



Cape Peninsula  
University of Technology

**ASSESSMENT OF THE INTERNAL ORGANISATIONAL  
COMMUNICATION AND INFORMATION FLOW AT THE SA  
CULTURAL HISTORY MUSEUM WITH REFERENCE TO ITS  
EFFECT ON DECISION MAKING**

by

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**BELLVILLE**

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## DECLARATION

I, Rocco Christian Human, hereby declare that the contents of this dissertation represent my own unaided work, and that the dissertation has not previously been submitted for academic examination towards any qualification. Furthermore, it represent my own opinion and not necessary those of the Cape Peninsula University of Technology.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the organisational communication and information flow at the SA Cultural History Museum (SACHM) and its decentralised sites with particular reference to its role in decision making and, where necessary, to recommend remedial measures.

An extensive literature review was undertaken on organisational communication, information and decision making in organisations, with particular reference to the SACHM. The literature review facilitated the development of the research instruments, to assess best practices in terms of the identified key drivers. The research questions are:

- The existence of communication practices and processes at SACHM, and
- The effective dissemination of information necessary for effective decision making.

The statistical results of the empirical study reveal conclusively that the organisational communication, information dissemination and decision making at the SACHM was indeed ineffective. The results indicate the following:

- The lack of adherence to shared values and common purpose between managers and staff regarding equity, lack of participation in decision-making, lack of service delivery to local, regional and national communities, lack of mutual respect, lack of dedication, lack of a people centered approach, and finally a lack of interpersonal communication and negotiation;
- The lack of application of basic communication fundamentals namely the bottom-up and top-down approaches;
- The lack of access to timeous and accurate information to make effective decisions; and
- The non-existence of communication processes and practices.

Dysfunctional organisational communication and inadequate information flow to both employees and managers, has been identified as having an impact on effective decision making. Arising from the findings of the research, a communication audit is recommended to facilitate the establishment of an effective communication and information framework for the museum.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS**

African National Congress (ANC)  
Arts and Culture Task Group (ACTAG)  
Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA)  
Department Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST)  
Government of National Unity (GNU)  
Public and Allied Workers Union (PAWUSA)  
Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP)  
SA Cultural History Museums (SACHM)  
SA Museum (SAM)  
Southern Flagship Institution (SFI)



## **CHAPTER 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND**

#### **1. Historical perspective**

The historical perspective is provided in terms of the statutory establishment of a national museum for social history in South Africa. This museum has a long history of research, collecting and exhibitions, and is regarded as one of the major centres of the material evidence of the social history, culture and heritage of the nation. To provide historical clarity the SA Cultural History Museum is discussed under the various headings below.

##### **1.1 The establishment of the museum**

The SA Cultural History Museum (SACHM), one of the major national museums in the Republic of South Africa, was separated from the SA Museum (SAM) in 1964, instituted by an Act of Parliament, called the *Cultural Institution Act, Act of 29 of 1969* and has functioned under the auspices of various national departments and eventually the Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology (DACST).

During the next forty years the organisation was largely financed by government funding and was insulated from any form of competition in the external environment. In the late nineties it had developed into an organisation that found it difficult to adjust its focus to its core business, namely its world class cultural collections and its core business, which is to serve the public at large.

The external and internal influences that prevailed at this museum from its inception to the current period, provided impetus to the communication problems encountered at organisational level. The external influences are discussed under the following headings, namely:

- Political influences;
- Constitutional changes during the 1990s;
- Role of the national department; and
- Amalgamation of the Southern museums.

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- Amalgamation of the Southern museums.

### **1.1.2 Political influences**

The historian, Dr Heléne Vollgraaff, provided the following insights on the establishment of the SACHM, and the developments thereafter. According to Vollgraaff (1998:3), the foundation of the SACHM in 1964 was seen as an attempt by the former National Party government to introduce a museum for the glorification of the white population, especially the “Afrikaner” culture. Vollgraaff (1998:3) also pointed out that the reigning political culture of the time definitely influenced the museum, although the accomplishment of the museum was also due to the following:

- A long process of support by the white population for a cultural history museum in Cape Town; and
- To find a proper home for the SA Museum’s social historical collections.

Prior to this period according to Vollgraaff (1998:4), all cultural collections fell under the banner of the SA Museum, the oldest museum in South Africa that was established in 1855. Cultural collections, however, got no real prominence, as the emphasis was more on natural collections at that stage.

Vollgraaff (1998:9) also maintained that because the SACHM was a state-aided institution, it had no alternative than to be influenced by the national political scene, especially the apartheid ideology, which had a major influence in terms of the personnel policy (separate service conditions for white and black staff members) and separate public amenities.

#### **1.1.2.1 Constitutional changes during the 1990s**

On 2 February 1990, President FW de Klerk delivered his historic speech in Parliament that placed South Africa on an irreversible road to political transformation. On the political front the process included a series of discussions between political groupings that led to the formulation of a democratic constitution and the staging of the democratic elections in 1994. As expected the then National Party Government was replaced with the Government of National Unity (GNU), dominated by the African National Congress (ANC), which had remained banned until as recently as 1990.

The political transformation process had a major influence on museums. According to Vollgraaff (1998:11) the Reconstruction and Development Plan (RDP) can be viewed as the ANC and later the GNU’s principles, on which all future policies would be based. Arts and

Culture was discussed under the RDP's guidelines and an extract from section 3.4 of these guidelines reads as follows:

*“ Under Colonialism and apartheid the culture of the majority of South Africans was neglected, distorted and suppressed. Freedom of expression and creativity were stifled. People and communities were denied access to resources and facilities to exercise and develop their need for cultural and artistic expression. Illiteracy, the lack of an effective educational system, and extreme poverty compounded this cultural deprivation ”.*

Küsel, (1995:4) pointed out that the 1994 general election marked the beginning of formal democracy in South Africa after more than three centuries of colonialism, segregation and apartheid. The historic transition posed major challenges to the museums sector, which has always reflected in microcosm, the broader power relations in South African Society. Black South Africans were largely excluded when it came to the administration of the museum and representing the history. Vollgraaff (1998:11-12) concluded that concepts such as democracy, affirmative action, re-contextualisation of collections, correction of imbalances, transparent management and the building of community relationships were suddenly “everybody’s vocabulary”.

Vollgraaff (1998:12) finally concluded that the SACHM was influenced by these political changes on two levels. The 1990s announced a period of internal turbulence in the museum sector, whilst a process of reconstruction of museums commenced on a national level.

#### **1.1.2.2 Role of the national department**

The Department of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology is the national department responsible for museum affairs in South Africa. Küsel (1995:6) had the following to say about the role of DACST namely:

*“The role of government at all levels should be that of an enabler, making it possible for museums to accomplish their functions and objectives through appropriate legislation, effective organisation, the best possible form of institutional control and funding commensurate with their reasonable needs”.*

However, in the post-1990 political dispensation the office of the Department of Arts, Science and Technology (DACST) did not adequately address the transformation needs of national museums in South Africa. Vollgraaff (1998:12,20) indicated that this opinion was widely shared amongst staff at the SACHM. This was expressed and confirmed in a summary of

grievances handed to management after a staff meeting held on 23 July 1993. The statement is further supported by the fact that amalgamation was only implemented by DACST on 1 April 1999.

The transformation process for museums lingered on despite the fact that in November 1994 a policy framework for the transformation of South African museums and museum services was mandated under the auspices of Dr Ben Ngubane, Minister of Arts, Culture, Science and Technology. The policy referred to as ACTAG stood for the Arts and Culture Task Group. Küsel (1995:3) concluded that the purpose of ACTAG was to establish a new museum policy with the emphasis on the provision of information regarding museums, their problems, functions and transformation so that museums could play a leading role in conservation, research, education, reconciliation and nation building.

### **1.1.2.3 Amalgamation of the Southern museums**

On 1 April 1999, the Government promulgated the *Cultural Institution Act, 1998 (119 of 1998)*, that abolished the five major national museums and fused them into the so-called Southern Flagship Institution (SFI). Later, in 2001, this name was changed to Iziko Museums of Cape Town. The result of this was a fusion of staff from different work and social cultures. The intervention increased conflict, confusion and inefficient forms of work and organisation, which negatively affected service delivery and left organisational communication in disarray.

The new amalgamated museum structure, namely the Southern Flagship Institution (SFI), formulated individual line function work plans, specific to its new divisions and organisational structure. However, no central co-ordination plan was included as part of the implementation and integration design of the five museums, namely South African Cultural History Museum, South African Museum, South African National Gallery, Michaelis Collection and the William Fehr Collection. The exclusion of such a vital element from its overall strategy resulted in a clumsy system of organisational management in the SFI. In the South African Cultural History Museum, for instance, there was no specific strategic plan for cultural history, or an indication as to how it was going to integrate into the new dispensation. The Director, Assistant Director and the management team had to co-ordinate the operation of the SACHM, without a proper vision or direction.

### **1.1.3 Internal influences**

Owing to the delays in the transformation of museums between 1990 and 1999, management and staff were left without direction and purpose, with the result that very little was achieved as most plans and actions were deferred. Staff reasoned that, since changes would be taking place, the initiation of new plans, changes in exhibitions or spending of funds, could actually derail these changes or be in conflict with the expected amalgamation of the five museums, which all had different strategic goals, collections and policies (Interviews with SACHM management and own observation as new employee at the museum from November 1997).

#### **1.1.3.1 Internal problems**

Vollgraaff (1998:12) stated that there was an internal restlessness over the personnel's future, but also a lack of patience and tolerance among the top management to adjust to the prevailing circumstances. The following grievances tabled by staff as early as July 1993, all related to the concepts of communication and decision making were recorded by Vollgraaff (1998:12-13):

- **Council:** The staff wanted more clarity in respect of the duties and powers of the Council, as well as the way it was constituted. A great concern was expressed that the Council was not representative of the wider South African population. Moreover, there was also a no confidence vote expressed by staff in the top management, as the information whereupon Council makes decisions was questioned.
- **Policy:** The staff expressed the view that there was a lack of long-term policy making and strategic planning.
- **Control structure:** The Deputy Director at that time came under scrutiny and a detailed explanation of the post description was requested. Staff were of the opinion that the duties attached to the post were not properly performed. Opinions were expressed that top management interfered with the decisions at lower levels, and that responsibilities were delegated without any real power attached and that contradictory instructions were received from members representing top management.
- **Work planning:** The staff felt that the year planning was unrealistic and inflexible. According to them the year plan was overloaded and when unforeseen problems emerged, staff were still expected to realise the target dates. The staff thus requested more say and input into the compilation of the year plan.
- **Work organisation:** The curators felt that their workload was too heavy, and in addition they were expected to have specialist knowledge across divergent study fields.

According to them there was so little staff, and too few curators and conservators. Moreover, available equipment was insufficient, as curators did not have access to computers and networking. There was also discord over certain functions that nobody wanted to execute, for example, the pasting of photographs on the catalogue cards. Further, the curators also mentioned that, as result of their workload, they had insufficient time to attend to the collections.

- **Personnel:** Great dissatisfaction with the evaluation and merit-award system was expressed. Curators complained and pointed that there were no promotion opportunities. There was also dissatisfaction over the choice of posts that were upgraded. This included the elevation of the Assistant Director post to the level of Deputy Director. Some staff members were of the opinion that there was racial discrimination at the museum, whilst others requested that new posts should be advertised in national newspapers to expand the applications to all groups of the community. Personnel in the lower ranks requested that their salaries to be increased and a general request was that the job description should be amended, with special reference to the last task on the duty sheet stating “and all other tasks as requested”.
- **Organisation:** Certain staff members felt that the museum had a bureaucratic control system that created a lot of red tape and decreased productivity. It was requested that a flexitime system be implemented.
- **Communication:** The need for regular debate and information in regard to work-related matters was requested.
- **Structure:** Staff felt that the control structure was too long, that delegation of duties and responsibilities are executed without the necessary authority and that lower ranks, including middle management, needed to be able to provide more input in the decision-making process.

#### **1.1.3.2 Lack of interaction with the national department**

The above situation was also aggravated by the lack of regular interaction and organisational communication between DACST, as national department based in Pretoria, and the SACHM’s management and its employees. Both management and employees expected DACST, as principal, major funder and enabler to the public entity, to provide direction and leadership, rather than the SACHM Council, and, as none was forthcoming, it led to the following dysfunctional factors:

- demotivated and unfocused employees;
- blocked communication channels;

- uncertainty and mistrust;
- friction between management and employees; and
- friction between Council and employees. This resulted in withdrawal and the formation of power groups by employees and the enhancement of the role played by the Public and Allied Workers Union (PAWUSA).

All the above information was obtained during interviews with SACHM management on November 1997, February 1998 and March 2001.

This situation and problems at the SACHM were not resolved by the amalgamation to form the SFI. The problems were passed on to the new amalgamated organisation, which is discussed in this chapter.

## **1.2 Influences on operational activities**

The external and internal influences, as described in the report of Vollgraaff (1998:9-17), had a negative effect on the public entity as a whole, to such an extent that it impacted on the management and staff, and had a bearing on the daily operational activities of the SACHM. Museums, like any other large organisation, rely on the communication network inside the organisation to exchange information between management and employees, in order to successfully meet daily objectives. The perceived problems have been categorised and are explained under separate headings.

### **1.2.1 Influence on museum's core business**

Since 1995 the visitors' profile system has reflected a decrease in visitors to the various decentralised sites of the SA Cultural History Museum (SACHM). Abnormal variations in specific categories of visitors to the museums were registered. Fewer school groups or international tourists visited a specific site, which had a negative impact on the gate revenue of the institution. Complaints received through the Director's office from the public since April 1998 indicated that Front-of-House staff were not communicating with the public on matters such as the entrance fee structure and opening or closing times of museums. Staff were aggressive and unfriendly towards the public and customers, and they complained that incorrect information was reflected on certain artefacts, or on the collections at that specific site. Staff displayed little knowledge regarding specific topics that were advertised in the local press such as research, restoration, exhibitions, certain projects, education and security (Interviews with relevant managers during February 1998 and March 2001).



At the operational level the following procedural problems were identified during the audit of practices conducted in 1998-1999:

- Incorrect recording of visitors statistics;
- Incorrect collection of revenue from public;
- Incorrect daily reconciliations and non-compliance with the revenue guidelines; and
- Not depositing the daily banking and deposits according to instruction.

It can be deduced that, if the operational staff are not *au fait* with the above, the result could be the loss of customers for museums. Moreover, this could result in a negative image and undermine the public's faith in the museum's services as a reliable means of entertainment, education, information and knowledge sharing.

### **1.2.2 Organisational relations**

Vollgraaff (1998:12-13) observed the following dysfunctional relationships:

- staff were managed as objects by curators and other management members;
- no respect and trust for Council members;
- staff and management were divided along racial lines;
- no change in job descriptions or the institutional organogram;
- non-acceptance of the staff guidelines handbook; and
- the abolition of the personnel appraisal system.

#### **1.2.2.1 Relationship between Council members and staff**

Council members were viewed by the staff as the oppressors and seen as not "caring for the problems of employees. The Council members were viewed by some staff as people that come from around the country to merely come and enjoy a cup of tea at the meeting and then leave the staff behind in misery" (Interview with Manager: Technical Services and Exhibitions, 1999-2000). Any decisions or changes made by Council were viewed with complete distrust.

#### **1.2.2.2 Relationship between Management and staff**

The management of the SACHM, which consisted mainly of curators, managers of sites and the Director, were mostly specialised museum professionals who did not have the necessary managerial knowledge and insight. The focus was on objects and artefacts rather than on staff and as a result, staff and management became alienated from each other. The curators mostly saw their daily tasks as the conservation of collections and perceived the staff as someone

else's responsibility. This resultant organisational breakdown manifested the following symptoms namely, increased absenteeism, lack of discipline and inadequate supervision of various tasks (Interview with Chief Auxiliary Officer of the Slavelodge, February 1998).

No communication existed between managers and staff for weeks and months, and *vice versa*, with the result that staff merely arrived for work to complete the day, rather than ascertaining departmental or organisational goals. The result was a breakdown in internal communications at the museum and its sites.

Staff and management were further divided along racial lines and black people saw it as unnecessary to work under the supervision of a white colleague, or merely disobeyed instructions from such persons. Certain associates, who worked in a team, would not greet each other for weeks and months, in some cases for years. It was clear that both management and staff did not respect one another and there was no common value system, which should be the premise for any organisation (Vollgraaff, 1998:13, 33).

Resistance to changes in the job descriptions and the staff guidelines handbook, were perceived by staff as a punitive action by the Council and SACHM management to enforce instructions and tasks upon them. Consequently, each staff member kept to his/her own, now outdated, job description. This left management, in a changing environment, without the power to operate decisively. Numerous actions were brought against the organisation at the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (CCMA), and staff started to form cliques or groups (Interview with the Senior Administrative Officer: Finance, February 1998).

By the time the SFI (name later changed to Iziko Museums of Cape Town) was formed on 1 April 1999, the SACHM had become a very dysfunctional organisation (Vollgraaff, 1998:33).

### **1.2.3 Non-compliance with systems**

The systems in place were not supported and maintained by SACHM staff, with the result that only the most elementary and necessary tasks were performed. Important or difficult matters were merely avoided or shortcuts were used (Interviews with the Senior Administrative Officer: Finance and the Human Resource Officer, February 1998).

A lack of supervision, discipline, leadership and organisational communication appear to be the main ingredients for the above behavioural pattern (Vollgraaff, 1998:12). Important data

or systems such as the appraisal system had been disregarded since 1994, and the staff guidelines handbook since 1997. Management could therefore not assess staff performance on operational matters. The same applied to the staff's moratorium on the amendment of the organisational structure and the number of posts contained in the structure, which had been identified as necessary in terms of the operational requirements. Management was left powerless to amend the structure, in order to fulfil the operational needs of the organisation.

Dysfunctionality was further evident in the non-recording of all gate revenue, sales and visitors figures by Front-of-House staff at the various points of sale, together with other relevant information pertaining to the organisation. This resulted in the loss of important or incorrect data and made the taking of informed decisions or preparation of information for marketing purposes very difficult for management, and impacted on the reporting to the majority stakeholder namely DACST.

#### **1.2.4 Geographical problems**

It is important for the purpose of this study to take cognisance of the fact that the SACHM's sites are not all situated at one museum site, like most other museums in the world, but distributed throughout the Cape Peninsula. This factor increases the difficulties in terms of administrative and managerial controls, as well as the communication processes and information flow throughout the organisation.

#### **1.2.5 Changes since 2000**

On the appointment of the new Chief Executive Officer of the SFI on 16 May 2000, the management and staff of the SACHM were requested to produce documents listing all staff, revenue, visitors, budget and expenditure figures, together with other relevant information pertaining to the different museums in the new organisation, namely the SFI. Although all the raw data was available, the particulars could not be reproduced immediately and in the format as requested. The accuracy of the data was also in question; owing to the diminishing role management had played since 1994. Basic information pertaining to resignations, vacant posts, employee numbers, equity and other relevant aspects could be ascertained, but the response time to collate data was unacceptable, or the data unusable in terms of decision making at strategic and operational level.

## 2. Theoretical framework

The researcher reviewed the findings of Vollgraaff as discussed previously, and become aware of the inconsistencies and hiatuses which justified further research, and simultaneously have a practical value for the SACHM, as a public entity. In accordance with an approach proposed by Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:26), a framework to guide the research process forward was developed. The research plan based on this framework is detailed hereunder.

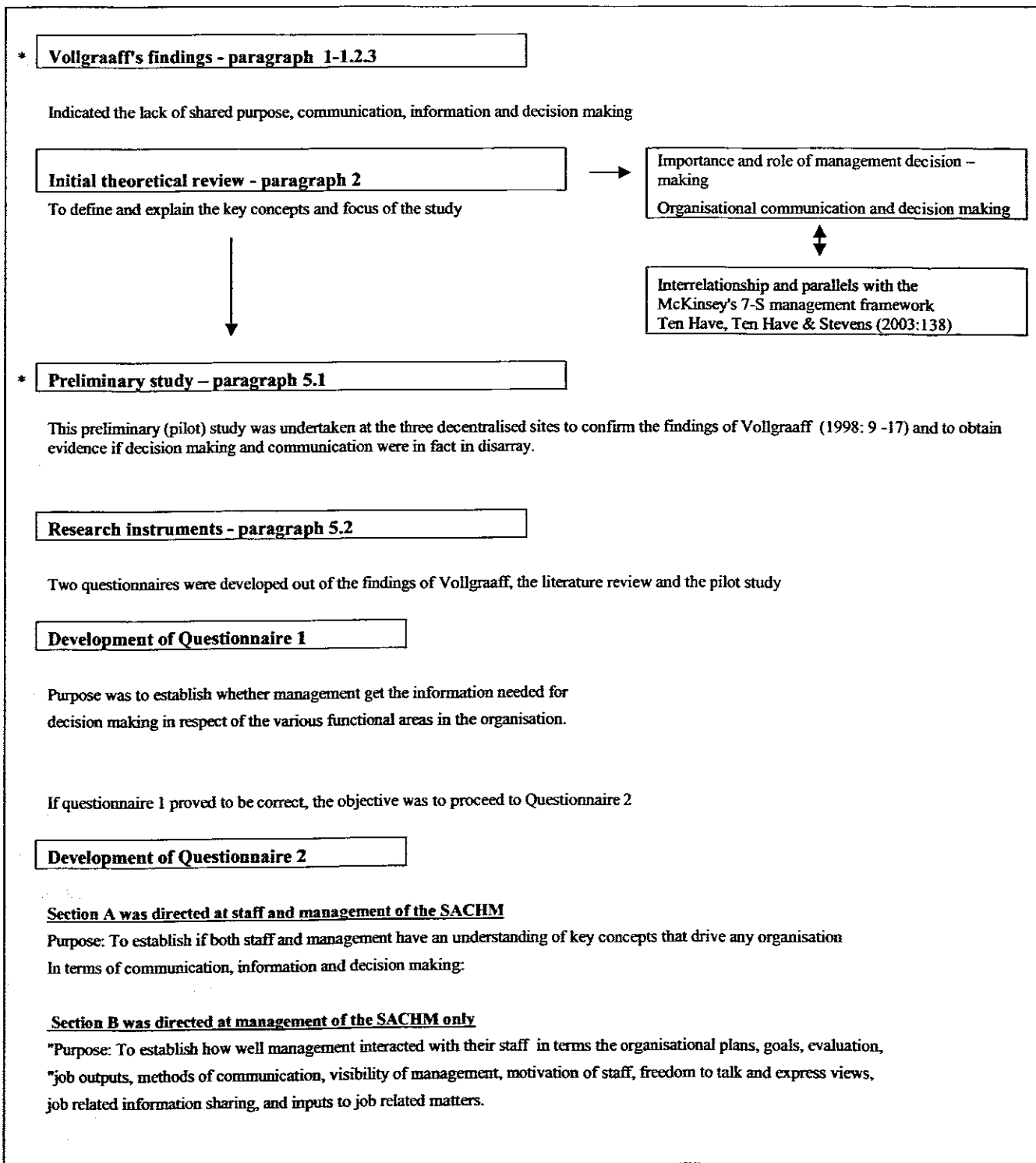


Figure 1-1: Framework of research plan

## **2.1 Initial theoretical review**

The initial theory identified at the beginning of the research process that was used to guide the set up of the research questions, were based on the following two main concepts namely:

- Decision making: What are the types of decisions which managers must make, and what information is needed to make them?
- Communication: What are the prerequisites for effective organisational communication flow?

The above concepts were used to compile the research questions for interviews and the development of the two questionnaires.

### **2.1.1 The importance and role of management**

Management can be seen as one of the most important of all human activities in economically active societies, also in museums across the globe. Kroon (1990:3) pointed out that it is the basic function of all managers at all levels in all businesses and service institutions, to create conditions in which the individuals and the organisation can work together towards achievement of set goals. Furthermore, according to Kroon (1990:3) management functions include the four basic functions, namely planning, organising, activating and controlling. The additional managerial functions that stem from these are decision making, communication, motivation, co-ordination, delegation and discipline.

In this study the emphasis was firstly placed on decision making in museums and this function's interrelationship with the organisation's communication and information flow.

### **2.1.2 Decision making**

Decision making is the process by which alternative solutions to a problem are purposefully considered, and the best alternative is chosen. Decision making can be seen as the most important of the additional management functions, because it can determine the difference between profit and loss, and even the success or failure of an enterprise. Moreover, because decision making deals with the present and the future, and with probabilities and certainties, the decision maker should attentively weigh up the consequences of each alternative before making a decision according to Kroon (1990:9).

Various sources have different interpretations of decision making, but a common thread can be detected through all the literature studied on this specific management function. Griffin

(1993:8), for instance, defined decision making as follows: “Part of the planning process that involves selecting a course of action from a set of alternatives”.

Organisational decisions are normally divided into two types, namely strategic decisions and operational decisions. Duffy and Assad (1989:80) suggested that strategic decisions relate to the following areas:

- The mission of the organisation;
- The target market (customers and produce);
- The target market (geographical);
- The objectives (profitability, growth, market share and risk profile); and
- Competitive strategy.

It can be deduced that decisions are truly strategic in nature if the decisions are externally oriented, relate to the total organisation, constrain day-to-day activities, and impact on the success of the organisation. Griffin (1993:176) viewed strategic management as “A management process aimed at formulating and implementing strategies, which promote a superior alignment between the organisation and its environment and the achievement of strategic goals”.

Operational decisions are normally taken by the first-line management of the organisation and these decisions usually impact on the execution of daily activities. These decisions are based on the strategic and tactical goals and objectives of the enterprise that were formulated by top and middle management, are less complicated, less comprehensive, less uncertain and also less risky (Kroon, 1990:132).

### **2.1.3 Organisational communication and decision making**

Organisations can be run successfully, only if effective organisational communication takes place. A decision, whether strategic or operational, cannot be made without communication and the necessary information. After the decision has been made, it must be shared and implemented. Communication plays a particularly important role in all organisations in relation to the management functions, since it provides the information necessary for work performance and effective decision making. Kroon (1990:9) concluded by pointing out that the manner in which communication takes place, also determines the relationship between management and staff members, the disposition, morale, motivation and performance of the latter, and the climate in the enterprise.

#### 2.1.4 Elements of the McKinsey's model

The researcher having established that communication, information and decision making, are vital elements and play an important role in the life of all organisations on a daily basis, considered various efficiency models and then selected the McKinsey model. This model was chosen, due to its analogy with the findings of Vollgraaff and the pilot study, the problems encountered at the SACHM, but also because of its strong relationship with organisational communication, information flow and decision making.

Ten Have, Ten Have & Stevens (2003:138) explain that the McKinsey model is made up of seven elements namely:

- **Strategy** refers to the organisation's objectives and the conscious choices it makes in order to achieve them;
- **Structure** refers to the organisational structure and hierarchy;
- **Systems** are the primary and secondary processes that the organisation employs to get things done;
- **Shared values** are those that underlie the very reason for existence of the organisation;
- **Style** refers to the unwritten yet tangible evidence of how management sets priorities and spends its time. Symbolic behaviour and the way bosses relate to their workers are the indicators of the organisation's style;
- **Staff** is comprised of the people in an organisation and, in particular, their collective presence.
- **Skills** are organisational capabilities that are independent of individuals.

This concept was originally developed as a way of thinking more broadly about effectively organising a company. It is important to note that elements of the McKinsey model were widely used throughout the dissertation by the researcher, in conjunction with the main concepts of communication and decision making. Moreover, the McKinsey model was later used by the consultants in 2005-2006, when the amalgamated museums organisation, Iziko Museums of Cape Town, was re-engineered with refinements to its general operation and new structure.

### **3. Purpose of the research**

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the effectiveness of internal organisational communication and information flow at the SACHM and its sites, with particular reference to its effect on decision making, and, if necessary, to recommend remedial measures.

### **4. Research questions**

The following research questions were posed:

- Are the communication procedures and processes in place at the SA Cultural History Museum (SACHM); and
- Do managers at the SACHM receive the required information for effective decision making?

### **5. Research approach**

The approach was both qualitative and quantitative in nature. Based on the findings of Vollgraaff (1998), a preliminary pilot study was undertaken in the form of observations and interviews with managers and staff members. This was followed by an intensive literature review, which informed the design and development of two questionnaires, the responses to which were subjected to quantitative as well as qualitative analysis and interpretation.

A hybrid approach was adapted owing to the complexities inherent in organisational communication and also due to the different career categories among respondents, the diversity of the population and the differences in educational levels.

#### **5.1. Research design**

The research commenced with a pilot study, with the following objectives in mind namely:

- To validate whether the perceived communication, information flow and decision making problems were valid or merely hearsay;
- To directly observe and obtain information on the actual organisational communication and information flow at the three sites selected, in an effort to inform the questions selected for the survey questionnaire;
- To examine the communication process and procedures in operation at the sites;
- To establish if effective communication and information techniques are implemented; and
- The findings of the pilot study facilitated the development of the **first questionnaire** to ascertain management perception of the foregoing.



The pilot study focused directly on the perceived problem areas. The information was obtained directly from this selected research group namely, the Front-of-House staff component, where some of the perceived problems originated from at an operational level. The research group consisted of the Head Attendant, Museum Attendant and cleaning staff at the sites. Both genders were represented. Direct contact and observation with the pilot group was deemed essential to prevent the researcher obtaining biased or filtered information.

Once it was established from the pilot study results that the information flow required within the organisation to inform effective decision making by management was inadequate, the researcher proceeded with the second phase of the research, namely **(questionnaire two)** which involved both management and employees.

## **5.2. Research instruments**

Two questionnaires were drafted, drawing on the preliminary (pilot) study findings and the literature review on communication essentials for effective decision making. The first questionnaire was designed for management only and the purpose was to establish whether the information for various decisions in the organisation is received in good time, is sufficiently comprehensive, accurate, complete and relevant; and further to establish from whom communication was received and if management members have speedy access to information. The secondary purpose was also to get confirmation if, from a managerial perspective, the information flow was effective or not and to be able to link it back to the pilot study information received from the research group at the sites.

The second questionnaire was designed for both employee and management, and was aimed at ascertaining whether the basic communication structures and processes for effective organisational communication and information flows, were in place at the SACHM. Here the researcher made use of the McKinsey model's elements in combination with the communication essentials for effective decision making, as established from the literature review.

### 5.3. Delimitation of the Research

The respondents included staff from each site and staff from the different sections at Head Office in Cape Town, so as to obtain a representative sample based on the entire museum staff complement. The population numbered sixty eight (68) staff members in total, including eight members of management. At the sites it included the Front-of-House staff, whilst at the Head Office in Cape Town it included the curators, administrative staff, Heads of Department and Top Management.

Stratified sampling was done per career class, as shown in Table 1-1. The sample was stratified in the sense that the population was composed of various occupation classes, and it was important to set criteria to enable an accurate and representative sample of the population. All career groups had training of matric and higher as a minimum qualification, whilst the Front-of-House and cleaning staff group's training were rated at matric and lower.

The sampling was also influenced by the fact that some museum sites had a limited number of staff members, which restricted the research sample.

The total museum complement consisted of the following occupational classes:

**Table 1-1: SA Cultural History Museum research population statistics**

Career class	Employees	Male	Female	White Group	Black group
Management (situated at 4 sites)	8	3	5	6	2
Administration (situated 1 site)	8	1	7	4	4
Public Relations (situated at 1 site)	2	0	2	2	0
Library Services (situated at 1 site)	2	0	2	2	0
Education (situated at 1 site)	2	0	2	2	0
Museums Scientists (situated at 1 site)	7	2	5	6	1

Technical staff (situated at 1 site)	8	4	4	4	4
Front-of-House staff and cleaning staff (All sites)	31	11	20	1	30
Total staff	68	21	47	27	41

## **6. Organisation of the report**

The report will comprise of six chapters detailed hereunder:

### **Chapter One: Overview and problem identification**

The introductory chapter provides an overview of the study; the historical factors and the present situation. It imparts the research question, research problem and the process followed. It further provides insight into the key concepts and definitions that are applicable to this study.

### **Chapter two: Literature study**

This chapter reviews the literature and previous research in which the study is anchored.

### **Chapter three: Theoretical framework**

This chapter explores the concept and process of organisational communication, and the link between communication and decision making, in order to provide justification for the criteria on which the research instruments were based.

### **Chapter four: Research conducted**

This chapter provides a more detailed report on the research approach, the research instruments and the research process.

### **Chapter five: Analysis, findings and conclusions**

In this chapter the qualitative and quantitative data are subjected to critical and statistical analysis and interpretation.

### **Chapter six: Recommendations**

This chapter concludes the dissertation. It provides recommendations based on the findings of the empirical study. It also identifies potential areas for future research on organisational communication in the context of museums.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE STUDY**

#### **1. Introduction**

This chapter aims to explain the main concepts relating to the research question, moreover, what the various theorists and researchers say about these concepts namely:

- Organisational communication;
- Communication; and
- Decision making.

This necessitated exploration of existing theories linking organisational communication and information flow principles to decision making, and how the overall performance and efficiency of the organisation can be improved, as indicated by the seven elements in the McKinsey 7-S framework.

#### **2. Organisational communication**

An extensive amount of research has been conducted on communication and organisational communication in the workplace.

##### **2.1 Communication as essential to proper functioning in organisations**

Baker (2002:1) pointed out that managers have traditionally spent the greater part of their time communicating in one form or another (meetings, face-to-face discussions, memos, letters, e-mails, reports, etc.). Today, however more and more employees find that an important part of their work is communication, especially now that service workers outnumber production workers, and research as well as production processes emphasize greater collaboration and teamwork among workers in different functional groups. Baker (2002:1) further stated that a major change in communication technologies has contributed to the transformation of both work and organisational structure. For these reasons, communication practices and technologies have become more important in all organisations, but they are perhaps most important in knowledge-intensive organisations and sectors and, as such, are of great significance to science organisations, public science management and museums.

Views of organisational communication can be categorised as those that view organisational communication as one aspect of an organisation, versus those that see it as the underlying basis of the organisation itself. An example of the former is exemplified by Fielding (1997:3), who defined communication as the exchange of messages by means of symbols and see organisational communication as a key element of organisational climate. The latter viewpoint was also expressed by Myers and Myers (1982:xv), who define organisational communication as “the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organised behaviour”. Likewise Rogers and Rogers (1976:3) argued that “the behaviour of individuals in organisations is best understood from a communication point of view”.

Baker (2002:2) pointed out that, in many ways, organisations have evolved in directions that make Myers and Myers view more appropriate. Changes confronting organisations and the associated changes in organisational forms have made organisational communication increasingly important to overall organisational functioning. Baker (2002:2) accredits this to the following factors:

- Work is more complex and requires greater co-ordination and interaction among workers;
- The pace of work is faster;
- Workers are more distributed;
- Simultaneous, distributed work processes are more common;
- Knowledge and innovation are more critical to an organisation’s competitive advantage; and
- Communication technologies and networks are increasingly essential to an organisation’s structure and strategy.

Grenier and Metes (1992), D’Aprix (1996), and Witherspoon (1997) as also referenced by Baker (2002:2), all advocate that communication is not only an essential aspect of these recent organisational changes, but view effective communication as the foundation of modern organisations.

The inference that is drawn by the researcher is, that although various authors point out different aspects on organisational communication, good communication is central to the argument, because it links the organisation to the management and employees and their

related tasks. Moreover these authors' opinions emphasise and confirm the importance of communication and its role for effective functioning in organisations.

## **2.2 Communication models in organisations**

Several researchers, as discussed below, hold different theories as to what the process of communication process really comprises, but agree that "this process is hard to analyse". Communication researchers have therefore devised models to help them analyse the major elements in the process. Fielding (1997:13) identified a linear model and indicates seven elements that function together for a specific purpose:

- a Sender;
- a Receiver;
- a message;
- a channel;
- feedback;
- psychological and physical noise as potential barriers; and
- a result.

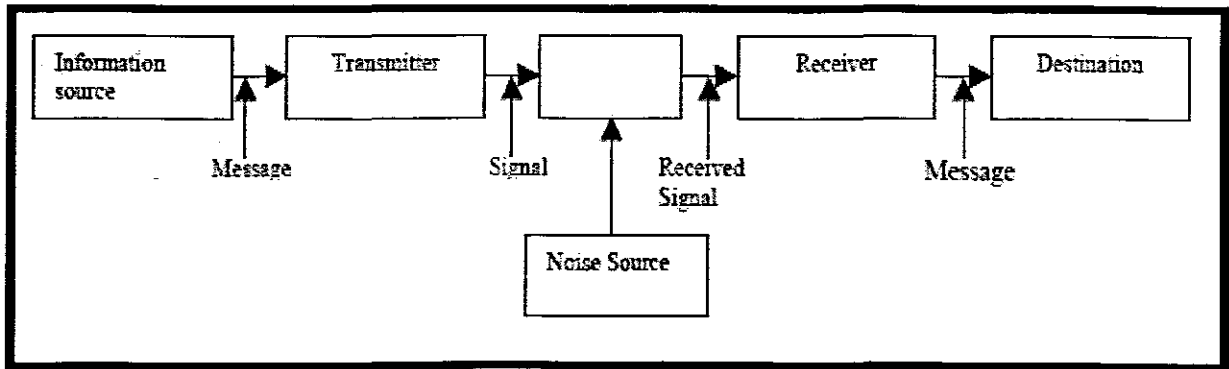
Huebsch (1989:6-7, 54) identified similar communication elements, and makes the assessment, that most communication models contain the above elements or components by stating: "The components of the communication process are to be found in the principal communication structures found in almost every organisation".

Baker (2002:3) identified two communication models that guide the study of communication, namely the Shannon Weaver and the White and Chapman models, which are illustrated in Figure 2-1 and 2-2. The technical view of communication is associated with information theory and is usually traced back to Shannon and Weaver (1949). Shannon, an engineer at Bell Laboratories, portrayed communication as a mechanistic system, as shown in Figure 2-1. Shannon introduced four other components to the system: the message itself, the transmitted signal, the received signal, and a noise source which could be anything that affects the signal as it travels through the channel, and which prevents the received signal from being identical to the transmitted signal.

The important question in information theory is "how can an information source get a message to a destination with a minimum of distortions and errors?" In applying this mechanistic approach to interpersonal communication, the question is the same, although the

mechanistic system is altered to some extent, and the analysis is less technical and mathematical.

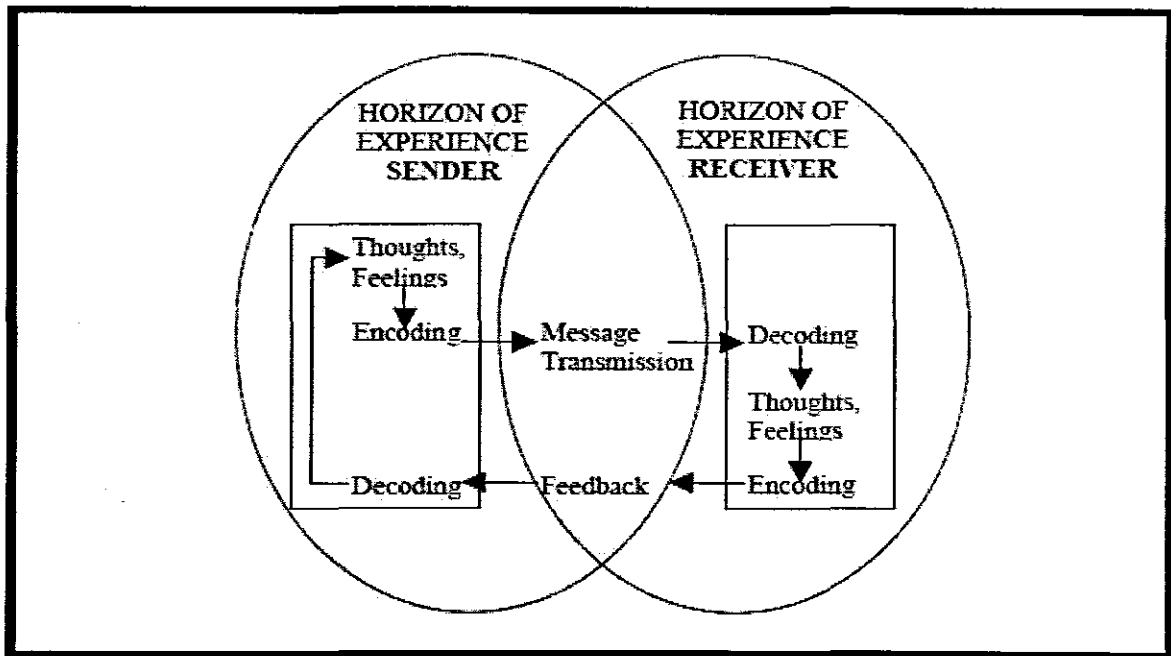
The technical perspective of communication persists as a common basis for discussions about organisational communication.



Adapted from Shannon and Weaver (1949).

Figure 2-1: Information Theory: Communication as a Mechanistic system (Source: Baker, 2002:3)

White and Chapman (1996:11) introduced into this communication system both human (the person's horizon of experience, thoughts/feelings, the acts of encoding/decoding) and interpersonal feedback elements, as illustrated in Figure 2-2. Since that time, an array of human filters that are influenced by the person's horizon of experience (such as motive, affect, attention, knowledge, attitudes, values, and beliefs), have been specified. Although the social context affects these human filters, the larger social context is not directly addressed in these approaches.



Adapted from White and Chapman (1996:11)

Figure 2-2: Technical Sender-Receiver Model of Communication (Source: Baker, 2002:4)

### 2.2.1 Theoretical Perspectives and its relationship with museums

Museums like any other organisation follow the same universal models of communication. Both these models, as shown and discussed above, have value for museums and the mode of communication in this type of organisation. It can be postulated that both models, and combinations, or portions thereof, are applicable to the SACHM and the research question.

Both models show how communication processes take place within an organisation between sender and receiver.

Common strands are the following:

- Organisational communication occurs as an open system;
- Organisational communication involves message flows, patterns, and channels;
- Organisational communication considers the goals of management, the process of change, innovation, and growth; and
- Organisational communication involves people's attitudes, feelings, relationships, and skills.

Individuals can be both receivers and senders. Upward, downward, and horizontal communication occurs, as well as the grapevine. The communicators involved, have their own frame of reference (one's background, attitudes, prior knowledge, and experience), regarding



occurrences in the organisation, that have been influenced by their formal education, parents, peers, and environment.

Most organisations use a hybrid kind of communication model, based on the kind of organisation and its service delivery. The SACHM is no different in this respect.

### **2.3 Communication channels**

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:210) explained that there are many type of formal communication channels available to managers. Andrews and Herschel (1996:143) confirmed the above statement, by indicating that within organisations, communication can flow in three directions; downward, upward or horizontally. The authors also make the assessment that the direction of communication flow depends on the structure of the organisation. However, changes in the direction of communication flow, intentional or otherwise, can alter the shape of the organisational structure.

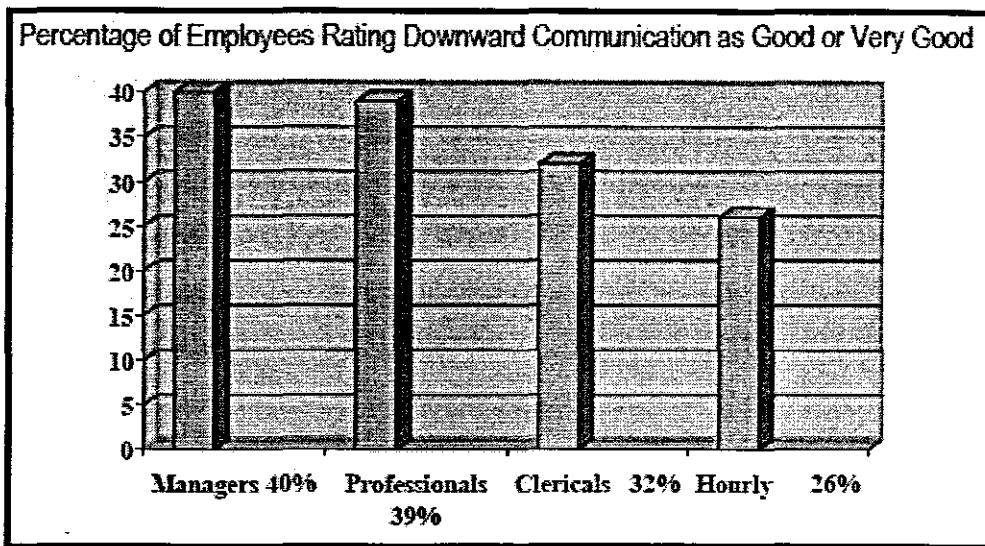
Baker (2002:7) made the same assessments, but argues that initially greater emphasis was directed at vertical organisational communication, as compared to lateral communication, but that is no longer the case. Diagonal communication is more recently emphasised in the organisational communication literature.

#### **2.3.1 Vertical Communication**

Griffin (1993:449) explained that vertical communications is communication that flows up and down the organisation, usually along formal reporting lines - that is, it is the communication that place between people and those above and below them in the organisation. Vertical communication may involve only two people, or it may flow through several different organisational levels.

##### **2.3.1.1 Downward Communication**

Based on a survey of 30,000 employees conducted by the Opinion Research Corporation (ORC), Morgan and Schiemann in Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:213-214) found that a majority of workers felt their organisation did not do a good job of downward communication. As seen in Figure 2-3, satisfaction levels were especially low at lower job levels.



Adapted from Morgan and Schieman (1983:16).

Figure 2-3: Employee Satisfaction with Downward Communication (Source: Baker, 2002: 7)

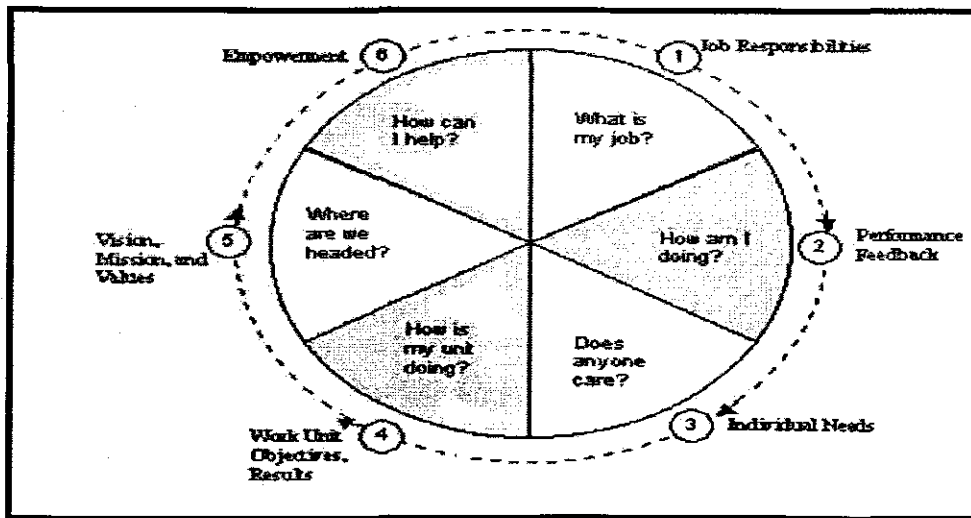
In terms of sources of employee information, the ORC study showed that employees prefer to get their information from their supervisors and from group meetings with management, however, all groups say they are getting less information from these sources than they would prefer. This led Morgan and Schieman to conclude that the “OCR’s data indicate that top management is, in effect, cutting itself off from its employees. Both the downward and upward flows have suffered.”

A survey of 32,000 employees conducted by the International Association of Business Communication (IABC) and the firm of Towers, Perrin, Forster, and Crosby as referenced in Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:213) found somewhat higher satisfaction with downward communication:

- 71 percent reported that their organisation tried to keep employees well informed;
- 65 percent agreed that they had been given sufficient information to perform their jobs; and
- 51 percent agreed that their organisation’s downward communication was candid and accurate.

They also found that employees want to hear more organisational news directly from the top executives. Finally, they found that the two topics of greatest interest to employees were future organisational plans and productivity improvements, a finding that seemingly conflicts with what D’Aprix (1996) in Baker (2002:8) expressed as the hierarchy of employees’

communication needs, as reflected in the pie chart in Figure 2-4. This latter discrepancy could stem from the fact that D'Aprix's hierarchy of communication needs is theoretical, as opposed to being based on empirical research, and/or the fact that D'Aprix does not distinguish what employees want to hear from top executives, versus what they want to hear from their immediate supervisors.



Source: D'Aprix (1996)

Figure 2-4: Hierarchy of Employees' Communication Needs (Source: Baker, 2002:8)

Although the content priorities of downward communication have not been definitively demonstrated, there is some level of certainty with respect to the best approach to downward communication. Jablin (1980) as referenced in Baker (2002:8), listed the following:

- Top managers should communicate directly with immediate supervisors;
- Immediate supervisors should communicate with their direct reports to subordinates; and
- On issues of importance, top managers should then follow-up by communicating with employees directly.

Perhaps the most tried and true rule of effective downward communication is to: "Communicate orally, and then follow up in writing" (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991:216).

### 2.3.1.2 Upward Communication

Even less is known about upward communication. One consistent finding is that employee satisfaction with upward communication tends to be lower than their satisfaction with downward communication (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991:221-222). Larkin and Larkin (1994) in

Baker (2002:9), found low levels of satisfaction with all the strategies commonly used to enhance upward communication, including employee surveys, suggestion programs, employee grievance programs, and employee participation programs, such as, quality circles and team meetings. Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:268-269) noted several management-based causes for this lack of satisfaction, particularly that these strategies often do not involve two-way communication, are not packaged well, are poorly timed, and are apt to trigger defensiveness on the part of managers. In addition, McClland in Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:222), found a number of employee-based causes for poor upward communication, including:

- Fear of reprisal: people are afraid to speak their minds;
- Filters: employees feel their ideas/concerns are modified as they get transmitted upward; and
- Time: managers give the impression that they don't have the time to listen to employees.

### **2.3.1.3 Lateral Communication**

Lateral communication involves communication among persons who do not stand in hierarchical relation to one another. While recent trends to flatten organisations have enhanced the importance of lateral communications, studies on lateral communication still lag behind those on vertical communication. One fairly limited study by Frank in Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:228), found rather high levels of satisfaction (85 percent) with lateral communication among human resource managers. On the other hand lateral communication among managers of dissimilar functional divisions, often cited as a major source of organisation dysfunction, has not been subject to much empirical research. It has been assumed that lateral communication at the worker level is less problematic, at least within a functional area.

With the greater importance of teams, more attention is now being directed at communication between team members. Lateral communications between workers in different functional areas is also becoming a bigger concern, as greater attention is being directed at increasing the speed of production through, simultaneous as opposed to sequential, work processes. There is further a greater emphasis on communication across distributed workers and geographically separated work groups doing similar kinds of work, in an attempt to promote learning and the sharing of expertise, best practices, and lessons learned (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991:229; Andrews & Hershel, 1996:147).

#### **2.3.1.4 Diagonal Communication**

Diagonal communication refers to communication between managers and workers located in different functional divisions (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991:229). Although both vertical and horizontal communication continue to be important, these terms no longer adequately capture communication needs and flows in most modern organizations. The concept of diagonal communication was introduced to capture the new communication challenges associated with new organisational forms, such as matrix and project-based organisations. Also, with the rise of the network organisation (both internally and externally oriented networks), communication flows can no longer be restricted to the vertical, horizontal, and diagonal (Baker, 2002:9).

#### **2.4 Key Functions of Communication in organisations**

The literature on communication generally acknowledges that the basic function of communication is, to affect receiver knowledge or behaviour, by informing, directing, regulating, socialising, and persuading. Neher in Baker (2002:10) identified the primary functions of organisational communication as:

- Compliance-gaining;
- Leading, motivating, and influencing;
- Sense-making;
- Problem-solving and decision-making; and
- Conflict management, negotiating, and bargaining.

The above author emphasised the social and organisational functions of organisational communication as a whole, rather than focusing on the functions of specific communication exchanges. Thus he combined the functions of informing, directing, and regulating into the broader category of behavioural compliance. He also placed greater emphasis on the role of communication in managing threats to organisational order and control, identifying problem solving, decision making and conflict management, negotiation, and bargaining as key functions of organisational communication. Another author who expressed similar views to Neher on the functions of communication is Robbins (1998:310), the only difference being that Robbins simply calls the functions by different names: control, motivation, emotional expression, and information.

Myers and Myers (1982:16) combined similar functions into a higher level common function and provide a particularly succinct and clear version of the functions of organisational communication. They see communication as having three primary functions.

The first of these is co-ordination and regulation of production activities. This function of communication has changed the most over time. In traditional bureaucratic views of the organisation, prescription - clearly communicating behavioural expectations and the behavioural consequences associated with complying or not complying with these expectations - and monitoring are considered to be the basis of organisational order and control. Myers and Myers (1982:16) stated that this function of organisational communication was seen as involving fairly proceduralised, rule-oriented, one-way, top-down communication. Tasks in many organizations have become more complex, less routine and repetitive, tightly coupled, and interactive, according to Perrow (1986) in Baker (2002:10) and, as such, the traditional bureaucratic view of organisational communication is no longer sufficient. Production activities of this nature require dynamic, reciprocal, lateral communications between production workers and non-routinised, two-way, vertical communications between production workers and managers. Communication as a means of co-ordination and regulation becomes more important, complex, and difficult.

Myers and Myers (1982:18) further identified the socialisation function of communication that stresses the human relations perspective of organisations, and asserts that capturing the hearts and minds of organisational members, is necessary to effectively co-ordinate organisational action in the pursuit of collective organisational goals. Communication directed at socialising organisational members, focuses on articulating and reinforcing organizational values and aligning individual goals with organisational goals. It is directed at establishing an appropriate organisational culture and climate. This form of communication cannot be one-way or top-down. It must occur reciprocally between organisational leaders and organisational members.

As regards the third communication function, Myers and Myers (1982:18) revealed, that organisational communication literature is increasingly addressing the importance of communication in promoting innovation, which includes communication activities such as organisation wide research and development, and marketing research. Communication to promote innovation is associated with strong communication within and beyond the organisation.

Baker (2002:11) summarised by commenting that this approach by Myers and Myers (1982:18), focused on the functional goals of organisational communication, rather than on the near-term outcomes of particular acts of communication, such as to make a decision, to persuade, or to resolve a conflict. The more specific functions of specific acts of communication or sets of communication exchange (decision making, informing, persuading, negotiating, problem solving), are subsumed into each of the three higher-level functional objectives.

From the above it can be concluded that, by reinforcing organisational values and aligning individual goals with an organisation's goals, the way is prepared for organisational members to have a better understanding of the direction in which the organisation wants to embark, the reasons for certain decisions and ultimate better decision making. The conclusion can thus be drawn that organisational culture affects communication, and therefore also decision making in the organisation.

### **3 Communication and Decision making**

Up to this point the literature review explored the communications in organisations with special reference to the following:

- Communications as essential to organisations;
- Communication models in organisations;
- Communication channels; and
- Key functions of communication in organisations.

The rest of this review will now focus on decision making and finding possible links between communication and decision making.

#### **3.1 Decision making**

Robbins (1998:103) stated that various organisations, through their managers, make decisions on a daily basis using different models of decision making. He is of the opinion that, making decisions are not the sole province of managers. Non-managerial employees also make decisions that affect their jobs and the organisations they work for.

### **3.2 Decision making defined**

Griffin (1993:202) viewed decision making as the act of choosing one alternative from among a set of alternatives. He saw the decision-making process as “recognising and defining the nature of a decision situation, identifying alternatives, choosing the “best” alternative, and putting it to practise.”

Robbins (1998:103) made a similar assessment and defines decision making as “ The choices made from among two or more alternatives”.

Drucker (1982:379) assessed decision-making by saying the following: “A decision is a judgement. It is a choice between alternatives. It is rarely a choice between right and wrong. It is at best a choice between ‘almost right’ and ‘probably wrong’- but much more often a choice between two courses of action, neither of which is probably more nearly right, than the other”.

In essence, the above authors assessments points to, that at any moment there are a multitude of alternatives of possible actions, any of which a given individual may undertake, and by some process, these numerous alternatives are narrowed down to that one which is in fact acted out.

### **3.3 Linkage between communication and decision making**

Various researchers offer evidence that there is a strong link between communication and decision making, which will be further discuss below.

#### **3.3.1 Management roles, functions and group decision making**

Mintzberg in Robbins (1991:5) offered a number of insights into the nature of managerial roles and its linkage with communication and decision making. He concluded that the various roles of managers’ fall into three basic categories, namely interpersonal, informational and decisional. The first role is that of monitor, actively seeking information that may be of value. The manager is also a disseminator of information, transmitting relevant information back to others in the workplace. When the roles of monitor and disseminator are viewed together, the manager emerges as a vital link in the organisation’s chain of communication.

Mintzberg in Robbins (1991:5) further explained that the manager’s informational and communication roles typically link, and lead to the decisional roles. The information acquired



by the manager (both sending and receiving) as a result of performing the informational roles, has a significant bearing on important decisions that are taken. The manager also responds to his/her role as entrepreneur, disturbance handler, resource allocator and negotiator. In all these roles two functions are interchangeably present, namely organisational communication and decision making, with information acting as the currency between the two functions.

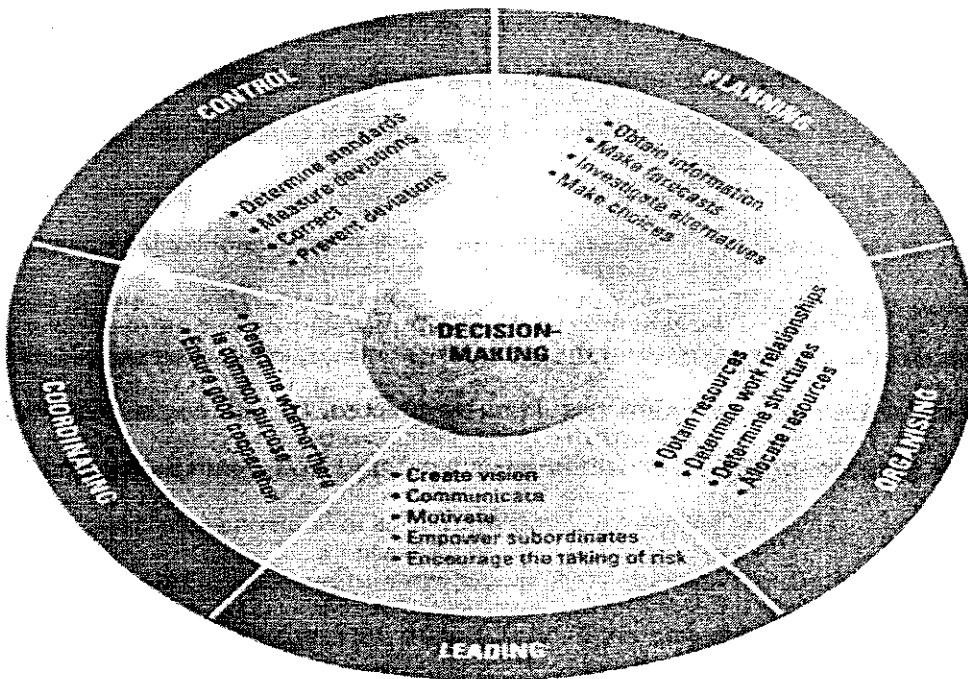


Figure 2.5: Management tasks (Source: Marx, Van Rooyen, Bosch & Reynders, 1998:354)

Moreover, Fayol in Marx *et al.* (1998:354,360) identified five major management functions that define management's activities, which are directed at an organisation's resources, as shown in Figure 2.5 above. These five functions are planning, organising, commanding, coordinating and controlling. Kroon (1990:3) redefined these management functions to four, namely planning, organising, activating and controlling. The additional managerial functions which stem from these are decision making, communication, motivation, co-ordination, delegation and discipline. These functions are interchangeably linked, consequently it can be postulated that, if the major functions are linked, communication and decision making, as extended functions of the main functions, are also intermittently linked.

Myers and Myers (1982:217) establish the linkage between communication and decision making by stating: "Decision making, therefore, is that activity or process in which people confront others and their ideas in a flow of communication exchange".

Similarly Robbins (1991:316) acknowledged the relationship between communication and decision making by stating:

“The final function that communication performs relates to its role in facilitating decision making. It provides the information that individuals and groups need to make decisions by transmitting the data to identify and evaluate alternative choices”. Robbins (1991:332) also made the following statements about group decision making and its link with communication: “We communicate information, and information is used in the making of decisions. Moreover, group decisions require transmitting messages between members, and the effectiveness of this communication process will have a significant impact on the quality of the group’s decisions”.

Likert’s participative decision-making notion, as referred to by Andrews and Hershel (1996:73), stated that where decision making is widely shared, even when significant matters are being addressed, the communication climate is quite interactive, with communication flowing freely and openly in all directions.

Eccles, Julyan, Boot and Van Belle (2000:7) pointed out that in order to make meaningful decisions; managers need timely, accurate and meaningful information. Furthermore, if communication is to be effective, the information received by managers should have value and stimulate them to make decisions that will assist them in achieving the objectives of the organisation.

Simon (1966:154) said it best by writing “Not only is communication absolutely essential to organisation, but the availability of particular techniques of communication will in large part determine the way in which decision making functions can and should be distributed throughout the organisation. The possibility of permitting a particular individual to make a particular decision will often hinge on whether there can be transmitted to him the information he will need to make a wise decision, and whether he, in turn, will be able to transmit his decision to other members of the organisation whose behaviour it is supposed to influence”.

It is thus evident from the above that there is abundant evidence in the literature, which proves the interrelationship between communication and decision making.

## **4 Previous research into the relationship between communication and decision making in museums**

### **4.1 Research in museums**

There is no empirical study that has been undertaken by the traditionalists or communication experts in the field of organisational communication and decision making in museums. Most of the research done in the field of South African museums, and reflected in the ACTAG report in Küsel (1995), addressed the museums' collections, governance, finances, assets and transformation with very limited reference to the roles and interactions of the employees' and management in the organisations. Vollgraaff (1998:12-14) was one of the few researchers that did research on the history of the SACHM, in Cape Town. Her research also referred to decisions and communication at the museum.

Vollgraaff (1998:12-13) identified the following matters as barriers to downward and upward communication at the SACHM. She pointed to the influence these had on the communication and decision-making processes at different levels, in particular on the functioning of the museum as an organisation:

- Clarity in respect of the duties and powers of the Council. A no confidence vote was expressed by staff in the Top Management, as the information whereupon Council took its decisions was questioned;
- Lack of policies: Long-term policy making and strategic planning;
- Control structure: The Deputy Director at that time came under scrutiny, and a detailed explanation of the incumbent's duties was requested. There were also complaints that Top Management interfered with decisions that should be taken on lower level, that responsibility was delegated without any real power, and that contradictory instructions were received from different members of the Top Management;
- Unrealistic year planning and inflexibility;
- Work overload in respect of curators, a shortage of staff (too few curators and conservators). Moreover, insufficient equipment was mentioned, for example, curators did not have access to computers;
- Great dissatisfaction was expressed with the evaluation and merit award system;
- Certain staff members felt that the museum had a bureaucratic control system, which resulted in a great deal of red tape and decreased productivity. It was requested that a flexitime system be implemented;

- The need for regular debates and information with regard to work-related matters were expressed; and
- Structure: Staff felt that the control structure was too long, that delegation of duties and responsibilities was undertaken without the necessary authority, and that lower ranks, including middle management, needed to be able to make more contribution to the decision-making process.

Vollgraaff (1998:33) submitted the convincing assessment that breakdowns in downward and upward communication at the museum, led to a total breakdown in organisational communication. The author also postulated that management's lack of willingness to include staff in the decision-making process, led to the organisation's negative climate and culture. In this context, organisational communication and decision making are seen as vital elements in the management of museums.

#### **4.2 From control to commitment**

Manning's (1987:74-75) research supported Vollgraaff's (1998) conclusions by stating that, "People want a say in their jobs, and success in today's complex world demands organisations designed to give them say". Manning mentioned that international companies are moving away from control and towards commitment and added: "They're starting to replace hierarchies with networks; to acknowledge that human organisations are living, dynamic organisms that survive and thrive through spontaneous communication. More participation - and more communication - is vital in South African organisations. We must work fast to bring more people into the decision making process, to give them a share of voice and a share in the rewards of success. They must share responsibility for inventing our future".

### **5 Conclusion**

The research that has been conducted in the field of organisational communication is a clear indication that communication has become an essential element in organisations in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

The research would have significant practical value and lessons for Iziko Museums of Cape Town, and other organisations that are responsible for the managing of staff through communication, especially the concepts of vertical and horizontal communication which, in turn may lead to more effective decision making if properly managed.

The focal point of this research is on effective communication within organisational context, and the central role it plays in organisations in terms of linking the management and employees and their related tasks in the organisation. This is of special importance, because organisations are made up of groups of people who work together to reach specific goals.

Communications in organisations is a two-way process, between sender and receiver, but is only of value if the message is accurate and clear as possible.

Communication and messages flow upward, downward, and laterally throughout the organisation.

Communication and decision making are intermittently linked, with communication (acting as the channel), information (as the currency), and decision making as the final link in the completion of a certain action.

Finally, the research points out that organisations through its management must make an effort to communicate properly and see to it that every employee, from the lowest to highest, have a total understanding and holistic view of its vision, strategic plan, corporate goals and the employee's role in the organisation. Moreover, empowering people and sharing information and accountability, all employees must understand how their responsibilities contribute to the bigger picture. By involving them in the decisions and giving credit to those who have earned it, will further assist the process of better decision making.

Communication is the skill which merits most interest and greatest investment of time and money for all South African managers.

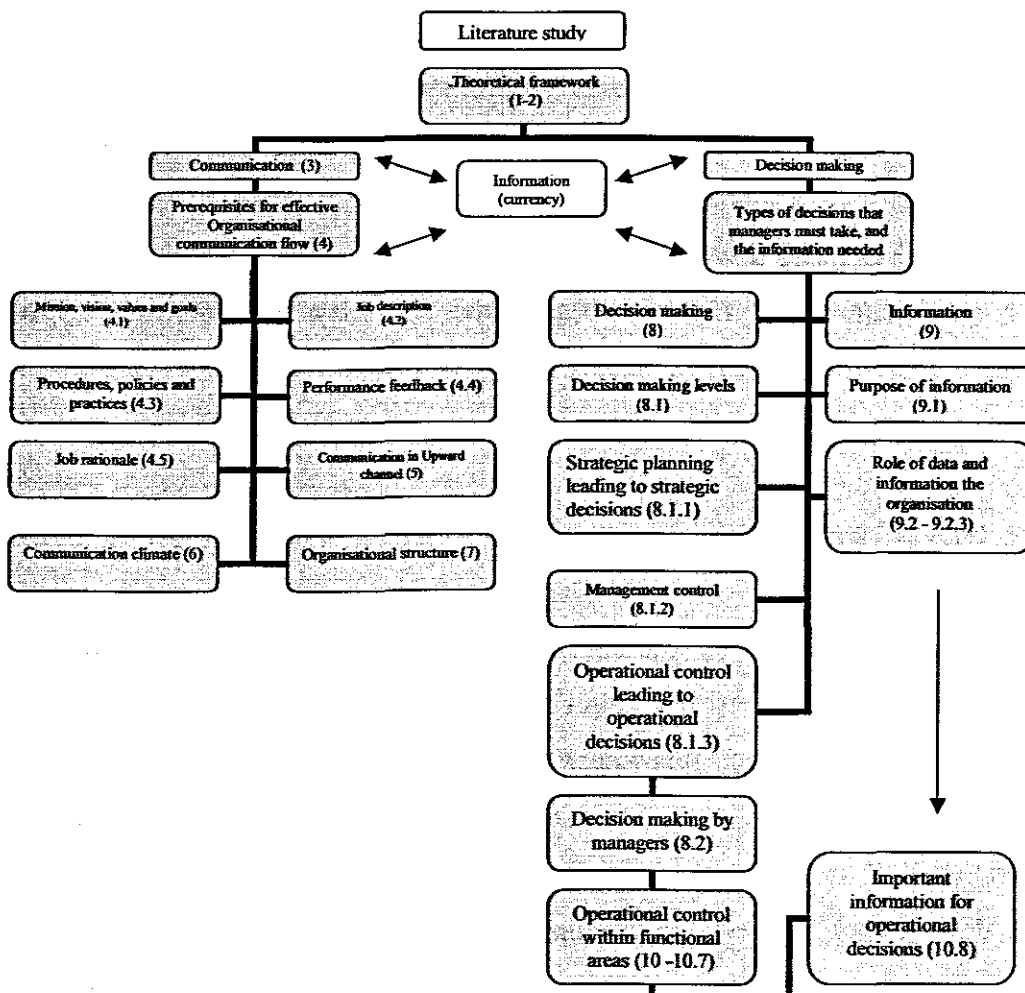
**CHAPTER 3**  
**THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

**1. Introduction**

This chapter explores the concept and process of organisational communication and the link between communication, information and decision making in order to provide justification and the relevance for the criteria on which the research instruments were based.

**2. Framework**

The information in the literature study and the empirical experience collated from the pilot study facilitated the development of the framework model, to guide and link the questions in the instruments to the actual theory.



**Figure 3-1: Theoretical framework illustrating the interdependence between communication, information and decision making.**

### 3. Communication

#### 3.1. The essentials of employer and employee communication

According to Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1998:345) communication and effective channels used for it, are essential for the survival of any organisation. The communication methods and channels used in organisations usually determine the effectiveness of communication between various groups, such as, supervisor and subordinates, employee groups and the employer. Effective communication at all levels in an organisation is therefore essential.

Communication is indispensable in organisations. It is generally accepted that people spend 70% of their day communicating, and of this 45% is spent listening. It is also known that people normally have only 25% efficiency when listening. It is therefore not surprising that something like 50% of all communication attempts fail (Gerber *et al.*, 1998:345).

Yet communication in any organisation is essential to reduce conflict to a minimum and to increase the effectiveness of employees in carrying out their daily tasks. Effective communication results in higher productivity and greater co-operation in an organisation. People can give of their best, only if they understand what they have to do, why they have to do it, and to what extent they are achieving their targets. If communication is not systematic, employees who are affected by change, for example, will not understand the reasons for these changes and will resist them.

Gerber *et al.* (1998:345-346) stated that, an organisation can gain several advantages from employer-to-worker downward communication:

- **Commitment to the job is improved:** The provision of information helps to build trust and motivates workers. Trust and motivation improve the commitment of workers to the work group and cause them to strive to achieve the goals of this group and of their section, and ultimately those of the organisation.
- **Grapevine distortion is reduced:** Grapevine distortion is inevitable in informal communication. Regular formal communication serves to reduce such distortion, since workers come to expect an official version, instead of giving credence to rumours.
- **Feedback is elicited:** Formal communication usually elicits a response from the receiver. This response provides valuable information and feedback to the sender, which enables the assessment of opinions and reactions of the interested parties.

- **The status of supervisors is improved:** To possess and to impart information confers status. If management wants its supervisors to enjoy status in the eyes of the workers, one way to achieve this, is to make supervisors the bearers of management information to workers.
- **Workers are involved in change:** It is human nature to resist change. Advance communication of a proposed or pending change, allows workers time to evaluate it and prepare for it. They are then more likely to co-operate in the proposed change.
- **The disciplinary system is more effective:** Workers accept the authority of management and see disciplinary procedures as a means used by management to eliminate unacceptable behaviour in the organisation.

#### **4. Prerequisite of communication in the downward channel**

Kahn and Kahn as referenced in Andrews and Hershel (1996:144-145), identified five general categories of downward communication, namely:

- Job instructions;
- Rationale (for task assignments);
- Information;
- Feedback; and
- Attempts to indoctrinate or motivate.

The general categories have been extended and broken down further by the researcher, in smaller understandable chunks, in an attempt to give a better understanding of the importance of these categories for organisational communication.

##### **4.1. Mission, vision, values and goals**

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:213) pointed out the importance of communication on the organisation's mission and goals to employees. The authors point out that too often employees have no idea what the mission of the organisation is, and company goals are guarded as if their public revelation would result in company failure.

McNamara (1999:3) in his article "Basics in Internal Organisational Communications", is of the opinion that to support effective internal communications, each employee should receive a copy of the strategic plan, which includes the organisational mission, vision, values statement, strategic goals and strategies on how those goals will be reached.



This is confirmed by Gerber *et al.* (1998:63) who argue that, where there is staff involvement in organisations and organisational goal achievement, it leads to:

- A strong willingness to do more than is expected for the sake of the organisation; and
- A definite acceptance of the organisational culture and goals.

Involvement also means that employees will identify with the overall goals of the organisation, and will consequently make a bigger effort in their pursuit of the goals of the organisation.

#### **4.2. Job description**

According to Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:212) the job instruction take many forms, one of which is the job description. The authors' further point out, that this communication, provides the employee with the necessary data to do the job.

Gerber *et al.* (1998:75) indicated the importance of the job description to employees and suggested what information should be contained in a typical job description:

- Job identification;
- Task summary;
- Relations, responsibilities and duties;
- Authority and job standards; and
- Work circumstances.

McNamara (1999:3) confirmed in expressing the opinion that management must ensure that each employee has a copy of their job description, to support effective internal communication.

Gerber *et al.* (1998:76) concluded that management must ensure that each individual employee has a separate, clearly demarcated job with special tasks and duties, in order to attain objectives in a co-ordinated manner.

#### **4.3. Procedures, policies and practices**

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:212) stressed that the communication relating to procedures, policies and practices are fundamental in socialising the employee to the organisational climate. They also pointed out that this process begins during the individual's orientation

program, when general policies and procedure are explained. On the-job practices are most often communicated by the direct supervisor and the informal group in the department.

McNamara (1999:3) is of the opinion that it is essential that management ensure that every employee receives an employee handbook that contains all up-to-date personnel policies. He takes it even further by stating that, management must develop a basic set of procedures for how routine tasks are conducted and include them in a standard operating manual, to support effective internal communication in the organisation.

#### **4.4. Performance feedback**

This category of information is of critical importance to the career progress of the individual employee, according to Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:212). They pointed out that this informs the employee how he or she is measuring up to standards, what are the employee's weaknesses and career opportunities, and in which training programs the employee should participate.

McNamara (1999:3) supported the above argument, by suggesting that internal communication will be improved if the following are encouraged:

- Regular meetings with staff (at least every two weeks), even if there's nothing pressing to report. He indicates if you only hold a meeting when you believe there's something to report, communication will only occur, when you have something to say ...communications will be one way, and the organisation will suffer. He advises to have the meeting anyway, if only to establish and affirm the communication that matters are of a status that there are no immediate problems.
- Leaders and managers should have face-to-face contact with employees, at least once a week. Even if the organisation has over 20 employees, management should stroll by once in a while.
- Regularly hold meetings to celebrate major accomplishments. This helps employees perceive what is important, gives them a sense of direction and fulfilment, and let them know that leadership is on top of things.
- Ensure that all employees receive yearly performance reviews, including their goals for the year, updated job descriptions, accomplishments, needs for improvement, and plan to help the employee accomplish the improvements.

#### **4.5. Job Rationale**

Information pertaining to the job rationale permits, the employee to understand his or her role in the organisation and how the job relates to that of others. Without such understanding, most employees will question the necessity of many of the jobs instructions they receive, and become demotivated by the seemingly unnecessary and unimportant tasks they are given (Gibson & Hodgetts, 1991:212).

#### **5. Prerequisite for communication found in the Upward channel**

Kahn and Kahn in Andrews and Hershel (1996:145) identified four general categories of upward communication namely:

- Employees comments about themselves, their performance, and their problems;
- Their reactions and ideas about others' behaviours and problems;
- Their reactions to organisational practices and policies; and
- Employees' thoughts about what needs to be done and how it can be done.

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:220) also identified similar categories which are discussed below:

##### **5.1. Feedback about employee attitudes and feelings**

The authors point out that if managers care to listen, upward channels can reveal a great deal about the how the employees regard their jobs, their supervisors, the mission of the organisation, and many other aspects of work life. By using these channels, supervisors can spot morale problems, before they become a major problem. They can also become aware of highly motivated individuals, with potential for helping the organisation, and of demotivated employees or departments than can cause problems.

##### **5.2. Suggestions for improved procedures and new ideas**

Upward channels that encourage employee participation are abundant in many of today's well-run corporations. Suggestion boxes, quality circles, scanlon plans, and a host of employee participation systems, all strive to obtain maximum employee input.

##### **5.3. Feedback regarding the effectiveness of the downward communication system**

According to the authors, feedback is the best way to determine whether downward communication has been received, is accurate, and is being taken seriously and put into

action. Feedback in upward channels has the potential to identify those subjects about which employees need information, before that information gap becomes a serious problem.

#### **5.4. Information regarding production and goal attainment**

The authors continue by advising that, productivity reports should not be an annual event or something that gets discussed only at budget time or during performance appraisals. Effective upward channels provide a conduit by which this information is routinely and regularly funnelled to higher management.

#### **5.5. Requests for subordinates**

Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:220) are also of the opinion that open-door policies and managerial willingness to listen have gone far in encouraging subordinates to ask for whatever they need in order to do their jobs better. These requests may take the form of informing management that a particular department needs more clerical help or more cooperation from the sales department, which does not seem to appreciate the budgetary limitations of the mentioned departmental staff.

#### **5.6. Surfacing of employee grievances**

The above authors continue by saying that small problems that go unnoticed have a way of mushrooming into major problems. Healthy upward channels can take the steam out of employee problems before this happen.

#### **5.7. Stronger involvement of employees**

Finally, Gibson and Hodgetts (1991:220) point out that stronger involvement of employees is perhaps the foremost purpose of upward communication systems, and provides the greatest benefit both to the employer and management. In the most basic sense, upward channels are motivational, because they allow the employees who use them, to satisfy their psychological needs for belonging, and feeling wanted and needed.

### **6. Communication climate**

Kreps (1990:194) noted that there is an interesting circular relationship between organisational climate and organisational communication. He explains that communication behaviours lead to the development of climates. However, organisational climates have been found to be a major influence on the ways that organisation members behave and communicate. Friendly communication climates encourage organisation members to

communicate in an open, relaxed, and convivial manner with fellow members, where negative climates discourage open and friendly communication.

Redding as referenced in Kreps (1990:194), identified that ideal communication climate consists of five dimensions, namely:

- **Supportiveness:** Superiors, subordinates, and co-workers provide psychological and physical support to one another;
- **Participative decision making:** Workers have opportunities to formulate decisions that affect them directly;
- **Trust, confidence, and credibility:** The workplace is characterised by integrity;
- **Openness and candor:** Free, honest, and open communication abounds; and
- **High performance goals:** Established goals reach beyond average performance.

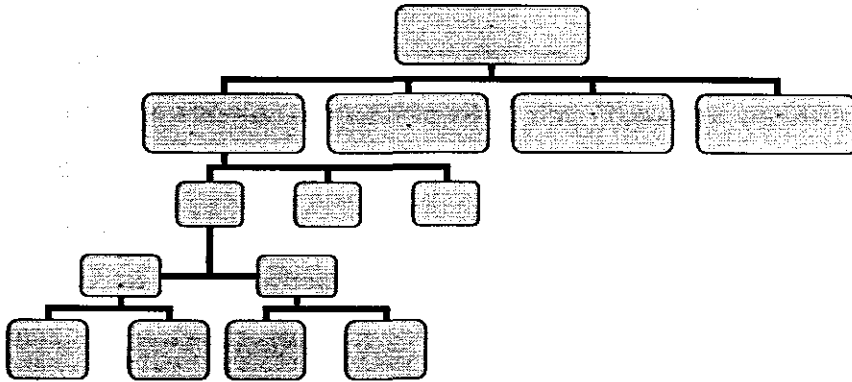
Of the five dimensions, participative decision making is a particular critical influence on climate. According to Likert in Kreps (1990:89), participative organisational style is the most effective, as workers are encouraged to participate fully in organisational goal setting and decision making. Managers are highly supportive of workers, depending on worker feedback and ideas to direct the organisation. Likert assert that this organisational style leads to highest organisational performance, because workers and management alike are able to identify with one another and with the organisation.

## **7. Organisational structure**

There is an interesting inverse relationship between organisational structure and the flow of information. One of the McKinsey's efficiency model elements are structure. Ten Have *et al.* (2003:138) indicated the importance of the organisational structure, hierarchy and co-ordination, including divisions and integration of tasks and activities. Two of these structures will be touched on, namely, tall structures and flat structures.

### **7.1. Tall structure**

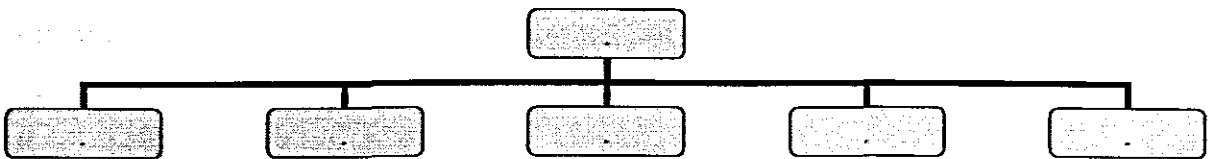
Fielding (1997:31) pointed out that tall structures are organised to allow for a carefully controlled flow of messages up and down a hierarchy of managers and departments. Managers have tight control over their subordinates. They also control the flow of information. In tall structures the more levels there are in the hierarchy, the greater the risk of message distortion, as illustrated by Figure 3-2 below.



**Figure 3-2: Tall structure (Source: Fielding, 1997:32)**

**7.2. Flat structure**

Fielding (1997:33) indicated that this kind of structure simplifies vertical communication by removing some levels in the hierarchy. The result is fewer distortions in messages. The author points out that this type of organisation requires a high level of communication skills in the field of conflict resolution, because of the often conflicting tasks and outlooks of different sections. Communication skills in flat structures need to be rather different from those in tall structures.



**Figure 3-3: Flat structure (Source: Fielding, 1997:33)**

O'Hare, Friedrich and Shaver (1995:40-41) are also of the opinion that an organisation's physical structure has a strong effect on its communication style. The authors feels that because flat structures have few hierarchical levels, they place a large number of employees at the same level, and do not rank jobs as being "above" or "below" other jobs in the organisation. The short chain of command in flat structures allows relatively rapid movement

of messages throughout the organisation. The modern trend in business is towards reducing the middle-level hierarchy and flattening the organisation.

## **8. Decision making, communication and information**

Lewis (1987:206) made an interesting observation of the above concepts by stating that, “Communication and decision making are interdependent activities. A decision is a choice made from various alternatives. It is the triggering mechanism of communication, and communication is the primary tool managers and supervisors have in acquiring information for decisions. However, gathering information to make a decision is not always easy. Almost half of all business transactions require decisions, which is why managers are constantly making decisions and then communicating those decisions. Choice, alternatives and communication seem to be the dominant elements in decision making”.

### **8.1. Decision making levels**

All management functions involve decision making on the part of the manager. Decision making is, in fact, the most important contribution that a manager adds to an organisation. Decision making by management takes place at three levels: strategic planning, management control and operational control. For the purposes of this dissertation the focus will be less on the first two kinds of decision making, and more focussed on the operational decision making.

#### **8.1.1. Strategic planning leading to strategic decisions**

According to Eccles *et al.* (2000:5), strategic planning develops a strategy with which a business organisation will attempt to achieve its objectives. The time range for strategic planning tends to be fairly long and does not necessarily have to occur on a regular basis. Some strategic planning will, however, be scheduled into the annual planning and budgeting cycle.

Nieman and Bennett (2002:103) emphasised that strategic planning includes developing a mission statement and long-term objectives. Strategic plans are commonly reviewed and revised every year, so that there are always a two-year, five-year or even ten-year plan. This allows the organisation to be future-orientated and able to adapt to changes in the business world. Top-level managers develop strategic plans.

The steps in the strategic planning process are:

- Develop the organisation’s vision (dream) and mission (reason for existence);
- Set objectives (long term);

- Develop strategies (corporate, business and functional); and
- Implement and control the most appropriate strategies selected.

### **8.1.2. Management control**

Management control (which includes tactical planning) involves the measuring of performance, deciding on control actions, formulating new decision rules to be applied by operating personnel and allocating resources. The time range for management control is shorter than that of strategic planning and decisions have to be made on a more regular basis (Eccles *et al.*, 2000:5).

Nieman and Bennett (2002:103) referred to this as functional planning, and pointed out that functional planning refers to medium-term planning carried out by middle management (in co-operation with top management) for the various functional departments to realise their objectives (which are derived from the long-term objectives). Examples of functional strategies or functional plans include human resource strategy on employment equity, or a marketing strategy on product positioning. Functional plans are normally designed for the medium term, and are therefore more tactical than strategic. Most medium-term plans are components of long-term strategies and plans.

### **8.1.3. Operational control leading to operational decisions**

Operational control is the process of ensuring that operational activities are carried out effectively and efficiently. It utilises predetermined procedures and decision rules and therefore a large percentage of the decisions can be programmed. The operating decisions and resulting actions generally occur over a short period and tend to be very regular (Eccles *et al.*, 2000:5).

Nieman and Bennett (2002:103-104) pointed out that operational plans have short-term objectives, that should be met in less than one year. Middle and first-level managers develop operational plans. Examples include plans that reflect the day-to-day activities of the organisation, such as equipment maintenance in order to maximise plant production or sending sales staff on training seminars.

Operational decisions are normally taken by the first-line management of the organisation and these decisions are usually responsible for the execution of daily activities. These decisions are based on the strategic and tactical goals and objectives of the enterprise, which were



formulated by top and middle management, are less complicated, less comprehensive, less uncertain and also less risky (Kroon, 1990:132).

## 8.2. Decision making by managers

Decision making should be seen as a process and not as something that happens in a passing moment. In many cases, decision making can take a considerable amount of time. Eccles *et al.* (2000: 5) recognise a number of steps that managers normally follow systematically when making decisions.

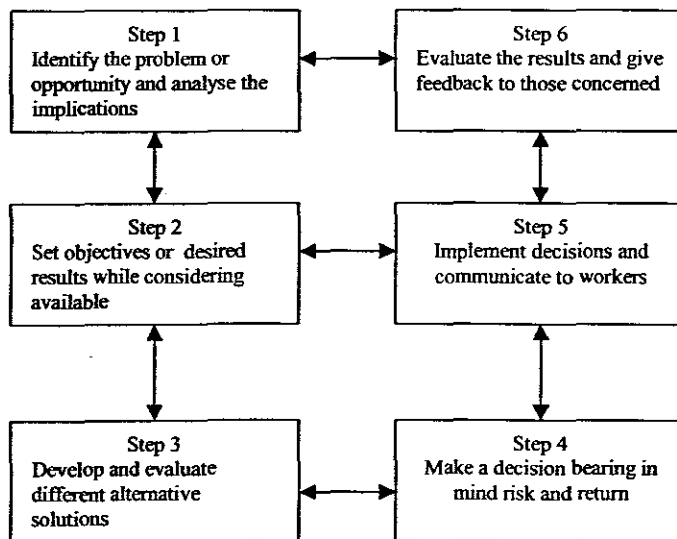


Figure 3-4: Steps in the rational decision making process (Source: Marx *et al.*, 1998: 364)

Although the words in Figure 3-2 are not exactly the same as Eccles *et al.* (2000: 5), in essence the idea is the same, namely:

- Recognising and defining a particular problem;
- Determining alternative courses of action for solving the problem;
- Evaluating the available courses of action and selecting the best one for solving the problem;
- Using the selected course of action to solve the problem; and
- Monitor the activity to ensure that the desired results are obtained.

Both Smith and Cronje (1992:140) and Griffin (1993: 202) defined decision making as the process of making choices among alternative courses of action. This definition implies that when managers are faced with an opportunity or a problem, alternative courses of action are

proposed and analysed, and a choice is made that is likely to move the organisation in the direction of its mission and goals.

Eccles *et al.* (2000:5) summed up by stating: “In short decision-making involves the following:

- Intelligence - knowledge or information regarding a problem;
- Design - inventing, developing and analysing possible courses of action; and
- Choice - selecting and implementing a particular course of action”.

## **9. Information**

### **9.1. Purpose of information in terms of decision making**

Eccles *et al.* (2000:5) made the interesting conclusion that all steps in decision making require information, one way or another. No decisions can be taken without timely, accurate and meaningful information.

Kroon (1990:196) also promulgated the same principle by maintaining that sufficient, accurate, reliable and applicable information gathered during the first step of the decision making process, leads to clearer and more carefully formulated problems and situations.

### **9.2. The role and definition of data and information in the organisation**

#### **9.2.1. Management’s need for information**

Eccles *et al.* (2000: 7) proposed that in order to make meaningful decisions, managers need timely, accurate a meaningful information. The identification of the information requirements for managerial decision making is, one of the most important factors in setting up a modern business. The information needs of managers are identified according to their responsibilities, the way in which they are evaluated, the types of problems they face, the means by which they evaluate personal output and the types of decisions they have to make.

The provision of information is part of the communication function of an organization. This means that information must be presented in a form that the manager can clearly understand and interpret. Furthermore, if communication is to be effective, the information received by managers should have value and stimulate them to make decisions that will assist them in achieving the objectives of the organisation.

### **9.2.2. Differences between data and information**

Information plays a vital part of communication. It follows that management and information is closely related. Indeed management itself can be conceptualised as a series of steps involving the reception, processing, and dissemination of information.

A major part of processing information is differentiating between data and information.

- Data is raw figures and facts reflecting a single aspect of reality; and
- Information is data presented in a way or form that has meaning (Griffin, 1993:548).

### **9.2.3. Characteristics of useful information**

Useful information has certain characteristics that influence the quality of decision making.

Those include:

- **Accurate information:** This provides a valid and reliable reflection of reality;
- **Timely information:** Information which is available in time for appropriate managerial action;
- **Complete information:** Provides the manager with all of the facts and details he or she needs; and
- **Relevant information:** The information is useful to managers in their particular circumstances for their particular needs (Griffin, 1993:549).

The above observation is also made by Eccles *et al.* (2000:23-24).

## **10. Operational control within functional areas**

Lay, Eccles, Julyan and Boot (1993:22) state that managers at the lower levels of the organisation have the responsibility of operational control, supervising day-to-day tasks and ensuring that plans are carried out properly. In this case, planning is minimal and the focus is on individual tasks and the techniques for performing those tasks.

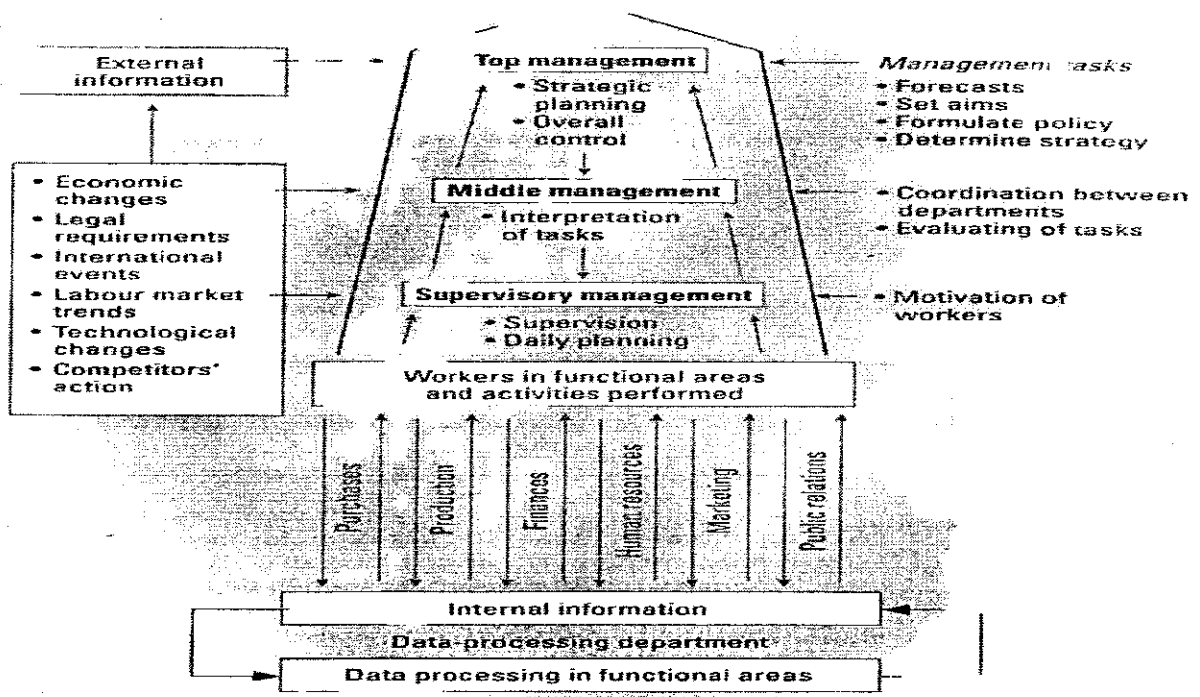


Figure 3-5: Information needs of management in relation with functional areas (Source: Marx *et al.*, 1998:667)

Various functional operational areas are normally found in organisations as shown in Figure 3-5, for instance, there may be marketing, public relations, finance, administrative, human resources and production (collections) functions. These functions are found in all museums, although they will normally play a supporting or cross-functional role in relation to the core product of museums, namely its collections - the main reason for museums existence in the first place. Based on these areas of responsibility, managers in organisations will take different kinds of operational decisions to affect the activities of museums and their respective sites.

### 10.1. Marketing function

The activities of the marketing function are based on the transfer of ownership of the enterprise's goods and services (its collections in the case of museums) to the consumer (public) and, in doing so, earning an income. This function is concerned with establishing the needs and preferences of its audiences (mainly the public) and the development and supply of a suitable service to fulfil these identified needs (Kroon, 1990:5). According to Marx *et al.* (1998:514) marketing decisions can be summarised in four areas of marketing namely:

- Product decisions - with reference to planning and executing the concept of ideas, goods and services;

- Pricing decisions;
- Distribution decisions; and
- Marketing communication decisions – with reference to promotion of ideas, goods and services.

### **10.2. Public relations function**

Public Relations constitute the conscious, planned, continuous liaison between the enterprise and its interest groups, with the main aim of creating, maintaining and improving mutual goodwill. Public relations is supplementary to the marketing function and concentrates on the current, as well as, the potential market, suppliers, capital investors, central government and local government, employees and trade unions (Kroon, 1990:5-6).

### **10.3. Finance management function**

The financial function deals mainly with the raising, utilisation and control of the organisation's capital. This is confined by the return on investment or profitability rates, liquidity and solvency of capital. The overall task of financial management includes, the investment policy (the determination of the type and quantity of assets needed by the organisation) and the financing policy (decisions on the financial norms and resources and capital costs).

Marx *et al.* (1998:656) pointed out that those financial decisions mainly cover the areas of investment, financing and profit distribution decisions of the enterprise:

### **10.4. Administrative function**

The administrative function is concerned with bookkeeping, collection, maintenance and distribution of information, by means of management information systems, cost accounting, archive control and general office organisation. Office organisation includes a wide range of activities, such as, the division of the administrative work units, supervision and control, office layout, filing, indexing, sorting of incoming and outgoing mail (Kroon, 1990:5).

### **10.5. Human resources management function**

Human Resources management focuses on supplying a service to the other functions by satisfying labour need, recruitment, selection, placement and induction or orientation of employees. It includes the formulation of human resource policy, as well as, the training and development of existing personnel. Other tasks of this function are the handling of

remunerations, promotions, transfers, demotions, resignations and dismissal of employees (Kroon, 1990:4).

In the case of the SACHM, the payroll function is part of the Human Resource function, although in many organisations this function is handled separately. The payroll function mainly deals with the inputs received from the Human Resources function, in other words, the physical input of data pertaining to all employees, and the necessary controls associated with payroll administration.

#### 10.6. Purchasing management function

Kroon (1990:4) explained that this function entails the procurement and making available all natural resources, parts, machinery, stationery, vehicles, furniture and equipment that any department may need. The principal activities are the establishment of the required resources, the search for possible sources of supply, the negotiation with and choice of suitable suppliers, the placing and follow up of orders, the receipt and inspection of purchased stock as well as storage.

#### 10.7. Collections management function (Production management)

The activities of the production function revolve around the production of goods and services according to Kroon (1990:4). In museums it is different, in the sense that this function deals with the curation, research and preservation of the different collections in museums, namely, Natural, Arts or Social History, which also forms the main core function of most museums, locally and internationally (Küsel, 1995:9).

#### 10.8. Important information for operational decisions in museums

The information requirements of different functional areas are listed in the table below.

**Table 3-1: Operational information Requirements**

<b>FUNCTIONAL AREA</b>	<b>INFORMATION REQUIRED</b>	<b>OPERATIONAL DECISIONS TO BE MADE</b>
Marketing and Finance	Collection of revenue & visitors and absenteeism figures of all museum satellites.  (Except the timeliness, accurate,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Projection of income per site depending on the visitors for budget purposes.</li> </ul>

	completeness the information must depict the gender, adults, children, pensioners and if possible local or tourist information).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increasing/decreasing the promotion of hiring out of venues at sites, based on the results.</li> </ul>
Human Resources	Payroll inputs in respect of all employees from all sites (example: vacation, sick leave, overtime forms, new appointments, etc).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Determination of the closing date of all inputs monthly.</li> <li>• Determination of the pay-date monthly.</li> </ul>
Human Resources & Finance	Identification of new or vacant posts at the various museums, as per the institutional organogram.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision whether to recruit, advertise, and selection of new staff members. The budget and availability of funds must also be considered in these decisions.</li> </ul>
Human Resources	Information on all employees per occupational category and level, ( <i>Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998</i> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision on the Equity plan of the organisation in terms of applying the numerical objectives and targets set in terms of employment per career class.</li> </ul>
Finance	Information needed on all museum sites income data from such as Gate revenue, sales, venue hire, government grant, projects, and professional services.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision to estimate the income of the museum for budget purpose yearly and approval by Council.</li> </ul>
Administrative & Human Resources	Information on the number of staff needed at sites over weekends and at functions. The information must also indicate that the legal required hours per month per employee are not exceeded, ( <i>Basic Conditions of Employment Act, no 75 of 1997</i> ).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision if staff must work overtime.</li> </ul>
Procurement	Information on the budget trends of actual expenses (items already purchased), versus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision on whether to purchase goods and services for your site.</li> </ul>

	the approved budget for the financial year.	
Finance, Marketing and Collection functions	Identification and prioritisation of all projects in terms of the strategic plan, corporate goals and objectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deciding on what projects will be financed and marketed in the next 12 months.</li> <li>• Deciding on what exhibitions will run parallel with the permanent collections.</li> </ul>

## 11. Conclusion

This chapter dealt extensively with presenting and explaining the principles of the prerequisites for effective organisational communication and decision making, especially the types of operational decisions and the information needed to make them. The foregoing informed the design of the research instrument, by focusing on the following principles:

- Development of logical and relevant questions that will assist the efficiency of communication, flow of information and then enabling decision making at the SACHM;
- Development of questions that will answer the research questions, and proving the research questions by data analysis, using nominal and open ended questions;
- Identification of actual theory that links to the questions and give justification to the questionnaire; and
- Conforming questions to the seven elements of the McKinsey model.



## **CHAPTER 4**

### **RESEARCH DESIGN AND APPROACH**

This chapter explains and details the research design and approach, the research process and instruments.

#### **1. Research approach**

An action participatory research approach was adapted which included a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The research method included two phases, namely, a preliminary and a main study, which incorporated the following and are explained later in this chapter.

##### **1.1 Preliminary (pilot) study - Phase 1**

- A preliminary (pilot) study at three museum sites to identify areas of inadequate organisational communication and decision making, and to find, verify and compare the preliminary findings with the findings as recorded by Vollgraaff (1998:xxxiv-xliv);
- Interviews and discussions with participants at the three problem areas; and
- Findings of the preliminary study.

##### **1.2 Main study - Phase 2**

- Development of Questionnaire one, was based on the findings of the preliminary study, and the literature review. The main purpose of this questionnaire was to establish if management obtain the information needed for decision making, and if proved to be so, to proceed with the research; and
- Development of Questionnaire two was based on the findings of the preliminary study, the literature review and linking to the elements of the McKinsey model. The main purpose of this questionnaire was twofold, namely:

**Section A** was directed at staff and management of the SACHM. The purpose was to establish whether both staff and management have an understanding of key concepts that drive any organisation in terms of communication, information and decision making.

**Section B** was directed at management of the SACHM only. The purpose was to establish how well managers interacted with their staff, in terms of the organisational

plans, goals, evaluation, job outputs, methods of communication, visibility of management, motivation of staff, freedom to talk and express views, job related information sharing, and inputs to job related matters.

## **2. Preliminary (pilot) study**

Huysamen (1994:197) pointed out that it is usually advisable to conduct a pilot study (before the proper study), on a limited number of subjects from the same population as, that for which the eventual project is intended. The purpose of such a pilot study is to investigate the feasibility of the proposed project and to detect possible flaws in the measurement procedures.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:43) defined a pilot study as a method to assess the feasibility of a research project, the practical possibilities to carry it out, the correctness of some concepts, and the adequacy of the method and instrument of measurement.

According to Polit, Beck and Hungler (2001:467), as cited in an article published by the University of Surrey (2001), a pilot study can refer to so-called feasibility studies that are at small scale versions, or trial runs, done in preparation for the major study. However, a pilot study can also be the pre-testing or “trying out” of a particular research instrument (Baker, 2002:182-3), as mentioned in the same article.

A pilot study was conducted by the researcher at the SACHM for the following reasons, namely:

- To establish whether the organisational communication, information flow and decision making were effective or ineffective, before further research would be of any relevance;
- Collecting preliminary data and information in relation to the research questions;
- To obtain direct, non-filtered information and confirmation from participants in respect of the problem areas; and
- To assist the developing of the research instruments.

In conclusion, the preliminary investigation involved participant observation in an effort to understand the employees’ behaviour, feelings, attitudes or beliefs better.

### **2.1 Observations during preliminary (pilot) study**

Information was obtained by the researcher by visiting three museum sites and recording direct observation(s) and by interviews with participants. This observation included the

employees, supervisory or management employees. The observations took the form of asking questions, drawing museum documents pertaining to policies, circulars and manuals, interviewing and interacting with staff to gather information, however, keeping to the following key areas of the research, namely, organisational communication, information and decision making.

### **2.1.1 Problem areas identified during pilot study**

The following indicators of ineffective internal communication and decision making were identified during the preliminary study, namely:

- No standard operating manuals, manual for operating the cash register or the alarm system could be found;
- Staff were not trained in terms of caring for the collections with special reference to conservation and curation;
- Visits by curators varied from weekly to monthly;
- Visits by the Director of the museum happened once or twice per year;
- Very limited decision making and communication was identified in the following decision making areas for house museums:
  - Exhibitions of the collections;
  - Research of the collections;
  - Conservation of the collections;
  - Replacement of equipment;
  - Duty and overtime rosters; and
  - Marketing of the site.
- No e-mail or computer communication was available;
- Communication was more by chance, and circulars and memorandums were absent;
- Slow communication in terms of informing staff of meetings, and when staff was informed, no relief arrangements were in place;
- Meetings on feedback by curator or manager were held irregularly;
- Matters such as the vision, values and procedures were not very high on the agenda, or were never discussed; and
- Staff generally seemed uncommitted, found the work boring and customer care was clearly absent.

It is of importance to note similar assessments were made at all three sites, and this conclusion could be extended to the other sites that were not part of the preliminary investigation. Most

important is that these observations tied in with the findings of Vollgraaff (1998), which was discussed in Chapter 1.

Based on the researcher's observations and positive identification of signs of ineffective internal communication and decision making at these sites, obtained during the pilot study, it was possible to take the research to the next level.

## **2.2 Action research**

According to Huysamen (1994:176-177) action research is performed with a view to finding a solution for a particular practical problem situation in a specific, applied setting. The following three distinguishing features are identified:

- Action research is not aimed at the testing or development of a theory, but at the solution of a problem;
- A second feature is that it uses a design which may continually be changed and adapted in reaction to information and results obtained during the course of the research project;
- Thirdly, action research places a high premium on involving all participants in each of the above phases; and
- Finally, external validity does not enjoy a high priority in action research.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:56-59) indicated that there is generally no specific formula for action research, but supplies the following broad framework as guideline:

- A request for assistance;
- Negotiation between the researcher and another party;
- Planning; and
- Implementation.

In contrast to other kinds of research, Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:55) pointed out that participatory research is distinguished by two characteristics, namely, the relationship of the people involved in the research, and the use of research as a tool for action, as well as, for increasing human knowledge. Participatory research techniques focus on particular problems facing society and a means of finding solutions to these problems, in order to improve the quality of life. The researcher works in partnership with various parties as equal partners to investigate the problem and causes to enable long-term solutions.

Moreover, Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:56) were of the opinion that participatory research is not necessary action research, although action research is always participatory. The conclusion can thus be drawn, that action research requires the researcher and the other parties to be equal partners in the planning and the implementation of a project, resulting in valuable contributions by both parties. Figure 4-1 clearly shows the relationship between action and research, which point to the repeated cycle of research and action, producing an ongoing learning and empowerment for all participants in the study (Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:59).

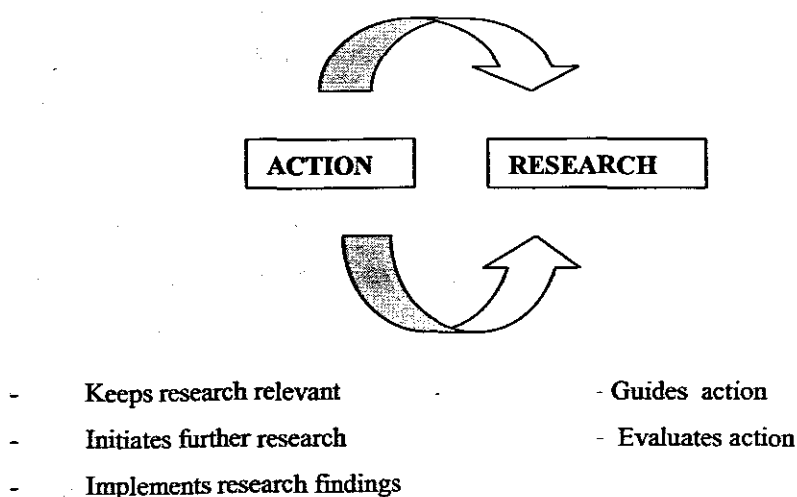


Figure 4-1: Relationship between action and research (Source: Bless & Higson-Smith, 1995:59)

### 2.3 Main study : Research following the pilot study

The preliminary finding during the observation and interviews, were used to inform the questionnaires, the responses which were subjected to both quantitative, as well, as qualitative analysis and interpretation.

#### 2.3.1 Quantitative and Qualitative methodologies

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:100) gave the following explanations by virtue of an example, what the above two terms really means in terms of research, namely:

- “The size of a table can be expressed in number of centimetres resulting in quantitative data”; and
- “The colour of a table can be described by its quality of being red-brown or dark brown, which constitutes an example of qualitative data”.

Taking the above explanations into account, it can be stated that the research is qualitative by nature, because it involves the contextual analyses of various academic studies and surveys,

regarding organisational communication, information flow and decision-making, which were used to draft the questions.

The various academic studies adapted the concept and principles of organisational communication, information flow and decision-making. The best practice principles and criteria applied are the result of an extensive literature review and setting up of the theoretical framework, undertaken by the researcher on the subject matter that would have a bearing on the organisational communication, information flows and decision making in museums.

Moreover, the research is quantitative; because an empirical study has been carried out on a representative sample, to validate the research questions.

The methodology engaged in, was chosen to ensure the maximum reliability and validity. It was necessary to adopt a hybrid approach, owing to the complexities inherent in organisational communication and also due to the different career classes among respondents, the diversity of the population and the differences in educational levels.

### **3 Research design**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:63) explained that research design can be understood as the planning of any scientific research, from the first to the last step. In this sense it is a programme to guide the researcher in collecting, analysing and interpreting observed facts.

The overall research were designed and consisted out of three parts:

- The Pilot study, and
- Two questionnaires.

These three components to the research are discussed further below.

#### **3.1 Preliminary (pilot) investigation**

The research commenced with a pilot study, which was undertaken to directly observe and obtain information on the actual organisational communication and information flow at the three museum sites selected, in an effort to inform the questions selected for the survey questionnaire. The pilot study focused directly on the perceived problem areas. The information was obtained directly from this selected research group, namely, the Front-of-House staff component, which formed part of the problem areas. Direct contact and

observation with the research group was deemed essential, to prevent the researcher obtaining filtered information. The staff at the three sites also assisted and interacted with the drafting of the questions and questionnaires that were eventually developed for the research.

### **3.2 Rationale and purpose of two questionnaires**

To verify preliminary and the main study findings, two questionnaires were drafted. The first questionnaire was designed for management only, and the purpose was to establish whether the information required for various decisions in the organisation was received in good time, was sufficiently comprehensive, accurate, complete and relevant. It also sought to establish from whom communication was received and if management members had speedy access to this information.

The second questionnaire was designed for both employee and management, and was aimed at ascertaining whether the basic communication structures and processes for effective organisational communication and information flow, were in place at the SACHM.

### **3.3 Validation of the research instrument**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:135-139) mentioned that there are many types of validity. In terms of each type the researcher took caution to adhere to the suggested principles in regards to the following types of validity:

- Content validity - The questions that were asked in the research instrument covered various decisions made by management and each decision had various sub-questions in terms of accuracy, timeliness, complete and relevant, comprehensive and speedy access, to ascertain if the respondent understood the relevant section.
- Construct validity - The questions in the instrument is closely linked to known theory of the research topic.
- Face validity - The positive way that respondents accepted the instrument and comments on the questionnaires serve as proof of face validity.
- Reliability - Reliability of information was ensured as the respondents who completed the questionnaires, were from the problem areas in the museum.

The language that was used in the instrument was English, a language known to all respondents.

## 4 The research method

### 4.1 Explanation of the research population

In order to achieve the research aim, a case study approach was adopted to describe the existing organisational communication flow, and thereby observe and identify the causes of the problems at hand. Yin (2002), as referenced in Wikipedia (the free encyclopaedia), suggests that a case study should be defined as a research strategy, an empirical inquiry that investigates a phenomenon within its real-life context.

The study was undertaken at the various museum sites of the SACHM. The sites are located in the following areas in the Cape Peninsula:

- Groot Constantia Museum in Groot Constantia ;
- Bo-Kaap Museum in Cape Town;
- Bertram House Museum in Cape Town;
- SA Maritime Museum and the SAS Somerset Museum Ship in the Waterfront;
- Koopmans-de Wet Museum in Cape Town;
- National Mutual Building; and
- Slave Lodge Museum in Cape Town.

Sixty-eight persons are employed at the museums and are responsible for the maintenance of the Social History collections, maintenance of historical buildings, research, exhibitions, public programs, Front-of-House activities and the administrative business of the organisation. These staff members come from a very diverse group, and range from academically qualified to very lowly qualified employees.

The composition of staff is as follow:

The total population accounts for 68 staff members, which are made up as follows:

**Table 4-1: Career classes and composition of staff at the SACHM**

Management	8
Administration	8
Public Relations	2
Library Services	2
Education	2



Museums Scientists	7
Technical staff	8
Front of House staff and cleaning staff	31
Total staff	68

The data was collected from all those participants who were more directly related to the problem areas in the organisation at large. To reduce bias, the research population that were targeted were employees at the various sites, but also representing the various career classes, as this would obtain a more holistic and even spread of data.

Care was taken not to structure the questionnaire based on any of the participants specifically, as the questionnaires used, was drafted from primary and secondary data sources.

#### 4.2 Sample selection and method

In terms of the questionnaires two methods were applied, namely:

Questionnaires 1 – 100% sample was used; and

Questionnaires 2 – Stratified sampling was used.

In terms of the management team of the SA Cultural History Museum, a hundred percent (100%) sample was selected for the first questionnaire on decision making and information flow, as the rationale behind the collection of this data, was to establish if these management members received adequate information for the decisions that they had to make on a daily basis. The characteristics of this sample (100%) consisted, of two males and six females. The 100% sample was undertaken, because the management group was very small and it was relatively easy to obtain the full sample.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995: 85) made the following statement that is relevant to this study, namely:

“Without doubt, if one wants to collect information about a group of persons or things that will give an accurate picture, the best way is to examine every single member or element of this group. But it is also possible to reach accurate conclusions by examining only a portion of the total group”.

In terms of the second questionnaire it was more difficult to obtain a representative sample based on the entire museum population, as the respondents included staff from each satellite and staff from the different sections at Head Office in Cape Town. At the seven museum sites it included, the Front-of-House staff, whilst, at the Head Office in Cape Town it included the curators of museum sites, the Heads of Department and Top Management.

Stratified sampling was done by career class, based on the industry experience of the researcher. The sampling was also influenced by the fact that some museum sites had a limited number of staff members, which meant the researcher was forced to use particular staff members in his sample.

#### **4.3 Construction of the questionnaire**

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:105) stated that the most frequently used method for gathering information, is by directly asking respondents to express their views. Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:107) added that exploratory research is an excellent technique, when no comparison is sought between the responses of different participants, but when each participant is considered as a specific case, such as in this case study.

Bless and Higson-Smith (1995:117) emphasised that great attention must be devoted to the wording of questions. The following list was identified as important:

- Questions should be simple and short;
- Questions should be unambiguous. Words which are too general, vague or give different interpretations;
- Questions should be understandable with reference to the vocabulary;
- Questions should not be double-barrelled (contains two questions in one); and
- Leading questions should be avoided (favour one type of answer over the another).

The questionnaires developed for this study was divided into three categories of questions and taking the above principles into account:

Nominal type questions (Dichotomous)-yes/no;

Ordinal type questions (Multiple); and

Open-ended type of questions.

#### **4.4 Questionnaire design**

As stated before, two questionnaires were developed.

- Questionnaire 1 consisted of 82 questions
- Questionnaire 2 consisted of 52 questions

The following questionnaire format included the following sections:

##### **4.4.1 Questionnaire 1 (Decision making and information flow for managers only – based on the kind of decisions that need to be made)**

- Section one: Decision: Projection of income;
- Section two: Decision: Increasing/decreasing the promotion of venues;
- Section three: Decision: Determination of closing dates for Payroll inputs;
- Section four: Decision: Determination of monthly pay date;
- Section five: Decision: Whether staff must work overtime? ;
- Section six: Decision: Recruitment and selection of employees;
- Section seven: Decision: Equity plan of the organisation, its implementation and promotion;
- Section eight: Decision: Projects to be financed and marketed;
- Section nine: Decision on exhibitions to run parallel with the permanent collections; and
- Section ten: Decision on whether to purchase goods and services for your satellite.

This questionnaire was designed to produce the following results:

- The questionnaire was directed at management to determine and test if the information flow allows staff and management to take proper decisions, based on the information that flows through the SACHM and its sites. It is important to note that decision making comprises various operational areas in the organisation, and therefore suggests various kinds of decisions, based on the kind of decision that needs to be made by managers.
- The purpose of the research questions was to test if the information flow was:
  - Sufficiently comprehensive;
  - Accurate;
  - Complete and relevant;
  - From who is the information received;
  - If there is speedy access to the information;
  - How to rectify the situation; and

- What can be done to arrange for good and timeous information?

#### **4.4.2 Questionnaire 2 (General questions for managers and employees)**

This questionnaire was divided in two levels, namely:

Section A: Only for employees to complete.

Section A & B: Management to complete both sections.

### **SECTION A**

#### **PART 1**

- Has the mission of the organisation, ever been discussed with you?
- Are you familiar with the strategic goals/corporate aims of the SACHM?
- Do you feel that your contribution is recognised within the organisation”?
- How would you describe the leadership style of your direct superior?
- One of the organisational values of the SACHM is mutual trust, respect and fairness. Do employees and management adhere to these values?
- One of the sub-items of the values reads as follows: “We regularly share information and knowledge within and between teams that empowers us to enhance teamwork and performance”. Do employees and management adhere to this value?
- Does management show understanding of the fact that people have different needs, desires, and cultures?

#### **PART 2**

- Have you ever encountered blocks to communication because of the organisation structure?
- What kind of organisational structure is evident in your organisation?
- Are the authority and responsibility lines clear to you?

#### **PART 3**

- Do you have an employee handbook that contains all up to date personnel policies, e.g. disciplinary, recruitment policy, etc?
- Have the contents of these policies ever been discussed with you or by you?
- Do you have a copy of your updated job description?
- Is the job description understandable and concise?

- Do you have a basic set of procedures on how routine tasks must be conducted (Standard operating manual)?
- Are you aware of the existing rules and regulations, for example “Rules on safety in the workplace” or “No supplies may leave the stores without unauthorised requisition”?
- Does the organisation offer an induction programme for new employees?
- When a vacancy exists at one of the museums, how quickly does the the advertisement reach employees ?

#### **PART 4**

- Are the current technology and resources (network, applications) in place to ensure proper communication?
- Are current staff and management adequately trained to use this technology to its full extent?
- Are the brands of hardware and software compatible for information to be able to flow freely through the organisation?
- Does the system documentation, e.g. leave-forms make provision for the correct input data?
- List the main types of information that your organisation/department must collect in order to meet its objectives?

#### **PART 5**

- How often are office meetings held?
- How often are full staff meetings held to report on how the organisation is doing, major accomplishments, concerns, and announcements about staff, etc.?
- Which of the following methods of communication are used in your organisation/department? Please cross the relevant block(s).
- Do you receive information and feedback concerning your job?
- Does the most information related to your work reach you on time?
- What role does the “grapevine” play in the organisation?
- Are you informed of the activities of other departments in your organisation?
- How does this information, as mentioned in paragraph 5.7, reach you? Please cross the relevant block(s).

## **SECTION B**

### **PART 1**

- How do you involve subordinates' in setting objectives and plans for your satellite?
- How are the Departments' goals or functions shared with employees at your satellite?
- How regularly are subordinates evaluated?
- What feedback is given to employees after a performance appraisal?
- How do you make sure that instructions of Top Management are conveyed effectively to the different levels?
- Do you ever discuss the job outputs with your employees?
- Which of the following means of communication do you use most often?
- How often do you as supervisor request written status report(s) on activities?
- How often do you 'walk the job'?
- How do you motivate and influence the subordinates to perform better?
- How do you learn about employees' problems?
- People assume that if they know something, others also know it. ? Is this true or false in your organisation?
- Employees usually do not have the insight to provide opinions on organisation functioning. Is this true or false in your organisation?
- In what format is information supplied to managers?
- How often are you supplied with information you need to perform your function?
- Are you aware of the budget approved for your satellite?
- Do employees of your satellite give input to the budget of your satellite?

This questionnaire was designed to produce the following results:

### **Section A**

- Part 1: To test if the organisational communication reaches the employee in terms of the organisational mission, strategic goals, own contribution, values, sharing information, teamwork, needs, desires and cultures;
- Part 2: To test if the organisational structure allows the flow of information;
- Part 3: To test if staff is aware of the personnel policies, job descriptions, standard operating manuals, rules on safety and induction programme;
- Part 4: To test if staff is aware and trained to use the current technology, resources and systems; and

- Part 5: To test if staff is aware of meetings, methods of communication, feedback, timeous information in terms of the job, role of the grapevine and activities of other departments.

## **Section B**

**Part 1:** This section was only for supervisors. The purpose was to test for:

- How does the supervisor involve subordinates in setting objectives and plans?;
- How does the supervisor share the goals with subordinates?;
- How regularly are employees evaluated?;
- What feedback is given after evaluation?;
- How does the supervisor make sure that instructions are conveyed to the different levels?;
- How regularly are job outputs discussed with employees?;
- What means of communication is followed?;
- How often is status reports requested?;
- How often does the supervisor work the job?;
- How does the supervisor motivate his subordinates?;
- How does the supervisor learn about employees' problems?;
  - Does the supervisor assume that staff knows the information?;
  - Does the supervisor view employees in having enough insight the organisation's problems?;
  - In what format is information supplied to the supervisor?;
  - The frequency that information is supplied to the supervisor?;
  - Is the supervisor aware of the budget approved for the satellite?; and
  - Does the employees give input to the budget?.

The questionnaires provided clear instructions to the respondents and provided an overview of the need for the research. The respondents were also assured of anonymity in order to promote reliable and unbiased opinions. A sample of both questionnaires is attached at the end of this dissertation for ease of reference.

### **4.5 Application of the research instrument**

The researcher obtained permission from the Director of the SA Cultural History Museum (SACHM) to do this research at the different museums sites.

#### **4.5.1 Distribution of questionnaires**

The researcher arranged with the Chief Messenger of the SACHM that enough copies were made to be distributed to the different sites involved. Seven sites were targeted.

#### **4.5.2 Instructions for completion of questionnaires**

The managers of each site were informed and requested telephonically to complete all questions as honestly as possible by the researcher. They were also invited to to phone or e-mail the researcher if they encountered problems or had difficulty with understanding the questions.

#### **4.5.3 Collection of questionnaires**

All managers were requested to assist with the return of the questionnaires. The matter was made easy, because there was a daily messenger service in place at each site. Most respondents send back the questionnaires by post, although some were delivered by hand.

#### **4.5.4 Minor problems encountered with completion of questionnaires**

One of the problems that the researcher had to overcome was that, certain colleagues were suspicious about the completion of the questionnaire. The researcher explained that no names were required on the questionnaires and that there was no need to worry that they will get victimised for answering questions in a certain way. Some employees thought this was a tool being used by management so that they could find fault with their work or build up a case to dismiss them.

The researcher explained the benefits to the employee as well as for the museum as a whole, and that this was a research project for a master's degree purposes. All respondents later indicated that they were satisfied with the explanations given as reasons for completing the questionnaire.

### **5 Conclusion**

As can be established from the foregoing, the process followed in the design of the instrument and its application was both rigid and structured. The research provided the necessary findings relating to the identified problems. Analysis of this information would facilitate the formulation of recommendations.



## CHAPTER 5

### ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

#### 1. Introduction

This chapter presents the findings based on the analysis of the completed questionnaires by the respondents who participated in the case study. Each questionnaire was dealt with separately, because each questionnaire served a different purpose during the research process, and thus analysed independently.

The raw data was captured, collated and recorded per question as completed and received from the respondents, on an excel spreadsheet. The data was then grouped to enable to identify major trends, and then computed for final analysis. It is clear from the respondents answers that there are problems in the organisation, at employee and managerial level, in terms of the internal and organisational communication and information flow, as the data have a strong correlation with the information obtained by Vollgraaff (1998: xxxiv- xliv) in her summary of interviews with staff from 27 November 1997 to 10 December 1997.

The results of the analysis, on which the initial conclusions are based, are discussed in detail.

#### 2. Analysis of results

Based on Questionnaire 1 the following results were obtained from the responses obtained from the management group.

#### ANALYSIS OF STATISTICS: QUESTIONNAIRE 1

##### Section 1: Decision –Projection of income

**Table 5-1: Question 1.1 - Information required for decision-making purposes**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	0	3	2	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	17%	0%	50%	33%	0%	100%

**Table 5-2: Question 1.2 - Information sufficiently comprehensive**

	Too Little	Specific enough	Too much	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	3	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as percentage				
	50%	50%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-3: Question 1.3 - Accurate information**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	4	2	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	67%	33%	0%	100%

**Table 5-4: Question 1.4 - Information complete and relevant**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	0	4	1	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.66%	0%	66.67%	16.66%	0%	100%

**Table 5-5: Question 1.5 - From who is the information usually received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	2	4	2	0	11
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	27.27%	18.18%	36.36%	18.18%	0%	100%

**Table 5-6: Question 1.6 - Speedy access to the necessary information**

	Easy	Difficult	Lag to long	Not at All	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	3	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	16.67%	50%	0%	0%	100%

**Question 1.7: If the correct information is not received, what in your opinion should happen to correct the situation?**

Responses and frequency:

- Liaise with relevant parties in order to get information in time (1)
- Information should be received from one level (1)
- Shorter, cleaner lines of communication (1)
- Sticking to deadlines (1)
- A more efficient and accessible and standardised system needs to be implemented (1)
- Statements of monthly expenditure are important but keep document less cumbersome i.e. give each department/section its statement of entire museum's statement (1)
- Handing in of departmental budget: Long waiting period until entire budget has been compiled and approved by Council (1)

-Missing (1)

**Question 1.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Develop systems that will provide info correctly from the start (1)
- Setting up proper systems in advance (1)
- More accurate and consistent record keeping of income received (1)
- Sticking to predetermined prices (1)
- Messages should be clear and precise (1)
- Ensure the quickest and easiest way of conveying message and information (1)
- Make sure the users of the information system are on par with how the system works (1)
- Budget for a project/exhibition: Admin should put out statements regularly and quicker to enable one to assess spending easier (1)
- Sometimes (like example with the Bumba project 2001) no statement was received at the end of exhibition (1)
- Missing (1)

**Section 2: Decision –Decreasing/increasing the promotion of venues**

**Table 5-7: Question 2.1 - Information to make decisions**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
<b>Raw score</b>	0	1	0	4	1	6
<b>Standard score %</b>	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.66%	0%	66.67%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-8: Question 2.2 - Information sufficiently comprehensive**

	Too little	Specific enough	Too much	Total
Raw score	3	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as percentage			
	50%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-9: Question 2.3 - Accurate information**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	2	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-10: Question 2.4 - Information complete and relevant**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	1	2	1	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-11: Question 2.5 - From who is the information usually received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self- Genera- -ting	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	2	4	2	1	12
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	25%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%	8.33%	100%

**Table 5-12: Question 2.6 - Speedy access to the necessary information**

	Easy	Difficult	Lag too long	Not at All	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	1	1	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Question 2.7: If the correct information is not received, what in your opinion should happen to correct the situation?**

Responses and frequency:

- Setting up proper systems (1)
- Compile a standard for customers to complete, with slots for (a) Were facilities sufficient (toilets, overhead projectors, telephones) (b) Comfort (c) Number of those attending (d) other comments (1)
- A centralised data base should be developed. (1)
- A single person should be responsible for co-ordinating the centralised system (1)
- Public Relations department to communicate hiring of venue in advance. Devise forms for functions of this nature and establish (1)
- Your immediate superior (1)

**Question 2.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Setting up proper systems (1)
- Arrange a specific roster as to when information should be submitted (1)
- Obtain precise information about functions and your own ability to house specific function (1)
- Better understanding on part of non-curatorial staff. Full information to supplied in advance, so that curators to have a chance to weight up pros and cons prior to decision to hire venues is taken (1)
- Speak to all parties concerned and ensure that a system is put in place to enable clear flow of information (1)

**Section 3 – Decision : Determination of the closing date(s) of all inputs to HQ**

**Table 5-13: Question 3.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	1	1	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.66%	16.66%	16.66%	33.33%	16.66%	100%

**Table 5-14: Question 3.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	2	0	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	33.33%	33.33%	0%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-15: Question 3.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	1	3	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	16.67%	50%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-16: Question 3.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	1	3	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	16.67%	50%	33.33%	100%



**Table 5-17: Question 3.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	0	0	1	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	50%	0%	0%	16.67%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-18: Question 3.6 - Speedy access to the necessary information**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	0	2	1	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	0%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Question 3.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- Liaise with relevant parties in order to get information in time (1)
- Information should be received from one level only (1)
- OK. Working as it is (1)
- There should be a standard slot on the agenda of the regular management meetings to discuss this (1)
- Very little impact before event, mostly decisions taken by administration and we just follow their guidelines (1)
- Missing (1)

**Question 3.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Develop uniformity in organization, i.e. all forms should be the same (1)
- Develop systems that will provide information correctly from the start (1)
- Systems working, OK (1)
- Should administration have questions i.e. attendance or missing leave forms, these often arrive well after the event, one often cannot remember any more. Handling in of forms to be strictly controlled (1)
- Missing (1)

**Section 4 – Decision: Determination of the monthly pay date?**

**Table 5-19: Question 4.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	0	1	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	0%	16.67%	83.33%	100%

**Table 5-20: Question 4.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	0	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	0%	16.67%	0%	83.33%	100%

**Table 5-21: Question 4.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	0	1	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	0%	16.67%	83.33%	100%

**Table 5-22: Question 4.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	0	1	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	0%	16.67%	83.33%	100%

**Table 5-23: Question 4.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	0	0	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.67%	0%	0%	83.33%	100%

**Table 5-24: Question 4.6 - Ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	0	0	0	5	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.67%	0%	0%	0%	83.33%	100%

**Question 4.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

-Missing (6)

**Question 4.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

-Missing (6)

**Section 5 – Decision: Whether staff must work overtime?**

**Table 5-25: Question 5.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	3	2	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	17%	50%	33%	0%	100%

**Table 5-26: Question 5.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	5	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	17%	83%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-27: Question 5.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	2	4	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	33%	67%	0%	100%

**Table 5-28: Question 5.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	3	3	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-29: Question 5.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	1	1	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	66.67%	16.66%	16.66%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-30: Question 5.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	2	1	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	50%	33%	17%	0%	0%	100%

**Question 5.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- A new policy and procedure to comply with labour law will have to be installed in co-operation with relevant staff members (1)
- Overtime will always be part of this organization. It is who and how that needs to be defined.(1)
- OK. Working as it is (1)
- There should be a standard slot on the agenda of the regular management meetings to discuss this (1)
- A written application form requesting overtime prior to the event, with slots requesting the necessary information (1)
- Attendants to apply for overtime earlier - often very little time to it clear with the Director

(i.e. in cases like KDW where house was specially opened to be cleaned on a Monday – this meant overtime for the attendant (1)

-Missing (2)

**Question 5.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

-Call several meetings regarding policy and procedures (1)

-Compile standardise policy (1)

-Manage through the line function (1)

-OK. Working as it is (1)

-Make arrangements well in advance (1)

-Avoid last minute decisions (1)

-Keep all relevant staff fully informed (1)

-Application forms for overtime to be timeously completed and signed by supervisor. Not just signing forms in retrospect of overtime worked (1)

-Missing (2)

**Section 6 – Decision: Recruitment and selection of Employees?**

**Table 5-31: Question 6.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	0	4	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.67%	0%	66.67%	16.66%	100%

**Table 5-32: Question 6.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	4	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	16.67%	66.67%	0%	16.66%	100%

**Table 5-33: Question 6.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	1	4	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	16.67%	66.67%	16.66%	100%

**Table 5-34: Question 6.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	2	3	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	33.33%	50%	16.67%	100%



**Table 5-35: Question 6.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	4	4	2	2	12
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-36: Question 6.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	2	2	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	0%	16.67%	100%

**Question 6.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- Policy to be compiled (1)
- Procedure to be compiled (1)
- Package to line managers (1)
- Shorten the line of command (1)
- One often receives enough information before the time and has a chance to input to short-listing and compilation of questions. But, once interviews are over, one does not have access to all the documentation. Yet, one is expected to make fully informed questions (1)
- Missing (2)

**Question 6.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Line managers need to be trained and kept informed (1)
- More involvement and insight into final papers (1)
- Missing (3)

**Section 7: Decision on the equity plan of the organization, its implementation and promotion?**

**Table 5-37: Question 7.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	2	1	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	33.33%	16.67%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-38: Question 7.2 -Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	2	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	50%	33.33%	0%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-39: Question 7.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	2	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-40: Question 7.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	3	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	50%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-41: Question 7.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	2	2	1	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	33.33%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-42: Question 7.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	3	0	1	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.67%	50%	0%	16.67%	16.67%	100%

**Question 7.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- 5 year plan needs to be streamlined and intensified through process of career pathing, learning and development (1)
- Respect for my managerial position (1)
- Effective communication by top management (1)
- The equity plan seems to have gone to a halt - not sure what is going on with it? (1)
- Missing (2)

**Question 7.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Information needs to be available (1)
- Management through Human Resources and line managers (1)
- Attend meetings (1)
- Receptive attitude (1)
- The Human Resources Director needs to be more pro-active in getting information from the staff (1)
- Missing (2)

Section 8 – Deciding: Projects to be financed and marketed?

**Table 5-43: Question 8.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	2	2	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	33.33%	33.33%	33.34%	100%

**Table 5-44: Question 8.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	3	1	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	0%	50%	16.67%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-45: Question 8.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	1	3	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	16.67%	50%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-46: Question 8.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	1	3	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	16.67%	50%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-47: Question 8.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	1	0	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	0%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-48: Question 8.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	2	1	1	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	33.33%	16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	100%

**Question 8.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- Setup better communication channels (1)
- Many levels involved to allocate money for a specific project. Once a project is up and running, its success greatly depends on marketing (1)
- There appears to be a blockage in terms of budgetary/project information (1)
- Missing (3)

**Question 8.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Receive information early so that it can be passed on timeously (1)
- Marketing has never been well orchestrated and has in fact been at times been non-existent. Curators often ended up doing own marketing, in absence of a proper Public Relations department (1)
- Requesting better communication from the Director (1)
- Missing (3)

**Section 9: Decision on exhibitions to run parallel with the permanent exhibitions of collections?**

**Table 5-49: Question 9.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	3	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	50%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-50: Question 9.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	2	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	50%	33.33%	0%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-51: Question 9.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	3	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	50%	33.33%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-52: Question 9.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	3	2	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	50%	33.33%	16.67%	100%



**Table 5-53: Question 9.5 - From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self-Generating	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	2	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	16.67%	33.33%	0%	16.67%	100%

**Table 5-54: Question 9.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	3	1	0	1	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	16.67%	50%	16.67%	0%	16.67%	100%

**Question 9.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

- Standard form requesting facts which even top management should complete (1)
- Regular meetings to discuss merits of each case, attended by all relevant parties (1)
- Written information on decisions whether accepted or turned down, so that all can know exactly where we stand (1)
- Concentrate on effective communication between curators and design studies (1)
- Centralise body that should control exhibition to be developed (1)
- Increased and effective cross-departmental communication (1)
- Decisions around exhibitions, and how and by whom they should be executed, have always been strained;

Communication and trust to be re-established; Curatorial powers to be recognized and respected (1)

-As with the budget, insufficient information from the Director (1)

-Missing (2)

**Question 9.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

-Standard form requesting facts, which even top management should complete (1)

-Regular meetings to discuss merits of each case, attended by all relevant parties (1)

-Written information on decisions, whether accepted or turned down, so that all can know exactly where we stand (1)

-Concentrate on effective communication between curators and design studies (1)

-Maintain channels of communication; and draw up schedules to this regard and provide all relevant parties with it (1)

-Proper working teams for exhibitions and projects, creative atmosphere; roles of different players to be sorted out (1)

-Curatorial positions to be recognized (1)

-Missing (3)

**Part 10: Decision on whether to purchase goods and services for your museum site?**

**Table 5-55: Question 10.1 - Do you get information to make decisions in good time?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	1	1	2	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	16.67%	16.67%	33.33%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-56: Question 10.2 - Is the information you receive sufficiently comprehensive?**

	Too Little	Specific Enough	Too Much	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	4	0	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage				
	0%	66.67%	0%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-57: Question 10.3 - Is the information accurate?**

	Never	Rarely	Some Times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	2	2	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	33.33%	33.33%	33.34%	100%

**Table 5-58: Question 10.4 - Is the information complete and relevant?**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	0	2	2	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	0%	33.33%	33.33%	33.34%	100%

**Table 5-59: Question 10.5: From who is the information normally received?**

	Subordinates	Managers	Other Departments	Self- Genera- -ting	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	0	2	0	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	0%	33.33%	0%	33.33%	100%

**Table 5-60: Question 10.6 - If you need to make an urgent decision, do you have ready and speedy access to the necessary information?**

	Easy	Difficult	Obtain ability lag too long	Not at all	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	0	2	0	2	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33.33%	0%	33.33%	0%	33.33%	100%

**Question 10.7: If you feel that you are not getting the information you should, what in your opinion should happen to rectify this situation?**

Responses and frequency

-Employees with decision making powers should get greater freedom, to make decisions and be accountable for it (1)

-Administration's position to be made clear and the role it plays in the acquisition of office equipment, furniture and appliances, as to find somebody who could purchase and collect goods is difficult; even services, such as rubbish removal, has been arranged ad hoc and not to utmost satisfaction (1)

-Missing (3)

**Question 10.8: What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?**

Responses and frequency

- Clear concise channel of command (1)
- Be pro-active and do own investigative cost hunting quotes (1)
- One person to take charge of services ,such as, tower rolls/soap dispenses, etc-this person will be in a better position to negotiate good prices (1)
- Missing (3)

**Table 5-61: Question 11 - How would you describe the information flow at the SACHM?**

	Effective	Ineffective	OK	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	5	1	0	6
	Raw score presented as a percentage				
Standard score %	0%	83.33%	16.67%	0%	100%

**Question 12: Please give reasons for your answer?**

- More care can be taken by managers and personnel with e-mail, to deliver messages to rest of staff immediately (1)
- Staff needs to be kept informed where processes of projects or changes are, so that rumours do not start and develop into negative monsters (1)
- Systems need to be improved (1)
- Bad communication flow from top down (Although they try hard) (1)
- Training for directors, to gain insight into information required by middle management, to do their jobs better (1)
- Central vision of the institution was not properly thought through and not implemented by the Director and others (1)
- Decisions were often made to "Save face" (1)
- General communication is OK, but there is room for improvement (1)
- Problem is mainly caused by staff in new positions (1)
- New buildings (1)

- New systems and processes (1)
- Information does not filter through to all employees; to a large extent the information given is not precise to be interpreted uniformly (1)
- Middle management knows only part of the full picture, but is expected to make decisions and take responsibility for the whole picture; this makes effective communication and understanding of the broader issues difficult; and if we don't understand, how can we effectively run a department (1)
- Attempts were made to ensure that staff had information, but I suppose that was not always successful (1)

## ANALYSIS OF STATISTICS: QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Section A (Both for employees and management)

Part 1:

**Table 5-62: Question 1.1 - Mission of the organisation**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	7	13	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	35%	65%	0%	100%

**Table 5-63: Question 1.2 - Strategic goals of the SACHM**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	7	13	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	35%	65%	0%	100%

**Table 5-64: Question 1.3 - Contribution recognition within the organisation**

	Never	Rarely	Some times	Usually	Missing	Total
Raw score	7	0	12	1	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	35%	0%	60%	5%	0%	100%

**Table 5-65: Question 1.4 - Leadership style of your direct superior**

	Autocrat	Democrat	Participative	Laissez Faire	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	3	11	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	30%	15%	55%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-66: Question 1.5 - Employee and management adherence to values**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	7	7	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	30%	35%	35%	0%	0%	100%



**Table 5-67: Question 1.6 - Sharing of information and knowledge within teams**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	10	4	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	30%	50%	20%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-68: Question 1.7 - Understanding of people's different needs, desires and cultures**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	5	2	13	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	25%	10%	65%	0%	0%	100%

Part 2:

**Table 5-69: Question 2.1 - Blocked communication because of the Organisational Structure**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	3	2	9		20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	30%	15%	10%	45%	0%	100%

**Table 5-70: Question 2.2 - Organisational structure evident in the organisation**

	Tall	Flat	Missing	Total
Raw score	8	12	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	40%	60%	0%	100%

**Table 5-71: Question 2.3 - Authority and responsibility lines**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	10	10	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

Part 3:

**Table 5-72: Question 3.1 - Employee handbook and up to date personnel policies**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	17	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	15%	85%	0%	100%

**Table 5-73: Question 3.2 - Have the contents of the policy been discussed with you?**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	16	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	20%	80%	0%	100%

**Table 5-74: Question 3.3 - Copy of the updated job description**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	11	9	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	55%	45%	0%	100%

**Table 5-75: Question 3.4 - Understandable and concise job description**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	12	8	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	60%	40%	0%	100%

**Table 5-76: Question 3.5 - Standard operating manual**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	16	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	20%	80%	0%	100%

**Table 5-77: Question 3.6 - Awareness of the existing rules and regulations in the workplace**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	17	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	15%	85%	0%	100%

**Table 5-78: Question 3.7 - Organisational induction program**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	16	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	20%	80%	0%	100%

**Table 5-79: Question 3.8 - Awareness of advertisement of vacancies**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	6	6	5	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	15%	30%	30%	25%	0%	100%

Part 4:

**Table 5-80: Question 4.1 - Does current technology and resources ensure proper communication?**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	10	10	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-81: Question 4.2 - Current staff and management trained to use the technology to its full extent?**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	18	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	10%	90%	0%	100%

**Table 5-82: Question 4.3 - Compatibility of hardware and software to promote information flow**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	10	10	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-83: Question 4.4 - Does the system documentation make provision for the correct input data?**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	16	4	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	80%	20%	0%	100%

**Question 4.5: Listing of main types of information that the organisation must collect to reach objectives**

Responses and frequency

- Creditors information (2)
- Missing (3)
- Faxes, e-mails (2)
- Research data for collections (1)
- Staff meetings (1)
- School groups (2)
- Daily income (2)
- Comments in visitors book (1)
- Upcoming exhibitions (1)
- Leadership skills (1)
- Transparency (1)
- Dedication (1)
- Stock information of hardware (Toilet paper, etc) (1)

- Visitors information (6)
- Parking information (5)
- Revenue information (3)
- Information for divisions (1)
- New Accpac information (1)
- Computers (1)
- Debtors information- customers (1)

Part 5:

**Table 5-84: Question 5.1 - How often are office meetings held?**

	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Longer	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	0	2	7	7	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage						
	20%	0%	10%	35%	35%	0%	100%

**Table 5-85: Question 5.2 - How often are full staff meetings held to report the organisations status?**

	Never	Monthly	Bi-monthly	Yearly	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	3	14	3	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	0%	15%	70%	15%	0%	100%

**Table 5-86: Question 5.3 - Methods of communication used in organisation/department**

	Memo	Verbal	Reports	E-Mail	Missing	Total
Raw score	11	11	4	9	0	35
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	31%	31%	12%	26%	0%	100%

**Table 5-87: Question 5.4 - Do you receive information and feedback concerning your job?**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	14	4	2	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	70%	20%	10%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-88: Question 5.5 - Information related to your work reach you on time**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	5	12	3	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	25%	60%	15%	0%	0%	100%



**Table 5-89: Question 5.6 - Role of "grapevine"**

	None	Little	Improves	Great	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	2	1	17	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	%	10%	5%	85%	0%	100%

**Table 5-90: Question 5.7 - Informed of activities of other departments?**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	11	3	0	0	20
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	30%	55%	15%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-91: Question 5.8 - Information mostly received from other departments**

	E-Mail	Reports	Verbal	Memoranda	Missing	Total
Raw score	6	4	12	7	0	29
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	21%	14%	41%	24%	0%	100%

Section B (For management only)

Part 6:

**Question 6.1: How are subordinates involved in setting plans for the satellite?**

- Motivate for productivity in their own areas (1)
- Missing (1)
- Raise on Monday morning and delegate the weekly work (1)
- At office meetings (1)

**Question 6.2: How are the departments goals shared with employees?**

- See above (1)
- Staff meetings (2)
- Via phone and verbally (1)

**Table 5-92: Question 6.3 - How regularly are subordinates evaluated?**

	Never	3 Months	6 Months	Yearly	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	0	1	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	50%	25%	0%	25%	0%	100%

**Question 6.4: Feedback after performance appraisal**

- Praise will be given when applicable and training for weaker points (1)
- Missing (2)
- Punitive feedback (1)

**Question 6.5: How do you ensure that instructions of top management are conveyed to the different levels?**

- By memorandum that is signed for (1)
- E-mail (2)
- Hand copies (2)
- Checklist (2)
- Enquire random (1)

**Question 6.6: Discussion of outputs with employees**

- No (2)
- I have no employees (1)
- Yes, fundamental in managing the work scenario (1)

**Table 5-93: Question 6.7 - Means of communication used most often**

	E-Mail	Reports	Verbal	Memoranda	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	0	4	0	0	6
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	33%	%	67%	%	0%	100%

**Table 5-94: Question 6.8 - Requests on written status reports as supervisor**

	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Longer	Missing	Total
Raw score	1	0	0	2	1	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage						
	25	0%	0%	50%	25%	0%	100%

**Table 5-95: Question 6.9 - How often do you "Walk the Job?"**

	Never	Sometimes	Usually	Always	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	0	0	1	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	75%	%	%	25%	0%	100%

**Question 6.10: Motivate and influence of subordinates to perform better**

- By example (2)
- Missing (1)
- Greet continuously, praise them when the time is due (1)

**Question 6.11: How do you learn about employees problems?**

- Daily visits to the office (1)
- Office meetings (1)
- Grapevine (3)
- Read their faces (1)
- Invite for chats in the office (1)

**Table 5-96: Question 6.12 - Does people assume other people know what they know?**

	True	False	Missing	Total
Raw score	4	0	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	100%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-97: Question 6.13- Employees usually do not have the insight to provide opinions on organisational functionality, is this true or false in your organisation?**

	True	False	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	2	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-98: Question 6.14 - How is information supplied to managers?**

	Raw Data	Mostly Unsort Report	Incomplete	Summarized	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	1	0	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-99: Question 6.15 - How often is information supplied to perform your function?**

	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage						
	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-97: Question 6.13- Employees usually do not have the insight to provide opinions on organisational functionality, is this true or false in your organisation?**

	True	False	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	2	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-98: Question 6.14 - How is information supplied to managers?**

	Raw Data	Mostly Unsort Report	Incomplete	Summarized	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	1	1	0	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage					
	50%	25%	25%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-99: Question 6.15 - How often is information supplied to perform your function?**

	Never	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Annually	Missing	Total
Raw score	0	3	1	0	0	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage						
	0%	75%	25%	0%	0%	0%	100%

**Table 5-100: Question 6.16 - Awareness of budget approved for museum site**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	2	2	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	50%	50%	0%	100%

**Table 5-101: Question 6.17 - Input of budget for satellite**

	Yes	No	Missing	Total
Raw score	3	1	0	4
Standard score %	Raw score presented as a percentage			
	75%	25%	0%	100%

### 3. Findings

The findings of the two questionnaires, compared well with the summary of interviews held by Vollgraaff (1998: xxxiv-xliv) with staff of the SACHM between 27 November 1997 and 10 December 1997, and validates the researcher's research questions.

#### 3.1. Identification of major trends

The research has achieved the objectives of the research, based on the results obtained from the two questionnaires.

- 46.67% of management felt that the information received was not comprehensive enough;
- 44.44% felt that it was difficult to get access to information, whilst 37.49% felt the lag was too long;
- 83.33% of management felt that the organisational communication was ineffective;

- 65% of employees indicated that the mission of the organisation was never discussed with them;
- 65% of employees indicated that the strategic goals and corporate aims were never disclosed to them;
- 35% of employees and management indicated that they adhere to the corporate values;
- 45% felt that the block channels of communication are due to the organisational structure;
- 85% of employees do not have an employee handbook containing up to date personnel policies;
- 85% of employees indicated that these policies have not been discussed with them;
- 80% of employees indicated that they do have a basic set of procedures on how to do routine tasks;
- 85% answered no on any awareness of the existing rules and regulations for example “rules of safety” , etc.;
- 90% of employees and management indicated they are not trained to use the technology and resources in place for communications;
- 70% never receive any feedback concerning their jobs;
- 85% indicated that they rely on the grapevine for information;
- 50% of management indicated that employees are never evaluated;
- 75% of management indicated that they never “walk the job”;
- 100% of management assumes that if they know something, others also know it;
- 50% of management indicated that employees usually do not have insight to provide opinions on organisation functioning; and
- 50% of management had no insight into their site’s approved budget.

### **3.2. Research question 1**

The researcher has achieved the required results from the questionnaire with regard to the summary of data collected through direct observation and questionnaire 2. The purpose of this objective was to prove the following research question:

“Are the essential communication practices and processes in place at the SACHM?”

This is proved by looking at the common observations of the researcher at all museums, which is also disclosed in both the pilot study and the questionnaire.



### **3.2.1. Direct observations by researcher**

- Standard operating manuals absent;
- Manuals to operate the cash register and alarm systems both absent;
- Collections at each site was not computerised, in other words very difficult access to information;
- The Director only visits the house museum once per year, whilst the curator visited two to three times per month;
- Employee and supervisor decision making were limited in terms of :
  - What exhibitions of collections would be entertained;
  - Financial decisions such as replacement of minor equipment;
  - Marketing of the venue;
  - Conservation, restoration and research of the collections, because of limited access to the curator; and
  - Decisions on duty rosters.
- No regular staff meetings in terms of work related issues; and
- Matters concerning the vision, values and work procedures, were not very high on the agenda.

### **3.2.2. Statistics from questionnaire**

Comparing the major trends of the observations by the researcher, it was easy to deduce that the existing organisational communication and information flow is defect. Nearly 83.33% of the respondents indicated that they thought that the organisational communication is ineffective, implicating that the communication processes at the SA Cultural History Museum is non-existent between staff, management and council, and produces the evidence that this organisation will not be able to deliver on its mission, corporate goals, programmes and deadlines.

- 65% felt that the supervisor never discussed the mission of the organisation with them;
- 65% felt that the supervisor never discussed the strategic goals with them;
- Only 35% adheres to the company values;
- 50% felt that information sharing and knowledge was inadequate;
- 50% felt that the authority and responsibility lines was not clear to them;
- 55% of staff had a copy of their job description;
- 80% admitted that the company did not have an proper induction programme;

- 90% felt that neither they or their management were suitably trained to use the technology;
- 35% of management indicated that monthly meetings were held, whilst 20% never held meetings; and
- 70% never receive feedback on their job performance.

### **3.3. Research question 2**

The researcher has achieved the required results from the questionnaire, with regard to the summary of data collected through and questionnaire 1. The purpose of this objective was to prove the following research question:

“Do managers at the SACHM receive the communication necessary for effective decision making?”

- In respect on information to make the decisions 45.83 % indicated that they sometimes get the necessary information, whereas 50% indicated usually;
- On sufficient information 46.67% managers indicated too little information;
- Only 42.95% indicated that they receive accurate information;
- Complete and relevant information got a rating of only 47.22 %; and
- Most managers indicate that information lag was too long (37.49%), whilst 44.44% indicated that information was difficult to access.

It can be safely concluded from the above results that managers do not get speedy, accurate, sufficient and relevant information, to make effective decisions at the SACHM, implicating that important strategic and operational decisions could not be taken by managers to assist the path forward in terms of organisational mission, and secondly to achieve milestones and delivery to the public at large, in terms of organisational programmes and deadlines.

#### 4. Conclusions

It is clear from both the researcher's observations, and the employee, as well as, management questionnaires, that the SACHM's organisational communication and information flow has been proven to be ineffective.

The following conclusions were also drawn from the aforementioned:

<u>Staff</u>	<u>Management</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff makes use of the grapevine for most of their information, with the result that wrong information reaches them</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>According to the results of the questionnaires, management gets to little information to make decisions</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff at the museums have limited decision-making powers. Because of this together with the bad information flow, employees do not act on the more important issues</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In certain cases the information is also not accurate or comprehensive enough</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Information does not move freely through the organisational network. As a result information flow is more downwards than upwards</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>83.33% felt that the information flow was ineffective</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integral key factors such as the vision, values, culture and work procedures are never discussed with employees with the result that no direct association between the organisation, and its branding exist; in other words employees do not feel part of the organisation and its working environment</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Management skills are non-existent</li> <li>No cohesion between departments</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff views the organisational communication and information flow as ineffective</li> </ul>	

**The research also revealed the following positive results:**

Most staff knows the answers to resolve the organisational and information flow problems, although not expressing it directly. The following answers confirm this when the respondents were asked "How would you correct the situation if you are not receiving good information"?

:

- Develop uniformity;
- Arrange for a roster as when information is needed;
- Line managers must be trained;
- Message to be precise and clear; and
- Users of the systems must know how the system works.

On the following question the following answers were given " What can you do to arrange for good and timeous information?":

- Managers and personnel to deliver messages to rest of staff immediately;
- Staff needs to be kept informed;
- Systems needs to be improved; and
- Information does not filter through to all employees.

## **CHAPTER 6**

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **1. Introduction**

The research proved that there are many factors, which contribute to the ineffective organisational communication and information flow at the SACHM and its various satellites. In the light of the findings, management must be informed of the problems that require immediate attention.

#### **2. Recommendations**

According to the results of the empirical study, there are problems at the SACHM, at various levels in the organisation's environment. Based on the analyses and conclusions drawn, the following recommendations have been formulated:

- Firstly, the lack of leadership, vision, mission, objectives for the whole SACHM must be rectified;
- All employees must be trained and be exposed to the company objectives, vision and mission statement;
- All staff must be briefed on the policies that applies to the SACHM, by method of workshops;
- Curators and Chief Attendants must be trained in managerial skills, leadership, control, delegation, budgeting and team management;
- That all Front-of-House staff be trained how to use the basic tools for their tasks like:
  - How to handle a cash register;
  - How to handle a credit card system;
  - How to deal with receiving of monies; and
  - How to deal with the public.
- All employees at the house museums must be given training in technical knowledge, like curation and restoration, to improve various task executions;
- All employees at house museums must be sent on a customer-care course, to alleviate further complaints from customers and the public;
- All Front-of-House staff must be briefed on a regular basis on current exhibitions, as well as being given a basic knowledge on the collections in their direct environment;
- All staff must be send on courses to address the deficit in using the technology at hand, as this will already assist to close the gap in the communication;

- The communication between the various sections and museum sites, requires serious consideration;
- Communication and feedback to be addressed, as no one can be successful in performing their tasks without knowing how they are faring;
- Management, curators and the various museum sites must urgently make an effort to communicate with one another, to be able to perform their daily tasks in harmony without ill feelings or discrimination against each other;
- All employees to live by the business rules, and obey and understand company objectives, vision and mission;
- All employees be briefed on information dissemination and be trained and informed to understand the importance of the information that is passed on to their superiors;
- That a central and unified system be used by all staff, to assist the organisational information flow; and
- Standardising all current system forms in use, to alleviate confusion.

### **3. Future research**

The research undertaken in this dissertation only covered the SA Cultural History Museum, in other words the Social History Collection side of matters. In the meantime the SA Cultural History Museum was incorporated with the other major museums in Cape Town as promulgated in the Cultural Institution Act, Act 119 of 1998 under a new corporate identity, known as Iziko Museums of Cape Town. In other words only 20% of the new organisation was researched.

The organisational communication and information problems were carried over into the new organisation, because the Department of Arts and Culture did not have a well defined and clear transformation plan in place for museums. The main purpose of this amalgamation initially was merely to put the functions together and then take it from there.

It will thus be very interesting to see what the organisational communication, information flow and decision making will be like at Iziko Museums of Cape Town, especially to see if the same symptoms of the colonial and post-colonial institutions will be remedied, or be improved upon in this 21st century museum fraternity.

#### **4. Summation**

The SACHM needs to move away from its current policies and systems and need to embark on a strategic planning exercise, to be able to refocus and to take its rightful place in modern society. Although the organisational communication and information flow was the elements that turned out to be ineffective, the inefficiency is due to many other factors than merely communication. The following is re-iterated and should be the focus to tackle the problem:

- Its current management and leadership;
- Untrained and uncommitted employees;
- Inefficient systems;
- Lack of information technology infra-structure;
- Outdated Personnel policies; and
- Lack of vision and corporate goals.

Finally, a good communication climate, where employees are more able to speak, communicate and take part in the communication activities, is likely to lead to increased satisfaction and effectiveness of the organisation.

On the plus side is the SACHM's world-class cultural collections and historical buildings; and if these two elements together with a strategic exercise, and the marketability of Cape Town as an international tourist destination, be combined, there is no doubt on what the outcome for the SACHM could be.

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- Finance and Administration;
- Technical Services and Exhibitions;
- Groot Constantia Estate, Slave Lodge, Bertram House, SA Maritime Museums;
- Curators of various disciplines of collections;
- Human Resources and payroll;
- Public Relations; and
- Front of House staff of various museums.