PROLOGUE

It is not uncommon to find that the words 'information' and 'knowledge' are used as synonyms. The state of knowledge is simply inconceivable without information. The quality and the level of knowledge are directly dependent upon the quality of information. Obviously this will directly influence the quality of decision in organisations. It is the decision which determines the height of organisational performance, to a major extent, on parameters of efficiency and effectiveness. So much critical is the significance of information and its quality for an individual, an organisation, a society and so on.

University charged with the task of providing educational service to the society is and ought to be an open system. Autonomy conferred on universities is to ensure their better functioning with necessary flexibility through full and free inflow and outflow of information. That is how 'coming events' in the university system cast their shadows before and help in unison between what is being done and what ought to be done.
Management theories and practice have undergone tremendous change in the past decades. These changes will inevitably continue and even accelerate. In the fast changing scenario more knowledge and proficiency in functional specialty will hardly be of much help. It is truer in case of universities for obvious reasons of their societal obligations. Hence, hackneyed approach with degenerated form of bureaucracy has to be done away with. Instead, there has to be full awareness of systems approach as a new and most relevant philosophy of management in the universities.

"Fore-warned is fore-armed" is the core hypothesis of systems approach as it equips the organisations like universities with pro-active vision. Naturally, an effective and efficient management information system in tune with the need of the hour is a must.

The above points form the basis and the need of the present study to cover all the universities of the country within the ambit of the study was not feasible on account of inherent limitations of an individual
researcher. As such, four selected universities from N.E.Region were subjected to the study of their management information system in vogue and its impact on their performance. The underlying objective has been to do cause-effect analysis and to suggest steps to minimize, if not eliminated altogether, the causes that have put question mark before the efficiency of these universities. It is earnestly hoped that conclusions arrived at from the study may form atleast a general basis to streamline the functioning in the university system. If it happens, the work of the researcher shall be more than amply rewarded.

At the outset, I offer my deep sense of gratitude to my research supervisor Prof. V.P.Giri, Manipur Institute of Management Studies, Manipur University, Imphal, a man of great personality, for his soft words and continuous encouragement and effort towards the completion of my research work.

I also extend my sincere thanks to my colleagues Dr. Memcha Loitongbam, Dr. L. JibonKumar Sharma, Dr. Ch. Ibohal Meitei, Mr. Ksh. Kunjabi Singh, Mr. H. Ramananda Singh and supporting staff Mr. S.
Jugol Singh, Mr. S. Dutta Singh, Mr. L. Raghumani Singh, Mr. V.S. Anung, Mr. L. Kanan Singh for their valuable suggestions, continuous encouragement and motivation at various stages of the study.

I thank all the respondents from the universities under study for their valuable information and responses provided to me while collecting the primary data without which the study would not be possible.

I wish to put on record my sincere thanks to Mrs. Damayenti Giri for her continuous encouragement during the course of the study.

I extend my sincere gratitude to my beloved father Padma Shri Laishram Nabakishore, who always motivated me to complete my study.

It is my proud privilege to thank my beloved parents L.Yaima & L. Bino for their endearing support and ever-ready co-operation.
Last but not the least, I express my gratitude to my wife L. Ranjana, son L. Nongdamba, daughter L. Tomthinganbi for their sacrifice, patience and continuing support throughout the study.

August 1, 2002
Imphal

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