PARTICIPATION IN EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT PROGRAMS

by

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Abstract

The thesis examines issues associated with an employee's inclination to participate in an employee involvement program.

The critical challenge confronting management of attracting and maintaining the effective participation of employees is central to the success of a participatory strategy. However, program impetus, design, formulation and execution is often of an ad-hoc nature and premised on achieving unrealistic outcomes derived from attempts to isomorphically replicate contemporary human resource management practices.

This qualitative and quantitative study provides important lessons for managers of small to medium sized manufacturing organisations, particularly as it relates to governing issues associated with the participation of employees in decision making processes. First, the necessity to thoughtfully design the participative structure and its mode of operation in accordance with an organisation's strategic objectives. Secondly, to ensure that the premises and parameters of issues of governance associated with the participation of employees in decision making processes are clearly defined and understood by all participants and finally, on-going success depends on senior executive support and commitment.

Acknowledgment

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Abbreviations

AIRC   Australian Industrial Relations Commission

AIRS   Australian Industrial Relations System

AWIRS   Australian Workplace Industrial Relations Study

BCA   Business Council of Australia

PC   Packaging Company

Chapter 1 Introduction

The objective of this research is to identify and evaluate the key attributes which influence the propensity of employees to become involved and committed to a participation program in a workplace environment.

The rationale for organisations and individuals participating in employee involvement programs range from the concerns of management with issues such as: efficiency, motivation and facilitation of change; the concerns of the employees about power balance and control; and secondary concerns of both parties such as commitment, communications, good industrial relations and identification (Cressey 1990:15). A further rationale for employee involvement is the paradigmatic shift in Australian industrial relations from centralised bargaining arrangements to an enterprise base. Most notably, amendments to the enterprise bargaining provisions in the Industrial Relations Act 1988, have emphasised the need to establish consultative mechanisms and procedures 'in order to give effect to the enterprise bargaining process' (Mitchell et al 1996:4). Mitchell et al (1996:4) argue that it is:

> ...the extension of bargaining to all classes of workers as a protective measure - which is contextualising the need for employee involvement rather than the HRM implications of productivity and flexibility gains.

One of the key imperatives of implementing any participatory strategy is the 'critical challenge' of attracting and maintaining the active participation of employees. The success of various participatory schemes is premised on the support of workers, often without a clear understanding of their needs for participation (Witte 1980:41 in Fenwick & Olson 1986:505). Fenwick & Olson (1986:505), argue that 'this omission is critical', considering the success of a participatory scheme is likely to be dependent upon the degree to which

the program is sanctioned by the employees. This study, therefore, seeks to identify and investigate issues which contribute to an understanding and explanation of an employee's inclination to participate in an employee involvement program.

There is a diversity of participatory methodologies and instruments available to organisations pursuing participatory policies, structures and processes. The selection of a structure is a crucial component of the design of any participative policy, as is the underlying rationale. Within the participatory literature, little attention has been given to the consideration of the design of participative structures and processes. The failure of behaviouralist participatory literature to explore the impact of institutionalism on policy design is a significant short-coming of the literature. It is only through the recognition and understanding of institutionalism that the factors which affect an individual's inclination to participate in an employee involvement program can be considered. Failure to recognise and understand institutionalism, leads to wasted effort and misunderstanding.

Central to a consideration of the design of institutions are the factors of social, economic and political institutional diversity and variances in market systems. Hence, Chapter One examines the key linkages impacting upon institutional design, because of an emerging new paradigmatic shift in Australian industrial relations, increasing globalisation and market uncertainty, new production regimes, the emergence of neo-classical market economics, and the professionalisation of organisational fields.

All of these inter-related elements are impacting upon institutional design and in turn the design of structures and processes within organisations. The behaviouralist participatory processes stemming from a consideration of institutionalism will be considered in later chapters.

Background

Organisations that operate in dynamic markets and environments are attempting to secure competitive advantage through a range of strategies and more flexible organisational structures, as opposed to the traditional rigid hierarchical frameworks (Toffler 1990). The changing nature of managerial and structural approaches is a result of factors such as: the increasingly dynamic business environments in market economies, increasing levels of education within society, the advent of new technologies, the growth of information technology and the gradual democratisation of peoples' working lives through increased democratic and participative workplace practices. These environmental and social factors represent significant shifts from those that impacted traditional bureaucratic managerial approaches. In the past, the absence of large-scale competitive forces and global markets meant that management could adopt strategies that best suited the local or national business environment in which they operated. The globalisation of markets and economies means that traditional structures and managerial practices are under strain and closer scrutiny.

Companies are adopting employee involvement initiatives in order to improve organisational effectiveness, which means improving quality, productivity, employee morale, and motivation (Dulworth et al 1990; Fenwick 1986; Miller & Prichard 1992; Leana et al 1992; Verma & McKersie 1987). Marchington et al (1992 in Guest et al 1993:192) elucidates similar managerial intentions to those cited by the above researchers. However, the latter researchers cite additional motives for implementating changes including the necessity for greater information and education, commitment, enhanced employee contributions, recruitment and retention, conflict handling (minimisation) and external pressures such as government encouragement by legislation and fashion. The issues

of fashion, organisational mimetic (modelling) behaviour and isomorphic organisational change brought about through normative pressures, such as managerial theories and philosophies espoused by managerial 'gurus', appear to have an impact upon the adoption of organisational forms and practices (DiMaggio & Powell 1991; Cordery 1995; Yorks & Whitsett 1985 in Cordery 1995; Guest 1990 in Cordery 1995; Guest 1992 in Cordery 1995, Coye & Belohlav 1991).

However, scant attention is paid to these issues in the participative literature. Yet, it is the contention of this researcher that mimetic behaviour plays a significant role in the widespread adoption of organisational structures and initiatives such as employee involvement programs.

According to DiMaggio & Powell (1991:69), mimetic isomorphism or modelling is a response to uncertainty. For example, in Britain, Hutton (1995:18-19) observed that the tenant of neo-classical market economics with its emphasis on deregulation, flexible prices and private ownership and the Conservative (Thatcher) government's desire to establish the market principle as the basis of every policy created, precisely, a climate of uncertainty. The perversity of the market has been nowhere more evident than in the unprecedented reforms in the labour market. The resulting uncertainty, in light of such radical reforms, particularly in Britain and New Zealand and more recently in Australia, has led many organisations to model themselves after similar organisations in their field that they perceive to be more legitimate or successful (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:70).

These researchers contend, for example, that the 'rapid proliferation of quality circles and quality-of-work-life issues in America' is a partial attempt to model the success of Japanese and German organisations (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:69). Unfortunately, for countries like America, Britain and Australia, mimetic isomorphism has not delivered the

successful outcomes often attributed to such normatively sanctioned strategies, because of a failure to recognise and understand the importance of social, economic, and political institutional diversity and variances in market systems and their influence in shaping organisational structures and processes (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:1; Hutton 1995:18-19; Coye & Belohlav 1991:239-240). The wholesale and incidental adoption of such organisation forms and practices, then, fails to address the structural and organisational changes required to facilitate attainment of the desired objectives of impacting upon performance, employee attitudes and behaviour. For, as DiMaggio & Powell (1991:70) argue:

> The ubiquity of certain kinds of structural arrangements can more likely be credited to the universality of mimetic processes than to any concrete evidence that the adopted models enhance efficiency.

Often, the adoption of such structural models is premised on the more ritualistic outcomes of being perceived in the market place as becoming competitive and enhancing 'their legitimacy' (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:69-70).

Nevertheless, underpinning this shift to greater employee involvement and cooperative work practices, is the objective of enhancing communication and decision making between management and employees within the primary systems and processes by which organisations operate (Dulworth et al 1990; Teicher 1990; Portis & Hill 1991; Leana 1992; Drucker 1988). Thus, organisational structures and processes, such as employee involvement programs are viewed as superior ways of organising and managing work and the means to secure competitive advantage outcomes (Verma & McKersie 1987).

In other words, participative management is viewed widely as a management approach that gives organisations the capacity to obtain significant gains. Traditional management theories of managing work are being replaced by more proactive and dynamic

management structures and processes that facilitate rapid response to changes in markets and the way work is carried out within organisations.[1] However, as Mohrman & Lawler (1985 in Lawler 1992b:10) contend:

> ...for a major social change to take place the mere existence of a new (management) approach is not enough; there must be a recognised need for change and a reason to change.

Mathews (1992:87-8) argues that the rise of new production systems based on 'high quality, quick response and high value-added product strategies', has resulted in the emergence of a 'new province of negotiations connected with workers' skill formation and the application and deployment of skill in the production process.' The evolution of these new production concepts represent a paradigmatic shift of industrial relations theory and practice.

Drucker (1988) identifies and elucidates a similar paradigmatic shift in organisational structure and innovation stemming from information based technologies. According to Drucker (1988:13) organisations are beginning to shift from the 'command-and-control' hierarchy to the information based organisation of knowledge specialists. The information based organisation is characterised by specialist teams with the knowledge and expertise to 'direct and discipline their own performance through organised feedback from colleagues, customers and headquarters.'

The key elements of the new production system are: teamwork, multi-skilling, flexible manufacturing systems, devolution of responsibility, autonomy and authority, new management techniques such as Just-In-Time (JIT), and Total Quality Management (TQM),

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[1]For more information on the changing nature of organisational structures see Peter F. Drucker, (1988), 'The coming of the new organisation', *Harvard Business Review*, January-February, pp.13-21.

and the systems dependence on worker commitment and adaptability (Mathews 1992; Drucker 1988; Cordery 1995). Such organisation of work represents the growth in contemporary 'commitment' based human resource management practices as distinguished from traditional 'control' based strategies (Cordery 1995). It seems that increased levels of worker participation are central to these paradigmatic shifts to a 'new province' of industrial relations on the one hand, and new organisational structures and forms, on the other.

Furthermore, there is considerable interest by organisations in the adoption of new models of work organisation 'that entail internal labour market innovations such as broad job definitions and the use of teams, employee problem solving groups and quality circles' (Osterman 1994:173 in Cordery 1995:3). However, implementation of these innovations is not straight forward in organisations that seek to rely on external labour markets for a number of their human resource management requirements. Organisations adopting such forms of labour utilisation face additional hurdles to overcome as a result of the short-term contract nature of employment. Lawler (1992a:103-4) contends, to obtain 'the ultimate advantage: creating the high-involvement organisation', requires the application of all resources to maintain a consistent workforce. Therefore, the attainment, of a high-involvement organisation is contingent upon permanent membership (Lawler 1992a). The rationale for such permanency of employment is premised on the attainment and organisational investment in human capital, and the need for commitment from employees (Lawler 1992a:239-242).

The question that arises is, how can organisations that are relying increasingly on external labour markets to fill a range of positions from the highly-skilled specialist through to the low-skilled process worker, foster and maintain commitment in an attempt to create

and sustain the high-involvement organisation? Lawler (1992a:240) argues that it is difficult

to seek commitment from employees and 'unreasonable to expect it from them, if in fact,

the organisation is unwilling to commit to seeing that they remain as employees.' This

conundrum of labour market flexibility and commitment is encountered by organisations

seeking to come to terms with the flexible workplace requirements evolving out of

privatisation and flexible new technologies.

For certain segments of the external labour market such as the skilled specialist, the

issue of commitment to the organisation or work-group will be, for the most part,

augmented by the specialist knowledge base from which they draw and their ability to keep

up-to-date with the current and future demands of their employment. However, this is not

always the case. Organisations exist for the very fact that there are costs associated with

subcontracting that negate the advantages. Furthermore, supervision and screening

processes of subcontractors can become an expensive and unreliable exercise. For example,

Hutton (1995:249) argues:

> ... the very fact that a subcontractor or worker is available for work may imply that
> others in the marketplace do not want to use his or her services; availability may be
> signalling that the subcontractor or worker is not very good.

As a result, the appointment of subcontractors whose performance is uncertain becomes a

costly exercise to monitor and to foster co-operative work practices. In short, 'employees

whose performance is known to employers are worth more than those whose performance

is uncertain' (Hutton 1995:253).

A problem segment will be the low-skilled process and part-time employees who

constitute the numerically flexible workforce of organisations. Typically, such labour

market segments are highly unstable and susceptible to the forces of market supply and

demand. The ability to attain commitment from these segments of the external or periphery

workforce for high-involvement organisations poses significant challenges to managerial orthodoxy.

Hutton (1995) addressing the vexed issue of co-operation versus competition in free-market economies, identifies two key factors as to whether co-operation is worthwhile between contracting agents. They are the market structure and the value placed on the future by the contracting parties. On-going relationships imply a requirement of knowledge dissemination between the contracting parties. Hutton (1995:251) argues, ' if the present-day value of future costs is high because the discount rate is low, then there is additional reason to co-operate.' In other words, a high level of investment by an organisation in its human capital today, means that an organisation has an added impetus to build co-operative relationships. Therefore, tangible benefits from co-operative relationships can only be obtained through commitment over time, but free-market forces mitigate against such commitment because of the termination of contractual obligations via the process of selling. In these circumstances, the ability to obtain and maintain commitment over time becomes a considerably difficult undertaking. As a result, a 'permanent tension' is prevalent in capitalist economies between the desire to establish committed relationships based on co-operation and the lure of short-term gains (Hutton 1995:252).

Organisations that exacerbate this conflictual relationship jettison effectively any real chance of securing sustainable long-run commitment and co-operation. However, organisations intent on creating high-involvement management premised on continuous improvement, high-quality, low cost, quick responses to technology and customer focus, substantiate their disproportionately high, compared to short-term focused organisations, investment in human capital through the creation of sustainable co-operative and committed relationships premised on trust. In contrasting these two orientations, Hutton (1995:252)

contends:

> Trust is the cement of non-competitive market bargains. It is the means of solving the commitment problem - of making people behave apparently against their immediate self-interest but in their true long-term interest.

Competitive market bargaining, on the other hand, with its emphasis on profit maximisation, changes the incentives of the contracting parties. For example, the attainment of goals and objectives from a managerial perspective are premised on greater functional flexibility and short-term contingent commitments by contractors (Alford & O'Neill 1994:128-9). A critical effect of this situation is the risk of reduced organisational memory and learning. Alford & O'Neill (1994:66) contend that on-going relationships and trust forged over time will be put at risk. Hence, an understanding of the importance of trust and commitment in the employment relationship is vital to developing effective and sustainable working relations. The morality with which contracting parties conduct their business transactions is dependent upon the degree of trust and reciprocity which the parties bring to the negotiations.

A rationale often cited for the adoption of employee contracts is that they will facilitate growth in workplace co-operation (Alford & O'Neill 1994; Hutton 1995). The principal component cited for engendering such growth is performance-related pay. Alford & O'Neill (1994:62) contend that despite the stated acknowledgement of alternate forms of motivations, other than performance-related pay, proponents of the contractual model fail to translate these rhetorical acknowledgements 'into alterations to the logic of their arguments or to the mechanics of their recommended model.' Thus, when productivity outcomes are less than anticipated, proponents of the contractual model remain perplexed and often cite the deleterious effects of the inflexibility of the Australian industrial relations system. Trust is crucial as a means of improving labour productivity in economic

relationships as opposed to reliance on performance-related pay. Thus, if trust does not

exist between parties, through the lack of due process, the result may be the use of 'gaming

tactics, including acting with extreme caution, designed to ensure their personal survival

rather than to actively advance organisational purposes'(Alford & O'Neill 1994:68). Hutton

(1995:104) argues:

> Thus the paradox that although the origins of performance-related pay lie in viewing
> labour as a commodity, success in the implementation of the schemes lies in the
> degree to which labour is not regarded as a commodity and is fully involved in the
> work process. Where there is trust, involvement and a commitment to fairness the
> schemes work; where only economic values rule, the schemes fail.

This approach has led Hutton (1995:253) to conclude, 'the key to productivity is not the

wage system, but the system of human relations within an organisation.'

Dynamic changes in market economies has resulted, however, in an increase in the

range and scope of participative strategies among organisations, because they are less

constrained by minor or peripheral job-related issues. In addressing the vexed issue of new

technology and its impact upon organisations, for example, (Cressey 1990) found that

during periods of technological change, participative structures become increasingly

necessary as a direct response to the uncertainty that accompanies innovation. As a result,

evolving and enabling technologies are no longer the exclusive domain of a few specialist

practitioners or management. Instead their adoption inevitably requires input from a variety

of organisational members. Thus, the changing nature of market economies and the way

work is being performed requires organisational and managerial structures and strategies

that are capable of responding rapidly and appropriately to changes in the marketplace.

Critically, Lawler (1992b:12) argues:

> ... that approaches to organising and managing are not inherently effective or
> ineffective. They are effective to the degree that they fit existing conditions. To be
> effective a management approach needs to fit the existing societal values, the nature

of the workforce, the type of product being produced, and the business environment. Because all of these factors determine the effectiveness of a management approach, its effectiveness may change over time.

It is clear that there is a rapid evolution of organisational change occurring within democratic market economies. Representative of this paradigmatic shift in organisational structure and operation is the substantial growth in participative schemes across all sectors of industry.

The incidence of participatory programs reported in the literature has grown significantly over the last decade. According to (AWIRS 1990 in Marchington 1992b:537), the vast majority of respondents reported having some form of employee involvement or participation programs in place. Similar results have been found within the American economy (see Dulworth et al 1990; Miller & Prichard 1992; Lawler et al 1992b). With a high degree of emphasis being placed on employee involvement schemes, the ability to attract and maintain interest in such programs assumes paramount importance amongst human resource management (HRM) practitioners.

The Setting

The study was conducted in a field setting in a medium to large firm which operates in the packaging industry. The research is a cross-sectional descriptive study. In other words, the data was gathered just once in order to ascertain and to describe the characteristics of variables in a situation in which events normally occur (Sekaran 1984).

The survey was conducted in a firm which has no employee involvement programs,

thus the results reflect a pre-program employee profile. Unlike similar studies, where the researchers have only been able to analyse the post-program profiles of employees involved in participatory activities, this research is able to distinguish clearly between those employees who were willing to volunteer, those who were unwilling to volunteer and those who were unsure or required more information. Therefore, the employee responses are free from any rater bias or prejudice from previously implemented participatory programs.

This situation overcomes the limitations associated normally with pre-program versus post-program comparative analyses (see Verma & McKersie 1987; and Verma 1989). Verma & McKersie (1987:559) argue that in order to examine the pre-program profile of employee-management committee participants, in post-program analysis, it is necessary to separate the selection effect from the overall participant/non-participant comparison. To accomplish this, non-participant respondents are asked if they would volunteer to join an employee-management committee. Since the participants will be chosen randomly from among the volunteers, it is reasonable to assume that the volunteers represent an approximation of the pre-program profile of employees who are currently participating in the program. A comparison of participants with non-participants can be decomposed into two components: a comparison of participants with volunteers, indicating the program effect and a comparison of volunteers with non-volunteers, indicating the selection effect.

Employing 230 workers, the Packaging Company (PC) is part of a multi-plant organisation divisionalised on the basis of the functional products produced. The PC operates from a single Melbourne site which produces two distinct product lines for the Australian and burgeoning Asian markets. The firm has been operating continuously from the one site for over a century.

The two main product lines are produced in separate buildings on the one site. Distinct cultures have developed around the product lines to the extent that site-specific cultural variances have become entrenched in the modus-operandi in the two buildings over the past twenty years. The PC management contends, that there exists a clearly distinguishable 'them and us' mentality between the two plants and between some management and employees of the plants. Guest et al (1993:192-193) contend traditional orientations of 'them and us (attitudes), reflects the traditional pluralist or even radical conceptualisation of work, a solidaristic working class set against management and ownership.'

These researches assert that this view of organisational identification and commitment is a rather superficial conceptualisation of 'them and us' attitudes which may be prevalent within an organisation. Considerable confusion surrounds the defining characteristics of 'them and us' at both the organisational and commitment level. The 'them and us' attitudes can be construed as constituting a variety of wide ranging attitudes premised on the policies and practices of an organisation and competing sources of loyalty, such as unions (Guest et al 1993). Such worker attitudes are typically representative of the concept of dual loyalty.

Therefore, organisations pursuing employee involvement strategies are directly or indirectly promoting a more unitarist approach to commitment in contrast to the 'them and us' interest in pluralist orientations. As a result, employee involvement strategies attempt to increase organisational identification as 'us', while reducing prevailing 'them and us' attitudes. Employee involvement strategies can be viewed, therefore, as 'a set of initiatives designed to increase the level of employee commitment to an organisation' (Guest et al 1993:192). These researches identify five initiatives to achieve employee commitment.

They include: increased vertical two-way communication; changes in job design; financial participation; and amendments to managerial styles and orientations (Guest et al 1993:192). It is particularly notable, however, that their study did not establish any causal link between commitment and 'them and us' attitudes. Thus, organisations attempting to engender greater commitment through the reduction of 'them and us' attitudes of their workforces through the utilisation of employee involvement strategies would be well advised to consider the rationale for the adoption of such strategies.

The Industry Setting

The packaging industrial sector was selected for the following reasons. First, the skills and qualifications of employees in the industry are diverse, ranging from unskilled and inexperienced school leavers through to experienced specialist engineers and management personnel. This spread of skills and competencies enables a comprehensive analysis of the issues which may be associated with employees' inclination to participate in employee involvement programs in a manufacturing industrial setting.

Secondly, the nature of the work, being high-speed repetitive manufacturing, means that most employees who hold non-managerial positions have little effective input into decisions about the speed or the nature of the work being carried out. In some sections of the plants the work is noisy, unpleasant and monotonous despite the introduction, in recent periods, of new technologies and manufacturing techniques such as JIT, TQM and Value Added Manufacturing (VAM) - an in-house program - currently being run at the PC. The responses of these employees is of significant interest given the widespread interest in

industry in the adoption of participatory programs.

Thirdly, this specific manufacturing site was chosen because of its stated managerial policy of a paradigmatic shift from the management specialisations typified by terms such as Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations to the concept of Strategic Employee Relations Management (SERM). Traditional views of labour relations have differentiated HRM and IR on the basis that HRM has a strategic contingent approach with a focus on the enterprise and IR is seen as taking place in the wider arena of national policy and concerned primarily with job regulation (Gardner & Palmer 1994:5-8). SERM is conceptualised as an amalgam of these two earlier managerial specialisations integrated into a unified approach to labour relations. This distinction, which superficially appears to be little more than an exercise in semantics, belies a significant change in managerial specialisation and focus.

The rationale for this paradigmatic shift is supported vigorously by groupings such as the Business Council of Australia and conservative state governments who argue that the Australian industrial relations system has reached its limits and is in need of a substantial overhaul and modernisation. According to this view, enterprise effectiveness is affected by, 'complicated processes largely driven by people outside the enterprise following agendas that have little to do with the need of firms or the employees directly involved' (Hilmer et al 1993:5).

Significantly, there has been a strategic shift in labour relations management in the organisation under investigation, which had its first enterprise flexible agreement ratified by the Australian Industrial Relations Commission, in 1995. This reorientation has gone as far as to develop a mind set amongst some key managerial personnel who question union representation and the long-term position and role of unions in the bargaining process at

this site and other business units of the parent company. Therefore, such a paradigmatic shift implies that the organisation must assume a greater role in the work life issues that have been championed previously by organised labour. If an organisation fails to develop systems and approaches that fill the void created by such changes, then the likelihood of fundamental and sustainable advances could be undermined.

A central question is whether or not employees' attitudes, perceptions and workplace specific issues are aligned strategically with such a paradigmatic shift? In other words, what is the potential for greater participative structures within this workplace, given that the organisation is seeking to establish a new framework of labour relations. Thus, the issues associated with an employee's inclination to participate in employee involvement programs assumes greater importance and legitimacy under such a paradigm, as does the organisational impetus for pursuing a new framework of labour relations.

Industrial democracy as well as a plethora of analogous terminologies are often used as a synonym for employee involvement. As a result of the variances in the use of key concepts and in work place practices, there is considerable confusion about the definition of crucial terms. Defining contemporary democracy in America, for example, Lasch (1995:7) argues that democracy today refers to:

> ... more often than not, to the democratization of self-esteem. The current catchwords - diversity, compassion, empowerment, entitlement - express the wistful hope that deep divisions in American society can be bridged by goodwill and sanitised speech.

By transposing this definition into the workplace environment, the rhetorical, hollow ring becomes all too familiar. This is often the rhetoric behind many participatory activities within organisations, especially where a program has been isomorphically replicated in a cynical attempt at worker appeasement and accommodation.

Democratic principles and practice are premised on the cogent exchange of ideas and opinions. As Hutton (1995:17) argues, '...democracy depends on parties being able to develop distinctive policies that correspond to some coherent political vision.' This is the very rationale many organisations cite for the adoption of participatory activities and Self (1993:258) argues, 'the principal feature of an active democracy is not voting but active political participation.' Therefore, the ability to elicit ideas from as wide a number of employees as possible should be the ultimate aim. However, this is often ignored and has become increasingly a major problem in the area of organisational management. Why is this so? Lasch (1995:10) argues:

> ... many of the "best people" as they think of themselves, have always been sceptical about the capacity of ordinary citizens to grasp complex issues and to make critical judgements.

Two key themes are evident here. First, the notion of best people or elites and their role in the process of limiting democratic exchange, and secondly, the role and capacity of ordinary (corporate employees) citizens.

On the first point, the notion of best people or elites is based on the increasing professionalisation of certain fields of endeavour or disciplines. Professionalisation is interpreted as:

> the collective struggle of members of an occupation to define the conditions and methods of their work, to control the production of producers, and to establish a cognitive base and legitimation for their occupational autonomy (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:70).

Professionalisation exerts considerable normative or modelling pressures across organisations. DiMaggio and Powell (1991) contend that there are two important aspects of isomorphism stemming from growing professionalisation. The first, is the stratification of the formal educational process, and the second, is the expansion of professional networks

at the inter and intra organisational level and in which new managerial models rapidly diffuse.

The outcomes of such professionalisation are highly visible. Professional career paths become restricted at entry points and through career progression so that individuals who make it to the top are virtually indistinguishable (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:71). Thus, organisational fields[2] become virtually indistinguishable to the extent that:

> managers and key staff are drawn from the same universities and filtered on a common set of attributes, they will tend to view problems in a similar fashion, see the same policies, procedures, and structures as normatively sanctioned and legitimated, and approach decisions in much the same way (DiMaggio and Powell 1991:72).

This phenomena has been referred to as the 'homosexual reproduction of management' (Kanter 1977 in DiMaggio & Powell 1991:72). The career paths that have experienced the most growth over the past decade are those of organisational professionals such as managers and specialist staff of large organisations. Persons who have bypassed the filtering process of such organisational fields will more than likely be the recipients of 'pervasive on the job socialisation' (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:72). That is, join 'the team' or seek career objectives elsewhere.

However, extreme care must be taken in defining these new professional and managerial elites. For as Lasch (1995:34) argues:

> Efforts to define a 'new class' composed of public administrators and policy makers, relentlessly pushing a program of liberal reforms, ignore the range of political opinions among the professional and managerial elites.

Lasch (1995:34) asserts that the range and scope of occupations conspires against the

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[2] An 'organisational field' refers to organisations that constitute a recognised area of institutional life: key suppliers, producers and consumers, regulatory agencies, and similar competing organisations (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:64-5).

notions of a sectarian political orientation and a defined new ruling class. Nevertheless, these groupings do constitute a new class, often referred to as 'symbolic analysts', to the extent that their main saleable commodity is information and professional expertise. The investment in education by members of professional and managerial elites sets them apart from the 'routine production workers', whose work is premised on mind-numbing repetitive tasks and who exercise little or no control over the design of their work life (Lasch 1995:34-35; Hutton 1995). The entrenchment of the power and wealth of the former group - the symbolic analysts - is occurring at an unprecedented rate, while other categories, which constitute the substantive majority of the population, are declining in wealth and status (Lasch 1995:35).[3] Glaringly similarly trends are observable in Britain, New Zealand and Australia.

The meritocratic elite and professional groups exist within a transient community of contemporaries of self-ascribed 'best and brightest' people which sets them apart from others in the community.

Typically, their interests are no longer the interests of the community at large (Hutton 1995: 309-311; Lasch 1995: 38-40). They are for all intents and purposes, a meritocratic oligarchy who are out of touch with the great number of citizens in developed countries and no longer simply definable as income or occupational categories, but rather as a social elite with their own folkways and customs (Lasch 1995:34-35; Lind 1995:139-141).

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[3]For more information on the new professional and managerial elites see Christopher Lasch., (1995:31-40), *The Revolt of the Elites and the Betrayal of Democracy*, W.W.Norton, New York; Will Hutton., (1995:105-110), *The State We're In*, Jonathan Cape, London; and Michael Lind., (1995:139-180), *The Next American Nation - The New Nationalism and the Fourth American Revolution*, The Free Press, New York.

Significantly, this community of contemporaries (elites) does not recognise itself as a distinct class, instead they pretend that they are just ordinary working people and as a result reject any idea of higher duties such as assisting the less affluent in society (Lasch 1995:39-40; Lind 1995:151-154). This self-made elite as it thinks of itself, 'owing its privileges exclusively to its own efforts', lacks any paternalistic obligation or noblesse obligé, to protect the majority of people from the worst excesses of the market as their predecessors would have done (Lasch 1995:39-40; Lind 1995:153-156). They are all too quick to arrogate privileges to themselves, yet deny any corporate responsibility. According to Lind (1995), their unbridled access and use of power, devoid of any substantive democratic processes, may induce an exploitative mentality in their haste to embrace the tenant of neo-classical market economics. For example, some of the more publicised examples of radical economic and labour market reforms in Britain over the past decade and more recently in Australia attest to the hegemony of these elites over public and private policy.

This is a very sobering and timely warning for states and organisations. Lasch (1995:39) contends that the rise of the meritocratic elites with their uncritical belief in 'a self-made elite owing its privileges exclusively to its own efforts', fails to acknowledge historical precedents and future obligations to societal maxims. This all too apparent ignorance of history, particularly labour history, is unerringly reflected in the New Right's labour market reforms which are, in reality, a reversion to scientific management principles and policies. So what are the implications of structural homogenisation for the structures and processes of organisations and for those denied entry to the meritocratic elite and professional ranks of society?

The rise of professionalism and the seemingly indistinguishable orientation and

disposition of key groupings has significant ramifications for the concentration and use of power. First, the defining characteristics of organisational norms and standards reside with these cliques. Second, is the notion of 'critical intervention', where the 'elites can define appropriate models of organisational structure and policy', more often than not devoid of any critical debate or analysis (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:80). On this latter point, Lasch (1995) provides an incisive commentary. He argues that in the absence of vigorous public debate:

> We do not know what we need to know until we ask the right questions, and we can identify the right questions only by subjecting our own ideas ... to the test of public controversy (163).

Thus, by excluding from the process of democratic exchange those employees who do not fit into the professional groups within an organisation or field, these cliques have been able to effectively establish and sustain the functional illiteracy of their workforces by eliminating incentives for them to 'master the knowledge that would make them capable citizens' (Lasch 1995:12). Regrettably, this professional and managerial point of view is represented vividly in the predominant unitarist managerial forms of control favoured by many Australian organisations (Teicher 1990).

Alford & O'Neill (1994:127) have also examined the 'post-modern organisation and its differential treatment of the workforce.' In assessing the effect of compulsory competitive tendering (CCT) on the labour market in the public sector in Victoria following changes by the Kennett Liberal government, they argue that CCT has:

> displayed a distinctly hierarchical and class bias...where senior managers dispense with much of their workforce and line management responsibility, but maintain - and possibly even extend - their span of control through managing public budgets and a complicated network of contracts and contractors (Alford & O'Neill 1994:127).

The growth of such segmented labour markets lends additional support and credence to the

assertion that the professionalisation of particular fields is accompanied by the further restriction and exclusion of the secondary (contractors) and periphery tiers (temporary and part-time workers) from the decision-making processes of public and private organisations. The flow-on effects on service quality provision, employment conditions, and issues of quality of work life receive little effective consideration in circumstances of such clear divisioning of power and autonomy.

The structural separation of the professional groups from the remainder of the workforce is further enhancing the growth of vacuous policy formulation which is devoid of involvement and scrutiny by the workforce. Policy formulation that excludes the diverse range of opinions and values present in any organisation runs the real risk of unanticipated results. The growing chasm of information and knowledge inequality between groups can be assessed at a number of organisational levels. The relatively high level of skills and knowledge possessed by the meritocratic elite and professional levels of the labour force is often in sharp contrast to the expanding numbers of 'barely literate and numerate workers' within the core labour forces of organisations (Hutton 1995:261). Alford and O'Neill (1994) addressing the growing disparity of knowledge and information between organisations (purchaser) and the secondary and periphery labour forces (provider) contend that 'information provision, compliance monitoring and service evaluation' are often reduced to unacceptable minima in the desire to secure strategic advantage in CCT transactions. Thus, the ability to secure and sustain co-operative participatory activities is undermined through the conclusion of commercial transactions.

Notably on the second point, the presumption is that workers are 'impotent, and it is assumed that they have nothing to contribute to workplace organisation' (Hutton 1995:103). Why is this the case? Typically, New Right economic policies are premised on

turning labour into a commodity and viewing it as a factor of production. Lasch (1995), in addressing the democratic malaise of America in the later part of the twentieth century, contends that despite the unparalleled and unprecedented access to information, the populace is notoriously ill informed. He argues:

> The explanation of this seeming paradox is obvious, though seldom offered: Having been effectively excluded from public debate on the grounds of their incompetence, most Americans no longer have any use for the information inflicted on them in such large amounts. They have become almost as incompetent as their critics [the elites] have always claimed - a reminder that it is debate itself, and debate alone, that gives rise to the desire for usable information. In the absence of democratic exchange, most people have no incentive to master the knowledge that would make them capable citizens (11-2).

This argument is persuasive when applied to the involvement or lack of involvement of employees in the decision making processes of organisations. One commentator has gone as far as to argue that in Britain, where New Right policies have been adopted with considerable gusto:

> Britain is approaching a position where few employees have any mechanism through which they can contribute to the operation of their workplace in a broader context than that of their own job (Millward in Hutton 1995:103).

The effective exclusion and decline of public debate, despite access to information, albeit controlled in some instances, has added to this malaise in the governance of states and organisations. However, where people have become involved in critical debate that focus and engage the parties, they have become rapacious seekers and processes of relevant information (Lasch 1995). This, has been the observable outcome in numerous successful participatory programs[4].

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[4]For more information on successful participatory programs see Edward E Lawler III et al., (1992b), *Employee Involvement and Total Quality Management - Practices & Results in Fortune 1000 Companies*, Jossey-Bass Inc, San Francisco.

Justification and Aims of Thesis

In light of the growing dictum of free-market economics, with its emphasis on deregulation and market principles as the basis of all policy formulation, the clear lack of understanding of the importance of carefully designed, new organisational structures and processes is mitigating against the 'altruism and civilising values of an inclusive society' (Hutton 1995:15).

The need to develop and sustain inclusive organisational structures and processes acquires an immediacy given the increasing reliance on market forces and the widely postulated paradigmatic shift in industrial relations in Australia. For as Lasch (1995:117) asserts, 'if elites speak only to themselves, one reason is the absence of institutions that promote general conversation across class lines.' Australian institutions and organisations are at a critical juncture. The abandonment or purposeful abolition of institutional and organisational structures and networks to unfettered market-based forces and self-regulation, embodied in the resurgent techniques of Fordist production, have the potential to jettison the long-run development of human capital in all, but the meritocratic elite and professional groups.

This study, therefore, seeks to identify and investigate issues which contribute to an understanding and exploration of an employees' inclination to participate in an employee involvement program dependent upon organisational institutional arrangements. In other words, the study provides a strategic link between the behavioural aspects of participation and the social, political, and economic institutionalism which is shaped and channelled by institutional arrangements. DiMaggio & Powell (1991:2) argue that, the neglect of social context and the durability of social institutions by behaviouralists, who interpret collective

political and economic behaviour as the aggregate consequence of individual choice, has resulted in a failure to recognise and understand the importance of social, economic and political institutionalism and its influence in shaping organisational structures and processes.

It is the contention of this researcher that the substantive literature pertaining to participation is founded on behaviouralist perspectives, which view '...institutions as epiphenomenal, [or] merely the sum of individual level properties' (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:2). As a result, the emergent normatively sanctioned managerial philosophies, have failed to comprehend the impact of institutionalism on organisational forms and practices, lending added legitimacy to the widely reported failure of (isomorphically replicated) participatory activities and programs.

Limitations and Delimitations

The study was confined to a single site operation implying caution in comparative analysis. However, the research examines a number of key issues which affect the willingness of employees to participate in employee involvement programs, and highlights the importance of superior selection outcomes, better designed structures and programs which have the aim of enhanced organisational performance.

This research adds to a body of findings pertaining to the dynamics of employee involvement in single sites that confirm the existence of common patterns, relationships, and outcomes across study sites (Miller & Prichard 1992). Therefore, the external validity of this cross-sectional study is relatively high. As a result, the results provide practical and worthwhile indicators and recommendations that management in other industrial settings can draw on when seeking guidance on how to improve the organisational and operational

effectiveness of their organisation.

The Structure of the Thesis

Chapter Two of the study takes a broad and systemic view of the theoretical perspectives underlying participation. The review of the related literature addresses the conceptual frameworks and measures employed in the assessment of participatory activities.

Chapter Three, The Experimental Design, comprises several major components. The chapter examines the sources of data, the overall methodology, the quantitative techniques such as t-tests, discriminant analysis, and qualitative techniques utilised in the study.

Chapter Four describes the results of the survey. The survey findings are discussed in relation to current theoretical orientations of organisational analysis.

Chapter Five consolidates the research findings and draws conclusions regarding the future development, implementation, and evaluation of participatory activities in Australian organisations.

The research takes a broad and systematic view of the substantive literature pertaining to participatory activity. The final element is based on the findings of the research. The study has examined and evaluated experiences in Britain and the United States and has sought to draw lessons for Australian firms contemplating introducing participatory activities.

Chapter 2   Theoretical Perspectives

Participation and Organisational Theory

In analysing any participatory relationship, an understanding of the distribution of power

and control between the conflicting interests of labour and capital is critical. Deery and

Plowman (1991:25) argue that power is an essential element which provides, 'the ability of

an individual or group to obtain compliance with their wishes, to overcome or preclude

opposition or to gain the acceptance of legitimation of their authority.' Hence, the

distinction between unitary and pluralist forms of control is at the centre of any analysis

regarding participation, because the question of control in organisations is continually

recurring (Cressey et al 1985).

A unitary view of the organisation is premised on control through the maintenance

and legitimation of the existing hierarchical authority or power structure. That is,

unitarianism implies that labour and capital share a common purpose or goal where there

exists 'a single source of authority and a single focus of loyalty' (Deery & Plowman

1991:5). By contrast, the pluralist view of the organisation is premised on a 'variety of

groups with divergent interests, objectives and aspirations' (Deery & Plowman 1991:9).

Pluralism implies a diffusion of power amongst competing interests where 'hierarchy is de-

emphasised' and group consultation is valued for the benefit of the organisation (Cressey

et al 1985:129).

The extent to which these two models differ is the degree to which they challenge

managerial prerogative. The unitarist model denotes centralisation of decision making with

established unchallenged lines of communication on a need-to-know basis where 'high-trust

cooperative relations and a mutual commitment to efficiency through respect for managerial authority' is the desired outcome (Cressey et al 1985:165). Thus, a unitarist approach is premised on unchallenged adherence to managerial directives by subordinates.

The pluralist model on the other hand, denotes a devolution of decision making power that extends a challenge to managerial prerogative and extends the boundaries of negotiation. In other words, a pluralist approach could be argued to be premised on encouraging commitment by subordinates to a participation scheme by shifting the influence-power relationship within an organisation.

These two approaches provide typologies with which to assess various participatory schemes. However, Cressey et al (1985:164) argue that, 'neither of these approaches is an adequate analysis of power and authority in the capitalist enterprise, nor a good guide to how management or employees actually define and pursue their interests in practice.' Each system implies different meanings and interpretations of participation, although it is in the interests of both management and employees to foster organisational commitment. Typically, organised capital has pursued a unitarist approach, while worker representatives have sought to pursue a more pluralist approach to participation in decision making. Thus, it is imperative to understand from which approach the various parties are arguing a case for participation.

Participative Structures and Power Sharing

The forms of industrial democracy can be classified according to 'the directness of participation and the extent of influence that employees have over organisational decisions'

(Deery & Plowman 1991:461). Direct participation is characterised by individuals or groups with higher levels of control over their work environment. In contrast, indirect participation is characterised by indirect or representative forms of participation in decision-making bodies at various levels of the organisation. Participatory (direct) and representative (indirect) forms of participation are usually mixed in varying and often complex combinations, in which the two serve different purposes and result from different contextual requirements (Dachler & Wilpert 1978). For example, Teicher (1990:24) argues:

> ... pluralism allows the possibility of collective agreement providing the basis for direct participation in management decisions at lower organisational levels. Indirect forms of participation are not precluded, but formally these have no part in this view of improved efficiency and employee well being.

Access (influence) to participation in decisions can be measured by simply locating instances of participation such as information sharing and joint decision making as points along a hypothetical 'influence-power-sharing' continuum reflecting the different access that organisation members have to the actual making of a decision, or the amount of influence they can exert toward a given decision outcome. The level of participation is categorised on the basis of a judgement regarding the relative power of the parties (Pateman 1970; Teicher 1990), which can range from unilateral managerial control at one extreme to employee control at the other (Deery & Plowman 1991; Cressey et al 1985).

The influence-power-sharing continuum also indicates a distinction between job-related and business related issues. Job related issues are characterised by decisions concerning questions of remuneration, staffing and quality of work-life. On the other hand, business related issues are characterised by decisions affecting areas of capital investment, product development and technical change (Cressey et al 1985). Cressey et al (1985:9) argue, 'the distinction between job-related and business-related issues roughly corresponds

to the issues that tend to be decided respectively at plant and enterprise level'. The evidence shows that participation by employees is confined generally to job-related issues, while employee participation in business-related issues is highly restricted, at best (Cressey et al 1985).

Studies by Cressey, for example, show that managers take a unitarist view of participation where, 'participation was complementary to management's right to manage and make decisions, not a challenge to that power' (Cressey et al 1985:9). Furthermore, in some unitarist contextual settings, participation is viewed as little more than a euphemism for maximising employee co-operation with decisions already made by management (Teicher 1990). Cressey et al (1985) have also observed that for management there are two main justifications for participation. First, educating the workforce about the strategic position of the firm in the marketplace in order to encourage 'realistic attitudes' and to foster commitment to the company and the acceptance of organisational goals. Secondly, to utilise employees' expertise on issues related to work outcomes. Locke et al, (1986 in Bruning & Liverpool 1993), argue that the level of participation can also be categorised according to the relative expertise of the employees. For example, if employees do not possess the skills required to enact and execute a participatory process, why involve them in the first place?

However, employee representatives are less likely to be committed to a participatory strategy if it is only advisory and not concerned with decision making (Cressey et al 1985). Typically, employees approach participation from a pluralist orientation, while management has invariably pursued a unitary approach. Depending on the power-control balance in a particular organisation, these orientations have significant ramifications for the type of participatory strategy employed and the level of organisational structure involved. Cressey

et al (1985) observed in their case studies that most participation schemes were initiated and run by management primarily because they could limit any challenge to managerial prerogative by controlling information disclosure and by limiting managerial commitment to be bound by discussions. This unitarist approach by management has restricted the integration of participation schemes into the primary systems and process by which organisations operate and thereby restricted the potential for significant organisational change.

Significantly, Dulworth et al (1990:145) found that unless participative schemes are integrated into an organisation's primary operating systems, the scheme will more than likely fail, in that, 'the degree of integration employee involvement (participation) systems have with a company's structure, systems and policies is directly related to its performance-improvement potential.' For example, when a participation scheme is predicated on a unitarist approach, enacting primarily on the job-related issues, the participation scheme is a parallel structure requiring no change in an organisation's strategic structure. On the other hand, when a participation scheme is predicated on a pluralist approach, enacting upon business related issues, the type of scheme requires a fundamental change in an organisation's strategic structure. Thus, the further to the right on the influence-power-sharing continuum, the balance is struck, the greater the potential for substantial improved organisational performance.

Dulworth et al (1990) also endorse a number of the findings of Cressey et al (1985). First, the major reason firms cite for not implementing participatory schemes is that their cultures are incongruent with participation and involvement principles, principally, their cultures are unitarist in orientation. This has a strong correlation with Cressey's finding of most managers adopting a unitarist approach to participative schemes. Secondly,

organisations with autocratic (unitarist) management style and culture and hierarchical structure are difficult to enact change within. Thirdly, the lack of top managerial support for the incorporation of participatory systems. Finally, the failure to effect major sustained change in the primary structures and processes of an organisation. In other words, there continues to exist an incongruent argument between supporters of existing organisation structures and systems and those who urge the incorporation of participative structures and systems. Further, there is also a clash between traditional and contemporary participative management principles.

The further along the continuum of the job-related and business-related decision-making continuum the balance is struck, the more likely participative practices are to encounter middle and line management opposition and resistance due to the necessary relinquishing of power and the possibility of managerial job losses (Teicher 1990; Smith 1991; Cressey et al 1985). For more information on 'influence-power-sharing' continuums, refer to Dachler & Wilpert 1978; Cressey et al 1985:8; Deery & Plowman 1991; and Dulworth et al 1990.

Taking this argument one step further and assessing the literature pertaining to power and interests within institutional settings, DiMaggio and Powell (1991:30) suggest that efforts to incorporate power into institutional arrangements begin with two observations. First, key position holders within organisations realise the considerable benefits they derive from the maintenance of their organisations or institutional arrangements; and secondly, when organisational fields are volatile and established practices ill-formulated, successful (participatory activity) often depends upon defining and elaborating widely accepted rules of operation. Thus, managers who exhibit unitary traits seek to develop and enact strategies of control with the intention of affirming and

maintaining their power within their organisational fields, most notably 'through the acculturalisation (socialisation) of the workforce or via support of the state and its judicial arm' (DiMaggio & Powell 1991:31). Semlar (1994) argues, for example, that managerial incumbency is a major stumbling block for participatory initiatives. He observes four obstacles to effective participatory management: size, hierarchy, lack of motivation and ignorance (Semlar 1994:97). It is only through overcoming these problems that participatory schemes can begin to deliver their potential benefits. Only, as organisations seek flexible alternatives to manage their operations, does the organisational effectiveness of managerial incumbents and their policies and procedures come under critical appraisal. (See Ricardo Semlar 1994, for further elaboration of flexible alternatives to managing organisational operations).

Participation Program Growth

The growth of employee involvement programs in recent years is becoming a common element of human resources strategy in a wide variety of industrial settings. The question to be addressed is whether these programs are of a substantive kind, impacting upon the primary systems and processes of organisations, or are they effectively exercises in everyday personnel management?

The literature refers to participation as the influence of employees in the decision-making processes of the workplace (Tannenbaum 1976 in Goll 1990; Teicher 1990). The degree to which employees can influence the decision-making processes of the workplace varies according to factors such as corporate ideology, environmental pressures, influence-power relationships and managerial style.

A recent study by Goll (1990), shows that environmental pressures exert little effect on corporate ideology, but ideology has a significant effect on participative practices in both union and non-union settings. Furthermore, the greater the legitimacy the organisation places on participative practices, the greater the likelihood of increased organisational efficiency. Therefore, organisations need to incorporate participative practices as a key philosophy of their formalised organisational structures if their intention is to improve quality, productivity, employee morale and motivation.

Managerial style and the signalling of participation through a manager's relational communication style also has a significant effect on participatory practices. The style of leadership a manager exhibits, (unitarist or pluralist), influences the willingness of group members to participate (Sorenson & Savage 1989). Relational communication between management and subordinates is viewed as the 'way leaders communicate to indicate their preference for the amount and nature of communication with group members' (Sorenson & Savage 1989:326). Thus, relational communications can contribute positively or negatively to the breadth and depth of participation in decision making. Relational communication can also directly affect participation through impacting upon the receiver's level of satisfaction and compliance with the strategy being pursued.

Domineering behaviour or supportive behaviour elicit quite distinct participative responses from groups and individuals receiving such messages. Thus, depending upon the relational communication strategy used and the underlying motives of management (unitarist/pluralist), the outcome in terms of satisfaction and commitment of subordinates can range across the spectrum. The relational communication used by the sender should be highly relevant to the receiver.

Research conducted on satisfaction and compliance gaining in communication

between physicians and patients has positively correlated the relevancy of the relational communication used by physicians and the level of satisfaction and compliance with the treatment regime (Burgoon et al 1987). This has important ramifications for practitioners attempting to secure commitment from subordinates involved in participative strategies. Further, (Burgoon 1987:311) argues that 'recognition of the role of relational communication in compliance' has shifted emphasis from a patient's failure to comply based on such factors as: personality, ethnicity, age, sex and intelligence, to the behaviour of the physician and the relevancy to the patient's requirements. Care must be taken in drawing tentative conclusions from such findings because such outcomes are based on patient's perceptions rather than observations of actual communication (Burgoon 1987). However, this does not diminish the effect of satisfaction or compliance in single experience or single site outcomes. Thus, when such findings are transposed to a participatory setting, relational communication linked to the industrial approach adopted by management (unitarist/pluralist) will directly influence the compliance and commitment of the receivers.

Participation and the Individual

So far the analysis of participation has focused on the definitional approaches (unitarist/pluralist) which management take in attempting to characterise participation, and the subsequent ramifications such approaches have upon the factors associated with employees' inclination to participate in employee involvement strategies. However, the needs and desires of the individual in participatory initiatives are key elements effecting an individual's inclination to participate in such initiatives irrespective of the approaches pursued by management.

Individuals have intrinsic and extrinsic needs that require fulfilment. Intrinsic rewards are awarded by the individual to himself or herself and possess some intrinsic value to the person performing them (Teicher 1990; Lawler 1986). Intrinsic rewards often assume the form of job enrichment, job enlargement, and job rotation which assist in satisfying an individual's psychological requirements for personal growth, accomplishment, and self-fulfilment. Extrinsic rewards on the other hand are formalised through the organisation. Extrinsic rewards take the form of remuneration, job recognition - both internal and external - and security.

Inextricably linked with both intrinsic and extrinsic rewards is the notion of motivation. Motivation is a result of an individual's beliefs about the consequences of their actions (Lawler 1973; Pinder 1984 in Lawler 1986). People must perceive some form of intrinsic or extrinsic reward for them to be motivated to perform. The participative process enables employees to generate outcomes that satisfy these needs. As a result of this relationship, consideration of an individual's needs is relevant to the issue of whether participative management is likely to be effective.

An adjunct to this thesis is the extent to which behaviouralist oriented participative literature focuses on self-determination as a personal need of employees. Thus, some organisations and human resource practitioners are placing greater emphasis on self-determination through participatory schemes in the pursuit of attaining individual needs within the workplace.

The range and scope of the participative action, has a profound effect on the level of individual motivation. If an individual perceives that a participative activity concerns an important work performance issue, the individual is more motivated to perform. The key is that the participation must concern an important work performance issue in order for it

to affect motivation (Lawler 1986).

Satisfaction is also a key variable that significantly influences the psychological aspects of an individual's work life. However, there is a clear distinction between motivation and satisfaction. Motivation is influenced by forward-looking perceptions concerning the relationship between performance and rewards, while satisfaction refers to an individual's feelings about the rewards they have received (Lawler 1986).

Vaughan (1984) and Teicher (1990) examined the link between job satisfaction and participation and found it to be tenuous. However, a number of studies evaluated by Vaughan (1984), observed that the majority of workers, regardless of the type of work being performed, claim to be satisfied with their work. Most workers are indeed reasonably satisfied with their jobs, however, most data sets are inadequate and insufficient for use as a base for drawing definitive conclusions. Taking this argument further, Wagner and Gooding (1987a) contend, that in percept-percept studies multi source outcomes such as employee attitudes, motivation, satisfaction, and acceptance (commitment) of participative strategies, the relationship between participation and outcomes was only modest at best. Bruning and Liverpool (1993), argue that the 'weak results' of the participation-outcome relationship observed by Wagner and Gooding may be accounted for by research undertaken by Locke, Schweiger, and Latham (1986). The latter researchers argue that participation is only 'one aspect' of a multidimensional work environment where satisfaction and commitment are influenced by other strategic variables, to a greater or lesser extent, depending upon the organisational environment and level of involvement and expertise of the workforce (Locke, Schweiger & Latham in Bruning & Liverpool 1993). It seems there is a tenuous link between participation and perceptual outcomes, although the actual participation process itself and the level of expertise and level of commitment of employees

involved in the process will affect the effectiveness of a program in terms of perceptual outcomes.

Dynamic markets dictate flexible organisational structures with communication and decision making processes which enable the free exchange of ideas and differentiation of interests. In practice, this produced two broad approaches to worker involvement in decision making processes, one favouring informal and the other formal arrangements (Teicher 1990; Dachler & Wilpert 1978). For example, Dachler & Wilpert (1978:10) contend:

> ... the degree of formality or informality of participation is tied closely to the underlying values of the designers, to the goals and objectives which participation is to serve, and to the particular organisational and societal context in which the participatory system exists.

Participatory (direct) and representative (indirect) forms of participation are often mixed in varying and often complex combinations and in which the two forms serve different purposes and result from different contextual requirements (Dachler & Wilpert 1978). For example, in Australian industrial settings, joint consultative committees are the major form of employee involvement (Marchington 1992b). However, joint consultation is a form of employee involvement that is considered to be indirect in nature and relatively weak, addressing principally non-substantive issues.

One of the key issues to be considered when determining the rationale for workers partaking in employee involvement structures is the level of support for participation exhibited by employees themselves. Fenwick & Olson (1986) found that studies examining worker support for participation have produced contradictory results. A number of studies cited by Fenwick & Olson (1986), for example, show support for participation to be stronger amongst high-status, high-skilled workers who exhibit higher levels of

commitment, power and expectations. This orientation to participation is referred to as the job enlargement principle. On the other hand, studies amongst low-status, low-skilled workers found strong support as a perverse response to dissatisfaction and worker alienation. This orientation is referred to as the underdog principle. Finally, some studies have shown support for participation amongst both types of workers (Fenwick & Olson 1986).

The issues of who participates and why they participate in work-related groups and organisational structures is of paramount importance to the present research. Homogeneous industries with respect to labour markets and industrial relations characteristics (approaches) will elicit similar results in relation to individuals participating in work-related groups and organisations. However, the differences in demographic profiles in firms may be related to systematic differences (e.g., different educational levels, or cultural experiences based on race, gender, or age), and these factors combined will elicit different participation levels across firms (Bruning & Liverpool 1993).

Employees' Participation in Work-Related Groups and Organisations

Research findings based on worker participation in unions has shown that employees who are active in union affairs possess higher levels of education, hold higher remunerated jobs, hold more seniority within the workplace, and are overall more satisfied with their jobs (Strauss 1977; MacDonald, & Duncan 1989; Miller & Prichard 1992). Other research has highlighted the importance of environmental factors as critical determinants of involvement in different unions. Four key factors are emphasised by Davis (1989). First, the historical

perspective where some unions are renowned for their members involvement. Secondly, the importance of the sex and occupational composition of the membership. However, a study by Benson & Griffin (1988), argues that when age and income are controlled for, gender is not a significant variable upon participation in trade union activities. Thirdly, the size of the workplace does not have an important bearing on the development of union consciousness, and therefore, it may be inferred, on interest and involvement in trade union matters. An alternative argument is advanced by Fenwick & Olson (1986:510-511), who argue that in the 'underdog principle', organisational size increases support for participation by increasing grievances, while from the 'job enlargement perspective', organisational size increases support by increasing the resources of workers, providing support for participation is greater amongst union-members. Finally, the financial state of the union will influence the opportunities for participation it can provide (Fenwick & Olson 1986:192-193).

Employee involvement in participation programs often affects employees' attitudes towards unions and management. In some instances, employee involvement programs have been shown to increase employee identification with a firm or a particular participation strategy (Verma & Mckersie 1987). Therefore, is identification with the firm and the union compatible or are they mutually exclusive? Verma & McKersie (1987) found that previous research shows that company loyalty is not achieved at the expense of union loyalty. Rather, there is a dual loyalty in existence where a company and the union are afforded equal loyalty by the employee.

Union-management relations have in most contextual settings been of an adversarial nature. Typically, management is highly sceptical of relinquishing power and decision-making to lower levels of an organisation. Issues such as capital investment, business

planning, and day-to-day operations are seen as the prerogative of management with employee influence limited to issues of pay, job structures, and working conditions. Such adversarial relationships promote inefficiency through the construct of parallel hierarchical union arrangements to represent employees' interests (Lawler 1990). Thus, a more cooperative union-management relationship is viewed as potentially beneficial in current contextual settings. It seems, the more cooperative or less adversarial the overall labour-management relationship, the better the company performance (Katz, Kochan & Mower 1984). Therefore, cooperative union-management approaches have the potential to offer wider and more efficient employee involvement as well as improved organisational performance (Gilbert 1989).

Recent literature pertaining to the implications of involvement by unions and the degree to which the union is a sanctioned player within the involvement strategy holds significant ramifications for support of such programs amongst unionised and non-unionised employees and the overall success of the strategy. Union involvement in participative programs ranges all the way along the continuum from opposition to full endorsement.

Traditionally, unions have been sceptical of such arrangements because they are often viewed as subverting overall union power or an attempt by management to usurp union influence in the workplace. For example, the research shows several outcomes. Employees may begin to question the relevancy of a union or union leaders may become too closely aligned with management or get co-opted into managerial decisions (Fenwick & Olson 1986; Katz, Kochan & Mower 1984; Cooke 1989; Gilbert 1989; Verma & McKersie 1987; Frenkel 1989:495).

Recent research studies have focused less on participation in union activities and more on involvement in participatory programs and strategies (Miller & Prichard 1992). For

example, Bruning & Liverpool (1993), report that the profiles of employees who were members of a Quality Circle (QC) were more highly educated, were more highly remunerated, and exhibited lower needs for dominance than non-members. They found that the motives for entering QCs go beyond desiring participation within the environment, they differ significantly in different organisational cultures, and influence outcomes in a variety of ways depending on the personal agendas of individuals involved in the QCs and the context in which they operate (Bruning & Liverpool 1993:93).

Summary

The theoretical perspectives of participation that have been examined require a brief summary to draw out the principal conceptual themes.

First, it is evident from the literature that the management of organisations need to assess and determine the kind and extent of participatory activities that employees will be involved in. In other words, clear strategic objectives need to be established and communicated to employees about the nature and scope of participative activities. As has been argued, institutional design of an organisation is the keystone to determining the structures and the level and scope of participative decision making occurring within an organisation. Thus, a clear understanding and acknowledgement of the role of institutionalism in setting the individual organisational participatory agenda is crucial.

The literature review has also addressed the organisational implications of participatory activities, principally, the influence-power relationship between the parties. It is evident that the degree to which a participatory program is incorporated effectively into

an organisational structure and processes has ramifications for the influence-power relationship between the parties. Typically, where a program impacts upon the primary systems of an organisation, there is a proportional shift along the influence-power continuum from the organisational elite to engage a larger number of employees. Furthermore, a number of researchers point to shifts in the influence-power relationship and its correlation with performance-improvement potential (Dulworth et al 1990; Cressey et al 1995). In other words, by power sharing the organisation gains from the larger knowledge pool and enhanced employee commitment.

The third theme evaluated in the literature is the impact of participation on the individual employee. A substantive quantity of literature focuses on the behaviouralist aspects of the participation debate, specifically, the needs and desires of the individual in participatory initiatives which in turn may affect an individual's inclination to participate. Finally, as with any organisational structure or process, participatory activities require on-going senior management commitment. In the absence of such commitment, the likelihood of affecting any long-term fundamental change is slight.

Chapter 3 Research Design

The purpose of the research design is to establish the nature of the relationship between the independent variables of age, gender, education, length of employment, job status, qualifications, area of employment, location of employment, seniority, shift worked, and remuneration method, and the dependent variable, inclination to participate in an employee involvement program. This is an investigative cross-sectional and correlational field study. As this research is concerned with ascertaining an employee's inclination to participate in an employee involvement program, the units of analysis are managers and employees.

Discriminant analysis has been utilised to guide the assessment of combinations of predictor variables separating weekly remunerated employees from monthly remunerated employees, and the further objective of profiling characteristics that distinguish between such groups. This level of analysis was utilised because of its ability to discriminate between the monthly remunerated professional and meritocratic groups within the PC and the weekly remunerated employees. Two status groups are identified as the dependent variables in the discriminant analysis, namely, monthly and weekly remunerated employees. The analyses centres on the variables which discriminate between these two contrasted groups.

Population and Sample

The population for the study comprised managers and employees across all departments, on and off-site, within the PC. A questionnaire was administered to all PC employees. The sample size of completed questionnaires was 197 respondents out of a total population of 235, a response rate of 84 per cent. In addition, a structured interview was conducted with

the human resource manager to ascertain his views about the firm's strategic direction with respect to organisational human resources. Structured interviews were also conducted with a number of supervisors to ascertain their willingness to share information and decision making activities with their subordinates.

Data-Collection Methods

The questionnaire data for this research was collected over one day by surveying the entire PC workplace during group production shifts. The researcher administered the questionnaire during scheduled breaks in production. All respondents are anonymous and their responses confidential. The in-depth interviews were conducted during follow-up sessions at times arranged with senior management.

Test Instruments

The standardised questionnaire consisted of a number of demographic items, including: age, gender, education, length of employment, job status, qualifications, area of employment, location of employment, seniority, shift worked, and remuneration method. The questionnaire is shown in appendix A. The research sought to identify those employees who are definite about their interest in either volunteering or not volunteering to become a member of a committee. That is, volunteers are isolated from non-volunteers. The analysis focused on identifying the variables that discriminate between these two distinct groups.

In order to test the hypotheses, the data was submitted to t-tests. Discriminant analysis was carried out on a series of predictor variables in order to determine a discriminant function of the propensity of employees to volunteer to join a problem solving

group or committee. The key dependent variable of primary concern to this research is that of voluntary status.

In addition, a number of scales were constructed with items (measured on a Likert-type 5-point scale) examining attitudes, individual perceptions about the respondent's job and organisational issues. The scales utilised in this study have been adapted from published sources with known and acceptable reliability and validity.

Satisfaction measures were derived by utilising a number of job satisfaction measures. This measure consisted of three dimensions: satisfaction with work, satisfaction with co-workers and satisfaction with supervision. The intention is to, 'attempt to operationalise the definition of job satisfaction' (Sekaran 1992:354). The scales of Job Satisfaction developed is adapted from similar scales reported by Miller & Prichard (1992); Kochan, Katz & Mower (1984); Mortensen & Foley, (1992); and finally, Fenwick & Olson (1986). The items used in the job design and autonomy scale are adapted from the work of Miller & Prichard (1992); Mortensen & Foley (1992). This measure assesses productivity, product quality, labour/management relations, plant operations and quality of employee's work experience.

Employee's interest in moving into a higher order job is derived from Miller & Prichard (1992). The senior management and leadership scale is adapted from the work of Miller & Prichard (1992); and Verma & McKersie (1987). The scale of information and communication is adapted from similar scales reported by Miller & Prichard (1992); Kochan, Katz & Mower (1984); Mortensen & Foley, (1992); and finally, Fenwick & Olson (1986). The scale of manager/supervisor performance is adapted from the work of Miller & Prichard (1992); and Verma & McKersie (1987) and a similar scale used within the PC. The scale of employee development is adapted from similar scales reported by Miller &

Prichard (1992); Kochan, Katz & Mower (1984); Mortensen & Foley, (1992); and finally, Fenwick & Olson (1986).

Interviews

Brief exploratory interviews were conducted with the director of human resources. The interviews sought information on the possible implementation options available to the organisation in order to introduce an employee involvement program. In addition, a focus group meeting was conducted with a group of departmental supervisors and several executive managers.

The purpose of these meetings was to first, clarify the organisational structure - the degree of formalisation, and function and task differentiation - products produced and technology employed. Secondly, to determine the degree of decision autonomy possessed by managers and supervisors, and finally, to define the issues of governance associated with the proposed shift to greater participation by employees in decision making processes.

Statistical Procedures

Principally, two separate statistical techniques were used in the study, namely t-tests and discriminant analysis. The hypotheses were tested with the use of t-tests.

Hypotheses

The causal model used to estimate the hypothesised relationship of an employee's

inclination to participate is presented in Figure 3.1. Inclination to participate is a function

of the characteristics of individual workers and their workplace organisation.
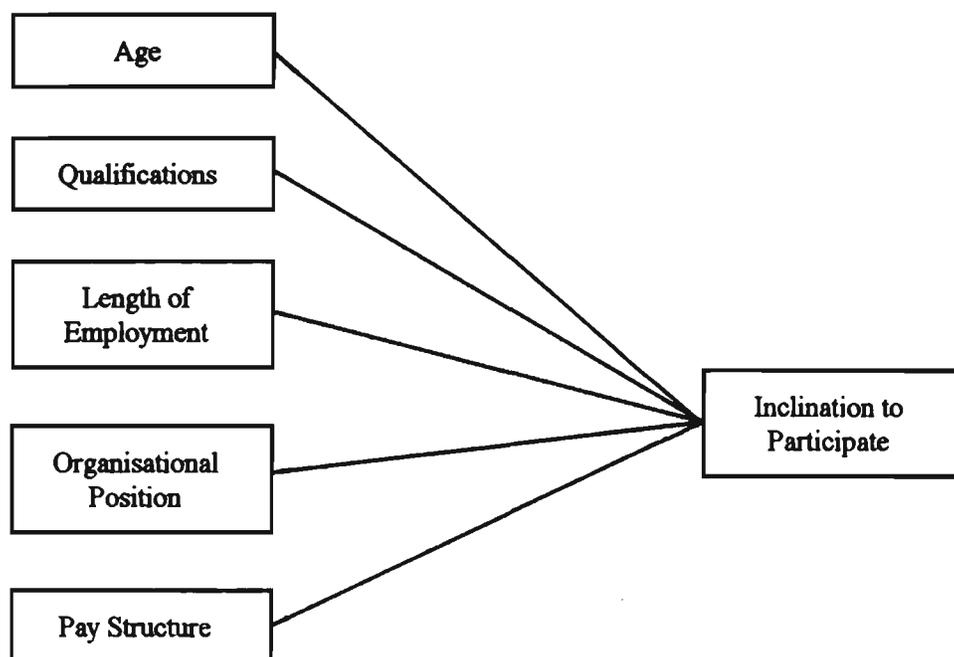
Figure 3.1 Theoretical Model

From the theoretical framework discussed above, several hypotheses were

developed. It follows from the discussion of the mechanisms by which participatory

activities occur within organisations, that this research should be able to predict

empirically which organisational groups will exhibit a higher predisposition for

participation within organisations. The principal value of this orientation lies in its

predictive utility.

Participation Predictors

There is variability in the extent and rate at which groups participate in organisational

structures and processes. These hypotheses are derived from the discussion of the

theoretical perspectives underlying participatory activities.

Hypothesis *H1a*: Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be

younger.

H1o: There is no difference in the ages of interested and non-

interested employees.

Hypothesis *H2a*: Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be

better qualified than non-interested employees.

H2o: There is no difference in qualifications between interested

and non-interested employees.

Hypothesis *H3a*: Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will

have worked for a shorter period with their present

employer.

H3o: There is no difference in the length of employment

between interested and non-interested employees.

Hypothesis   *H4a*:   Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will

have different organisational positions to non-interested

employees.

H4o: There is no difference in the organisational position of

interested and non-interested employees.

Hypothesis   *H5a*:   Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be

remunerated differently to non-interested employees.

H5o: There is no difference between interested and non-

interested employees and the form of remuneration.

Chapter 4   Analysis of Data

The inclination to participate in an employee involvement program is shown in Table 4.1.

The total number of respondents was 197. A total of 84 employees indicated they were

interested in joining a problem solving group or committee, 50 indicated they were not

interested, while a further 61 indicated that they were unsure, or required more information,

and 2 cases were misclassified. The following analysis focuses on employees who were

definite about their interest in volunteering to join a problem solving group or committee.

Respondents who were not interested or who were unsure or required more information

were grouped together for further analysis.

The majority of respondents (54 or 27.4 per cent) had worked for the PC for a

period of between 6 to 10 years. This figure represents a stable workforce which was

substantiated against evidence from the interview with the human resource manager who

confirmed the long-term tenured nature of employment within the PC. The next highest

group was respondents who had worked for the PC for less than one year (35 or 17.8 per

cent) of employees, followed by respondents who had worked for a period of between 3 to

5 years (29 or 14.7 per cent) of employees. The majority of respondents were distributed

equally between the age groups of 25 to 34 and 35 to 44, constituting (57 or 28.9 per cent)

of the respondents respectively. The next highest age grouping was in the 45 to 54 year old

age group which constituted (46 or 23.4 per cent) of all respondents. A majority of

respondents were male, 158 or 80.2 per cent. Turning to education, 67 or 34 per cent of

respondents had completed high school,[1] 41 or 20.8 per cent possessed a trade certificate,

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[1]Completion of high school was inclusive of respondents who had left school in years ten
through twelve.

35 or 17.8 per cent had a tertiary qualification, and 21 or 10.7 per cent possessed a technical qualification.

Table 4.1 Number of People Interested in Volunteering

	SENIOR MANAGEMENT	MANAGEMENT	SUPERVISOR	EMPLOYEES	TOTAL
INTERESTED	6	9	20	49	84
NOT INTERESTED	1	1	9	39	50
UNSURE/NEED MORE INFORMATION	0	1	6	54	61

Survey Analysis

Comparisons of the means and standard deviations (SD) of the interested, and not interested groups of employees are presented in Table 4.2. The results indicate that several of the hypotheses were confirmed.

Table 4.2 Means of Interested and Non-Interested groups

DISCRIMINATING VARIABLE	Interested Mean	SD	No Interest / Unsure Mean	SD	t-Value
QUALIFICATIONS	3.17	1.70	2.65	1.67	-2.09*
POSITION	.67	.93	.20	.50	-4.18*
PAY STRUCTURE	1.37	.48	1.19	.39	-2.67*
LOCATION	1.06	.23	1.13	.33	1.63
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	4.14	1.72	3.37	1.78	-3.06*
AGE	3.95	.99	3.69	1.16	-1.67
AREA	7.27	4.26	6.01	3.88	-2.10*
SEX	1.18	.38	1.22	.41	.65
SHIFT	1.12	.39	1.23	.55	1.59

* Significant at the 0.05 level.

Hypotheses

Several hypotheses were proposed in Chapter Three. The hypotheses were tested with the aid of *t*-tests. Of the hypotheses tested, four were substantiated. The survey results were also substantiated by information derived from on-site interviews with area managers, supervisors and employees.

The comparison of means for volunteers and non-volunteers presented in Table 4.2 indicate significant differences that are consistent with the theoretical model's predictions. The results of these tests and their interpretation are discussed below.

Hypothesis 1

Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be younger was not borne out by the analysis. The *t* value of -1.67 is not significant. The results indicate that the difference of the means for interested and non-interested employees of 3.95 and 3.69 with standard deviations of .99 and 1.16 is not significantly different . In effect, there are no significant differences between interested and non-interested employees in age. Thus, hypothesis 1 is not substantiated.

Hypothesis 2

Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be more highly qualified than non-interested employees was substantiated. The *t* value of -2.09 is significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The results indicate that the difference of the means for interested and non-interested employees of 3.17 and 2.65 with standard deviations of 1.70 and 1.67 is significantly different . In effect, there are significant differences between interested and non-interested employees in the qualifications held.

These results highlight the importance of education, training and professional development on the job. Organisations pursuing involvement structures and processes need to target education programs at specific groupings if they are to avoid creating a two-tier participatory structure. As can be seen from Table 4.2, less qualified employees have a lower interest in joining a problem solving group or committee. Programs targeting this group may in part redress this imbalance between the meritocratic and professional groupings within the PC and wage earning groups.

Hypothesis 3

Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will have worked for a shorter period with their present employer was substantiated but, not in the direction hypothesised. The t value of 4.14 is significant at the 95 percent confidence level. The results indicate that the difference of the means for interested and non-interested employees of 4.14 and 3.37 with standard deviations of 1.72 and 1.78 is significantly different. In effect, there are significant differences between interested and non-interested employees in the length of time employed with the PC.

The result of this finding is not in the direction hypothesised. However, it is a statistically significant outcome which exemplifies the site specific nature of the results. Clearly, if the PC intends to encourage participation, then they will have to implement an induction program that encourages employees to 'sign on' to a commitment to participate and contribute. This is a large part of the education process that should be directed at the wage earning groups of the PC.

Hypothesis 4

Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will have different organisational positions than non-interested employees was substantiated. The t value of -4.18 is significant. The results indicate that the difference of the means for interested and non-interested employees of .67 and .20 with standard deviations of .93 and .50 is significantly different. In effect, there are significant differences between interested and non-interested employees in the organisational positions held within the PC. Typically, employees who expressed an interest in volunteering for a problem solving group or committee were more senior in position than non-interested employees. While this result was expected, it reinforces the importance of new employees undergoing an appropriate induction program and the integration of on-going training and development to encourage and maintain high levels of employee performance and effectiveness.

Hypothesis 5

Those employees who are identified as 'interested' will be remunerated differently to non-interested employees was also substantiated. The t value of -2.67 is significant. The results indicate that the difference of the means for interested and non-interested employees of 1.37 and 1.19 with standard deviations of .48 and .39 is significantly different. In effect, there are significant differences between interested and non-interested employees in the pay structures of employees within the PC. Typically, employees who expressed an interest in volunteering for a problem solving group or committee were paid monthly as opposed to non-interested employees who were remunerated weekly. Again, this result was anticipated.

Discriminant Analysis

A total of 197 (unweighted) cases were eligible for inclusion, however, 40 of these were excluded from the data analysis because of missing data, leaving 157 (unweighted) cases which were used in the analysis. The following analysis focuses on the 157 employees who were divided into two groups, the first those who indicated they were definite about their interest in volunteering and the second included the not interested and the unsure respondents.

Discriminant analysis has been used to determine whether the variables listed in Table 4.3 distinguish between those identified as being interested in volunteering for a problem solving group or committee and those who are not interested. Table 4.3 shows the pooled intercorrelations among all variables. Pay structure and current position have the largest correlation coefficient of 0.57. This is to be expected, since the position held dictates remuneration method. Age and length of employment have the second largest correlation coefficient of 0.53. This is also to be expected, since length of employment increases with age. The inclusion of highly correlated variables in an analysis may affect the magnitudes and signs of the coefficients since the contribution of the variables is shared, resulting in individual coefficients which are less meaningful. Overall, the correlations were low.

Table 4.3 Intercorrelations Among Variables

VARIABLES	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1. QUALIFICATIONS	1.00								
2. CURRENT POSITION	.30	1.00							
3. PAY STRUCTURE	.45	.57	1.00						
4. LOCATION	.07	.02	.26	1.00					
5. LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	.03	.21	.12	-.11	1.00				
6. AGE	.26	.30	.20	.03	.53	1.00			
7. AREA	.34	.31	.45	.00	.14	.19	1.00		
8. SEX	-.02	-.20	-.20	-.13	-.07	-.04	.22	1.00	
9. SHIFT	-.10	-.14	-.24	-.01	-.11	-.01	-.28	.01	1.00

The discriminant function of the propensity to volunteer to join a problem solving group or committee with the categories of interested, and not interested was carried out on 9 selected predictor variables, namely, qualifications, current organisational position, pay structure, site location, length of employment, age, organisational area, sex, and shift worked.

Classification Results

Results of the classification analysis indicate the ability of the discriminant function to correctly classify employees who were interested and were not interested in volunteering for a problem solving group or committee. Table 4.4 indicates that the overall percentage of grouped cases correctly classified was 71.97 percent, of which 58.2 percent of the interested employees and 82.2 percent of the non-interested employees were correctly classified.

The percentage of cases classified correctly is often taken as an index of the

effectiveness of the discriminant function. The percentage of grouped cases correctly classified is 71.97 percent. Therefore, the discriminant function with a misclassification rate of 28.09 percent is performing better than chance. An optimal discriminant function should minimise the probability of misclassification. In this case, the classification rate of 71.97 percent compares moderately favourably with the .5 percent expected by chance alone (based on equal prior probabilities for the two groups). The stability of the classification procedure was not checked by cross validation.

Table 4.4 Classification Results

Actual Group	No. of Cases	Predicted group membership	
		1	2
Group 1 Weekly remuneration	67	39 58.2%	28 41.8%
Group 2 Monthly remuneration	90	16 17.8%	74 82.2%
Ungrouped Cases	1	1 100.0%	0 .0%
	Percentage of "grouped" cases correctly classified: 71.97%		

Interpreting Results of Discriminant Analysis

Table 4.5 shows significance tests for the equality of group means for each of the variables. If the observed significance level is small (less than 0.05), the hypothesis that all group means are equal is rejected. Five discriminating variables were identified by the discriminant analysis. The discriminant function had a canonical correlation of .41 and a chi-square value of 28.03 significant beyond .0009. Large values of Wilks' lambda indicate that group means do not appear to be different, while small values indicate that group means do appear to be different. The significance of change in Wilks' lambda is determined by the significance of

f-statistics. A comparison of Wilks' lambda, presented in Table 4.5, shows that

qualifications, pay structure, current position, length of employment, and work area are the

variables whose means are most different for interested employees from non-interested

employees.

Table 4.5 Tests for Univariate Equality of Group Means

VARIABLES	Wilks' Lambda	F	Significance
1. QUALIFICATIONS	.97177	4.5034	.0354
2. CURRENT POSITION	.86960	23.2429	.0000
3. PAY STRUCTURE	.94334	9.3098	.0027
4. LOCATION	.99395	.9442	.3327
5. LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	.93637	10.5328	.0014
6. AGE	.98366	2.5750	.1106
7. AREA	.96381	5.8193	.0170
8. SEX	.99567	.6746	.4127
9. SHIFT	.99016	1.5400	.2165

A summary of the discriminant analysis is presented in Table 4.6.

Table 4.6 Summary of the Discriminant Analysis

DISCRIMINATING VARIABLE	STANDARDISED DISCRIMINANT FUNCTION COEFFICIENTS	VARIABLE DISCRIMINANT FUNCTION CORRELATIONS
QUALIFICATIONS	.17	.38
CURRENT POSITION	.73	.86
PAY STRUCTURE	.02	.54
LOCATION	-.14	-.17
LENGTH OF EMPLOYMENT	.53	.58
AGE	-.29	.28
AREA	.11	.43
SEX	-.01	-.15
SHIFT	-.00	-.22

The standardised coefficients indicate that current position makes the most important contribution to the discrimination between groups. An interpretation of these results indicates that current position in organisational level, and length of time employed with present employer are the most important in distinguishing whether people are more likely to volunteer to join a problem solving group or committee or not.

The variable-discriminant function correlations, which can be interpreted as loadings of the discriminating variables on the discriminant function (Pedhazur 1992 in Miller & Prichard 1992:425), indicate a similar relationship among variables as the coefficients. Table 4.6 indicates that the variable *Current Position* (.86) has the highest correlation with the discriminant function. The variable *Length of Employment* has the second largest correlation (.58) in absolute value.

A significant outcome can be deduced from this data. If management of the PC is interested in increasing the interest expressed in employee willingness to volunteer in participatory programs, program designers should consider an employee's current position in the organisational level, length of time employees have been with the PC, and the remuneration structure.

The results of the discriminant analysis indicate length of employment, pay structure, and organisational position as the predictors most significant in distinguishing employees who are interested in participation from employees who are likely to indicate no such interest.

The three predictors to emerge from the discriminant analysis provide the means for the management of the PC to classify employees into interested, and not interested groupings. The predictors of length of employment, pay structure, and organisational position creates a profile of each group, indicating which variable should be scrutinised if

the PC is to attract volunteers to employee involvement initiatives. The findings also hold implications for organisations pursuing high involvement strategies. The ability to attract participation and sustain programs and initiatives is premised on enlisting support. Identification of employees or groups who exhibit a high propensity to volunteer will aid in this process. On the other hand, employees or groups who exhibit little propensity to volunteer can be specifically targeted to create more interest amongst these employees or groups.

Attitudinal Results

Job Satisfaction

Summary statistics for job satisfaction responses by interested and not interested employees are shown in Table 4.7. The mean values are statistically significant between the groupings.

Table 4.7 Means of Interested and Non-Interested Groups - Job Satisfaction

	Interested		No interest - Unsure		
DISCRIMINATING VARIABLE	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	*t*-value
I have enough time to get everything done on my job.	3.26	1.16	3.66	1.12	2.42*
The work I do on my job is meaningful to me.	4.07	.97	3.69	1.13	-2.51*
I feel personally responsible for the work I do on my job.	4.55	.59	4.31	.87	-2.30*
I receive useful information at shift briefings.	3.04	1.11	2.67	1.14	-2.21*
I am keen to move into a higher level job.	2.81	.94	2.52	1.09	-2.35*
This organisation does a good job of providing technical training for employees.	2.99	.94	2.69	1.12	-2.00*
We are all responsible for the quality of our products and services.	4.44	.61	4.21	.79	-2.30*

* Significant at the 0.05 level.

These results suggest those employees identified as interested were overall more

satisfied with their work. These findings support the argument that employees reporting

higher levels of job satisfaction will on average have a higher propensity to volunteer for

employee involvement programs.

Management Performance

Summary statistics for management performance responses by interested and not interested

employees are shown in Table 4.8. The mean values are statistically significant between the

groupings.

Table 4.8 Means of Interested and Non-Interested Groups - Management Performance

	Interested		No interest - Unsure		
DISCRIMINATING VARIABLE	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-Value
My manager/supervisor recognises the good performance of employees.	3.28	1.19	2.91	1.23	-2.15*
My manager/supervisor encourages us to perform well.	3.73	.92	3.36	1.20	-2.45*
My manager/supervisor shows interest in us as individuals.	3.38	1.23	3.01	1.24	-2.08*
The senior management team provides effective feedback on the plant's current performance.	3.38	1.06	3.00	1.06	-2.48*
The senior management team keeps us informed about the plant's future directions.	3.28	1.07	2.91	1.10	-2.40
Senior management in [the firm] care about employees.	3.20	1.10	2.77	1.09	-2.71*

* Significant at the 0.05 level.

The comparison of means for interested and non-interested employees presented in

Table 4.8 indicate significant differences in perceptions of management/supervisor

performance. These results suggest that interested employees perceive a superior level of

manager/supervisor performance than that reported by non-interested employees.

Union Involvement

Summary statistics for union involvement responses by interested and not interested employees are shown in Table 4.9.

Table 4.9 Means of Interested and Non-Interested Groups - Union Involvement

	Interested		No interest - Unsure		
DISCRIMINATING VARIABLE	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	t-Value
Management and unions cooperate well together.	2.81	.94	2.52	1.09	-1.97*
For employees, there is no conflict between the organisation's quality activities and strongly supporting the union.	3.17	.75	2.94	.87	-1.99*

* Significant at the 0.05 level.

The mean values are statistically significant between the groupings. These results suggest that there is a significant disparity between interested and non-interested employees with regards to union relations and management, and the area of dual-loyalty. Principally, non-interested employees perceive management union relations to be less cooperative and were less likely to support dual-loyalty philosophy.

Discussion

In summary, four of the five hypotheses are substantiated and one is not. The results indicated that employees who expressed an interest in volunteering were: first, more senior in position; secondly, were paid monthly as opposed to non-interested employees who were remunerated weekly; thirdly, possessed higher qualifications and worked for the organisation for a longer period of time. There were no significant differences in age

between interested and non-interested employees.

From the results of the hypotheses testing, it follows from the discussion of the mechanisms by which participatory activities occur within organisations, that this research is able to predict which organisational groups exhibit a higher predisposition for participation within organisations. The demonstrated predisposition of monthly remunerated, higher qualified, longer tenured, senior personnel within the PC to express an interest in volunteering for a problem solving group or committee above that of weekly remunerated employees lends credence to the argument, that where democratic exchange is limited either through the professionalisation of a field or effective exclusion of employees on the presumption of their impotence, that few employees have any mechanism through which they can contribute to the operation of their workplace in a broader context than that of their own jobs (Millward in Hutton 1995:103). The very fact that weekly remunerated employees' interest in volunteering to join a problem solving group or committee is lower than monthly remunerated employees, implies a perceived divisioning of knowledge and limited access for meaningful employee input.

The findings must be considered in light of the absence of any formalised participatory activities or programs at the PC. The PC has a limited history of such programs and to date has not considered nor articulated any strategic commitment to employee involvement activities or programs despite an acknowledged paradigmatic shift in focus to strategic employee relations management. Value Added Manufacturing (VAM) and limited Total Quality Management (TQM) programs have been introduced within the PC's traditional hierarchical organisational model, with lower employees afforded limited knowledge, information and power over organisational work processes.

The findings hold implications for organisations pursuing high involvement

strategies. The ability to attract participation and sustain programs and initiatives is premised on enlisting support. Identification of employees or groups who exhibit a high propensity to volunteer will aid in this process. On the other hand, employees or groups who exhibit little propensity to volunteer can be specifically targeted to create more interest amongst such respondents.

Chapter 5 Conclusion

In Chapter One several major tasks were set down and a number of associated questions were raised. It is appropriate now to review briefly the arguments discussed and the evidence analysed. The first task was to analyse critically the apparent failure by advocates of employee involvement programs to recognise and understand the importance of social, economic and political institutional diversity and variances in market systems and their influence in shaping and sustaining organisational structures and processes. As a result, mimetic modelling of organisational structures and initiatives such as employee involvement programs, often fail to address the substantive structural and organisational changes required to facilitate the attainment or even partial attainment of the desired objectives of impacting upon performance, employee attitudes, and behaviour. The second task was to analyse critically the underlying governance issues confronting the management of organisations in attracting and maintaining the effective participation of employees in decision making processes. The final task was to assess the necessity to thoughtfully design participative structures and their mode of operation in accordance with an organisation's strategic objectives. In addition, the issues of governance associated with the participation of employees in decision making processes need to be clearly defined and understood by all participants if effective organisational policies are to be formulated and implemented.

Institutional Diversity and Participatory Activities

The principal focus of this thesis is the examination of issues associated with an employee's inclination to participate in employee involvement programs. Thus, the identification and evaluation of the key attributes which influence the propensity of employees to become involved and committed to a participation program in a workplace environment is central to this study. However, the lack of understanding by management of the importance of carefully designed organisational structures and processes mitigates against the development of sustainable and inclusive participatory structures and processes.

As discussed in Chapter One, this deficiency, given the widely postulated paradigmatic shift in Australian industrial relations, has the potential to hinder inclusive organisational governance. The meritocratic elite and professional groups near monopoly over institutional structures and processes, mitigates against access and inclusion of wage-earners in economic, political, and social organisational institutional arrangements. The disproportionate influence of the former groups in the governance of organisations is reinforced by restricted entry to the ranks of the professions. Furthermore, such groups fail to recognise and understand social, economic and political institutionalism and its influence in shaping organisational structures and processes.

The normatively sanctioned behaviouralist participatory literature has been carefully manipulated by the meritocratic elite and professional groups to convey the ideal and belief that industrial democracy is well and thriving, at unprecedented levels, in contemporary organisations. This isomorphically replicated refrain is evidenced in the rhetoric advocating fashionable participatory activities such as team orientations and total quality management. Such initiatives are designed principally to illicit changes in performance indicators rather

than to deliver inclusive governance of organisations. These activities do not represent an

increase in work place democratic principles and practice, but rather what Lasch (1995:7)

refers to as the democratisation of self-esteem.

Input from the majority of wage-earners seldom finds expression in the economic,

political or social structures or processes in organisations. Instead, the meritocratic elite

and professional groups are able to limit debate to matters of detail concerning

implementing the consensus they share (Lind 1995:100).

Recent research by Mitchell et al (1996:12-21) found that a significant proportion

of employers are failing to consult employees over workplace issues despite rhetoric of

employee involvement and legislative requirements for consultative mechanisms. Mitchell

et al (1996:16) argue:

> ...At best there is grave doubt as to whether the vast majority of joint committee
> structures comply with at least the spirit of the Industrial Relations Act's
> requirements.

In other words, the findings suggest that the majority of consultative agreements and

enterprise flexible agreements are not complying with the intent of the Act and that the

Industrial Relations Commission has certified agreements with limited evidence of

compliance with the Act's requirements for consultative processes.

Attracting and Maintaining Participation

The second major task was to analyse critically the underlying governance issues

confronting the management of organisations in attracting and maintaining the effective

participation of employees in decision making processes. These analyses are elaborated

fully in Chapter Four.

Of major significance was the findings of the hypotheses testing. The variables that loaded as significant in the hypotheses testing are highly incisive, in that the profile of persons exhibiting a significant predisposition or interest in joining a problem solving group or committee were predominantly members of the professional and meritocratic groups within the PC.

The results of the study support the argument that participation, as exhibited by the meritocratic and professional groups willingness to volunteer, is dependent upon the organisational institutional arrangements enacting upon and within the PC. In other words, the study has confirmed a strategic link between the behavioural aspects of participation and the social, political, and economic institutionalism which is shaped and channelled by institutional arrangements.

Furthermore, the findings suggest that the PC has little understanding of the implications of the widely reported paradigmatic shift in Australian industrial relations and the PC's own acknowledgement of a conceptual shift to strategic employee relations management. The findings highlight the need for management to develop an appreciation for the design of organisational structures, processes and relationships in light of the organisational objectives that they intend to pursue, the degree to which they intend to adopt participatory activities, and which groupings within the organisation are to have access to and impact upon the influence-power continuum. In addition, management must ascertain the level of access afforded to the various organisational groupings in relation to business or work related decisions.

Policy Enunciation and Implementation

The final task was to assess the necessity to thoughtfully design participative structures and their mode of operation in accordance with an organisation's strategic objectives. Accordingly, the issues of governance associated with the participation of employees in decision making processes need to be clearly defined and understood by all participants to formulate and implement appropriate and effective organisational policies.

The principal undertaking of this thesis is the examination of the willingness of employees in a manufacturing firm to participate in an employee involvement program. A medium sized manufacturing operation with several hundred employees was researched because of its representative spread of employee groupings enabling clear divisioning of personnel and their willingness to participate in employee involvement programs. The findings of the research adds to a substantive body of findings related to single sites that confirm patterns, relationships and outcomes across study sites.

This study is important given the recognised market forces representing the widely postulated paradigmatic shift in industrial relations in Australia. The uncertainty borne out of this shift creates an environment within which institutional responses directly affect the utilisation and involvement of labour within organisations. Furthermore, the abandonment or purposeful abolition of institutional and organisational structures and networks to unfettered market-based forces and self-regulation exacerbates this climate of uncertainty.

As a result, there is an increasing tendency for organisations to adopt structures and practices of other organisations who are judged to be successful in a field or have a greater legitimacy in a field. Mimetic isomorphism or modelling behaviour plays a significant role in the widespread adoption of organisational structures and initiatives such as employee

involvement programs. Unfortunately, mimetic isomorphism has not delivered the successful outcomes often attributed to such normatively sanctioned strategies because of a failure to recognise and understand the importance of social, economic, and political institutional diversity and variances in market systems and their influence in shaping organisational structures and processes (DiMaggio & Powell 1991; Hutton 1995; Coye & Belohlav 1991).

The key findings of the research indicated significant differences between the professional and elite groupings of the PC and wage-earning groups. Significant differences were also obtained in attitudinal responses between these groupings in relation to job satisfaction, managerial/supervisory performance and union involvement. The results highlight the deficiencies present in an organisational setting of the limited understanding of a paradigmatic shift and its impact upon various groups, principally, the professional, meritocratic and wage-earning groups.

The link between the research findings and theory provides a 'new twist' over the more normatively sanctioned behaviouralist participatory literature. The thesis has evaluated models and perspectives of a number of important researchers and theorists, in fields as diverse as institutionalism in organisational analysis, behaviouralist participatory literature, and political economy. The number and variety of participatory instruments highlights the necessity to understand institutionalism and the interconnections between the polity, the economy, and the society. The extent to which institutional and operational characteristics shape organisational structures and processes has typically been neglected by behaviouralists. It is the fundamental consideration of institutional design and operating principles that set this study apart from other participatory investigations.

An understanding of institutional and operational characteristics is critical, if policy

entrepreneurs and their advisors are to attract and maintain effective involvement of employees over and above the illusory process of democratisation of self-esteem. This study has found the plethora of behaviouralist participative literature wanting in its atomistic account of social processes and neglect of institutional arrangements.

The main recommendation of the study is that if organisations are going to ascribe to an involvement philosophy, the role of institutionalism in the process needs to be recognised and understood by the designers. They must possess an appreciation of the design of organisational structures, processes and relationships and their impact upon the influence-power continuum. Then and only then, can policy entrepreneurs design organisational structural arrangements that facilitate who has access to information appropriate in making certain kinds of decisions.

Despite the rhetoric of the meritocratic elite and professional groups, serious challenges to democratic ideals and practices are guaranteeing that, at best, only moderate shifts in performance indicators will be derived from involvement programs. As a result, what we observe are empirical anomalies and inconsistencies in findings of contemporary participative theory and practice.

In an Australian context this creates challenges for policy entrepreneurs as a strategic paradigmatic shift in labour relations management is inextricably coupled with neo-classical market economics. The flow on effect of such uncertainty provides a climate ripe for a proliferation of mimetic isomorphism. Failure to recognise and understand the perversity of markets will therefore ensure, that for the majority of wage-earning employees, few if any mechanisms for making a contribution to the operation of their workplace in a broader context than that of their own job will be forthcoming.

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Appendix A

Dear Participant

This questionnaire is designed to study aspects of life at work. The information you provide will help us better understand the quality of our work life. Because *you* are the one who can give us a correct picture of how you experience your work life, I request you to respond to the questions frankly and honestly.

Your response will be kept *strictly confidential*. Only the researcher will have access to the information you give.

The confidentiality of your response is protected in the following ways:

- your name is not required, and although you are being asked to provide some background details about yourself, no attempt will be made to identify you as an individual;
- the final report will be in the form of a statistical analyses of aggregate data; and
- the University's Human Research Ethics Committee approved the above procedures to protect the confidentiality of your response.

If you have any questions, please contact Ms Stephanie Miller, Coordinator, Master of Business in Management.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation. I greatly appreciate your help in furthering this research endeavour.

Yours sincerely

Paul Rumpf

Masters student.

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+--------------------------+
|  +--------------------+  |
|  |      FIRM          |  |
|  |      NAME          |  |
|  +--------------------+  |
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CONFIDENTIAL SURVEY

Do not place your name on this survey.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

In this section we ask information about yourself.
This information will be kept strictly confidential.
Please answer all questions.

Please circle the appropriate answer.

1.	Are you?	Male	1
		Female	2

2.	How old are you?	15-19	1
		20-24	2
		25-34	3
		35-44	4
		45-54	5
		55 or older	6

3.	How long have you worked for your present employer?	Less than 1 year	1
		1-2 years	2
		3-5 years	3
		6-10 years	4
		11-15 years	5
		16-20 years	6
		More than 20 years	7

4.	Which of the following qualifications is the highest you have obtained?	Completed High School	1
		Work Experience	2
		Trade Certificate	3
		Technical Qualifications	4
		University or College Degree/Diploma	5
		Other	6

. . . .
please specify

5. Which of the following organisational areas best describes the area you usually work in?

Production	Printing		1
	Extrusion		2
	Finishing		3
	Cutting & Creasing		4
	Product A		
		(a) Maintenance	5
		(b) Production	6
	Product B		
		(a) Maintenance	7
	Logistics/Despatch		8
	Product A - Sales & Customer Service		9
	Product B - Sales & Customer Service		10
	Technical & Quality Assurance		11
	Engineering		12
	Personnel & Industrial Engineering/Administration		13

If you feel your job does not easily fit into one of these organisational areas, please describe what you usually do:

. . . . 14

6. Are you located at main site?

Yes	1
No	2

7.	Which of the following organisational levels best describes your current position?	Supervisor	1
		Management	2
		Senior Management	3
		None of the above	4
8.	Which shift do you most frequently work?	Day	1
		Afternoon	2
		Night	3
9.	How are you paid?	Weekly	1
		Monthly	2
10.	Would you volunteer to join a problem solving group/committee (VAM / CQI - TEAM)?	Interested	1
		Not Interested	2
		Unsure/Need more Information	3

PART - B

In this section we ask questions concerning your feelings about the firm and what you would change for the better.

Please indicate how strongly you agree with each statement by circling a number - **MARK ONLY FOUR (4) RESPONSES IN THE IDENTIFIED AREAS.**

1. What would change at [firm name] for the better.

		Least Important	Minor Importance	Important	Most Important
a.	Employing the right people	1	2	3	4
b.	Better quality/less waste	1	2	3	4
c.	Better safety	1	2	3	4
d.	More training	1	2	3	4
e.	New equipment	1	2	3	4
f.	Greater job security	1	2	3	4
g.	Information sharing	1	2	3	4
h.	Profit sharing	1	2	3	4
I.	Improved customer service	1	2	3	4
j.	More teamwork	1	2	3	4
k.	Effective leadership	1	2	3	4
l.	Higher wages	1	2	3	4
m.	Best practice	1	2	3	4
n.	Improved communications	1	2	3	4
o.	Performance indicators	1	2	3	4

PART - C

In this section we ask questions concerning your feelings about your job and your working conditions.

Please indicate how strongly you agree with each statement by circling a number.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS

		Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1.	My job requires that I keep learning new things.	1	2	3	4	5
2.	I have the freedom to decide what I do on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	I get to do a number of different things on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	My job lets me use my skills and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Most of the time I know what I have to do on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
6.	I have enough time to get everything done on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
7.	I determine the speed at which I work.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	I can tell what impact my work makes on the product or service.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	The work I do on my job is meaningful to me.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	I feel personally responsible for the work I do on my job.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	The rules and regulations concerning my job are appropriate and flexible.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I am productive in my job.	1	2	3	4	5

		Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
13.	Ideas that improve productivity, I keep to myself.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	My immediate supervisor follows-up on information that I pass on.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I receive information face-to-face.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I receive useful information at shift briefings.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	I can tell my immediate supervisor when things go wrong.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I receive information about specific problems faced by management in my company.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Other departments have no difficulty in understanding the difficulties my workgroup has in doing its job well.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	I am generally satisfied with the communication between my workgroup and other workgroups.	1	2	3	4	5
21.	Overall, I am satisfied with my job.	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Considering all things, I enjoy my work.	1	2	3	4	5
23.	My job provides opportunities to further develop my skills and abilities.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	My job allows me to make an important contribution to the success of firm name.	1	2	3	4	5

		Disagree Strongly (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Strongly agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree (5)
25.	Managers in this organisation make every effort to develop trained and competent employees.	1	2	3	4	5
26.	Employees in this organisation are frequently sought out for their ideas.	1	2	3	4	5
27.	This organisation does a good job of providing technical training for employees.	1	2	3	4	5
28.	Employees in this organisation have enough training to do their jobs effectively.	1	2	3	4	5
29.	Management is willing to back with time and money good employee ideas to improve quality and productivity.	1	2	3	4	5
30.	Good performance in this organisation is recognised, encouraged and rewarded.	1	2	3	4	5
31.	This organisation encourages differences of opinion.	1	2	3	4	5
32.	This organisation's management consistently emphasises excellence in the workplace and high-quality results.	1	2	3	4	5
33.	This organisation is more productive than most in this industry.	1	2	3	4	5
34.	This organisation's products and services are better than most in this industry.	1	2	3	4	5
35.	Employees usually decide how to improve their performance in this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
36.	Employees are concerned about the performance of the organisation as a whole.	1	2	3	4	5

		Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
37.	We are all responsible for the quality of our products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
38.	The organisation regularly asks our customers how satisfied they are with our products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
39.	The organisation acts on feedback from customers on how to improve products and services.	1	2	3	4	5
40.	Management is prepared to spend money to improve quality.	1	2	3	4	5
41.	Employees and managers from different departments meet together and cooperate to improve performance and quality.	1	2	3	4	5
42.	Employees have a say in the decision making processes of the organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
43.	Overall, I am satisfied with my Manager/Supervisor.	1	2	3	4	5
44.	My Manager/Supervisor leads by example.	1	2	3	4	5
45.	My manager/Supervisor sets clear plans and directions for our area.	1	2	3	4	5
46.	My Manager/Supervisor recognises the good performance of employees.	1	2	3	4	5
47.	My Manager/Supervisor is a good communicator.	1	2	3	4	5
48.	My Manager/Supervisor is a strong champion of our area.	1	2	3	4	5
49.	My Manager/supervisor is usually available if we need to discuss issues which affect us.	1	2	3	4	5
50.	My Manager/Supervisor encourages us to perform well.	1	2	3	4	5

		Disagree Strongly	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
		(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
51.	My Manager/Supervisor shows interest in us as individuals.	1	2	3	4	5
52.	My Manager/Supervisor is fair in dealing with us.	1	2	3	4	5
53.	My Manager/Supervisor protects us on the job by ensuring we have a safe working environment.	1	2	3	4	5
54.	The senior management team provides effective feedback on the plant's current performance.	1	2	3	4	5
55.	The senior management team keeps us informed about the plant's future directions.	1	2	3	4	5
56.	Senior management in [firm name] care about employees.	1	2	3	4	5
57.	Senior management in [firm name] are aware of issues and problems employees face.	1	2	3	4	5
58.	Overall, I am satisfied with [firm name] as an employer.	1	2	3	4	5
59.	Considering everything, [firm name] is a good company to work for.	1	2	3	4	5
60.	Morale within the plant is good.	1	2	3	4	5
61.	Meetings are used to improve effectiveness at [firm name].	1	2	3	4	5
62.	Different work areas in this plant co-operate well to achieve [firm name] goals.	1	2	3	4	5
63.	Within [firm name], I have good opportunities for career development and promotion.	1	2	3	4	5
64.	Promotion within [firm name] is based on competence and performance.	1	2	3	4	5
65.	Employees are given opportunities to improve their skills at this plant.	1	2	3	4	5

		Disagree Strongly (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither Agree nor Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Strongly agree (5)
66.	I feel like I am part of this company.	1	2	3	4	5
67.	Deciding to work for this company was a very good decision on my part.	1	2	3	4	5
68.	There is a lot to be gained by sticking within this organisation.	1	2	3	4	5
69.	I would recommend a close friend to join this company.	1	2	3	4	5
70.	I am extremely glad I chose this company to work for over others that I had considered joining.	1	2	3	4	5
71.	I am keen to move into a higher level job.	1	2	3	4	5
72.	Management and unions cooperate well together.	1	2	3	4	5
73.	Quality activities have improved relations between management and union members.	1	2	3	4	5
74.	For employees, there is no conflict between the organisation's quality activities and strongly supporting the union.	1	2	3	4	5
75.	I would feel a lot better about quality activities if they had the support and involvement of the union.	1	2	3	4	5
76.	It makes good sense to involve union members in problem-solving and decision-making on the job.	1	2	3	4	5

77. Have you attended a union
meeting in the last
3 months?

Yes 1

No 2

78. Have you talked to a union
shop steward about union
affairs within the last 3 months?

Yes 1

No 2

79. Have you talked to a union
shop steward about a work
life issue in the last 3 months?

Yes 1

No 2

Thank you for completing this questionnaire.