

# **Operationalisation of Activity Theory in the Information Technology Shared Services environment**

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## **Abstract**

*The focus of this research paper is on the nature of interaction and mediation that occurs between various users of information technology projects and the technology itself in a community environment. In this report a community refers to a work environment. This paper examines how Cultural Historic Activity theory (CHAT) can be applied in seeking to understand the dynamism that exist when people are made to work together in a collaborative way by sharing certain resources.*

*Shared services refer to the process of combining certain back office operations of different entities in such a way as to create professionalism, standardization of services and above all, to reduce the costs of operations and therefore leave the front office to focus on their most important duty: provision of front line services to the members of the public*

*The biggest impact of having information technology sharing at the organisation is that it calls for certain changes to team dynamics and management processes.*

*In this study, various respondents noted that teams must be formed in the right sizes, and that the members of these teams should be made to realize the importance of team work*

*It appears that, Information Technology sharing, being like any other new Information Technology project in the organisation, it has not provided use with any new role of managers. However, in this study, it has been found that there is need to manage new team formations. While the skills of the manager may still remain the same, the dynamics between new teams, based on desired work cultures becomes crucial for successful team work.*

## **Introduction**

Shared services refer to the process of combining certain back office operations of different entities in such a way as to create professionalism, standardization of services and above all, to reduce the costs of operations and therefore leave the front office to focus on their most important duty: provision of front line services to the members of the public.

Many studies clearly highlight various reasons for resorting to sharing of Information Systems services for instance efficiency (Fairhurst and Reilly 2010) and combining know-how (Persson and Goldkuhl).

It is clear that in the recent past and costs of operations (Ulbrich 2006), the main reason for sharing services is the quest to free up resource by transferring the responsibility for managing the organisation's non-core services to another organisation (McKeen and Heather 2011).

The Gershon report indicated that at the age of austerity, many economies around the world are faced with the quest to ensure that they work within limited resource pools. What follows is therefore the need to transfer resources from one area to another.

But McKeen and Heather, (2011) noted that this is not going to benefit the organisation unless a fundamental cultural shift is devised in such a way that as resources are being freed up, they are used elsewhere more effectively.

There is then the element of political process that can be attached to what the local authorities are doing. The reason for this is that the central government has its own objectives, driven by among others, political party's manifestos and internal political and economic pressures (Neches, et al, 1991).

Being the main institution that partly dictates the actions of the local authorities, the Central government is a key stakeholder in technology usage and sharing (Dwivendi and Mustafee, 2010). The role of the central government in technology use and sharing has been examined by Hiller and Belanger whose model went further than the models by Layne and Lee (2001 ; Persson and Goldkuhl, 2005), ANAO model- Australia National Auditing Office Model (Persson and Goldkuhl, 2005), and SAFAD – Swedish Agency for Administrative Development model (Persson and Goldkuhl, 2005).

The focus of this research paper is on the nature of interaction and mediation that occurs between various users of information technology projects and the technology itself in a community environment. In this report a community refers to a work environment.

This paper examines how Cultural Historic Activity theory (CHAT) can be applied in seeking to understand the dynamism that exist when people are made to work together in a collaborative way by sharing certain resources.

This paper therefore contributes to the understanding of emerging issues that might hinder effective working among work colleagues and hence to suggest ways through which management and other stakeholders might improve certain

aspects of resource management within an organization, for instance; training and resource allocation.

Activity Theory subject is large and may not be fully analysed in this paper alone, this section will only focus on the process of team dynamism among technology project implementers. These are the members of staff who are charged with ensuring that this process becomes successful.

### **Literature review**

Research on collaborative technology is in generous avail, from the studies on e-government adoption (Kankanhalli and Kohli, 2009; Dwivendi and Mustafee, 2010), to adoption of technology across departments, transfer of technology (Dubay et al, *n.d.*; Dwivendi and Mustafee, 2010), cloud computing (Kshetri 2010, Kundra, 2010), and also, the concept of shared services (Young, 2005; Kearney 2005; McKeen and Heather 2011).

According to Fairhurst and Reilly (2010) and Ulbrich (2006), information systems shared services (defined above), often incorporates not just one department but either two or more.

While the culture within a department might be one and hence easy to examine and work with, when two or more departments have to combine their efforts, different work cultures might emerge

causing major challenges to the management (Hofstede, Geert 2001; Orlikowski, 2004).

The term shared services is self explanatory, it implies that there must be an element of collaboration, co-petition or dual assistance in order to achieve something. This implies that workers in various departments have to have a common factor that binds the nature of their work (Orlikowski, 2004).

According to Fairhurst and Reilly (2010), Dwivendi and Mustafee, (2010), when sharing online services, in order to achieve infrastructural efficiency, there needs to be an element of trust, individual responsibility and accountability.

The focus of this discussion is limited to the involvement of information technology in facilitating sharing. The role of technology in organisations has also brought conflict among researchers. While one group suggests a facilitative role to other departments, the other advocates its role as core to the organisations and other departments must coalesce around it (Levy et al, 1999).

When discussions about technology are held, there can be two divides to this; first, some scholars focus their attention on technology proper (Shculz et al 2009), with no much emphasis on the role of humans beings or users and secondly, others focus

on the role of users in technology adoption (Benyon-Davies, 1995; Dwivendi and Mustafee, 2010).

This brings into perspective the issue of organizational processes or operations, structure and internal policies. Accordingly, it also raises the issue of Cultural Historic Activity Theory (CHAT) which is basically a brainchild of Russian psychologists (Leont'ev, 1978) and later by Engestrom (1987) that can be used to examine Human Computer Interaction (Bartel and Harrison, 2005).

Deciding on the right system to use in the organisation is a very complicated process that requires careful planning on the part of the management (Mathew 2002; Shculz et al 2009). This is because any wrong move made at this stage might imply insurmountable losses for the organisation (Bartel and Harrison, 2005).

However, there is a difference between the choice of the right system and having the users to use the system in the most effective manner. While the management of the organisation might be willing and ready to bring in a new system, or even ensure that it has been brought, the challenge would now lay with the users (operational level staff).

The idea of having shared service among local authorities replicates expansion of what is already taking place within the private sector organisations. Resource sharing is not a new thing in management (Kaul, 2001).

The reason for encouraging sharing of resources is based on the premise that when people share resources, they can also share ideas and reduce the costs of operation (Shculz et al 2009). There could not be any better time for resources sharing than at such times when organisations across the globe are seeking to 'eke a living' out of the prevailing economic circumstances.

In the UK, the effects of the financial crisis were devastating in many a respect and as such, the new coalition government came on the platform of reducing spending. This meant that government bodies were to be asked to ensure that they can effectively reduce their expenditure.

Many a government body is increasingly expected to find ways of reducing their expenditure and one way of doing this has been to seek resources sharing. There have been cases of local authorities sharing their fire stations, cases of police authorities sharing an air ambulance or hospital sharing referrals (Benyon-Davies, 1995). All these are very good examples of physical resources sharing.

## **Importance of this research**

Since many local authorities in the UK are already IT enabled (due to e-government initiatives), most of the resources or operations of these councils are often found online. For example, most council have their own sites for managing council housing, paying council taxes and other fines, allocating schools to the children and also for aiding complaints to be made as and when necessary.

It is therefore evident that all the physical activities that councils are engaged in are mainly controlled through online mechanisms and therefore this makes it possible for us to conduct this study. Various councils across the country are seeking to share these services as a way of fulfilling central government's policies on the same and seeking to offer better services to their clients.

### **Shared service Models in Local Authorities**

In the last few years, organizations in the private sector have made considerable savings through economies of scale facilitated by shared services. These organizations have also seen enhanced performances.

Shared service enables the support staff to focus solely on the needs of internal customers whilst also freeing up senior managers to concentrate better on the organization's core business requirements.

### **Approaches to technology sharing**

Technology sharing or collaboration in technology usage between different entities might take the form of any one of the following approaches (Vargo and Lusch 2008a);

- a. Centralisation and Standardisation in a local authority department
- b. Collaboration between local authorities.
- c. Collaboration between bodies for ensuring better services.
- d. Franchising where one local authority provides support or methodologies to another
- e. Joint services in delivering services
- f. Joint services between different entities.
- g. Commercial trading for profit exploitation
- h. Commercial trading in partnerships

The Government is hoping to see similar results can take place in the public sector and more particularly within the local authorities (Scottish government 2007). The comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07) requires of the councils to achieve further cashable savings.

In order for the councils to achieve such cashable savings, avail better yet cheaper support to frontline services and revamp services to address the particular area's needs, they need to share their resource through any available models.

### **Models of Shared Services**

The options of shared services available to the local authorities are varied and include formal arrangements and 3<sup>rd</sup> party entities. There are various forms of arrangements that might be entered into by the authorities that are sharing these services, these are explained in the subsequent sections.

### **Informal Arrangements**

These include networks and shared learning arrangements and are oft unwritten treaties between councils themselves or with other entities for sharing of services (Robert 2009). Such arrangements create negligible personnel disruptions and associated challenges. It is a cheap arrangement as personnel skills can be shared.

Informal arrangements have, however been said to yield no noteworthy achievements. It has also been noted, that the exposure of personnel from one council to another with completely different terms and working conditions often leads to comparisons by the personnel and ultimately demands for equivalent or better terms/ work conditions. The council that is charged with the duty to provide is also stretched and over-burdened by the increased demand.

### **Procuring or Commissioning Work Jointly**

Here, internal services are merged into a single unit, but can be extended to apply across organizations. Each partner council still acts independently and

retains responsibility for the service in-house (Ulbrich, 2006).

For example, several councils may work together on commodities procurement and agree to bargain jointly with contractors, but they each continue to employ and manage their own procurement staff.

Where a business venture or part thereof is transferred to a new employer, then the personnel terms and conditions are safeguarded by The Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE) (Vargo and Lusch 2008b; Robert 2009).

*This model of shared services presents the following benefits:*

- ∇ Presents wider advancement opportunities where an expert contractor is involved.
- ∇ Provides inventive and effective systems of work.
- ∇ The labor force unions can be engaged and effective changes achieved.

*Challenges presented by this model include:*

- ∇ The engagement of the contractor results in redundancies and job losses internally.
- ∇ The relationship between the council and the labor unions and the remaining staff is strained.

- ∇ Escalation of contract costs is occasioned by demands for synchronization within the contracting firm.

### **Lead Authority Model**

Here, one council assumes the responsibility of running services for the other councils or other firms. The services may range from Legal, internal audit, or revenue and benefits (Blackman, Rowe, 2001).

In this model, specialization of the individual councils ranks big and the council becomes a 'center of excellence' of sorts as it brings on board the service that they excel best in. This council is then charged with the responsibility of managing fully all the aspects of that service including HR management.

*The benefits accruing from this model include:*

- ∇ Good staff in poorer performing councils may see opportunities for self development.
- ∇ Collection of skills and resources.
- ∇ Efficiencies through less duplication and economies of scale.
- ∇ Risks of redundancies and job losses are minimized.
- ∇ Clear lines of control and responsibility

*The following disadvantages have been noted with this model (Sadick, Hack and Clarke 2010; Robert 2009):*

- ∇ There are serious personnel displacement issues where one council losses staff to another.
- ∇ Changes can be difficult to sustain once the staff return to their employees.
- ∇ The employer function is shared between two partner councils and can cause personnel challenges.
- ∇ Transfer of personnel comes with a variation of the terms and conditions for the new personnel.
- ∇ Management, communications and team building becomes intricate by the introduction of multiple centres.

### **Third Party Entities**

Partnering councils can decide to establish another organization that will specialize in providing services for them. For example, Liverpool City Council and BT set up a joint venture vehicle to consolidate and deliver the council's ICT, procurement and HR Services (Scottish government 2007).

*Benefits of third party entities model to HR include:*

- ∇ Fosters creation of job opportunities rather than job losses especially if the third party bids for external work.



- ∇ Headcount is maintained as the main aim is service betterment. Personnel can be seconded or moved.

*The HR challenges for third party entity model are:*

- ∇ TUPE may cause enforcement of wider terms and conditions for personnel.
- ∇ May require modification of jobs and change of personnel.
- ∇ May affect access and continuity of the Local Government Pension Service (LGPS).
- ∇ Secondment lasting long durations is not possible under this model

### **In-sourcing**

This model is applicable in situations where one council is in need of the skills or competencies that another council has. In this scenario, the council with the required competencies ‘franchises’ personnel to the other council on a temporary basis.

Benefits (Robert 2009):

- ∇ No disruption of the personnel.
- ∇ The council in need gets the skills easily.
- ∇ The providing council offers its franchised staff experience and opportunities of self growth.

*The challenges:*

- ∇ The franchised staff may come with little or no understanding of the procedures at the other council and may thus be less effective.
- ∇ Unless proper competence building in the receiving council’s staff is done, the franchised personnel leave with the skills once their period is up.
- ∇ Performance management is challenged with responsibility issues.
- ∇ There are always additional costs of traveling and accommodation.

The model of sharing that a corporate body or a local authority might chose to adopt is informed by the local authority’s needs and the nature of agreement that has been agreed upon (Young, 2005).

**Table showing shared service among local authorities**

Council or Borough	Collaborating with	Area of collaboration	Stage	Cause for sharing
Solihull Council	Lichfield District Council	Financial and Procurement System	Executed and went live in 2009	Cost reduction
Staffordshire County Council	All local authorities in Staffordshire	Customer relationship management and Shared e-Payments		Efficiency and funding opportunities.
Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead	N/A	Any model	2010-2015	Scalability and business offers to other councils
Brighton and Hove	Various councils and Police departments	Security and Human Resources	2011-2016	Cost benefits
Camden Council	In-house sharing.	Human resources area	2007 - 2012	Efficiency and cost reduction
Allerdale Borough Council	Carlisle City Council	Procurement and Human resources		Cut service duplication and reduce costs
Darlington Council	Stockton council	Human resources management	2009 -2011	Cost reduction
Aylesbury Vale District council	Buckinghamshire, South Bucks and Wycombe District council. Also Milton Keynes fire and rescue service.	Aylesbury Withdrew	N/A	No cost benefit from the third party.
Oxfordshire	Hampshire	Human Resources and Finance	N/A	Cost Reduction

**Activity theory in a shared services environment**

Probably the theory that has given greater emphasis and explanation to the concept of sharing technology is the Activity theory which has been discussed below;  
This theory focuses not

on the individual but on the activity that is being performed. According to Leont'ev (1978), activity is made of actions, norms, subjects and objects. The

object (objective) is with the subject and it is what motivates the subject to work hard.

In a shared services environment, as noted in the previous sections of this paper, the objectives might include; cost reduction, cost savings, gaining through collaboration and other specific benefits that an organisation might be seeking to achieve.

The capabilities and knowledge of individuals is centred on interactions with information technology systems in physical and in social circumstances in ways that are beneficial. Humans beings are able to achieve this by becoming accustomed to patterns that embody situations, and the way humans act and create the situations.

Human beings combine their capabilities to learn new things in order to achieve their goals. In other words, these new capabilities are developed similar to ways through which language might be learnt, or how one becomes proficient at work or in a certain sporting activity.

For this to happen, there must be personal intuition and interpersonal knowledge that is mediated by both conceptual and physical tools that involves series of acting, reacting and learning (Robert 2009).

Engeström's (1987) Activity Theory presents a platform that can be used to analyse these elements

of interpenetration of human activity. According to Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006) and Kaptelinin and Nardi (2006) there are four aspects of Activity Theory which might be instrumental in examining the dynamism of the employees in an organisation; Hierarchical structure of activity; object orientedness of activity; Externalization or internalization of activity; and development.

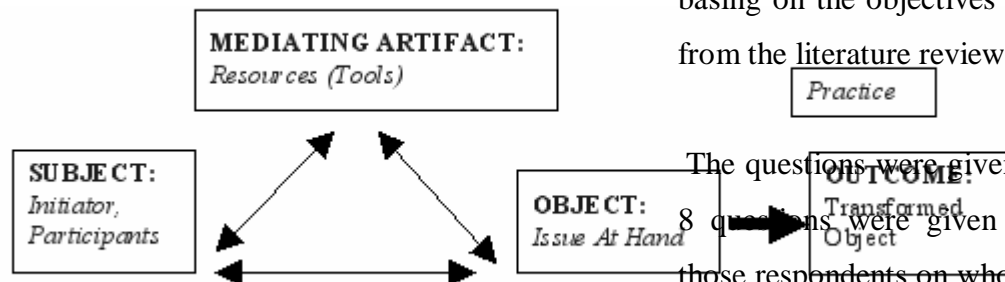
Hierarchical structure of activity or also known as Means/ends is where the motive of the activity is related to the activity's highest level, the goals of the activity is related to the action which is the middle level, and the conditions of the activity is related to the operation of the activity which is the lowest level.

Next is the Object-orientedness or the environment which I perceive was best described by the graphical descriptions of a subject that transforms an object to the finished product through mediatory of artefacts, rules community and labour that provides an important framework that can be used to describe work environments.

Thirdly is the externalization/internalization also known as the learning /cognition/ articulation: the processes of internalization and the externalization are important in simulation and visualization of certain activities, for instance, the new work arrangement.

And lastly, the development activity where the Activity Theory provides a platform for the development of practises such as the usage of software tools therefore this provides an understanding onto how the employee learning process has evolved.

Within a shared services environment, in order to meet the objectives (issues at hand) of the organisation, the organisation must avail resources: the artefacts, including rules, procedures, incentives and tools and workers or teams being the subjective. The diagram below shows how this might happen;



The outcome of Activity theory in a shared services environment is efficiency, better services provision and freeing up of resources for use in other areas. The participants play a pivotal role in ensuring that technology has been implemented successful (Bagozzi, 2007). Therefore, if any participant is not contributing towards the object, then they must either be re-trained or removed from the group (Orlikowski, 2004).

## Methodology

In the conduct of this study, both the primary and secondary methods were used. The researcher first examined a number of UK local council's strategies on ICT shared services and this resulted in the following table;

The second phase was to chose a few councils from the list given above depending on accessibility and their availability. The researcher sought to interview, orally, or by mail, a total of 7 managers or persons of managerial position in various local councils. The researcher prepared a set to 16 questions that were considered vital for research, basing on the objectives and information identified from the literature review.

The questions were given in two sets; first the first 8 questions were given to the managers and for those respondents on who interview was conducted, the same questions were administered.

In the second phase, the other 8 questions were given. The reasons for having a doubled phased process was to first identify, from these managers how dynamic their work arrangements were.

This is because, implementation of shared services is not an event but a process and therefore, that in position of implementation are assumed to have knowledge about the processes and activities involved in the implementation. it was vital to

identify persons who were involved in the processes of information technology sharing.

All the questions were open ended and the respondents were allowed to provide their views to the best of their knowledge and experiences at their workplaces.

### **First set of questions**

1. Why do you want to share, why now?
2. What is the fit?
3. What is the business case for sharing?
4. How will it change organisational processes for instance (staffing, employment policies)?
5. How will it be delivered? This is in terms of the main location?
6. How is this service going to work, is there a different management team needed for this?
7. What are the legal aspects of this service, for instance, issues with the Union e.t.c?
8. How will we know that this new arrangement is successful / when?

### **Second set of questions**

9. What is the main problem now?
10. Are there any changes in the ways teams are organised?
11. Is the team ideal?
12. What are the future challenges?
13. Are there any ethical issues that you are concerned about?

14. At what stage are you in the implementation of this initiative?

15. Are there any issues of cultural conflicts that you are confronting?

16. Conflicts that you are confronting?

### **The findings**

From the sets of questions given above, there were a couple of themes that arose. These included; the business process, the team formation and the strategic issues. There was a general consensus that technology sharing is mainly aimed at bringing cost benefits or savings for the councils involved.

This is evidenced by the information presented in the table above and also from the proposition by the Gershon Review (Local Government Improvement and Development, 2010). None of the respondents stated that they are sharing for the sake of freeing up resources, yet this is the view that has been held by a sizeable number of authors (Bergeron, 2003; Robert 2009).

In terms of business fit and case for sharing, it was found that to many a council, the proximity of the councils was a key determinant for sharing. The table given above shows councils that are very close to one another, for instance; Leicester and Market Harborough; Coventry and Warwick; all councils in Staffordshire and lastly, Brighton and Hove (Local Government Improvement and Development, 2010). The explanation for this was that it would be

easy to move resources from one place to another, unlike where the organisations were very far apart.

In terms of organizational processes, it was found that there was need for new team formation and training of the staff members (Macredie and Sandom 1999). This is because; there was need for new teams to spearhead the sharing process.

However the need to changing organisations policies was not cited because, in many of these organisations information technology sharing was considered to be a project and hence a function of the council, consistent with the views held by (Robert 2009).

With regards to the place where the services was to be delivered, it was found that various councils used the venues of one of the collaborating councils for implementation of the shared services. The management mainly focused on the need to ensure that the needs of their organisations and employees are met.

The managers must consider the TUPE – Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Act of 2006 (Local Government Improvement and Development, 2010). Accordingly, some of the respondents noted that for the employees to be moved from their places of work, they had to be given incentives. On the other sets of questions, the responses are thus summarized as;

In terms of the need for changes to the organisations of teams; it was noted that in many places a team might have two divisions; the first camp embraces the changes, while the second camp may not.

The ones who embrace change often work hard to accomplish the goals of the team and hence contribute to the objectives of the organisation. However, those who have not embraced changed (it might be just one or a few members of the team), often seek to find their own solution to achieving the goals of the team.

One respondent went further to note that although the latter group might be having a realistic or even better solution, it is the work of the manager to ensure that teams work as one and are hence adopting a common approach to achieving their goals.

With relations to what constitutes an ideal team, it was found that there is no definitive figure, however, the team in place in one of the councils, the Leicester Council that is in charge of implementing this process is made up of 12 members (10 at operational level and the other 2 at supervisory level). This is in the view of the manager, an ideal team because; it has managed to work quite well so far.

In terms of the future challenges; in the course of dealing with this question, some of the respondents revisited the issue that had been raised with regards to varied levels of skills among team members hence the work of the manager is to ensure that these varied skills are aligned around the same level so that there can be a 'smooth' work environment.

However, the main problem that has been identified is;

- Often individuals do not want to see the bigger picture, for instance, when an individual is given a task, even if that task can be handled within 2 weeks, as long as the individual is allowed a certain time frame (say 4 weeks), they will try and drag the task for that duration.
- Also, individuals tend to be concerned with their individual tasks and as long as they have accomplished their individual tasks, they may not wish to help others within the team in order to complete the main tasks much faster.

Due to the two issues mentioned above, the manager's role is to try and make the members of the team to see how their individual actions affect other members of the team and also to make them to 'see the bigger' picture.

However, there are those team members who look at the group's objectives and they find greater satisfaction when the team achieves its objectives.

Where technology sharing is concerned, according to Miner, (2005), ethical issues must arise. It was therefore vital to seek to understand what ethical issues concerned the respondents. Some of the issues that was raised included fear among employees regarding their jobs, and that two key questions that linger in the minds of the clients;

- What are they doing here?
- What are we doing to ourselves?

However, some of the respondents noted that in these times of austerity measures, there appear to be less emphasis on some ethical issues because, the main aim of many a government policy is to reduce the costs of operation.

In terms of the cultural issues facing the teams, in addition to the reasons given above (on ethical issues) it was noted that within a team there are those individuals who may be disjointed from the team as change begins to be a reality.

These will often tend to find others within the team who are also facing difficulties and they can gang up and frustrate the efforts of others. Also, some of these individuals (who may be just a few), may seek to follow their way of doing things, or to frustrate the efforts of others just to show 'that I am right'

when the desired end is not achieved or when the team fails.

The role of the team manager in shaping such individuals is also crucial and the manager can deal with such individuals by guiding them to be part of the team, but if they cannot, then they may be asked to leave the team.

The last and crucial question was regarding the stage of implementation of the shared services and in general most respondents noted that in their assessment, they had covered a large part of the task and therefore what is remaining is relatively small. However it was also noted that this being the view of the manager, often the problem that arises relate to the viewpoint of the manager and that of the team members.

Often the manager seeks to see where the team is heading, while the team members see where they have come from and hence the obstacles that they have faced, which might hinder them from viewing the task as achievable or the progress that they have made.

## **Discussion and Conclusion**

Through the use of Activity theory, this study has attempted to highlight various issues of technology sharing, team working and resources utilisation in the local authorities. It has been found that when technology has to be shared there is need to ensure

that changes are made at organizational processes and individual levels (Miner, 2005; Anon *n.d.*).

Activity theory suggests that there must be an active mediation of tools and hence the need for these to be available by the management. When an organisation seeks to employ a new kind of work arrangement, according to (Macredie and Sandom 1999; Orlikowski 2004), such a change might face resistance.

If there are no incentives, then the level of resistance might just increase. It is imperative therefore that for any successful implementation of a work arrangement, there must be a provision of incentives and this was in consistency with our finding.

Activity theory stipulates the need for subjects, artifacts and objects (issues) to work together, yet the key role is played by the artifacts in determining the success of the process.

Shared technology can take place through various models, yet the bottom-line remains that there is a form of collaboration in terms of information technology resource sharing (Macredie and Sandom 1999). Within the local authorities, the choice of the 'partner' for sharing technology has been influenced by the proximity to one another.



Also, it was noted that there are a wide array of areas where local authorities are sharing their resources including; procurement, human resources, customer relationship management, recruitment and other fields.

While the local authorities, being part of the public sector have been forced by policy changes from the government's executives, the reality is that cost reduction was precipitated by harsh economic hardships and therefore finances are crucial to managing organisations successfully (Vargo and Lusch 2008a).

However, besides costs and finances, the need for efficient allocation of freed up resources has emerged as a driver to sharing services. Shared services allows the organisation to free up some of its resources, for instance an office space might be used for something else or some of the staff members might be re-deployed.

The biggest impact of having information technology sharing at the organisation is that it calls for certain changes to team dynamics and management processes.

In this study, various respondents noted that teams must be formed in the right sizes, and that the members of these teams should be made to realize the importance of team work (Orlikowski 2004; Gerhart, and Fang, 2005). The managers should also

know how to handle different team members and shape the activities of the teams to the desired goals.

It appears that, Information Technology sharing, being like any other new Information Technology project in the organisation, it has not provided use with any new role of managers. However, in this study, it has been found that there is need to manage new team formations. While the skills of the manager may still remain the same, the dynamics between new teams, based on desired work cultures becomes crucial for successful team work.

The manager must play his/her part in team development, but the team members must appreciate the need for trust, working together and focusing on common objectives at all times.

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