+

2. My present level of managerial responsibility

Senior Management	
Middle Management	
Lower Management	

3. My People Network (as an employee of the Provincial Government Department)

The number of people inside the Provincial Government Department who fall <i>under</i> my jurisdiction	
The number of people inside the Provincial Government Department <i>at my managerial level</i> with whom I interface regularly as peers in the execution of my duties	
The number of people in <i>the general public, communities and business</i> with whom I interface per year in the execution of my departmental duties	
The number of people who are, in terms of my professional work relationships, my superiors inside the Provincial Government Department	

4. I hold the following academic qualifications

Post-school diploma		Bachelor's degree	
Honours degree or post-graduate diploma		Master's degree	
Doctoral degree			

5. I have personal experience in the following:

Business		Community development projects	
Pre- and primary school teaching		Secondary and post-secondary school teaching	

6. I currently use (want to use) the following applications/online tools:

Application/Tool	Personal use	Currently use for work	Want to use for work	Unknown to me
WHATSAPP				
Google+				
Google Docs				
Google Hangouts				
MS Office 365				
Drop box				
Skype				
Facebook				
Twitter				
Other (Please specify):				

6. I use (want to use) them on the following device(s):

DEVICE	
Laptop	
Tablet	
Mobile phone	
Other (Please specify):	

SECTION B: My Organisational Experiences with respect to Collaboration

Please note: there are no “right” or “wrong” answers. In organisations, each person experiences events and practices differently. This holds the potential to greatly enrich our organisations. For this reason, “collaboration” is very important. When well done, collaboration weaves our different experiences, skills and knowledge into a formidable productive organisation.

How to fill in the questionnaire:

The questionnaire is designed as a ranking instrument. There are a number of questions. Under each response, four response options are given. In most cases, you will have experienced all of the options. However, it is unlikely that you will have experienced them in equal measure. That is why you are requested to rank the options according to how much they represent your own experiences.

You are kindly requested, under each question, to give each option a *percentage* weight. You can give as low as 0 or as much as 100 to each option (although that will be very rare).

It is important, however, that the sum total under each question must add up to 100.

Q1: When decisions are taken that impact my area of work, I am consulted:

	% of cases
in person.	
in individual meetings with my superiors.	
by means of participation in general meetings.	
I am not consulted.	
	100

Q2: When decisions have to be taken that impact my area of work:

	% of cases
I am consulted first before anyone else.	
my ideas are implemented.	
they only listen to me politely.	
my ideas are dismissed.	
	100

Q3: When decisions have to be taken that affect the organisation at large:

	% of cases
I am informed by a circular or other mass communication means about the decisions.	
I am asked to participate in workshops/discussion groups debating the proposed actions.	
I am involved in strategic planning sessions.	
I am asked to prepare input documents for the planning process.	
	100

Q4: When decisions have to be taken that affect the organisation at large:

	% of cases
only a small number in the organisation is consulted.	
work teams to debate the decisions are established across the organisation at large.	
expert groups are established to debate the alternatives.	

stakeholders from the public are invited to participate in the deliberations.	
	100

Q5: When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation to get the work done:

	% of cases
teams are set up that comprise of members across different directorates.	
teams work in the ambit of line functions.	
work is given to teams even if individuals could have done it faster.	
work does not get done because individuals are given tasks that only teams can do.	
	100

Q6: During teamwork sessions in the organisation:

	% of cases
I feel comfortable offering suggestions and I know that all suggestions are taken seriously.	
my suggestions are listened to but are not implemented, and I am not told why they are not accepted.	
there is too much disagreement and lack of transparency.	
teamwork is not a priority in my work environment.	
	100

Q7: When teamwork is embarked upon in the organisation and disagreements occur:

	% of cases
only solutions from those in positions of power are allowed.	
our attempts to iron out differences are overridden by higher authorities.	
we waste time on negative personal issues.	
we work as a collective to quickly achieve “win-win” solutions.	
	100

Q8: When opportunities for change arise or we have to address changing needs in the organisation:

	% of cases
I get the opportunity to express my views on anticipated changes.	
new developments are communicated from top management.	
employees' suggestions are sought but not implemented.	
change is a given that I must accept.	
	100

Q9: When there is imminent change in the organisation and decisions have to be made on how to deal with them, I feel that:

	% of cases
my department is generally responsive and accepts change positively.	
my department always strives to develop new and improved ways to get work done.	
my department prefers not to rush in and change quickly.	
my department follows orders from higher authority.	
	100

Q10: When annual plans are developed in the organisation:

	% of cases
top management coordinates planning across all departments.	
employees are encouraged to take self-initiative in forging cooperation across departments.	
employee initiative has to follow line functions.	
employees merely implement the plans as presented by top management.	
	100

Q11: When there is a need or opportunity to improve the Provincial Government Department's knowledge and capabilities, I feel that:

	% of cases

my division encourages creativity and risk taking.	
my division is risk-averse when the source of knowledge is from outside the organisation.	
my division first wants to obtain authorisation from top management before it engages in such opportunities.	
we lack a critical review of our own capabilities and how they can be improved.	
	100

Q12: When opportunities arise, originating either internally or externally, in the Provincial Government Department to gain new knowledge and capabilities, I feel that:

	% of cases
my department views failure as an opportunity to learn and improve.	
my department believes that strictly following regulations will eliminate the risk of failure.	
real opportunities to experiment with new ways of doing our work are rare, given the strict regulatory framework within which a government organisation must operate.	
the appetite for work innovation is low among employees in my department.	
	100

Q13: To what extent are information flows in the Provincial Government Department successful? I think:

	% of cases
Information-sharing happens daily and support systems are in place. We all get to know what we have to know timeously.	
information flows between functions and directorates are problematic.	
information flows happen predominantly through informal networks.	
the need for good information flows is not properly understood in my department.	
	100

Q14: When carrying out my official duties at work:

	% of cases
it is expected that my tasks are done in a controlled, procedural and structured manner.	
I have some personal flexibility but adhere to the core values of my department and the Provincial Government Department.	
it is expected that I use my discretion on how to complete tasks.	
it is expected that I liaise continuously with colleagues who may be impacted by my work.	
	100

Q15: When carrying out my official duties at work, I work from the assumption that:

	% of cases
I am a specialist in my area of work and therefore I do not depend on others to make an impact.	
I take a generalist view of my area of work and therefore try to link up with others where appropriate, both inside and outside the Provincial Government Department.	
I need to work within strict regulatory frameworks. What I do, and how I do it, is dictated by these frameworks.	
we are a team in which each of us contributes a unique skill or knowledge, and we reap the benefit only when we pool such skills and knowledge.	
	100

Q16: The professional relationships between myself and my superiors inside the organisation is such that:

	% of cases
I feel a sense of worth in my organisation.	
I feel it is best for me to abide by all decisions taken by top management without question.	
I just do my job as instructed.	

I feel left out and, therefore, as though I do not belong here.	
	100

Q17: The professional relationships between myself and those under my jurisdiction are such that:

	% of cases
I make them feel valued in my organisation.	
They abide by all decisions without question.	
They simply have to do the job without question.	
It is not necessary to include them when decisions are made.	
	100

Q18: My professional interactions inside the organisation and theirs affect my attitude as follows:

	% of cases
I feel strongly about the success of my organisation.	
I see the big picture and understand my contribution thereto.	
I feel enthusiastic about my work but not always about the work that some others do.	
I cannot wait to finish and go home.	
	100

Q19: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers:

	% of cases
I view this as a positive input to improve efficiency.	
I feel that my knowledge, abilities and skills are being undermined.	
I feel it shows that we do not do our work properly.	
I view this as threat to the independence of our organisation.	
	100

Q20: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers:

	% of cases
I feel that outsourcing leads to increased productivity in the organisation.	
I feel that it is a natural step to take in a complex world, and that the Provincial Government Department cannot be expected to have all the skills and resources to cope.	
I feel that it brings about a sense of chaos in the work environment.	
I tend to develop a sense of distrust in top management.	
	100

Q21: When it is decided to outsource services to outside providers:

	% of cases
I view it as an opportunity to gain new ideas and solutions which help sustain competitive advantage.	
I see it as natural in today's economy to have networks with business.	
I get a sense that management wastes finances as there is available talent inside the organisation to do the job.	
I feel that it portrays the Provincial Government Department in a negative light with regard to competitiveness.	
	100

Q22: When entering into cooperative agreements with others organisations, communication is as follows:

	% of cases
I receive regular updates from all parties involved.	
A system which guarantees speedy information flows is set up.	
I always have to ask for developments from our partners.	
I feel that communication, trust and openness are lacking.	
	100

Q23: When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations:

	% of cases
I am invited to attend information meetings (formal and informal) with partners.	
I am given the opportunity to contribute to matters of mutual interest with partners.	
I have to wait for instructions from my seniors to participate.	
I feel that this takes me away from my core duties and wastes my time.	
	100

Q24: When entering into cooperative agreements with other organisations:

	% of cases
I participate in all matters relating to the implementation agreements.	
I feel that there is always a display of the spirit of collective ownership of a project.	
I have a greater sense of competition than cooperation on our part with regard to the partners.	
I have a greater sense of competition than cooperation from the partners with regard to us.	
	100