Downplaying model power in IT project work

Executives and information technology specialists often manage IT projects in project teams. Integrative IT systems provide opportunities to manage and restructure work functions, but the process of change often causes serious problems in implementation and diffusion. A central issue in the research, presented in this article, conducted in a Danish manufacturing company, is how an IT system could be configured to support shopfloor teamwork and enhance the quality of work. The approach is based on participatory design and the concept of "model power". This concept facilitates an understanding of power of specific actors, during participation in IT project development. Model power may be an obstacle to different interests and perspectives being taken into consideration. The case study presented illustrates the point, that it is possible to counterbalance model power and, thus, it has been possible to put issues such as team functions and quality of work on the agenda. Simultaneously, participation competencies seem to have been enhanced.

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