

# The Need for Participatory Management in the Defence and National Security System

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## *Abstract*

*The entire business environment and implicitly all the organizations are in an accentuated dynamic from all points of view: political, social, economic, technological, etc. The military and similar military institutions are no exception, which are obliged to impose themselves promptly and efficiently on all internal and external requirements that may influence them.*

*As with any organization and institution in the national defence and security system, the quality of services provided must be constantly improved. Organizational performance is directly influenced by the quality of work of all employees, so it is necessary, at all times, to ensure the development of professional skills and competencies for each individual, as components of the organization.*

*Thus, the aim of this paper is to highlight the importance of promoting a participatory management style within public institutions of the defence and national security system, based on bibliometric and systematic analysis of the specialized literature.*

**Keywords:** *quality, participatory management, performance, security system*

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## 1. Introduction

The instability of the business environment and the pressure for change in organizations, in order to improve the quality level of the services offered is a priority for managers today. If until recently an individualistic management style was promoted in organizations and public institutions, the decisions being adopted exclusively by managers, the situation has fundamentally changed, more and more managers involving employees in the decision-making process, given the complexity and ambiguity of the situations they face. An element that contributes significantly to motivating people at work for the continuous development of high-performance activity is the level of participation given within the organization (Shaw & Carter, 2007; Munoz, et al., 2021).

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The word participation has its origins in the Latin "participation" meaning the idea of being involved with others in undertaking something, participating in an event or activity with others thus linking individual and collective action (Munoz, et al., 2021; Merriam-Webster, 2022).

Effective management is carried out by professional managers, these being the main suppliers that ensure performance in the areas managed (Cristache, et al., 2013). Participatory management requires a substantiated training from managers in their field of expertise, in order to address the critical situations they face together with hierarchical bosses, colleagues or subordinates and create a work climate that facilitates the development of subordinates (Burdus & Popa, 2013). Also, organizations that promote participatory practices, to the detriment of other classics, contribute to the development of civil society more than others (Gidron, 2010).

What should be emphasised in this context is that the final responsibility for taking a decision on a particular identified problem and implicitly on the effects that will result lies with the managers. The other participants (colleagues, institutions, subordinates, line managers, partners) may have a certain influence on the decision-making process by providing arguments, comments, recommendations and suggestions regarding the analysed situation. Involving employees in the decision-making process, as well as the promotion of a harmonious work environment in which teamwork is encouraged are indispensable elements of the organization are indispensable elements of the organization (vital parts of a whole) in supporting the approach to achieving the specific aims and objectives set out above.

The application of a participatory management style at the level of public institutions, which are also organizations, requires the existence of modern equipment and information resources that lead to the efficiency of the activity carried out by employees, respectively by civil servants. Thus, the decision-making processes will be transparent and will add value to the organization by creating a framework that facilitates the "participation" of employees in solving problems. Also, a particularly important role in participatory management is played by the training and improvement of employees so that the work performed by them leads to optimal results for the organization.

## **2. The current managerial style of the national defence and security system**

The management style specific to defence and national security institutions today is pyramidal, with each employee having a well-defined role in the organization's hierarchy, the subordination relations being well highlighted. Thus, the entire responsibility for decision-making lies with the manager, as the leader of the organization who must have in addition to the professional skills characteristic of the field (economic, legal, psychosociological, technical knowledge, etc.) and a number of special skills and abilities, such as: rapid collection of necessary information, analysis, sorting and classification according to the field concerned, forecasting future activities by setting clear and realistic objectives, concentrating efforts to achieve the previously predicted results, the desire for self-improvement, the ability to lead and direct people (formation of

work teams, motivation of employees, correct evaluation of each employee and recognition of the results obtained) (Nicolescu & Verboncu, 2008).

Social and economic development requires the existence of a process of continuous adaptation to new conditions, given the available resources as well as the desired level of performance (Dobrea, et al., 2018). The organization of the activity of institutions on hierarchical levels is justified especially by the need to give responsibility for the achievement of a manager's objective, given the complexity of the activities they face, the number of hierarchical levels, being influenced by the number of executors (Burdus & Popa, 2013). The organization of the activity on hierarchical structures is associated with the institutions of the national defence and security system (military institutions and similar military), each employee having a well-defined role in the hierarchy, noting a large number of executants at the base of the pyramid and a small number of people to the top of the pyramid.

Given the scale and all the conditions that military institutions and similarly military, have to fulfil in the framework of the activities carried out involve different structures compared to other business models, the management style encountered being the authoritarian one. Authoritarian management is characterized by the primary situation of hierarchical relationships of subordination, with very little use of employee consultation, the working climate is often austere diminishing the creativity and initiative of staff (Nicolescu & Verboncu, 2008).

The European Union and NATO are calling on the component countries to reorganize their management system by transforming the entire system and redefining the objectives at both the macro and individual levels within each organization. It is noteworthy that this style of authoritarian management specific to the pyramidal hierarchical organization, although it has the main disadvantage of being dependent especially on a single decision maker and his direct ability to analyse and solve situations facing and influencing organizational activity, not it can be fundamentally modified as it represents the exercise of public office under the law.

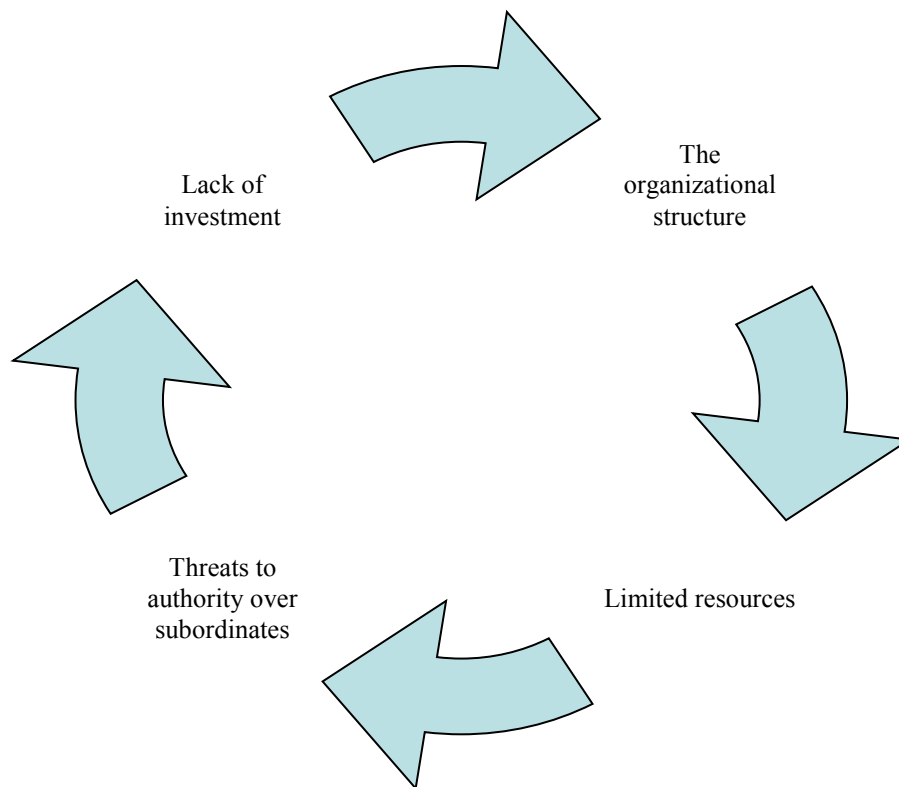
### **3. The need to implement the participatory management style within the institutions of the national defence and security system**

As with other organizations, the services provided by the institutions of the national defence and security system must be constantly improved, depending directly on the quality of the work performed by their employees. It is therefore necessary to constantly ensure the development of their skills and abilities, Harrington and Harrington (2000) being of the opinion that the prestige and success of the public institution is influenced by the behaviour and mindset of the employees, and their desire and satisfaction to help the organization become more performance, participatory management thus becoming a way of life.

Researchers have found that participatory management can positively influence employees leading to increased job satisfaction (Kim, 2002; Spence-Laschinger & Finegan, 2004; Shagholi, et al., 2011). Thus, with the emergence of the urgent need to adapt organizations and implicitly the institutions of the national defence and security

system to the new external and internal conditions, managers of organizations have increasingly begun to turn their attention to participatory management as the main means of efficient use of resources and ensuring the progress of employees. Participative management recognizes the importance of the human factor as the main resource that ensures high organizational performance through the most efficient use of other resources (material, financial, informational, etc.).

Organizations should be viewed as complex systems that require an iterative goal-oriented procedure to implement change (Endrejat & Kauffeld, 2017). The main causes of organizations' resistance to change are represented in the figure below (figure 1).



**Figure 1. Organizations' resistance to change**

*Source:* Adapted from Burduş & Popa (2014)

Managers of organizations may be reluctant to implement changes, as they feel that their authority would be threatened by the implementation of certain programmes or projects that help improve working relations between employees. Also, resources are often limited in organizations and especially in public institutions, so that making investments becomes more and more difficult. All the internal and external influencing factors that affect the organizational activity require the development of a participatory management that leads to the

development of human resources and to the increase of efficiency (achieving the organizational objectives with a minimum effort). Thus, the management of human resources in the defence and national security system requires action in two main directions: a line to allow the exchange of information between employees of a public institution and a line to ensure the continuous development of employees with civil status in relation to civilian from outside the system.

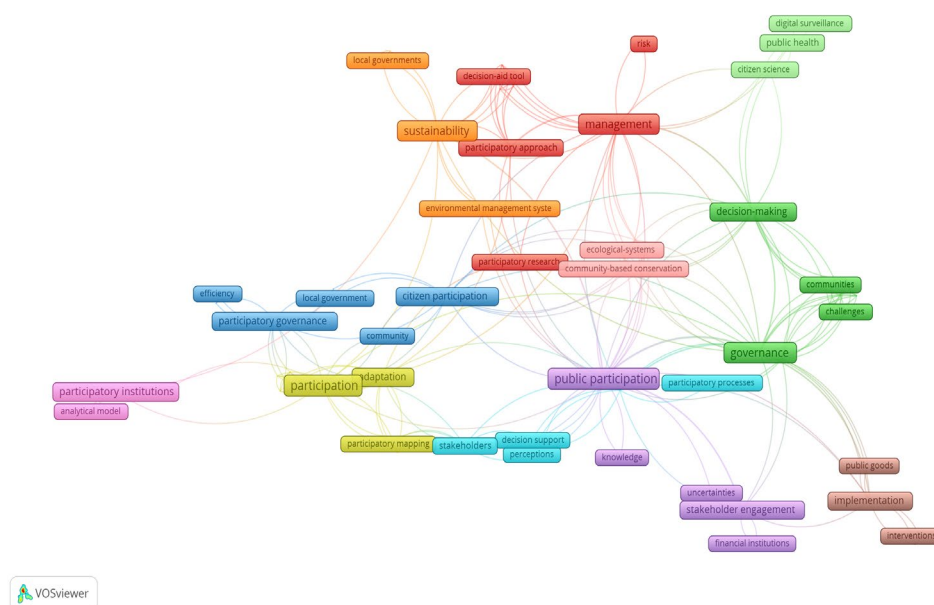
Focusing on the reputation of organizations as an input into public service delivery, an internal branding (Waeraas & Dahle, 2019; Zavattaro & Eshuis, 2021) affects service delivery outcomes such as transparency, accountability, performance management (Beck Jorgensen, 2007; Zavattaro & Eshuis, 2021). Moreover, when the brand and reputation of an organization is socially built in a participatory way, taking into account the arguments and suggestions of stakeholders (Eshuis & Edwards, 2013; Zavattaro & Eshuis, 2021) and citizens will be encouraged to develop initiatives to improve the quality of life in their community (Breek, et al., 2018; Zavattaro & Eshuis, 2021).

Participatory processes require specific investments of resources and time by setting clear objectives to avoid chaotic meetings and encouraging stakeholders to engage in the participatory process for a long period of time (Stoll-Kleemann, 2004). In terms of financial resources, it is known that the defence and security system is financed from the state budget, being dependent on public funds and implicitly on the national economic situation of each budget year. As in organizations, public institutions in the national defence and security system are influenced by financial resources as they ensure the implementation of the strategy and the fulfilment of the mission, in practice being encountered in situations where highly trained human resources have overcome financial shortcomings. Thus, a complex redefinition of the defence and national security system is needed, in order to combine its traditional components with the modern, current ones.

#### **4. Results and discussions on participatory management**

In order to carry out the bibliometric research to identify the key words most often used together with the concepts of "participatory management" and "public institutions", a search of the Web of Science database was carried out (because it includes the most prestigious works in the field), resulting in a number of 389 publications.

After filtering the results and eliminating studies that were not of the type "article" type, in English or that could not be accessed, a number of 129 articles resulted. Therefore, after processing the articles with the help of VOSviewer software, the most frequent terms used next to the researched field were obtained, as well as the most rarely encountered terms (figure 2).



**Figure 2. Frequency of keywords**

*Source:* author's own contribution

The most frequently used terms are: "public participation", "participation", "management", "participatory institutions", "participatory approach", "stakeholder engagement", "governance", "decision-making". Among the less frequently encountered terms are: "risk", "knowledge", "public goods".

As can be seen from the figure above, the concept of participatory management is often linked to public institutions, suggesting the idea of organizational change. Managers of public institutions in the national defence and security system must be vigilant and have new skills and abilities that will allow them to understand the new situations they face and to successfully manage all the challenges encountered in the course of their work. Thus the leaders of public institutions must be able to use their often limited resources effectively and optimally to deliver high quality services and achieve previously agreed indicators and results. Considering that at the level of military and similar military organizations financial resources are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain, sometimes the state is not too generous, managers need to be experienced and have the necessary information and knowledge to ensure proper guidance of their work.

In participatory management, a key role is played by management meetings, so at the level of institutions in the national defence and security system, the rule of meetings (such as meetings of management boards or command boards) that take place regularly, on a weekly basis, should be implemented as ordinary working meetings. The main objective of these meetings is to facilitate the communication process between the

different sectors of activity of the institution, as well as to create the feeling of belonging. Each member of the management structure should have a vision of the work of the whole institution, so that during the management meetings certain algorithms or measures to improve the work of the departments can be established.

## **5. Conclusions**

Taking into account the above information, participatory management can lead to improved efficiency of the work of public institutions in the defence and national security system, ensuring better transparency in the decision-making process through the involvement of subordinates. Thus, the more employees become motivated and loyal to the organization, realising that their presence and work adds value to the organization, the more they will be involved and the better they will perform their tasks.

The development of employees' skills and the increase of organizational performance can be achieved through participatory management if the special importance of the active involvement of employees in the decision-making act is recognised. Regardless of manager's level of training, the environment in which he operates is characterized by new situations, which are constantly changing, therefore the information and knowledge held by all members of the organization are superior to those held by him.

Developing employee skills and increasing organizational performance can be achieved through participative management if the importance of actively involving employees in decision-making is recognised. Regardless of a manager's level of training, the environment in which he or she operates is characterised by new and changing situations, and therefore the information and knowledge held by all members of the organization is superior to that held by the manager.

The implementation of the participatory management style within the organizations and implicitly within the public institutions can provide the employees the opportunity to develop through the multiple analysed situations, which leads to a higher efficiency and a favourable climate for successfully achievement both the institution's objectives and individual goals. Taking into account all the positive effects generated by this style of management (participatory management), public institutions must be open to changing the organizational culture, concentrating their efforts on designing, developing and implementing a participative system favourable to employee development.

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