

**University of Strathclyde
Department of Human Resource Management**

**Attitudes towards Employee Involvement:
Gender Differences and Similarities**

by

Norsiah Aminudin

**A thesis presented in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of
Philosophy**

2007

COPYRIGHT

The copyright of this thesis belongs to the author under the terms of the United Kingdom Copyright Acts as qualified by University of Strathclyde Regulation 3.51. Due acknowledgement must always be made of the use of any material contained in, or derived from, this thesis.

ABSTRACT

Employee involvement (EI) has been the focus of considerable research on the management of people in organizations, particularly on whether EI results in improved employee attitudes and behaviours, and in turn company performance. Although EI trends have continued to interest academics and practitioners and are well documented in literature, the literature is relatively silent on studying EI schemes in relation to gender. This thesis intends to reconcile this gap by examining differences between the attitudes of men and women towards EI programmes. A second feature of this research is its focus on a non-western context. This is important both in examining the issue of gender in attitudes towards EI, and expanding the cross-cultural validity of mainly western-oriented research in the broader area of employee participation.

Given the above issues and the limited empirical evidence in the context of non-western cultures, the current study sought to explore the attitudes towards EI in a Malaysian context. Quality Circles (QC) and Employee Share Ownership Schemes (ESOS) were the focus of the current study of EI. The general aim was to understand the relationship between EI and employees' organizational commitment and the effects of gender, degree of participation, and management support within a Malaysian context.

Both quantitative and qualitative research approaches were used in a mixed methods study. In the first stage, a survey questionnaire gathered data on employee attitudes from 217 respondents in three Malaysian public utility companies. This data was used to test a series of hypotheses regarding the relationships between attitudes to the EI programmes and organizational commitment, as well as the effects of gender, participation in programmes, and supervisory support. A second qualitative stage used semi structured interviews with management and focus groups with employees to explore further the gender dimension and identify both differences and similarities in the treatment of women at work and their experiences with EI.

The research found that there were no significant differences in the attitudes of men and women towards EI schemes; nor were there any gender differences in wider work related attitudes including organizational commitment, job satisfaction and attitudes towards management. Men, however, were still more negative in their general attitudes about women and work. The qualitative phase suggested that Malaysian organizations need a more democratic culture and better support from superiors in order to make EI schemes successful. It was also found that the practices of Malaysian organizations mirrored the issues of stereotyping and lack of opportunities available to women as compared to those of men, which are found in western literature. Overall, the findings of the study served to enrich the EI literature, particularly with respect to the treatment of women, and offered valuable guidelines for non-western organizations seeking to improve the implementation of EI schemes.

DEDICATIONS

To:

My husband, thank you to make it happen.

My late dad, whose generosity and self sacrifice enabled me to have what he did not.

My late grandma, whose unconditional love continues to inspire and help me persevere in completing this work

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I am deeply grateful to late Professor Harvey Ramsay and Dr. Nikos Bozionelos, for their guidance, suggestions and comments, which made it possible for me to complete this thesis. Their invaluable suggestions, constant encouragement and dedication to work became a source of inspiration to me in completing this work. Special thanks must be conveyed to Professor Chris Baldry for his insights and suggestions at the very beginning of the research.

My appreciation goes to all top managers and staff members of the three organizations, who have participated in this study.

I wish to express my gratitude to these colleagues at UKM for their invaluable insights and suggestions: Dr Nik Mutasim, Dr. Khairul Akmaliah, Dr. Zarina and Dr. Rozhan. I also wish to express my gratitude to Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM) for their award of the Ph.D. scholarship.

I would also like to thank several experts which have provided help: Dr Jamilah and Dr Norma of UM. Thanks are also due to my fellow PhD colleagues at Strathclyde. Muhammad Athar Siddiqui, Dorothy Mapanga and Anne McCormick. Also thanks to Sana Choi, University of Strathclyde alum, for her help.

Many thanks need to be given to wonderful staff of Department of Human Resource Management, Strathclyde Business School, for their moral support and cooperation at all times. In particular, Professor Paul Thompson, Head of Department, for providing critical comments and literature in building to this thesis, Dr. Calvin Burns, for his feedback on my work and Patricia McTaggart, Postgraduate Programs Secretary, for helping in general affairs.

My utmost gratitude goes to Dr. Dora Scholarios, Director of Postgraduate Students, for providing all necessary help and support, which contributed significantly to the completion of this thesis.

Most importantly, I am grateful to my family, especially to my mother Hajjah Yam Chik Aziz, late father Aminudin Hj Salleh, and my late grandmother Hajjah Cik Jah Abbas, my uncle Nordin Mahmood, my sister Noraini, my brother Hedzir, all of whom have taught me to be a good human being.

I am ever grateful to my husband Mohamad Yunos, who has been so patient, understanding and helpful, and my children, Ahmed Yasir, Nur Amani, Omar and Safiyyah. They are my life, and without their encouragement this work could not have been completed.

Table of Contents

Abstract	i
Dedications	ii
Acknowledgements	iii
Table of Contents	iv
List of Tables	x
List of Appendices	xi

Chapter One: Thesis Introduction

1.1. Introduction	1
1.2. Employee Involvement in Malaysia.	4
1.2.1. The Malaysian context	4
1.2.2 Women in Malaysia	6
1.3. The relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment	8
1.4. Explaining the failure of EI management support and attitudes towards EI	10
1.5. The present study	12
1.5.1. Methodology	12
1.5.1.1 Research site	13
1.5.1.2 Research design	14
1.5.1.3 Methods	15
1.6 Organisation of thesis	17

Chapter Two: Definition and Theories of Employee Involvement

2.1 Introduction	21
2.2 Meaning of Employee Involvement (EI)	24
2.3 Models of Employee Involvement	27
2.4 The Effectiveness of Employee Involvement (EI)	31
2.4.1 Failure in EI	33
2.4.2 Linking culture to EI	34
2.4.3 Cross-cultural and participative management	35
2.4.4 Issues in the implementation of EI	37
2.5 Employee commitment	39
2.5.1 The bases of commitment	41
2.5.2 The meaning and measurement of organizational commitment	41

2.5.3	Style of leadership and organizational commitment	42
2.5.4	The relationship between EI and commitment	44
2.6	Forms of employee involvement	46
2.6.1	Forms of EI - teamwork and High Performance Work Systems	46
2.6.2	Forms of EI - quality circles (QC)	49
2.6.2.1	Quality circles and TQM	51
2.6.2.2	Quality circles - theory and outcomes	53
2.6.2.3	Implementation and the failure of quality circles	55
2.6.3	Forms of EI - Employee Share Ownership Schemes (ESOSs)	59
2.6.3.1	Reasons for adopting Employee Share Ownership Schemes	61
2.6.3.2	Evidence of Employee Share Ownership Schemes	64
2.6.3.3	Attitudes towards Employee Share Ownership Schemes	67
2.7	Chapter summary	68

Chapter Three: Employee Involvement and Gender

3.1	Introduction	70
3.2	Construction of gender	72
3.3	Women's orientation towards work	75
3.4	Work orientation across national cultures	79
3.5	Gender and organisation culture	81
3.6	The source of women's disadvantage	83
3.6.1	Male dominated occupations gendered organization culture	83
3.6.2	The masculine nature of management	84
3.6.3	Part-time employment	86
3.6.4	Sex segregation at work	88
3.6.5	Promotion opportunities	92
3.7	Studies from non-western cultures	93
3.7.1	Women in the Malaysian labour force	94
3.7.2	The dual role of Malaysian women	98
3.7.3	Disadvantaging of Malaysian women	100
3.7.4	Choice for Malaysian women	104
3.8	Chapter summary	106

Chapter Four: Research Methodology

4.1 Introduction	107
4.2 Blending quantitative and qualitative research	109
4.3 Research design	111
4.3.1 Selection of companies	112
4.3.2 Company accessibility	113
4.3.3 Population	115
4.3.4 Sampling design	115
4.4 The quantitative phase	116
4.4.1 Survey questionnaire	117
4.4.2 Development of the questionnaire	117
4.4.3 Translation of the questionnaire	121
4.4.4 Pilot testing of the questionnaire	122
4.4.5 Administration of the survey	124
4.4.6 Reliability and validity	125
4.5 The qualitative phase	127
4.5.1 Trust and sensitivity	128
4.5.2 Interviews with management level	129
4.5.3 Focus groups with non-management levels	132
4.6 Limitations of the study	136
4.7 Chapter summary	138

Chapter Five: Quantitative Data Analysis

5.1 Introduction	139
5.2 Development of hypotheses	139
5.3 Sample profile	143
5.4 Overview of analytical strategy	147
5.4.1 Multiple regression analysis	148
5.4.2 Assumptions of multiple regression analysis	149
5.4.3 Tests of significance in regression analysis	150
5.4.4 Stepwise and hierarchical regression	153
5.5 <u>Hypothesis 1</u> : There are differences between men and women in (a) attitudes towards EI (b) organizational commitment (c) job satisfaction (d) general attitudes towards management and (e) attitudes towards women and work.	155

5.5.1	Comparison of gender attitudes towards employee involvement scheme	155
5.5.2	Comparison of gender attitudes towards the organization, job and management	156
5.5.3	Comparison of gender scores on attitudes towards women and work	156
5.5.4	Summary for Hypothesis 1	157
5.6	<u>Hypothesis 2</u> : Amongst EI participants (both for ESOS and quality circles), there is a positive relationship between favourable attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment.	157
5.7	<u>Hypothesis 3</u> : Amongst EI non-participants (both for ESOS and quality circles) (a) attitudes towards EI will be less favourable than those of participants and (b) there will still be a positive relationship between these attitudes and organizational commitment.	159
5.8	<u>Hypothesis 4</u> : Amongst EI participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.	161
5.9	<u>Hypothesis 5</u> : Amongst EI non-participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have unfavorable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.	162
5.10	Chapter summary	163

Chapter Six: Interview Focus Group Results

6.1	Introduction	164
6.2	Attitudes towards Employee Involvement (EI)	166
6.3	Attitudes towards quality circles	168
6.3.1	Perceived objectives of quality circles	169
6.3.2	Quality circle training and problems of access for women	174
6.3.3	Quality circle training and quality control attitudes	176
6.4	Perceived objectives of employee share ownership schemes (ESOSs)	178
6.4.1	Employee attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme	179
6.4.2	Issues in the implementation of employee share ownership schemes	181
6.4.3	ESOS allocation between management and workers	183
6.4.4	Justification for implementing employee share ownership scheme	186
6.5	Reasons for non-participation in quality circles among workers	189
6.5.1	Perceived lack of support	189
6.5.2	Authoritarian style of management	194

6.5.3	Pressure of work and time	196
6.5.4	Absence of direct incentives	198
6.5.5	Extended quality circle meetings and married women (focus group)	200
6.5.6	Gender issues in meetings	201
6.6	Attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment	205
6.6.1	Attitudes to quality circles and organizational commitment	205
6.6.2	Attitudes to ESOSs and organizational commitment	207
6.7	Reasons for gender differences	212
6.7.1	Perceptions of women in workplace	214
6.7.2	Women as different	216
6.7.3	Women as bosses	219
6.7.4	Women's experiences in the workplace	222
6.8	Chapter summary	236

Chapter Seven: Discussion

7.1	Introduction	241
7.2	Quality circles and organizational commitment	242
7.3	Employee share ownership schemes (ESOS) and organizational commitment	245
7.3.1	The findings for ESOS members	245
7.3.2	Other predictors of organizational commitment	246
7.3.3	The findings for non-members of ESOS	247
7.3.4	The size of investment in ESOSs	248
7.4	The role of supervisory support	250
7.5	Managerial problems in employee involvement	252
7.6	Implementation issues with quality circles	254
7.7	Gender differences	256
7.7.1	Attitudes towards EI - differences between men and women	256
7.7.2	Organizational commitment, job satisfaction and general attitudes towards management - differences between men and women	258
7.7.3	Attitudes towards women and work - differences between men and women	259
7.7.4	Women's orientations to work	262

Chapter Eight: Conclusions and Recommendations

8.1 Introduction	265
8.2 Objective One	265
8.3 Objective Two	267
8.4 Contributions and Recommendations	268
8.4.1 The importance of management trust	268
8.4.2 The importance of context	269
8.4.3 Gender differences	270
8.4.4 The need for incentives	271
8.5 Recommendations for practice and future research	272
8.6 Limitations of the study	275
References	276

List of Tables

Table 1.1:	Employment distribution of Malaysian women by sectors (1980 to 2000)	7
Table 3.1:	Labour Force Participation Rate by Sex, Malaysia, 1957 – 2000	96
Table 3.2:	Share of Employment by Gender within Occupational Categories, Malaysia, 1957 – 2000	97
Table 4.1:	Questionnaire constructs and items	121
Table 4.2:	Reliability analysis of questionnaire scales (Cronbach alpha coefficients)	126
Table 5.1	Sample profile of respondents by gender	144
Table 5.2	Comparison of mean scores of demographic variables, by gender	147
Table 5.3:	Comparison of mean scores for attitudes towards employee involvement schemes (QCs and ESOSs) by gender	155
Table 5.4:	Comparison of mean scores of attitude towards organization by gender	156
Table 5.5:	Comparison of mean scores on attitudes about women and work by gender	156
Table 5.6:	Hierarchical regression for relationship between favourable attitudes towards Quality Circle scheme and organizational commitment among participants (n=92)	158
Table 5.7:	Hierarchical regression for relationship between favourable attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme and organizational commitment of participants (n=88)	159
Table 5.8:	Comparison of mean scores for attitudes towards employee involvement schemes (QCs and ESOSs) between EI participants and non-participants	159
Table 5.9:	Hierarchical regression for relationship between non-favourable attitudes towards Quality Circle schemes and organizational commitment among non- participants (n=83)	160
Table 5.10:	Hierarchical regression for relationship between non- favourable attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme and organizational commitment among non- participants (n=52)	160

Table 5.11:	Hierarchical regressions for relationship between attitudes towards employee involvement (QC) and organizational commitment for participants and non participants who perceive superiors have favourable attitudes towards quality circle scheme.	162
Table 6.1:	Interview respondents by gender and organizational level	165
Table 6.2:	Focus group participants by gender	166
Table 6.3:	Attitudes towards employee involvement (EI), quality circles (QCs) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOSs)	188
Table 6.4:	Summary of issues with regard to non-participation in quality circles	191
Table 6.5:	Summary of interview and focus group themes related to EI and organizational commitment	208
Table 6.6:	Summary of interview and focus group themes related to gender differences or similarities	213

List of Appendices

Appendix I:	Letter of Permission for Research
Appendix II:	Questionnaire
Appendix IIIa:	Breakdown of Interviewees-Company 1
Appendix IIIb:	Breakdown of Interviewees-Company 2
Appendix IIIc:	Breakdown of Interviewees-Company 3
Appendix IIId:	Focus Group
Appendix IV:	Interview/Focus Groups Questions

CHAPTER ONE

THESIS INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Employee involvement (EI) programmes have become a popular management technique for a number of reasons – as a means of: boosting productivity (Griffin, 1988; Klein, 1987; Walton, 1985); encouraging innovation and cutting costs (Juran, 1964); improving employee well-being (Freeman & Kleiner, 2003); inducing loyalty, reducing conflict, and managing waste (Cole, 1990); increasing personal growth, feelings of accomplishment, and satisfaction (Cotton et al. 1988; Leana et al., 1992); developing more trust in management (Ben-Ner & Putterman, 2003; Jones & Kato, 2005); and increasing quality (Ben-Ner & Putterman, 2003). Many studies also have shown a link between EI programmes and employee commitment (Guest, 2000, 2001; Jones & Kato, 2005; Lawler 1986; Ramsay et al., 2000; Walton, 1985). Examples include companies where equity has been transferred to employees (see Pendleton et al., 1998 or Klein, 1987), or where team-working programmes or the concept of empowerment have been adopted (Lashley & McGoldrick, 1994).

The topic also has produced a considerable number of literature reviews since 1979 and has generated a body of vigorous and continually evolving research. As Ledford and Lawler (1994, p. 638) suggest “the attention given to these topics (employee involvement and participation) ...[is] evident of broad practitioner interest”. According to surveys more than half of large firms in the USA, and an increasing number of firms in Europe are reported to have initiated a variety of EI participation programmes, such as quality circles, self-managing work teams, and task-groups in their work places (Cook, 1990; Delaney et al., 1994; Lawler et al., 1992). Lawler, Mohrman, and Ledford’s (1992) research indicated that the vast majority of large companies use employee involvement practices, and that practitioners report these practices to be

successful. They also showed that intensity of their use is accelerating with practices that represent the greatest degree of change for conventional bureaucratic organizations, such as self-managed teams, showing the greatest increase in use.

In the human resource management literature, employee involvement has assumed a central role (Beer et al., 1984; Buchanan & Storey, 1996; Fombrun, et al., 1984; Walton, 1984; Walton, 1985). It has become increasingly recognised that the need to harness employees' loyalty and creative potential is essential for not only organizational development but also, as times of recession have shown, organizational survival. In short, employee involvement has increasingly become a popular managerial initiative; it is an initiative controlled and implemented by management to enhance employee commitment and to increase the quality of the product and service (Lashley, 1997; Wilkinson, 1998). The popular idea of EI is that it is associated with improved job attitudes and behaviours, and therefore operationally functional.

Although employee involvement trends have continued to interest academics and practitioners and are well documented in the literature, the literature is relatively silent when it comes to gender. Management theory is, even with an overwhelming amount of empirical evidence, according to Wilson (1995), male-oriented because gender is not considered as a variable, causing much management theory to be considered gender-blind. There is also bias in studies on women in the workplace, where many researchers question women's commitment to the workplace (Bergmann, 1989; Hakim, 1996).

Two types of bias are evident in the literature. Some argue that there are gender differences in men and women, but ignore these differences as the organization is already gendered as masculine (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988). Other research highlights the presence of differences in gender, but those same differences help to stereotype women in the workplace (ibid.).

In common with management theory generally, gender issues have not been a central concern in EI literature. The present thesis intends to reconcile this gap by examining differences between the attitudes of men and women towards EI programmes. Men and women may experience EI differently. As argued by Hakim (1996), women may be less committed to work and as a matter of preference, would rather stay at home. Alternatively, factors other than gender differences per se may keep women at home rather than entering the workplace. A goal of the present research, therefore, is to examine further why gender differences or similarities may exist in workplace attitudes, particularly with respect to how men and women react to EI initiatives.

A second feature of the present research is its focus on a non-western context. This is important both in examining the issue of gender in attitudes towards EI, and in expanding the cross-cultural validity of mainly western-orientated research. In Asian cultures, as well as most other non-western cultures, the prevalent position is towards male-dominated societies or for little or no access for women in the workplace, thus reducing levels of participation for women (Woford, 2004). The nature of gender differences in this context, particularly when EI initiatives are introduced, is an important issue.

In addition, although the concept of EI has received the attention of both scholars and practicing managers in Asian contexts, it must be questioned whether Asian managers are equally as enthusiastic as western managers about this refined mode of human resource management. Hofstede's (2000) dimensions of culture showed that scores for non-western and some western countries varied considerably. As the majority of research reported in EI literature comes from North America and Europe, additional research conducted with Asian managers and employees is likely to add to the body of literature on cross-cultural management practices.

The main aim of this thesis, then, is to gain an understanding of EI and gender differences in the Malaysian context. The choice to focus on EI initiatives in Malaysia

provides an insight into management practices in one of the non-western countries of the world. EI, in this research, is defined as a process of employee participation designed to encourage greater responsibility and accountability, and to encourage job satisfaction and employee commitment to organizational success. As well as contributing a cross-cultural dimension to the significant body of western literature, then, the study is also important to human resource managers in Malaysia who are contemplating adopting EI practices widely used in North America and Europe.

The remainder of this chapter outlines the rationale for the approach taken in this study of EI. Firstly, the national focus of the present study – namely the implementation of EI initiatives in the Malaysian context – is presented. The importance of cross-cultural examinations of EI programmes in non-western countries, and the consideration of gender, in this context is discussed. Secondly, the chapter presents the case for focusing on one particular posited outcome of EI initiatives, organizational commitment. Thirdly, the reasons for the failure of EI initiatives are considered with particular focus on the role of leadership style and management support. The chapter then concludes by introducing the present study and research objectives, along with a summary of the methodology and research settings, and the overall chapter structure of the thesis.

1.2 Employee Involvement in Malaysia

1.2.1 The Malaysian context

With mounting pressure on the private sector in Malaysia, many different schemes and principles of managerial efficiency, like Employee Involvement (EI), are being imported from western countries. These bring with them the promise of quality improvement, and higher levels of employee satisfaction, commitment and productivity (Pun et al. 2001). This trend can also be considered within the context of wider economic development in Malaysia which has been driven by the Government's objective, articulated in "Vision 2020", to make Malaysia a fully-developed nation by 2020. When Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamed (Mahathir, 1991) introduced the nation to Vision 2020, it was considered a

comprehensive approach to national development that would balance economic growth and prosperity with social and moral development.

Efforts by organizations to improve quality in the workplace have been a vital part of the vision to be a fully-developed country. In Malaysia, a popular EI technique was quality circles (QCs), introduced in the belief that participation in the workplace was central to organizational success (Hassan, 1996). Management interest in QCs increased in the 1970s and early 1980s. This was the period when Malaysia began its programme towards industrialization, and when many local companies adopted Japanese management techniques, as did many western companies. Quality awareness programmes and campaigns were of equal importance in the public sector (Hassan, 1996). The Malaysian Civil Service, a significant part of the national governance community, was particularly interested in new techniques that nullified negative organizational phenomenon, such as high turnover rates, absenteeism, low or poor morale, low levels of commitment, and other disruptions in the workplace (Razali, 1993).

Malaysia, thus, provides an interesting context within which to study the effects of EI initiatives. In choosing to focus on a non-western context, the study also allows an examination of cross-cultural differences which may impact the implementation and outcomes of EI. It is reasonable to expect, for example, that managers from different countries may define employee participation differently and will have different views as to its effectiveness. For example, tradition and levels of participation vary considerably across European countries and differ from the American experience (Strauss, 1982; Tsiganou, 1991). It is also widely recognised that cultural variations exist between non-western and western countries. To take one example, non-western countries tend to score higher on power distance, according to Hofstede (2001), which means that national culture can impact on organizational culture change and on the commitment, job satisfaction and psychological wellbeing of organizational members. According to Cartwright and Cooper (1989) organizational cultures which place a high degree of

constraint on the individual and offer little autonomy are generally experienced by the majority of employees as potentially more stressful. Companies that try to import a vision of employee participation across countries may find the way blocked by cultural differences. As Adler (1991) points out, employee values, attitudes and behaviour vary across countries and can sometimes be quite dramatic.

Conducting such research in Malaysia provides an opportunity to examine possible cultural differences in EI implementation from western countries and contribute to the wider management literature on the practice of EI across national boundaries. Moreover, on a policy level, the present study's focus on EI in Malaysia acts as a potentially important contributor to Vision 2020, the programme to develop the nation. The findings of the study will provide relevant information for human resource management practitioners, employers and policy makers concerned with economic performance.

1.2.2 Women in Malaysia

The Malaysian Government, in both the Seventh Malaysia Plan (1996-2000) and Eighth Malaysia Plan (2001-2006), had identified women as an important pool of resources that can be "mobilised to achieve the national development agenda" (Government of Malaysia, 2001) and they have formed a substantial force in the economy since independence in 1957. Between 1975 and 1990, for example, female labour force participation rates averaged about 45 per cent (Mazumbar, 1994). Between 1995 and 1997, the rates registered at 43.5 per cent and 45.8 per cent respectively, but declined in 1998 to about 44 per cent due to the economic recession (Government of Malaysia, 2001). In 2000, with the economic recovery, this rate increased to about 44.5 per cent.

Labour statistics on employment distribution by gender within sectors in the Sixth, Seventh and Eight Malaysian Plans show that the role of women in business areas such as manufacturing, wholesale and retail trades, and finance-based industries was on an increasing trend (see Table 1.1). In 1980, for instance, 40.1 per cent of the total women

in the labour force were in manufacturing, 29.3 per cent in wholesaling, retailing, hotels and restaurants, and 29.5 per cent in finance, insurance and real estate. By 2000, the proportion of women in these respective businesses increased to 41.1 per cent, 39.3 per cent and 39.9 per cent, respectively.

In spite of the high level of Malaysian women's involvement in the labour market, hardly any Malaysian research has focused on gender issues in the workplace. Most research on Malaysia so far has tended to be on women's roles in socio-economic studies; for example, the status of women as factory workers in labour-intensive industries (Ariffin, 1982 & 1992; Kaur, 1994; Khoo & Pirie, 1984) and on the changing role of women in rural economic activities (Ng, 2000). Thus, there is a gap in Malaysian literature pertaining to gender in the workplace, and, generally, hence, with respect to the way that employee involvement, as one of the schemes introduced by management in the workplace, interacts with gender issues.

Table1.1: Employment distribution of Malaysian women by sectors (1980 to 2000)

Sectors	1980	1985	1990	1995	2000
Agriculture, Forestry, Livestock & Fishing	39.0	38.4	34.3	28.6	26.8
Mining & Quarrying	10.3	10.5	12.9	17.9	13.0
Manufacturing	40.1	43.1	46.4	42.8	41.1
Construction	7.5	3.4	6.9	6.5	6.0
Electricity, Gas & Water	7.1	5.6	4.3	9.6	9.5
Transport, Storage & Communication	29.3	37.7	38.6	12.1	13.1
Wholesale & Retail Trade, Hotel & Restaurant	6.3	10.4	11.1	38.7	39.3
Finance, Insurance, Real Estate & Business Services	29.5	35.1	34.2	39.9	39.9

Sources: Government of Malaysia (1991, 1996 and 2001)

1.3 The relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment

It has been argued that the whole rationale for introducing EI is to increase levels of commitment so that other positive outcomes are ensured (Marchington et al., 1992). Organizational commitment is generally defined as the “relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement with a particular organization” (Mowday et al., p. 27). Employee involvement and its linkages with organizational commitment have received considerable attention in the literature (e.g. Balfour et al., 1990; Cotton et al., 1988; Jain, 1980; Leana, et al., 1992; Mowday et al, 1982; Rosen et al., 1986; Walton, 1985). Securing organizational commitment of employees to their organization is often associated with the ‘soft’ HRM policies of participation (Guest, 1987; Storey, 1992). This may be pursued in a number of ways, including through some form of employee involvement techniques, such as quality circles, team briefings, or Employee Share Ownership Schemes (Walton, 1985). This is also thought to be expressive of an individualistic ‘high trust’ organizational culture as opposed to the collective ‘low trust’ cultures of stereotypical personnel management (Fox, 1974; Guest, 1987; Tyson & Fell, 1986).

Yet, doubt has been cast whether EI has any kind of impact on levels of commitment to the organization (Guest & Pecci, 1996). Critics have suggested that the rhetoric of EI runs ahead of reality (Legge, 1995); a more serious criticism is that EI promises autonomy based around commitment while practicing alternative forms of control and surveillance (Ramsay, 1977; 1990 et al.). With both views in mind, this points to a mixed picture; the link between theory and practices of EI and organizational commitment remains unproven. Despite claims that EI will lead to changes in employee attitudes, especially commitment, and in turn, organizational performance, in the absence of evidence on employee experiences and attitudes, it is difficult to draw meaningful conclusions about the impact of EI in the workplace (Ahlbrandt et al., 1992; Byham, 1991; Guest, 1992). While some research has found significant relationships

(Barret, 1995; Cotton et al., 1988;), other findings are less generous in finding links between EI and favourable work attitudes (Wagner, 1994).

With this uncertainty regarding the possible outcome of EI in relation to organizational commitment, together with the lack of research on attitudes towards EI, the present research aimed to understand the relationship between employee attitudes to EI and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment is a relevant study for a developing country such as Malaysia given, as shown above the emphasis now being placed on improving organizational performance. As argued by Razali (1993), most public service organizations in Malaysia are becoming increasingly concerned with the need to introduce techniques that can nullify negative organizational phenomena, such as costly work disruptions, labour turnover, absenteeism and poor morale.

Although there has been considerable research on employee involvement, as illustrated in the Introduction to this chapter, not only has this research been carried out primarily in the west, but it also has been based on the assumption that workers are a homogeneous work group; few have considered gender as a variable in their studies (Dickens, 1994, 1998; Ramsay & Scholarios, 2005). More importantly, no Malaysian studies so far have looked at the relationship between employee involvement and employee commitment, or used gender as a variable which may explain employees' identification with their organizations.

The second shortcoming of previous research on EI according to Dicken (1998) is that even when surveys of employee opinion are undertaken, the results appear abstracted from reality and inadequately "located" within an organizational context. Typically, surveys differentiate between respondents on the basis of individual characteristics, such as age, or length of service, to the neglect of gender. Within an organizational society there are attitudes that are independent of social surroundings, and cannot be analysed discretely in terms of the workplace. This may include, for example, cultural differences and management styles that members bring in from other countries (Jelinek et al., 1983).

It is arguably important, therefore, to investigate employee experiences of EI and take into consideration a considerable degree of diversity, such as gender. Studies that examine employee attitudes, and explicitly locate these within the work context and the national, and organizational environment in which EI is conducted, also are desirable. The present study attempts to provide such research.

1.4 Explaining the failure of EI – management support and attitudes towards EI

Literature demonstrates that most EI failures can be attributed to attitudinal problems with either employees or middle managers (Frazer & Dale, 1986) or more generally, problems related to organizational culture (for example, Cunningham & Hyman, 1996; Snape et al., 1995), especially the lack of a climate of trust and confidence and established formal mechanisms for successful implementation. Managers appear to give insufficient priority to ‘softer’ people management issues and the skills necessary to foster a culture of high commitment and motivation among staff.

Literature on managerial issues and leadership styles link these problems with the failure of EI programmes (for example, Creed & Miles, 1996; Powell, 1990; Sautar & Savery, 1991). Research on culture and leadership indicates that an organization’s success is dependent upon management’s understanding the link between leadership and culture (Locke, 1997; Miyashiro, 1996; Sagie, 1997). The day-to-day operations within an organization are influenced by a set of shared values which are primarily influenced by the relationship between leaders and employees (Sagie, 1997; Savery, 1991).

An important factor influencing respondents participating in EI programmes, therefore, is likely to be the democratic style of management. Transformational leadership, perceived organizational support for participative decision-making and meeting expectations of followers were also found to be significantly related to trust in leaders (Dirk & Ferrin, 2002). Similarly, Trethewey (1997) recognises that empowering form of EI plays a critical role in constructing and maintaining a strong organizational culture,

and, as a feature of the leadership process, 'communication style' is seen as being critical to transformational leadership.

Legge's (1995) critique, in relation to empowerment, identifies further ambiguities in the 'soft' side of HRM. As such, she contrasts the 'rhetoric' and 'reality' of empowerment, where managerial legitimacy undermines participative management. Further limitations, paradoxes and contradictions relating to participative management were also presented by Clegg & Dunkerley (1980), Mills and Simmons (1995) and Thompson & McHugh (2002). Thus, as an increasing body of literature focuses on management inadequacies as a source of failure in EI initiatives, this provides further reason to examine its operation, particularly with respect to the cross-cultural validity of these claims in a Malaysian cultural context.

In addition to its focus on gender, therefore, the present research also addresses whether management support has any influence over employee attitudes towards employee involvement, and its relationship towards organizational commitment. Studies have identified "them and us" attitudes amongst employees as a consequence of middle managers feeling threatened by sharing their 'power' with their subordinates. The results, however, are inconsistent. Some studies have shown lower 'them and us' attitudes among participants of share ownership schemes (Bell & Hanson, 1984; Hammer & Stern, 1980; Long, 1978a,b; Long, 1980); others show no attitude differences between participants and non-participants in employee involvement schemes (Baddon et al., 1989; Poole & Jenkins, 1990; Russel et al., 1979); yet others show only a small number of participants in employee financial schemes reporting a sense of ownership or equality (Dunn et al., 1990; Klein & Rosen, 1986; Kruse, 1984); and other studies report mixed results (Bradley & Hill, 1983; Dewe et al., 1988; Forgarty & White, 1988). The present research, similarly, would like to understand whether there are any attitudinal differences between participants and non-participants in employee involvement schemes.

1.5 The present study

The general aim of this research is to examine the relationships between EI, organizational commitment and gender within the Malaysian context, with an additional focus on the role of management support in encouraging more positive employee attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment. In order not to repeat the weaknesses of previous research, both management and employees, and both participants and non-participants of EI schemes, were investigated. The focus was on both task and financial participation; specifically, quality circles and employee share ownership schemes, respectively. At the same time, this study explored whether there were gender differences in the attitudes towards employee involvement schemes, and the reasons behind any possible findings.

Given these general research aims, the researcher derived two research objectives, which can be stated as follows:

Objective One: To investigate the relationship between attitudes to employee involvement and organizational commitment in a Malaysian context, considering the effects of gender, participation in EI schemes, and management support as potential moderators.

Objective Two: To explore the reasons for gender differences or similarities in a Malaysian context with respect to employee involvement (EI).

1.5.1 Methodology

Objective One was approached through a cross-sectional survey design in selected case study organizations. This quantitative approach allowed a statistical analysis of differences between men and women, and participants and non-participants in EI and ESOS programmes, with respect to attitudes towards EI and organizational

commitment. Objective Two was addressed through an in-depth qualitative analysis of the role of gender in shaping attitudes to and participation in EI, and organizational commitment.

1.5.1.1 Research sites

The research was conducted in three utility companies in Malaysia. These were public utility companies for electricity, gas and telecommunications. These were chosen for the study as, at that time, it was only public utility companies that had adopted quality circles and employee share ownership programmes in Malaysia. The companies were similar in that all of them were once public sector organizations that were privatised into public listed companies in the mid 1990s and large companies with around 20,000 employees. Due to privatisation, these companies all provided their employees with employee share ownership schemes. They resembled common Malaysian public companies, where the majority of the workers (around 98%) are Malays, despite Malaysia being a multi-racial country comprised of Malays, Chinese and Indians. The companies were all technically-based with many staff having engineering backgrounds. Management was male-dominated, while the majority of women were in clerical positions.

The choice of these research sites was significant for the aims of the study. Firstly, these were the first privatised companies and the only former-public companies that issued employee share ownership schemes (at that period of time). In addition to share ownership schemes, they also all had quality circles, which was another form of EI which the researcher wished to study. Secondly, they allowed the study of gender differences as the vast majority of women workers were at clerical levels and they all had similar characteristics within the male-dominated technically-based companies. The women, therefore, were relatively homogeneous and could be compared as a group to their male equivalents at the same levels.

1.5.1.2. Research design

The study was cross-sectional in design. As opposed to a longitudinal design, cross-sectional research designs lack the ability to effectively interpret causal processes of a phenomenon that occurs over time. However with due consideration of the economic and time constraints associated with this research, it was not possible to undertake such a design.

In trying to understand the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment, and more specifically, the effects of gender, degree of participation and management support (Objective One), a positivist paradigm, based on mainly quantitative methods, was felt to be appropriate. Quantitative method is appropriate when looking at relationships between attitudinal and behavioural variables, where these can be relatively objectively measured and compared. Furthermore, the sample provided by the three Malaysian organizations was sufficient for the findings to be generalisable to the population of the three companies of the study, as well as any other companies in Malaysia with similar characteristics and backgrounds to these utility companies. This is important as the research findings can be relevant to policy applications in the Malaysian context, whereby, companies can utilise findings to gain further understanding of the implementation of EI and employee outcomes.

In order to explore the reasons behind any possible findings of gender differences or similarities (Objective Two), the researcher decided on qualitative methods. Although gender differences in attitudes could be observed by examining the survey responses, understanding gender is a complex phenomenon and the questionnaire as a tool is not rigorous enough to capture these complexities. Here the aim was to shed further light on gender differences or similarities towards employee involvement schemes that are introduced by companies.

1.5.1.3 Methods

In order to examine the relationship between EI schemes and employee attitudes, as well as the effects of gender, mixed methods were used. These comprised a questionnaire-based survey, semi-structured interviews and focus groups. The survey was for the purpose of addressing Objective One, to investigate the relationship between employee attitudes to EI and organizational commitment. Qualitative information from interviews with managers and focus groups with non-management employees addressed Objective Two, where the aim was to explore the reasons for gender differences or similarities in the workplace.

The use of a range of methods is consistent with other studies in the area of employee involvement (Marchington et al., 1992; Rudestam & Newton, 1992). Although the research was framed primarily within a positivist epistemological framework the data derived from the qualitative methods was used to add meaning to the findings. In this sense, quantitative and qualitative data were considered to compliment each other (Newman, 2003). The researcher felt that the qualitative data would complement the study by contextualising the findings, following Bryman's advice that "the research technique must fit the problem in hand..." (Bryman, 1984, pp 83, 89). The use of multiple methods also offers benefits from data "triangulation" (Martin, 1990).

The research sample for the questionnaire consisted of all levels of employees from the three utility companies in Malaysia. The survey was distributed throughout the three organizations, randomly, by the companies' Human Resource departments. There were 31 questions, typically based on a five-item Likert scale (with opportunities for open comment), covering employee involvement and organizational commitment related issues; quality circles, employee share ownership schemes, views of the organization; orientation to work and attitudes towards women at work.

In each organization, the semi-structured interviews with managers included the Chief Executive Officer, the Director of Human Resources and other HR personnel together with senior operations managers. From this, and with the support of company executives, the researcher conducted interviews with personnel in the head quarters as well as the branches of the Northern and Southern states of Malaysia. Interviews lasted for an average of 90 minutes.

The semi-structured interview comprised key themes to be explored with each respondent. For managers and those responsible for introducing and managing the employee involvement initiatives, the questioning explored the background, intentions for the initiatives and perceived benefits, change in the way the organization was to be managed, perceived problems regarding the implementation of employee involvement schemes and views as to what contribution employee involvement would make to the organization. Having established the managerial intentions for employee involvement, interviewees were asked to describe their own attitudes toward the schemes, how they perceived non-managers' attitudes towards the schemes, and differences between women and men on this issue.

As for focus groups with the non-managerial employees, in addressing Objective Two, the key themes explored were gender issues, their experiences with the schemes, their perceptions regarding intentions for the initiatives, perceived benefits, perceived problems regarding implementation, and perceived managers' attitudes towards the schemes.

A total of 271 responses across the three companies were received from the survey, and 9 focus groups and 37 individual interviews were carried out. Altogether, 90 per cent of respondents were Malays, which represented well the population of public utility companies in Malaysia.

1.6 Organization of thesis

Inclusive of this chapter, this thesis is organised into eight chapters. Chapter Two presents a review of the literature on employee involvement (EI) and organizational commitment. The specific intention of this review is to understand what effect the degree of participation and management support has on attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment within a Malaysian context. The chapter begins with a conceptualisation and review of alternative models of EI. It then examines empirical research on EI programmes and practices in organizations. Issues regarding the effectiveness of EI are addressed, highlighting some critics who question the rhetoric of EI. Leadership styles, which are an important background factor influencing participation in EI programmes, are also discussed. This leads to a discussion of organizational culture in relation to employee involvement, and following this, the link between EI and organizational commitment. The chapter ends with detailed discussion of the various forms of EI, with the main focus on quality circles and employee share ownership schemes.

Chapter Three provides a review of the literature on gender issues in relation to EI schemes and organizational commitment. The chapter starts with theory related to the construction of gender, and continues with attitudes of women towards work in relation to women and commitment in workplace. Gender and culture, as well as cross-cultural perspectives, are addressed. The chapter continues to discuss the disadvantaging of women in the workplace, raising, for example, issues regarding male dominated occupations, part-time employees, and promotion opportunities. The chapter concludes with a discussion related to women in non-western, and specifically Malaysian, contexts.

Chapter Four presents the empirical study exploring the relationship between EI, organizational commitment and gender in a Malaysian context. The research question in this thesis is to understand the relationship between employee involvement and

organizational commitment and patterns that affect the degree of participation and management support and gender within the Malaysian context. The chapter also presents the justifications for choosing a cross-sectional design as opposed to a longitudinal design with due consideration of the economic and time constraints associated with this research. This chapter describes the research design, selection of companies, sample design and pilot testing. The chapter justifies the use of mixed methods, to conduct both exploratory as well as confirmatory research.

In Chapter Five, the quantitative analysis addressing Objective One is presented. The research questions and hypotheses for the present study are outlined. Objective One, which constitutes the overall framework for the quantitative data analysis, investigates whether there is a relationship between employee attitudes towards employee involvement and employee commitment. More specific hypotheses are constructed to test for differential relationships between participants and attitudes towards EI, participants and organizational commitment for both men and women, and perceived support and attitudes towards quality circles. These variables are reviewed in Chapters Two and Three, and in Chapter Five, a case is developed for each hypothesis addressing these relationships. The chapter then provides the sample profile and presents the results for each of the hypothesis tests, based on regression analysis, relating to Objective One.

Chapter Six presents the findings for the analysis of Objective Two. It explores the reasons for gender differences in the workplace by examining the qualitative data gathered from management interviews and employee focus groups. The reasons for gender differences or similarities examined include orientations to work, perceptions of women at work, and perceptions of women managers.

Chapter Seven discusses the research findings presented in Chapters Five and Six. To summarise these findings, the hypothesis tests showed a significant difference between non-participants and participants in their attitudes towards quality circles. Findings for attitudes towards Employee Share Ownership Schemes showed there was a significant

relationship between attitudes towards the scheme and organizational commitment among participants, but a non-significant relationship among non-participants. There was no relationship between Employee Share Ownership Schemes and organizational commitment.

With regard to superiors' support for quality circles, the result was consistent with other common findings that quality circles fail due to a lack of management support. Moreover, management support seems to act as an important moderator of the relationship between attitudes toward EI and organizational commitment in the case of non-participants. In this research, there was no significant relationship between attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment for participants of quality circles who perceived their superior's support, but there was a significant relationship for non-participants. It indicates that leaders play an important role for non-members. Findings from the focus groups showed that in organizational cultures where managers do not readily participate managers refuse to let go of old autocratic styles of leadership.

Another significant finding concerned attitudes towards women and work, where men seemed to have a stereotyped outlook toward women who work. This is probably because all three utility companies studied were male dominated utility companies. However, there was no significant difference between genders in organizational commitment; hence the common belief that women are less committed did not hold. Additionally, women's orientation towards work was seen to change over time. In later years, their orientation tended to be towards career, which reflected a change from an initial instrumental orientation to work.

Chapter Eight presents the conclusions and implications of this study. The findings of the survey confirmed the relationship between attitudes to EI and commitment for non-participants but not for participants. The attitudes towards quality circles were not related to organizational commitment for participants who perceived their supervisors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme. The attitudes towards the

quality circle scheme and organizational commitment were related among non-participants who perceived that there is superiors' support towards the scheme. This finding emphasizes the importance of top management support especially for non-participants observing the scheme. Qualitative findings also showed that this was especially so for women, and for workers who through pressures of time and work, found it difficult to participate in the EI schemes. With regard to attitudes towards women and work, the study also found less favourable attitudes amongst men. There was no significant difference, however, in men's and women's attitudes towards organizational commitment.

'Them and us' attitudes still persisted in these workplaces despite the introduction of involvement schemes. This reflected divisions between workers and management. The importance of management trust before implementing any new programme was evident from the present findings. More so, as found in this research, management culture in these organizations is still very much of an autocratic style, where a top down management style is extensively practiced. Specifically, this suggests that management must prepare before implementing any imported programmes.

The second major contribution of the research is to show that the meaning of participation must be considered in the context in which it is to be implemented.

The findings of the present study also highlight the need for addressing gender issues in future management research. And another common problem associated with a company's inability to sustain quality circles is the failure of top management to incorporate an incentives programme through other human resource functions. The final chapter presents recommendations for practice and future research based on these findings.

CHAPTER TWO

DEFINITION AND THEORIES OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT

2.1 Introduction

The purpose of this thesis is to investigate the relationship between attitudes towards Employee Involvement (EI) schemes and organizational commitment. This chapter examines the development of issues related to the conceptualisation of EI. The chapter begins by examining what EI is, first in general terms and then by distinguishing forms of EI that are central in this research, as well as significant links between EI and individual outcomes and organizational outcomes. Organizational commitment, claimed to be one of the key outcomes of EI, is discussed in depth. Cross-cultural issues are also reviewed to understand their effect on the implementation and practice of EI, and issues regarding the effectiveness of EI are addressed. This discussion highlights some critics who comment on the rhetoric of EI and notes the importance of leadership and management style with respect to the implementation of EI programmes and practices in organizations. The chapter also examines in depth the two forms of EI that are the focus of the present research: quality circles (QCs) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOS). This includes a definition of QCs, focusing particularly on the reasons for their rise and fall, and a discussion of the emergence and outcomes of ESOSs.

EI is associated generally with a number of human resource management (HRM) initiatives, which have increased considerably in recent years. In the HRM and organizational change and development literature EI has assumed a central role (Beer et al., 1984; Buchanan & Storey, 1996; Fombrun et al., 1984; Walton, 1984). EI was known as participation “Apparently paradoxically, in the sphere of everyday work relations, the practices have grown and prove much more durable than might have been expected” (Harley et al., 2005:1); and according to Bennet (2002: 11),

Employee involvement has now been accepted and understood by world class organizations ... These same organizations, working predominantly in the fast-moving world of information and knowledge application, recognize the value of decisions made at the lowest qualified level and the payoff from smart workers who know their jobs.

Interest in EI has grown considerably in Europe and North America. The reason for introducing EI, championed by the 'model of excellence' school in North America, derives from the utilitarian principle that EI improves the quality of decision-making and productivity (Marchington, 2001). The call for worker involvement in decision-making and work itself has a long history (Brannen et al., 1996) but the current unprecedented interest appears to be associated with increased competition in domestic and overseas markets as well as government regulation. For this reason, employees are seen as a source of competitive advantage (Hyman, 1998).

EI may refer to involvement in the task design, as in quality circles (QCs) or some teamwork; gaining of power in decision making, for example, through empowerment efforts or joint consultation; and financial participation, such as ESOSs or gain sharing (Harley et al., 2005). EI has been claimed to be beneficial for both employee and organization alike. Research on EI and organizational performance suggests that giving employees a 'voice' on a range of organizational decisions yields benefits to both the organization and the employee (Heller et al., 1998). Organizations are seen to benefit, as they can utilize the full capacity of the workers, and encourage employee commitment to organizational success (Cotton et al., 1988; Lawler, 1986; Pendleton, 2005). Employees may benefit through the ability to influence their own working environment (Benders, 2005; Jones & Kato, 2005). Most EI literature is concerned with goals of binding the employee to the organization and obtaining behavioural outcomes of increased efforts, cooperation and organizational citizenship (Beer, 1984; Buchanan & Storey, 1996; Fombrun et al., 1984; Guest, 1989; Walton, 1984). Surveys of managers have shown that EI is typically management initiated with the objective of enhancing employee commitment to organizational goals (Delbridge & Whitfield, 2001; Marchington, 1995, 2001).

Despite these developments, as most of these studies are conducted in western countries, it is open to question whether companies which try to import the vision of EI across to non-western countries would have similar experiences and outcomes. Hence, the focus of the thesis is the examination of the Malaysian work context in relation to EI schemes and its linkages to commitment. As a result of competitive pressures faced by private sectors in Malaysia, principles of managerial efficiency are being imported into these sectors, such as EI schemes. The schemes are considered to be one of the so-called managerial efficiency practices that bring attainable employee commitment, employee satisfaction, quality improvement and productivity (Pun et. al., 2001). For most employers, the new emphasis on participation marks a search for greater flexibility, productivity and product quality, a new model of production, (Freeman & Kleiner; 2003), and management's drive towards new production concepts such as continuous improvement and enhanced participation.

In the midst of fast growth rates, there is also a substantial increase of Malaysian women's participation in the labour market, being more prominent in the private sectors. The impact of industrial work on family economy and household position has led to changes in the course of life of Malaysian women (Mansor, 1991). There has been substantial research dealing with the issue of gender in Malaysia. However, there is a lack of research that examines the participation issue in the workplace; the attention of most gender studies has been on the socio-economic aspects of women (Mansor, 1991). Even more surprisingly in western literature, besides the vast amount of literature on employee participation, there is little importance given to any studies trying to find out whether the driving concepts behind EI vary across men and women as a workforce. According to Ramsay and Scholarios (2005), most literature on the subject of worker participation treats the workforce as a homogeneous group, and empirical studies have made almost no effort to correct the situation. Consequently, understanding of the way that gender inequalities have an impact on women's attitudes to industrial democracy is fragmented. Hence, this thesis also examines gender differences or similarities in their attitudes towards EI schemes and gender is the primary focus of Chapter Three.

2.2 Meaning of Employee Involvement (EI)

Though the interest in employee involvement (EI) has been increasing among both researchers and practitioners, there is no general consensus concerning the meaning of the term. It appears that EI means different things to different people (Cotton, 1993). For example, 'employee participation', 'workplace democracy,' 'empowered employee,' 'work redesign,' or many others, can replace the term 'employee involvement'. Ramsay (1980) noted that the literature on participation is vast; yet when searching for substance within it, the results are disappointing. He highlighted the biggest problems with the literature on EI is the lack of a clear and unambiguous definition of its subject matter. Marchington (2005), in trying to clarify the meaning of participation, found that it was still problematic even at the start of the 21st century. He supported claims by Ramsay that materials referred to the possibilities in different practices and approaches, but most of the time had little in common. Industrial democracy is regarded as the only true form of participation, offering workers an opportunity to take control of the organizations in which they are employed. On the other hand, others would define information-sharing as being sufficient enough to be included because it is an example of management attempting to involve employees by providing data that was previously unavailable to them. Yet others would restrict their definition to financial participation, because it gives workers a chance to make a direct contribution to organizational success and be some part of the ownership.

Griffin (1988) and Locke and Schweiger (1979) viewed EI as a new terminology for a rather old idea. They mentioned that, in the past, EI has been termed 'industrial democracy', 'participation,' 'quality of work life' 'team work,' or any combination of the above. They maintained that EI schemes have common objectives: the improvement of some aspect of productivity, product quality enhancement, stronger employee motivation, reduced workforce alienation, positive work attitudes, more willingness to change, enhanced employee development, more information sharing between organizational levels, and better employer-employee relations.

Despite the lack of agreement over its definition, EI is based on one central philosophy; it views workers as capable of learning (Camman, 1984) and organizations as learning environments (Cherns & Davis, 1975). This view emphasizes that workers are assets, with abilities and ideas that, if given opportunity to develop, will result in enhanced personal growth as well as enhancing the quality of interaction between workers and clients, from which service effectiveness results (Gowdy, 1988). In addition, Lawler (1986) stated that EI is a process of participation to utilize the full capacity of the workers, and designed to encourage employee commitment to organizational success.

Strauss maintains that meaningful employee participation in decision-making requires that workers are able to exert influence over their working environment. He defines participation as 'a process that allows employees to exert some influence over their work and the conditions under which they work' (Strauss, 1998, p.15). Stohl and Cheney (2001) state the meaning of the term 'employee participation'. The process should provide workers or their representatives with the opportunity to take part in and influence decisions that affect their working lives. As such, an employee participation environment creates an alternative network to traditional hierarchical patterns.

According to Marchington (2001), there are two types of participation, direct and indirect. Direct participation refers to those forms of participation in which individual employees, often in a very limited way, are involved in decision-making processes that affect their everyday work routines. Examples of direct EI include briefing groups, quality circles, problem-solving teams, self-managed teams and financial involvement. As a direct form of EI, financial involvement, which includes profit-related rewards, aims to improve competitiveness by educating employees on the operation of the business. Indirect participation refers to those forms of participation in which representatives or delegates of the main body of employees participate in the decision-making, for example in joint consultative committees (JCCs), employee works councils (EWC)s and through 'worker directors' - all forms

that are associated with the broader notion of 'industrial democracy' (Bullock, 1977).

In most literature, the term 'involvement' is seldom used; instead many authors adopt the term 'employee participation'. Cotton (1993) refers to employee involvement, which is not just about taking part in decision-making, but can include incentives (gain sharing), group behaviour (quality circles), and training (self-directed work teams). According to Marchington et al. (1992) the concepts of EI and employee participation are semantically intertwined. Marchington et al. (1992) further described employee participation as covering all forms of employee influence (for example Industrial Relations, or, joint consultation), whereas EI is described as managerial inspired initiative with intention to win employee commitment (for example, teams and financial schemes).

Harley et al. (2005) divided EI into three categories: task involvement, such as through quality circles or teamwork; power in decision making, such as through empowerment initiatives and joint consultation; and financial participation, such as save as you earn (SAYE) schemes, ESOSs and gain sharing. In this study, both the concepts of Harley et al. (2005) and Cotton et al. (1988) are adopted in order to provide clear delineations and encompass a full range of available EI schemes. Their logical argument is that in task involvement, such as quality circles, employees are more likely to accept working conditions that they helped to create. This reason is closely related to the first; using people's knowledge is likely to increase their willingness to use a system that they have helped to develop. Another related reason is knowledge utilization; being immersed daily in their work, employees are experts at what they are doing. As for financial participation, it gives workers an opportunity to make a direct contribution to organizational success and more importantly, to rightly take their fair share of company profits. With such a definition, financial participation is said to be able to improve the adversarial 'them and us' attitudes by promoting employee identification and attachment as share plans transform employment relationships.

This study also treats both EI and participation as an intertwined concept as mentioned by Marchington et al. (1992). Hence, in this thesis these two concepts will be treated as very similar in meaning. Furthermore, the literature shows that EI has been a movement in the past, known as participation. In this study, whenever participation is mentioned it refers to direct participation rather than indirect participation, as differentiated by Marchington (2000).

2.3 Models of Employee Involvement

As indicated above, employee involvement (or employee participation, or worker democracy) is a relatively slippery concept. As Schregler (1970:117) commented, “Workers’ participation has become a magic word in many countries. Yet almost everyone who employs the term thinks of something different”. Given these several wide aspects of definition, it is not surprising that many models of how employee involvement (EI) operates have also been developed. Lewin (1968:69) defined participative decision-making as a situation “in which decisions as to activities are arrived at by the very persons who are to execute those decisions”. In his model, the factors that lead to the success of an employee involvement scheme depend on the personality and attitude of those involved; the extent, importance, and visibility of the issues addressed; and the quality of the participation process (e.g., clarity of goals, amount of useful information available exclusively to the subordinates, and the extent to which subordinates can exert control over productivity).

Sashkin (1976) presented a model that focuses on the psychological targets of EI. He differentiated between four types of involvement (participation in goal setting, decision-making, problem-solving, and change), and argued that each can produce such psychological and cognitive effects as psychological ‘ownership,’ development of shared norms and values, and information flow. These effects then lead to increased quality, acceptance and commitment, increased support for involvement, and increased capacity of the organization to adapt. Sashkin argued that congruence between the type of involvement and the aim of the involvement would lead to more effective change.

In their well-known review of employee participation literature, Locke and Schweiger (1979) presented a model of the participation process. Locke and Schweiger's model differentiated between cognitive effects (more upward communication, better understanding of the job) and motivational effects (increased trust, more ego involvement, group pressure) of involvement. These cognitive and motivational effects together were thought to produce higher productivity.

Schuler (1980) and Lee and Schuler (1982) attempted to incorporate concepts from expectancy theory and role theory into employee participation. In Schuler's model, greater employee involvement first serves to reduce role conflict and the feeling of being considered unnecessary. The more involvement an employee has with his or her supervisor and fellow workers, the more chances there are for role clarification and role conflict reduction (Schuler, 1980). In addition, employee involvement will tend to increase employee expectancy of a link between their performance and the potential rewards. As the employee becomes more involved, he or she will learn more clearly which behaviours are rewarded more and which are not. Finally, reduced role conflict and feelings of being unwanted and the increased performance-reward expectancy should lead to greater satisfaction with the work and with the supervisor.

Lawler (1986) reviews work groups, where the principles of participative management are employed and employees supposedly feel more involved in the organization when their input is requested. As an example, work groups might meet with their supervisors to discuss the meaning of the results for the organization as a whole and the work group in particular. The process is also said to increase the salience of managerial behaviour towards subordinates to organizational effectiveness and productivity. Possible positive outcomes from work groups include improvements in work methods and procedures, attraction and retention of employees, higher quantity and quality output, enhanced decision making (resulting from better communication), and smoother group processes and problem solving (from enhanced attention to group dynamics).

Employee involvement can take many forms. One of the most visible and formal approaches to employee involvement is share ownership (Cotton, 1993). Employee involvement can be categorized into financial and non-financial schemes. Financially- related employee involvement schemes include employee share ownership and profit sharing, and non-financial employee involvement schemes include quality circles, team briefings and suggestion boxes (Marchington, 1994).

In an extensive review of worker participation in management around the world, Strauss (1982) presented a taxonomy of participation, employing four dimensions: organizational level, degree of control, issues, and ownership. In terms of organizational level, most American experiments in employee involvement have focused on the departmental or individual level, whereas Europeans stress the plant or company level. Degree of control refers to whether employees are consulted, have joint decision-making rights with management, or have complete control. Issues can range from production methods and job content to major investment decisions. Ownership refers to how much of the company is owned by the workers.

Leana (1987) differentiates between employee participation, which she defines as joint decision-making between superior and subordinate, and delegation, which is a process whereby the manager transfers decision-making autonomy to a subordinate. Her distinction is similar to Strauss's (1982) dimension of control; employees can have partial control (participation) or complete control (delegation). In addition, Leana (1987) emphasized that delegation focuses on individual autonomy, and argued that managers delegate to individuals, not to groups. In her criticisms, she presented data indicating that managers tend to use the importance of the decision and the characteristics of the subordinate in deciding whether to involve employees in participative decision-making, or to delegate. She argued that these findings indicated that participation and delegation are not simply points along a continuum, but rather are distinct and different decisions for managers.

Bartlett (1986) found that companies reporting success with quality circles had mostly introduced similar reasons connected with participation. According to him,

the meaning of participation could vary widely, from a long-term approach to developing people, or at the other end, the simple feeling that it was worth the trouble of trying to involve shop-floor personnel in problem-solving activities. Most companies appear to be closer to the latter end of the spectrum. Hence, he focused on the contradictory features regarding positive individual and organizational outcomes that might not result.

Tjosvold (1987) defined employee involvement as a subset of group problem-solving. From this perspective, involvement can improve organizational effectiveness because several persons can improve the information and ideas considered and can develop higher quality solutions. For employee involvement to be successful, however, the employees must work together effectively. Tjosvold argued that cooperative goals and productive controversy are necessary for optimum efficiency, and described methods to achieve these group processes. (Tjosvold 1986, 1987).

Conger and Kanungo (1988) addressed the concept of empowerment. These authors developed a 5-stage model of empowerment, in which the use of participative management, job enrichment and other management strategies provides self-efficacy and confidence, leading to the experience of empowerment. In their approach, the crux is the perception of empowerment by the employee; the use of employee involvement by management simply helps produce this perception. They also addressed factors that lead to the perception of powerlessness.

From the above review of alternative models, it can be seen that various models focus on different outcomes of the participative process. Lewin (1968) focused on attitude about the process, Strauss (1982) on the impact on society, Sashkin (1976) on the commitment to change, and Conger and Kanungo (1988) on the perception of empowerment. The models also employed different perspectives. Sashkin (1976) followed a psychological need approach, while Schuler (1980) followed role and expectancy theories. Above all, they also differ on how they define participation. Leana (1987) defined it as 'joint decision-making'; Sashkin (1976) described several different

types of participation as well as different methods of participation; and Conger and Kanungo (1988) distinguished between participation and empowerment. Locke and Schweiger (1979), and Tjosvold (1986, 1987) examined how employee involvement can improve organizational effectiveness, such as produce higher productivity and optimum efficiency. On the other hand, Bartlett (1986) created doubt on the positive outcomes for both the individual and the organization.

2.4 The effectiveness of Employee Involvement (EI)

Theoretical perspectives have been used to derive a wide range of benefits of employee involvement (EI). These may focus on internal rewards and the benefits to employees (e.g., personal growth, feelings of accomplishment); the benefits to employers (e.g., a more cooperative or committed workforce); or the benefits to society (e.g., a more empowered and informed citizen, which may result from enhancing employee participation in decision-making). Other forms of EI incorporate external rewards, in monetary or other terms (Cotton et al., 1988; Leana, 1992).

Cotton (1993) and Ramsay (1996) questioned whether adopting an EI scheme in an organization was able to solve such a wide array of problems and concerns. Some authors argued that employees should be involved for ethical reasons (Sashkin, 1984). At the same time, behavioural scientists tried to establish its efficaciousness in attaining a variety of management goals, such as increasing productivity. Most studies suggest that effective involvement varies with different types of schemes. As an example, productivity has no significant impact on gain sharing as compared to job redesign; profit sharing has no direct influence on attitude as compared to team briefings (Cotton, 1993; Ramsay, 1996).

In EI schemes, organizational objectives are to be accomplished through a process of involving employees in aspects of decision-making that have been traditionally reserved for management. As an example for teams, such arrangements are expected to produce several outcomes, such as improve motivation and enhance discretionary

effort by team members. By participating in teams, members share more information, and develop more trust in management, stronger commitment to the organization and their goals are more aligned with the organizational goals (Jones & Kato, 2005).

These objectives may also be expected to include improved performance as a result of teams feeling more strongly in product quality than about productivity. The participatory arrangement in general might be expected to change employee attitudes so that team members better understand the crucial importance of quality for organizational success. Teams are apt to foster and enhance trust, which has been identified as a key component of successful business systems (Ben-Ner & Putterman, 2003). In turn, this might be expected to lead to discernible differences in the quality of the care and attention that team participants devote to their jobs. Ultimately, these changes might produce improvements in quality control.

As suggested by Walton (1985), the key factor linking increased job satisfaction to increased productivity is the worker commitment or integration with the job and the firm. As noted above, EI is believed to offer a solution to a host of workplace problems ranging from poor interpersonal relationships to inefficient production. Despite the often-overemphasized rhetoric, many researchers (Delaney et al., 1994; Ledford & Lawler, 1994; Mohrman et al., 1989) have realized that an EI scheme cannot actually be a wide solution for so many problems and concerns.

With such a diverse range of outcomes, most researchers on managerial objectives suggest that there is a greater tendency to rely on more general aims rather than to focus on more concrete aims such as direct incentives or motivational effects. Ramsay (1996:227) commented: "Such lack of clarity is sometimes reflected in a 'catch-all' listing of what schemes are meant to achieve". Freeman and Kleiner (2003) found that employee involvement barely affects firm productivity but substantially improves employee well-being.

2.4.1 Failure in EI

Increasingly the literature in EI has shifted from analyses of various forms of participation (Cohen & Bailey, 1997; Cotton et al., 1988; Leana, 1986) to the assessments of organizational and behavioural reasons why participation sometimes fails (Argyris, 1998). The common reason that led to failure in our previous quality efforts was that we did not change the culture or the environment in which all these tools and processes were being used. And we had the “flavour of the month” mentality (Sam Malone, Worldwide Marketing Manager at Xerox, quoted in Brennan, 1994: 36).

Similarly, Cunningham and Hyman (1996) found that failure in the implementation of an empowerment programme was due to a prevailing culture in the organization, where management control still persisted and seemed to have tightened rather than loosened. According to Hill (1991), “quality circles and middle managers do not mix well”. It has to do with management attitudes or perceptions (Parnell & Crandall 2001), whereby managers tend to resist participation (Dale, 1984; Hill & Wilkinson, 1995; Parnell & Bell, 1994) because it undermines their managerial status (Cotton et al., 1988, 1993; Hill 1991, Pennington & Hammersley, 1997), autonomy and control, and where it is perceived to threaten their job security (Heller et al. 1998; Schlesinger, 1982; Klein 1984). As Klein (1984) found, while the majority of supervisors see EI programmes as beneficial for employees and the organization, less than one-third see such programmes as beneficial to themselves.

The evidence in Cotton et al.’s (1988, 1993) studies showed that the success or failure of participative programmes was linked to, among other factors, the likelihood that managers will embrace the approach. This was consistent with findings from Pennington & Hammersley’s (1997) case study of the Rover Group in the UK which showed it is not about threatened job security or that of redundancies and restructuring concerns among the middle management but more about the commitment of top management who often show a lack of enthusiasm for

participation efforts compared to previous top management of earlier management group.

2.4.2 Linking culture to EI

As illustrated above, the concept of culture continues to strike managers and management orientated researchers as a key variable in success or failure of organizational innovations, such as quality improvement or empowerment. According to Detert et al. (2000), a comprehensive set of values and beliefs represent the cultural backbone to successful total quality management (TQM) adoption. TQM provides a prominent case in point, where culture has been labelled a key reason for the non-institutionalisation of new systems and behaviour (Becker, 1993; Klein et al., 1995). Similarly, quality circles were said to have been introduced partly as a tool for the gradual transformation of the workforce culture (Stavroulakis, 1995). However, according to Hill (1991), Heller et al. (1998) and Klein (1984), managers tend to feel uneasy, in the sense that QCs are considered as having the potential to undermine managerial status, autonomy and control, which have been embedded in their 'cultural background' as managerial prerogatives. Parnell and Crandall (2000) argue that managers have different propensities for participating in EI programmes; one of them is the culture of the organization in which the manager operates. Cabana (1995) called it "participative design", emphasising structural changes in work and the manager-worker relationship required for success. Heckshers (1995) argues that a participative programme requires a certain context over and beyond a set of techniques or programmes. In his findings, most managers suggested that participation has accomplished little and rarely breaks down walls of bureaucracy. He further argued that, without the redesign of work, EI efforts can even have a negative effect. And according to Zamanou and Glaser (1994), participative design is more than simply introducing decision-making into the current system. It requires commitment, fundamental organizational change, and necessitates a serious effort to enhance the entire organizational system. Hence, participation must become part of organizational culture (ibid).

2.4.3 Cross-cultural and participative management

Triandis (1980) noted the importance of adopting a cross-cultural perspective in conducting research on social issues, when he stated that: “For a complete science of behaviour we need to tie the characteristics of ecology with the characteristics of humans. Cross-cultural studies help us learn how ecology and psychology variables are interrelated” (Ibid: p.35). There has been a considerable debate over Triandis’s statement pertaining to the transferability of American management methods and development programmes to other countries’ cultures (Hofstede, 1980; Tainio & Santalainen, 1984). Furthermore, Bassett (1991, p.1) observed that, “Generalisations about management and supervision in the cross-cultural context are limited...concepts and constructs tend to shift in meaning as we move from one culture to another...cross-cultural investigations have considerable utility for industrial and organizational psychology”.

Participation by employees in decisions relating to their work in the organization has been advocated as a motivational tool by such noted management scholars as Argyris (1957), Likert (1961), and Vroom (1964). Employees who are given the opportunities to participate would develop a sense of pride in their job. On the other hand, the degree to which the employees wish to participate in the organization is influenced by their cultural orientation. The influences of cultural variables on participative management have been explored in some depth. Hofstede (1983) pointed out that power distance, uncertainty avoidance, and individualism are linked to participative management. Cultures with low power distance tend to encourage participation. The acceptance of participative management in particular cultures depends upon its levels of uncertainty avoidance. This helps to explain the popularity of informal and spontaneous forms of participative management in such low uncertainty avoidance countries as Scandinavia, the Netherlands and the Anglo-American countries.

In contrast, countries with high uncertainty avoidance need formal, legally sanctioned forms of participation (Bassett, 1991). Hofstede (1983) also indicates that

the individualism-collectivism dimension may partly determine the prevalence of participative management. Leadership in a highly individualistic country, such as the United States, could be said to be based largely on the premise that each individual seeks to satisfy his or her own interest. In contrast, leadership in collectivist countries tends to be more group-orientated. Thus, the practice of participative management in a particular culture is dependent upon the combination of the culture's cultural dimensions.

Cotton et al. (1992) examined an American multinational company to uncover any cross-national differences in managerial attitudes towards employee participation in decision making, and the study revealed attitudinal differences among European managers as well as among their American counterparts; United States managers viewed participation as a tool to improve performance, those in the Netherlands as a societal obligation, those in Britain as a threat to management control, and those in Spain had mixed feelings. The researchers argued that each country's historical experience with employee participation could help to put their results into a meaningful context with relevance to the Hofstede framework.

Hofstede (1983) shows that culture has an impact on motivation as well, as it can be related to the individualism-collectivism dimension. Motivation theories, which originate from the United States, reflect the individualistic nature of culture. This is evident in the presence of needs such as 'self-actualisation', and 'self-respect' theories. In more collectivist cultures, people are more concerned for their group membership, where their collective loyalty may be directed towards a larger unit, department or organization. Here, 'saving face' or 'avoiding shame' within their group is a prime motivator that is not evident in most western cultures (Hofstede, 1983).

Garsombke and Garsombke (1993) show some dominant culture factors in Malaysia, as well as their managerial implications. These include cultural background, religion, social practices and language as cultural differences. Though there are some contributions, as there is very little research on Malaysian values that could be related to management and organizational behaviour, and given that most studies are

historical in nature, the treatment of the concept is largely uncritical. For example, with regard to religion, only the predominant religions are mentioned, and it is said that their customs and traditions clash with western managerial practices. In reality, one can say culture, tradition and custom interfere with religion, as in most parts of the world; historically, new religions were brought along with missionaries to places where culture, traditions, and customs already prevailed. Hence, religion itself is a complex issue as it varies across countries, and culture could be one of the intervening factors. As in most studies, Garsombke and Garsombke did not explore gender as another possibility of cultural differences.

Two Malaysian researchers who studied organizational culture (Bashah, 1988) and work value systems (Nik Rashid, 1977), both in the Malaysian context, have found that cultural differences may result in different work preferences among employees of different ethnic groups. Malaysian managers in general prefer superiors who trust people, but Malay managers primarily, as compared to Chinese or Indian managers, prefer the sociocentric leadership style, i.e. the leader that “gets them working in close harmony by being more a friend than a boss” (Bashah, 1988:118).

Malaysian positions on Hofstede cultural maps, especially on the Power Distance and Collectivism dimensions, are significantly different from those of the United States, Great Britain and most western countries, and show that Malaysia is “Large Power Distance - Low Individualism” whereas most western countries are in the opposite side of the quadrant. This seems to have some reference points in the above Malaysian studies. Therefore, attitudes towards employee involvement schemes in Malaysia are likely to be different from those in western countries, where such schemes were conceived and implemented, and most research has been carried out.

2.4.4 Issues in the implementation of EI

Although the virtues of EI are widely supported by its proponents, the uptake by companies has invariably been disappointing. Why? This question has prompted this study to explore the perception of ‘progress’ in implementing EI schemes. After

more than a decade of persistent efforts by companies on what is believed to be the vital importance of EI to their performance, there is evidence of a significant gap between prescription and practice (Guest et al.,1995). Cunningham and Hyman (1996) in their article on empowerment highlighted the problem of implementation. Their study in the British NHS shows the reasons for failure as being cultural problems with regards to training among some middle managers. These findings and others have become a source of increasing concern to both human resource practitioners and academics, especially in the face of the apparently 'overwhelming' factual evidence that 'progressive' EI practices are associated with improvements in organizational effectiveness or business performance.

A general theory of EI has continually to address two interlinked problems, those of control and commitment, with regard to managing employment relations. Fox (1985) argued that, faced with the management problem of securing employee compliance, identification and commitment, management were drawn to adopt a range of employment strategies including EI. However, many of the early controversies in the emergent disciplinary field of 'employee democracy' or 'participation' have focused on the rhetorical identity of EI. Besides the advocates of EI, reviewed in detail above, there were others who offered more sceptical counter-arguments.

One of these sceptical voices was Ramsay (1977, 1990) who proposed that the economy was a more prominent factor influencing the adoption of participation in workplaces. Ramsay (1977) argued that it was a 'cycle' phenomenon that emerged when management authority was under challenge and it was necessary to gain worker's compliance. Ramsay further argued that the conflict inherent in the employment relationship set limits on the viability of participation schemes. Marchington (1998), in contrast, was saying that there were factors within workplaces themselves, such as the managers and the influence of the top management, which were affecting adoption and implementation. Nevertheless, both Ramsay and Marchington, share the similar view that the context in which organizations formulate participation initiatives was important, whilst at the same

time one can understand the wider dynamics by reference to how they are 'played' out in a particular organizational context (Marchington, 1998).

Harley et al. (2005) examine one recent manifestation of management-inspired involvement - high performance work systems. These authors question both Ramsay and Marchington's arguments, which are explicable in terms of gaining employee compliance while reinforcing management control. The outcome of this study was inconclusive: consistent with Ramsay, managers introduce initiatives intended to instil employee attachment or goodwill at the expense of their collective loyalties. At the same time, actual management activity can be pragmatic, uncoordinated and not apparently driven by rationality and consistency (see also Ramsay, 1996; Ramsay & Scholarios, 1996).

The critical test here is what happens to employee attitudes say, in organizations where participation or EI is practiced, but where it may be claimed to be more rhetoric than reality. In this situation, is there a relationship between organizational commitment and participation in programmes such as teamwork, quality circles or financial participation? According to the rhetorical approach, the phenomenon is more likely to be taken at face value according to labels ascribed to it.

2.5 Employee commitment

Ensuring the commitment of employees to their organization is something that is eagerly sought after by human resource practitioners, at least in its "softer" appearance (Guest, 1987; Storey, 1992). This is said to be due to increased competition in domestic and overseas markets, which has led organizations increasingly to turn to employees as a source of competitive advantage (Storey, 1992; Sisson, 1994). Organizations have introduced "soft" and "hard" employee relation policies associated with the shift to HRM (; Millward, 1992; Storey, 1992). Softer aspects of HRM, based on the encouragement of employee commitment in support of management aims, have received particular attention given any proposed linkage with improvements in organizational performance (Walton, 1985). The

concept of commitment and the assumption that committed employees are beneficial to organizations has a long tradition in the management literature (Swales, 2002), and it is the single most useful outcome of HRM strategies in the creation of a highly committed workforce (Coopey, 1995; Illes et al., 1990). This had, in turn, led many organizations to adopt schemes designed to encourage employee involvement (Marchington et al., 1992). This may be pursued in a number of ways, including through team working techniques, such as quality circles, performance appraisal oriented to employee development, developing a bi-lateral communication process, employee share ownership, a commitment to employment security, and forms of union/management “partnerships” (Walton, 1985, pp.48-9). The underlying principle is often mutual, in terms of goals, influence, respect, responsibility and rewards, with the desired outcome of enhanced employee development and performance (Walton, 1985, p64). In this view, workers who feel that the organization is committed to them are likely to have a positive perception of HRM practices and hence be committed to the organization (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Meyer & Smith, 2000).

Research studies on organizational commitment continued to increase in number following the highly influential work of Porter et al. (1974), which set down a definition of commitment and introduced the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire, a way of easily measuring commitment and with this exploring its theoretical network. Organizational commitment is generally defined as the “relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement with a particular organization” (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 27). In the same way that employees can show varying commitments to broad external foci such as a profession or a union, it is also clear that there are several internal foci for commitment above and beyond the organization itself (Morrow, 1983). Much of the research in the field of ‘commitment’ has focused solely on commitment to the organization and has overlooked how relative commitments to other foci are connected to performance (Mathew & Zajac, 1990).

2.5.1 The bases of commitment

Bases of commitment represent the reasons why employees are committed in the way they are and four bases can be identified. Attitudinal commitment (Mowday et al., 1982) centres around belief in organizational goals and values and embraces Etzioni's (1975) moral commitment, Kanter's (1968) cohesion commitment and Allen and Meyer's (1990) affective commitment. Second, continuance commitment is based on identification with an organization due to economic and social ties, and includes Becker's (1960) "side-bets" theory concerning the "costs" of leaving an organization, Kanter's [continuance/cohesion] commitment, O'Reilly and Chatman's (1986) compliance commitment and Allen and Meyer's (1990) continuance commitment based on low job alternatives and previous sacrifices that bind employees to particular organizations. Third, normative commitment is based on feelings of loyalty and obligation to an organization and includes Kanter's (1968) control commitment, O'Reilly and Chatman's notion of identification and Allen and Mayer's (1990) normative commitment. Fourth, behavioural commitment is based on past behaviour that binds employees to organizations (Salanchik, 1977). Commitment based on positive attitudes towards the organization (organizational commitment) has become the dominant paradigm in the literature, both as a desired outcome of HRM practices and as the most commonly used operator in quantitative studies.

2.5.2 The meaning and measurement of organizational commitment.

Mowday et al. (1982, p.20), in their model of employee-organization linkages highlighted the proliferation of definitions of organizational commitment but considered that underlying these definitions was the individual's attachment to an organization or social system. Researchers have largely adopted this view such that, for the purposes of measurement, high organizational commitment has become synonymous with positive feelings towards the organization and its values, in essence, an assessment of the closeness between an individual's own values and beliefs and those of the organization. The focus of attitudinal commitment is

assumed to be the organization and Mowday et al., (1982) used “attitudinal” and “organization” commitment interchangeably. Their influential definition of organizational commitment as “the relative strength of an individual’s identification with and involvement in a particular organization” was codified in the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire using three dimensions: a strong belief in and acceptance of the organization’s goal and values; a willingness to exert considerable effort on behalf of the organization; and, a strong desire to retain membership in the organization (Mowday et al., 1982, p. 27)

2.5.3 Style of leadership and organizational commitment

It was suggested as early as 1980s that what was needed to improve business management was leadership instead of management (Kotter, 1990). Leadership is often regarded as that component in an organization that is instrumental in deciding a group’s direction and is essential to elicit outstanding performance from others and through others (Locke, 1997; Miyashiro, 1996). For competitive survival, according to Mathews (1989), organizations should have a co-operative relationship between management and the employee. One way to achieve this co-operation is to provide the preferred style of leadership of the individual (Savery, 1991), and to provide an environment of trust (Creed & Miles, 1996; Dirks & Ferrin, 2000) by showing confidence in the workforce. Early behavioural researchers found that a perceived democratic style would lead to increased job satisfaction, lower labour turnover and increased productivity (Arygris, 1966; Likert, 1967).

Literature has linked participation with leadership (Sagie, 1997) and particularly leader direction or directive leadership. Sagie (1997) argues that the limit to participation has a link to non-directive leaders. Similarly, Vroom (1997) argues that there is a compatibility between leader direction and participation, but added that leaders cannot in reality behave directly and participatory as the same time. Thus, Murphy and Fielder (1992) and Vroom (1997) suggest that employee participation is less likely to be related to positive work attitudes when coupled with leader direction at task level. Hence, participation is more likely to be predictive of favourable work

attitudes when tactical leader direction behaviours are minimal than when they are maximised (Cassar, 1999).

According to Drago and Wooden (1991) some demographic variables have also been found to influence peoples' attitudes in this area. For example, older people were less willing to become involved in workplace participation. Evidence regarding gender is more conflicting. Some research suggests that males prefer greater democracy (Drago & Wooden, 1991), while others proposed that women prefer a more democratic system (Savery, 1991). It is argued that a democratic system is one indicator of better relationships between members of the organization, subordinate attitudes towards the enterprise and a desire to remain an employee of the organization because of a democratic style of leadership (Likert, 1961). And according to Mowday et al. (1982) this desire to remain has been viewed as reflecting a commitment of that person to the organization. The relationships that may exist between various personal and organizational factors and organizational commitment have been tested in several studies. Job satisfaction also seems to have some impact on commitment and is generally seen to be a different concept because "commitment emphasizes attachment to the employing organization ... while job satisfaction emphasizes the specific task environment where an employee performs his or her duties" (Mowday et al., 1979, p. 226). Mowday et al., (1979) found that organizational commitment was generally more related to overall satisfaction with the organization than other satisfaction facets.

The results from different styles of leadership studied by Savery (1994), that is consultative, autocratic and democratic, show that people under a democratic style of management had the highest level of commitment with the lowest level of commitment indicated by the autocratic group. This suggested that an increase in the level of perceived involvement in the decision-making process increases the feeling of commitment towards the organization held by an individual (Savery, 1994).

Some researchers (Angle & Perry, 1981; Hrebiniak & Alutto, 1972) have found that women are more committed. However, other researchers (Morris & Steers, 1980;

Steven et al., 1978) did not find women were more committed, suggesting that differences may exist between organizations and between occupations. Angle and Perry (1981) suggest that their result was unexpected because the organizational commitment questionnaire taps a form of commitment that is conceptually close to work involvement and earlier research suggests that women are less involved in their work than men.

In summary, the research on culture and leadership indicates that an organization's success is dependent upon management's understanding the link between leadership or management style and cultures. For management style cultures in Hofstede (1997) it was mentioned that management cultures and scope for competitive advantage in cultures does matters. As an example, his study shows large organizations with heavy investment tended to have a more employee-orientated style of management rather than a job-oriented style. And gender has an impact on management style, where for example, women employees are associated with a more open style of management rather than a closed system. In short, the day-to-day operations within an organization are influenced by a set of shared values known as culture, and these shared values are primarily influenced by the relationship between leaders/managers and employees.

2.5.4 The relationship between EI and commitment

Employee involvement (EI) is associated with the 'softer' side of Human Resource Management (Guest, 1986). According to Guest, "involvement is considered to be more flexible and better geared to the goal of securing commitment and shared interest" (p.687). Similarly, Marchington (2001) added that EI aims to support management's goal either directly through performance improvements, or indirectly through organizational commitment. The commitment-performance link according to Marchington is predicated on a number of assumptions: first, that giving workers more autonomy over work tasks will strengthen organizational citizenship, and secondly, it will increase workers' commitment to the organization's goals which will in turn result in enhanced individual and organizational performance (2001).

Guest also framed his model of 'soft' HRM and its presumed employee outcomes in terms of the psychological contract. This refers to the expectation of employer and employee that operates over and above the formal contract of employment (Argyris, 1960), i.e., the perceptions of the different parties to the employment relationship of what each owes the other (Rousseau, 1995). It incorporates the beliefs, values, expectations and aspirations of the employer and the employee. Different people have different perceptions of the psychological contract, even within the same organization, and the content of the psychological contract is specific to a time and to a person, and also to the characteristics, and particularly the skill level, of a job.

An important aspect of the notion of a psychological contract is that it can be continually re-negotiated (Herriot, 1992), changing with an individual's, and an organization's, expectations, and in shifting economic and social contexts. For this reason it may be misleading to talk about 'the psychological contract' insofar as this implies homogeneity and consensus. There are different types of contracts that yield distinct predictions about the behaviour of both individual and organization, and affect commitment between employers and employees (Rousseau & Benzoni, 1995).

Nevertheless, we cannot take for granted that EI initiatives will have the predicted effects on psychological contracts and employee attitudes. As argued in section 2.4 of this chapter, the theory of EI is linked to both problems of control and commitment. Management adopt strategies of EI in order to secure employee compliance as well as identification and commitment. This leads us to question whether EI can be seen as being simply a management strategy for gaining worker compliance without ceding significant control? More specifically can it be explained by Ramsay's (1977) 'cycles' of control thesis? On this point, a paradox results when managers, in pursuit of a specific organizational goal, carry out actions that are in opposition to the very goal the organization is attempting to accomplish. Critics of HRM models have drawn upon the Weberian notion (Weber, 1968) of a paradox of consequences arising from HR policies and practices. New organizational designs have, for example, been introduced to improve productivity and employee autonomy through EI. On the other hand, the productivity benefits arising from the new

organizational forms are accompanied by a number of deleterious consequences on the psychological contract, which have the effect of undermining other espoused goals and loyalty and commitment. More broadly, there is ambiguity with regard to whether the main role of the HRM function is a 'caring' or 'controlling' one (Watson, 1986).

2.6 Forms of employee involvement (EI)

The discussion above has considered the linkages from employee involvement to employee outcomes and to organizational performance. Organizational commitment, which is claimed to be the main outcome of EI, has also been discussed. The aim of the remainder of this chapter is to further discuss the various forms of employee involvement. Employee involvement is divided into three basic categories according to Harley et al. (2005): tasks, power and financial involvement. Task involvement refers to efforts such as total quality management (TQM), quality circles and self-managed teams; power refers to joint consultation and empowerment; and financial involvement is represented by profit-sharing, gain-sharing, share ownership (by employees) and "save as you earn" (SAYE) schemes.

The present research has chosen to focus on task and financial participation, largely because of its relatively more common uptake in Malaysian public sector organizations. The discussion of forms of EI in this section, therefore, will not discuss power, but is focused mainly around task and financial participation with the main focus on quality circles (QCs) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOS). Nevertheless, it also covers participation practices that represent a new discourse of EI in the literature, such as high performance work systems (HPWS) and some forms of teamwork, such as QC.

2.6.1 Forms of EI - teamwork and High Performance Work Systems

Teamwork has become a prominent topic in the EI literature. Teams are increasingly used in organizations (Lawler et al., 1995; Osterman, 1994) and often constitute a

fundamental change in the way employees go about their work. The way that teams work in organizations proves durable, mainly because teams are effective (Manz & Sims, 1993).

According to Benders (2005) there are different types of teams, from shop floor units responsible for ongoing work in organization to temporary project or top management teams. In the latter, there is an assumption that teams are associated with high levels of autonomy. As an example, socio-technical teams, such as 'autonomous work groups', or 'self-managing teams' can be defined as "a group of employees, generally between 4 to 20 persons, responsible for a rounded-off part of the production process, and entitled to take certain decisions autonomously" (Benders & Van Hootegem, 1999: 615).

The increasing interest in Japanese models of work and employment led to an alternative model being developed that included the ideas of collaboration, interdependence and knowledge sharing, from 'self-managing'. Such theories have been partly transcended to include the concepts of 'lean teams' and then later 'lean factories'. These new terms mean that workers need to acquire many additional skills (e.g., simple machine repair, quality checking, housekeeping and material ordering) and need encouragement to think actively (Womack et al., 1990:99).

In this Japanese form of work organization, tasks were assigned to work units known by a wide variety of names. At the lowest levels, units were called 'han' or 'kumi', which has come to translate into English as 'teams' (Benders, 2005). This is closely related to quality (control) circles (ibid). Lillrank & Kano (1989) describe quality circles (QCs) as small groups of employees from the same organizational unit who, on a voluntary basis, use sets of tools and methods to realise a variety of improvements on a continuous basis. The notion of 'continuous improvement' or *kaizen* in Japanese (Imaik, 1986), generally means 'standard operating procedure'.

Since the mid-1990s, with a decline in the theory and practice of 'Japanisation' of production and the spread of teams to service contexts, such debates have been

partly transcended by a focus on high-performance work system (HPWS). There has been continuity of some evidence as some of the proponents of the new conceptual approach had been promoters of lean production (Pil & MacDuffie, 1996). The traditional emphasis on the bottom-line performance benefits of team working was offset by location within 'bundles' of progressive human resource practices. The concept of high performance work system results from the innovative use of human resource management practices or 'bundles' which attain synergic benefits through an interactive and mutually reinforcing impact (Delery, 1998; Huselid, 1995). The term 'bundles', derived from the argument that while individual practices, for example, self-managing teams, total quality management (TQM), or performance based pay systems, might be beneficial in their own right, HPWS are the total outcome of individual practices combined together (Purcell, 1999). Boselie and Dietz (2003), from their review of HPWS, assessed which practices are most often included. They found that practices related to employee development and training, participation and empowerment, information sharing and compensation systems were most commonly identified. Batt (2000) reached a similar conclusion, where she stated that HPWSs generally include relatively high skill requirements; work designed so that employees have discretion and opportunity to use their skills in collaboration with other workers; and an incentive structure that enhances motivation and commitment (Batt, 2002: 587).

According to Appelbaum (2002), HPWSs with these characteristics allow employees to "use their initiative, creativity, and knowledge in the interests of the organization" (Appelbaum, 2002:123). The specific aspects of HPWS include such practices as information sharing, staff briefings, consultative committees, employee consultation of organizational changes, problem-solving groups, and formal teams (Ramsay et al. 2000). Delaney and Huselid (1996) mention employee participation and empowerment, job redesign including team-based systems, extensive employee training and incentive compensation as practices that are likely to improve organizational performance.

2.6.2 Forms of EI - quality circles (QC)

Teamwork can be seen as closely related to quality circles (QCs). QCs were a commonplace topic in the academic literature during the 1980s, but their popularity dropped by the second half of the 1990s. Whereby in the mid-1990s, the new discourse of high performance work systems had emerged, nonetheless, Benders (2005) argues that the concept of teamwork constituted at best a form of partial participation as it enhanced employee participation. Although not the only one, it is an important explanation for mutual gains between organizations and employee and, as reasoned by Manz and Sims (1993), teams are effective and have proven durable to organizations.

QCs are one of many forms of team-based EI initiatives, such as team briefings, suggestion schemes, and profit sharing, adopted in organizations since the 1970s (Marchington et al. 1992). They are among one of the most popular approaches to EI and, according to Lawler and Mohrman (1987), can be a good first step in the employee involvement process, leading to other more participative programmes. A quality circle represents a participative approach to employee involvement in problem-solving and productivity improvement.

Marchington et al. (1992) classify EI into three categories; downward communications, upward problem-solving techniques and representative participation. QCs are an upward problem-solving technique giving employees the opportunity to exercise influence on decision-making. This EI technique does not, however, create sharing of power and theoretically, as a form of EI by consultation (Marchington et al., 1992) is not a deliberate management strategy for more participative management.

Sisson (1994) contrasts EI with 'participation', defined as employee influence, exerted by negotiation and bargaining whether it be collective or individual. It is commonly agreed that QCs, as a form of EI, do not necessitate industrial democracy and the literature on their adoption and failure shows they have been a marginal

experiment in participative management. QC programmes are primarily concerned with improvements in work tasks and the working environment. They have been of limited range within the organization, often focusing on the lower levels of the organizational hierarchy.

Starkey and McKinlay's (1993) research on the Ford Motor company found employee involvement schemes and flexibility were primarily a business response to increased competitiveness rather than a fundamental change in management ideology. QCs, named "problem-solving groups", were established with the threefold objectives of increasing productivity, motivating and involving lower level employees and providing a forum for increased informal communication between management and the lower level employee. Ford management's assumption was that, under changing competitive conditions, the common interests of the company were best served by emphasising common goals and mutual benefits, QCs being one of the forms (Marchington et al., 1992) of EI to be established. However, Starkey and McKinley (1993) have argued that it is difficult to have involvement without participative management, saying that "the other side of the coin" of employee involvement is participative management that, in line with Banas, is defined as:

The techniques and skills that managers use to provide employees with opportunities to participate actively in key managerial processes (planning, goal setting, problem-solving and decision-making) affecting job-related matters (Banas, 1988, p.406)

Starkey and McKinley (1993) elaborate on Banas's (1988) definition of participative management to include both "consultative" and "collaborative" styles. Consultation is used to maximise information and commitment, while collaboration is based on consensus decision-making and delegation of managerial responsibilities. QCs require the active participation of line managers with skills in consultative and collaborative styles of management and their long-term survival depends on managers devoting some of their time to QC activities. Further, as Marchington et al. (1992) have found, there is a further problem that employee relation decisions tend

to be downstream from other business issues (Purcell et al., 1987). Senior management's approach to QCs has not involved long-term planning and has been said to be faddish (Ramsay, 1991), which makes a "collaborative" style of management hard to sustain by definition (Banas, 1988). As a form of EI it has become harder to justify their continuation when evaluated with more recent and popular EI and quality management practices.

2.6.2.1 Quality circles and TQM

QC programmes are becoming less popular with employees in the 1990s than they were at the outset. Marchington et al. (1992) conducted case studies of 25 organizations, and found less frequent incident of QCs (five) than customer care or total quality management (TQM) programmes (19) and suggestion schemes (15). Only three companies out of the 25 companies answered the survey question items on QCs; the overall result was that employees in these companies were not happy with the way management had responded to employee problem-solving initiatives. As stated by Marchington:

Many employees perceived that the schemes have been introduced in the first place in order to satisfy what they saw as management objectives of saving money and improving efficiency, rather than increasing job satisfaction or providing an opportunity for employees to offer their knowledge and ideas. There were number of complaints about the failure of managers to put quality circles ideas into practice and of delays in responding to employees' contributions (Marchington et al., 1992, p.36)

A common line of argument in the literature on QCs is that they are inferior from quality management without TQM. Hill and Wilkinson (1995) report Ishikawa (1985) who felt QCs were bound to fail where western companies were not embarking on TQM, because it avoids establishing "dualistic organizational structure" with one part comprising the official management hierarchy and the other, informal arrangements created by QC activities. TQM had the advantage of working

with the grain of management rather than against it and, according to Hill and Wilkinson (1995), top management are far more determined for TQM to succeed than they were with QCs.

Kerfoot and Knights (1995) are less optimistic than Hill about the potential of management controlled TQM because they say it is contradictory in requiring employees to submit unquestioningly to quality programmes and yet remain as active thinking subjects. Similarly, Geary (1994) argues UK management has used the Japanese model primarily as an ideological legitimacy and prefers to rely on changes in work organization such as job intensification, threats of sacking, and stricter disciplinary actions rather than innovative TQM programmes.

There is evidence that TQM is following a pattern of implementation common to QC programmes; for example, Wilkinson et al. (1992) describe TQM initiatives as seeming to progress through a similar life cycle of adoption, hope and disappointment. After a while, management finds TQM fails to achieve what they had expected and employees do not obtain the influence they had hoped to achieve. Wilkinson et al. (1992) characterise TQM as presenting a counter-cultural problem of British management by requiring power sharing which reduces expert power (Giles & Starkey, 1987). Snape et al. (1995) have argued that trade union resistance creates implementation problems for TQM because a pluralist industrial relations culture will exhibit opposition towards a unitarian, top-down management culture.

Even if QCs are just ill-conceived TQMs, which is doubtful once implemented, both are forms of employee involvement and quality management that raise issues of participative management in the workplace. Hill (1991) claims that the proponents of TQM have understated the difficulties of winning employee commitment to TQM, as traditional working practices and management styles may be inconsistent with TQM. Managers, for example, may feel that they have much to fear from TQM, given the emphasis on empowering their subordinates (Marchington et al., 1992), and evidence suggests that TQM may make managers' jobs more demanding (Wilkinson et al., 1993). Schular and Harris (1992) argue that TQM promises to

empower front-line employees, giving them more responsibility and information, and so undermines middle managers' traditional role in implementing and monitoring the instructions of top management. Instead, middle managers are to perform the key function of providing leadership and support for front-line employees, which would require new skills and attitudes on their part. As for employees, TQM means taking responsibilities with the same pay, and there is fear that TQM may involve job losses.

2.6.2.2 Quality circles - theory and outcomes

QCs first became popular in U.S. companies around the beginning of the decade. The strength of the Japanese approach to management was being formally acknowledged, and American managers were looking for ways to compete more effectively (Griffin, 1988). Ouchi's work (1981a, 1981b) on Japanese management practices, for example, was very well received in the United States by managers looking for ways to enhance organizational effectiveness. So, too was the concept of QCs - Meyer and Stott (1985) estimated that at least 500 U.S firms were using QCs.

Quality circles, or QCs, are generally defined as "small groups of volunteers from the same work area who meet regularly to identify, analyse, and solve quality and related problems in their area of responsibility" (Munchus, 1983: 255). They usually consist of eight to ten members and meet once a week after working hours. Moreover, members of QCs usually receive some form of training in problem-solving techniques. Similarly, it can be concluded that quality circles are voluntary problem-solving groups of employees from the same work group that meet regularly (Geber, 1986; Lawler & Mohrman, 1985; Yager, 1980). Members identify, analyse, and solve work-related problems in their occupational area. The structure of a quality circle includes a quality control facilitator, a quality circle leader and the circle itself.

The circles are often given some latitude in the determination of the issues to be covered in the decision-making process. Members are expected to receive training in problem-solving and group dynamics. The scheme is seen as a formalized avenue for

eliciting and managing participation in relevant operational areas. The rationale for decision-making groups such as quality circles is based on the notion that those who are intimately involved in performing an activity are in the best position to address problems in that area. The group method of problem-solving and the participative management philosophy associated with it are natural outgrowths of managerial practices developed by the Japanese (Huse & Cummings, 1985).

The theoretical framework for analysing the impact of quality circles is provided by the participation in decision-making literature. QCs are seen as a formalised way for eliciting and managing employee participation in relevant operational areas (Marks et al., 1986; Munchus, 1983). Participation in QCs is viewed as a method for enhancing employee attitudes and behaviours. For example, participation in QCs has commonly been studied in conjunction with satisfaction and organizational commitment.

It is presumed that employee participation in decision-making would lead to positive outcomes such as increased productivity, increased satisfaction, and increased commitment (Griffin & Bateman, 1986; Munchus, 1983). Quality of work was also expected to be enhanced as a result of employees being given an opportunity to participate in problem-solving and decision-making (Mohrman, et al., 1986; Hutchins, 1985; Yager, 1980). However, there is little evidence of any vigorous examination of whether quality circles actually enhance employees' influence in the decision-making process or if, in fact, employees do have a strong desire to participate in that process (Ferris & Wagner, 1985)

Quality circles are accepted as potential contributors to an improved quality of working life and as a possible stepping-stone towards greater participation of the workforce in making decisions that concern them. Geber (1986) had demonstrated the benefits of quality circles in achieving worker involvement in problem-solving, showing that these can lead to personal development and greater recognition. Their adoption represents a 'bottom-up' approach, which is participation from employees, rather than a 'top-down' one-way communication from management, giving

employees the opportunity to exercise influence in decision affecting their work. As such, it contrasts with the frequent assumption that problems arise mainly from employees' indifference and lack of responsibility. Evidence produced by Guzzo and Waters (1982) suggested that the quality circle concept re-establishes the team approach to the problems of work, providing an opportunity for additional responsibility, job satisfaction, self-development and recognition.

In addition, though, the broader literature on participation is inconsistent regarding the effects of participation on various outcome measures. At one end, it was generally believed that participation caused employees to feel more satisfied, committed, be more productive and so forth. On the other hand, some other researchers are rather sceptical about the positive findings. For example, meta-analyses (Miller & Monge, 1986; Wagner & Gooding, 1987) have suggested that methodological artifacts explain many of the positive relationships found between participation and presumed outcomes. Nevertheless, the relationships have not been refuted but simply called into question. Thus, there is still reasonable basis for this research expecting positive consequences to result from increased employee participation.

Another set of outcomes that organizations evidently hope to achieve with QCs relates to overall organizational performance. Individual outcomes are presumed to aggregate to the benefit of an organization, and, more specifically, management expects the circles to provide tangible and objective suggestions and methods that will lead to such direct benefits as lower costs, improved quality, and more efficient work procedures (Griffin, 1988).

2.6.2.3 Implementation and the failure of quality circles

Some organizations have looked towards employee participation programmes involving quality circles (QCs) to improve overall quality and productivity. Intense concern for quality first appeared in the manufacturing segment of the US economy in response to the "Japanese miracle" (Dessler & Farrow, 1990). Accordingly, the

statistical tools for quality control were developed first in manufacturing environments. Many service organizations, lacking the strong global competition from other nations that manufacturers face, have not started the change to team-based production. However, other service industries have realised that quality is a major concern for them as well (Townsend & Gebhardt, 1989). For example, some US banks started QCs early in the 1980s. In 1982, Rieker (1982) told of helping establish circles in the Bank of America, Republic Bank of Houston, Bank of California, and others.

Some observers maintain that the original emphasis of employer support and excitement for QC programmes in the US had diminished by the late 1980s (BNA 1987). This may be attributed to a number of problems, foremost among which are the failure of such programmes to achieve measurable goals, and the mismatch between the organizational climate necessary for QCs to work and the management styles of many organizations. Some critics claim that many QC programmes have failed to yield measurable cost savings for the organization because their bottom line was too vague. Hutchinson (1987) believes that some other measuring system must be in place if the success of the programme cannot be quantified in monetary terms. He believes that QC systems must be accompanied by statistical management procedures to track their success.

Bozman and Gibson (1986) suggest that QCs should include some formal type of review of basic conditions that are required for their successful implementation in organizations; part of his main focus is again having the full support of top management and the development of an organizational climate congruent with participative management. In addition, QCs require the close co-operation of middle management, and the correction of misconceptions, such as their applicability only to the manufacturing sector and as a method for achieving quick results (QCC, 1986).

Hill (1991), in examining the management literature on the failure of quality circles, also commented on the failure to identify 'attitudes' as the basic problem, i.e.,

primarily, wrong attitudes among middle managers, and secondarily, wrong attitudes among other employees. Much evidence in research and practical experience shows that much of the opposition to quality circles comes from middle managers. For instance, Frazer and Dale (1986) expressed a common belief that resistance from middle managers was one of the biggest obstacles that quality circles can encounter.

Bank and Wilpert (1983) suggested that quality circles should be considered as a part of an organizational change programme. Sasaki and Hutchins (1984) support this view when they see quality circles as a kind of 'organizational development' and the theme of circles as a change agent has been argued by Sasaki (1987). If individual workers are to feel that they have some control over how their work is to be done, this 'participative option' is both a means towards improving the quality of working life and an end in itself. Among other risks, in this particular change process, some perceive quality circles as being seen as merely another technique devised and imposed by management. Whilst there is doubtless some validity in the belief that all circles arise from a conscious decision of management, where circles are seen by employees as a means for cost-saving or a technique for raising productivity, and particularly where progress is dependent upon the approval of recommendations by middle or even top management, a certain degree of scepticism is however to be expected. This comes over clearly in Kieser (1997) who pointed out that there seems to be no room for the spontaneous formation of quality circle by employees on their own initiative. The argument looks upon the quality circle as a form of participation that tried to answer critics of industry's autocratic style of management, where managerial authority always remains.

According to Lillrank and Kano (1989), failure in most other countries to overcome dualism and integrate quality circles into the mainstream of managing was one of several signals of top management showing a lack of commitment to the quality circle programme after an initial period of enthusiasm. The absence of linkages with appraisal and rewards may also be interpreted as a signal that top management regarded quality improvement as optional extra work that was voluntary, separate from managerial duties.

Bradly and Hill (1987) describe how one US company did successfully manage the integration of quality circle structures through the managerial appraisal and reward systems in the early 1980s, so that line managers had an incentive to work with circles. Some investigation of how quality circles work in Japan shows that, despite the given principle of voluntarism in Japanese literature, Japanese companies in practice do use their organizational reward system to put pressure on middle managers to cooperate with quality circles. Most managers believed that their performance in supervising quality circles was considered when promotions were being determined (Lillrank & Kano, 1989, p.61). This implies middle management needs to be motivated for quality circle success.

They further commented that quality circles could not be transplanted when separated from their Japanese environment. They anticipated difficulties in getting quality circles to flourish outside the Japanese employment system, whose characteristic features were said to be high trust and welfare corporatism that encouraged the participation of employees and gave them an incentive to search for improvements (Bradly & Hill, 1983). Japanese quality theorists seemed to be aware of the pitfalls of taking quality circles out of their cultural context, and Ishikawa (1985), for example, was highly critical of the western use of quality circles, which he thought was bound to fail. As Cole (1989) pointed out, western companies have high interest in promoting workplace democracy whereas, in Japan, quality circles were instituted and continue to function to improve products or process controls and quality, not to promote workplace democracy.

According to Lawler and Mohrman (1985), despite QCs distinct advantages, they have inherent in their design a number of factors which often lead them to self-destruct. One of the major causes of difficulty with the quality circle approach is the failure of some companies to think through fully the meaning and implication of developing an open and participative management, of which quality circles is a part (Robson, 1984).

Part of the criticism of quality circles comes from the fact that they have been changed considerably from what they were in Japan (Wood et al., 1983). Quality control circles, as they are known in Japan, were not intended to motivate employees or to democratise the workplace (Marsh, 1992). They were simply a tool, a methodology for identifying and solving problems that were related to quality (Shea, 1986). Although Japanese industry relies heavily on quality circles for international competitiveness, many countries found quality circles less popular for the fact that it was difficult to transplant. This was due to various misconceptions about their true nature, including the idea that workers' motivation for participating in the circles was mainly socio-culture, even though the motivation was primarily economic (Watanabe, 1991).

Ramsay (1991, 1996) commented that the critical observer would see it as the familiar life-and-death cycles of fads and fashions in the world of employee involvement, and he viewed the decline as a general feature of employee involvement, rather than due to anything specific about quality circles. The optimists would view it as companies simply shifting towards more ambitious and integrated programmes. The subject of management fads is well covered in the literature with typical definitions forwarded by Cole (1999), Huczynski (1993) and Kieser (1997). Their definition is that normally it is a new idea but is developed in a vague and previously undefined area; and the users being initially enthusiastic can result in a loss of interest in return, if it turns out to not be successful as envisaged at the outset. Dale et al. (2001) examined the extent to which quality circles follow the path of fad and fashion and found that quality circles fit the conditions described.

2.6.3 Forms of EI - Employee Share Ownership Schemes (ESOSs)

Employee share ownership is one of the prominent areas of financial participation discussed in EI literature. There has been an increase of interest in various types of employee financial participation schemes in the 1980s and early 1990s, ranging from profit sharing and employee share ownership to employee buyouts of failing firms and worker cooperative ventures. These represent an important international trend

towards sharing both capital as well as authority in organizations, though there is also variation in the extent to which financial sharing arrangements are used and embraced, both across countries and across industrial sectors within individual countries.

Employee share ownership has been hailed as a “phenomenon of considerable importance” (Wilson, 1995). It has been credited with bringing some measures of employee control to production, engendering commitment in contexts where it is difficult to generate by other means (Pendleton et al., 1996, 2005), providing opportunities to employees to share in the reward of work (Hyman & Mason, 1995; Kelly & Kelly, 1991; Poole & Jenkins, 1990) and thus motivating them to work harder (Heller et al., 1998). Moreover, where an increase in involvement in decision-making occurs, positive effects upon employee attitudes, including more co-operative behaviours between employers and employees, and productivity are anticipated (Long, 1978). Specifically, systems of ownership can allow employees the opportunity to increase their involvement at their workplace, and improve their level of understanding and degree of communication with management (Poole & Jenkins, 1990). It also shares some of the attributes of human resource management practice with the potential “to align the interest of employees with those of the organization” (McHugh et al., 2004: 277).

Share ownership is one of two broad categories of financial participation; the other is profit sharing. The main differences are that profit sharing is profit-based remuneration, where employees are able to take some share of profit into their income from their employer. In share ownership, employees are able to acquire shares, and thus have some degree of ownership over assets of their employer (Baddon et al., 1989). Employee ownership has been defined as a “plan in which most of a company’s employees own at least some stock in the company, even if they do not have a right to vote, and even if they don’t sell it until they leave or retire” (Rosen, Klein & Young, 1986). The employee share ownership plan (ESOP) is a deferred employee benefit plan, similar to a pension fund. Corporations may directly contribute stock to the trust rather than funds for purchase. Such contributions, whether fund or stock, are tax-

deductible for the company, which makes the ESOP attractive to existing owners who wish, for various reasons, to alter their ownership position in the company. The stock of the ESOP trust is then allocated to individual employee accounts, usually based on the employee's salary level. In some plans, employees may contribute part of their wages to the trust to supplement their investment.

The employee's ESOP trust account increases in value in two primary ways. The first is through contribution to the fund, either by the employee or the employer. The second is through appreciation in the price of the shares of the company owned by the employee. In firms that are publicly traded, stock prices are affected by normal stock market activity. For those firms that are privately owned, an annual appraisal is made of the firm by an independent appraiser who determines the fair market value of the shares. When employees leave the organization, they receive the vested portions of their accounts, which may then be sold back to the company at the established fair market price.

Often in firms that are privately owned, employees do not receive voting rights with their shares. Instead, since their shares are held in trust, the trustees of the ESOP vote as representing the shareholders. In some cases, voting rights may be granted or may be limited, according to the terms of the ESOP. In firms that are publicly held, however, employees can vote using their shares, as would any stockholder.

2.6.3.1 Reasons for adopting Employee Share Ownership Schemes

A number of reasons may explain the increased interest in and usage of financial participation from an organization's perspective. According to most researchers in the area, the presumed positive consequences have attracted the attention of management in workplaces. Some studies are related to providing an insight on why some firms adopt financial participation. Some findings show that management is trying to foster the virtues of employee share ownership in the form of wider attitudinal and motivational changes. Pryce and Nicholson (1988) stated that motivating employees was the most important reason for the introduction of share

schemes. Ramsay et al. (1982; 1990) and McHugh (2004), in reviewing a number of studies, also confirmed that schemes are more of management expectations to appeal for employee attitudes towards closer identification with company objectives and profitability. In a subsequent study, Gamble (1998) discovered that Tax Reform Act (US tax incentives) may have motivated companies to adopt ESOPs for tax purposes.

There are however studies that report the employees' reasons for joining such schemes, without necessarily attempting to place them within a broader theoretical framework. For example, Hammer and Stern (1980) found that in an employee buy-out of a failing manufacturing firm in the USA, there were three main responses employees gave as to why they purchased shares. These were firstly, to save their jobs, secondly, as an investment, and finally, because of a basic principle that employees should own part of the company. Ramsay et al. (1990), who studied companies in the UK with save-as-you earn (SAYE) share option schemes, found that employees joined the schemes because of the low risk and high financial rewards associated with them. The least contributing factor among their sample was attributed to having a 'stake or share' in the company. Similarly, French and Rosenstein (1984) studied a company operating an employee share ownership plan as an employee investment rather than an ownership scheme. Long (1978), in his study of a trucking company purchased by its employees, reported that the most frequently cited advantage of employee share ownership was again monetary gain, with the second most popular response being the feeling of working for oneself as well as the company. These types of responses provide some tentative indication that employees participating in schemes, which do not confer a sizeable degree of ownership, do not in fact give ownership as an important reason for participation.

Perhaps most popular are the notions that employees join schemes to obtain greater participation and influence in the organization or that they join in the expectation of a high financial return on their investment. Several researchers have examined either or both of these ideas in various ways (French & Rosenstein 1984; Long, 1978; Rhodes & Steers, 1980). The findings of these studies point to the conclusion that employees are concerned more with the financial aspects of share ownership than

with having a greater voice in the company affairs. Similarly, French (1987) designed a detailed model of the predicted outcomes of employee share ownership assuming only that employees use schemes as a potential investment.

A second view is that participation in schemes, in principle, is for the workers' right to ownership. There are studies that have explored whether workers, in being shareholders, see it as their 'right' as workers to exercise greater control in the firm (Hammer & Stern, 1980). While the underlying reason for joining the scheme was not examined in Hammer and Stern's study, the issue of the workers' 'right' to some form of ownership in their employing organization is not new. Hammer and Stern, in conducting their study, examined the outcomes expected rather than feelings at the entry point, using hypothetical reasons, rather than actual reasons, and the idea that the higher the level of shareholding, the higher the level of influence they would want at the workplace. This argument could also be used, however, in explaining the decision to participate by focusing on the notion that the more employees feel a 'right' to ownership in the organization, the more likely they are to want to participate in the scheme. This reverses the direction of causation from the hypotheses set out by Hammer and Stern.

Compared to the theme of investment potential or increased influence in the organization, less attention has been devoted to a third possibility, that employees may be driven to participate in share schemes by a desire for some form of greater emotional attachment to the organization. In this sort of circumstance, a strong sense of job satisfaction or satisfaction with the firm may lead to a desire to be more part of the organization by owning a share in it. Kruse (1984) argues alternatively, that employees may be motivated to join out of a sense of loyalty to the company, either because they feel they are helping the organization by purchasing shares or because they feel that 'committed' employees should demonstrate their loyalty through share ownership. Very few studies have dealt with this type of reason for participation.

One exception to this is the research by Klein (1987) who compared three basic models of satisfaction with share ownership. These focused on satisfaction derived

from being part of the owners of the company, satisfaction with the financial return on investment, and satisfaction as a result of greater influence in the organization. She found that employees were most satisfied with share ownership when their financial return was greater. They were less satisfied when they expected greater workplace influence (largely because this desire went unmet). The affective model of satisfaction in which ownership is seen as a desirable end unto itself was the least supported model.

Dewe, Dunn and Richardson (1988) also proposed that workers could join schemes for various reasons, including affective attachments. They hypothesized that workers participate in the schemes either because they believe the schemes will offer financial benefits or because they are highly committed to the organization, and their positive feelings about the company are expected to encourage participation in the schemes. In their case study, they found that workers with more positive attitudes to the company were no more likely to join the company share scheme than those with less favourable attitudes. They concluded that employees' views about the scheme, and whether or not it would have a positive impact in the workplace, were more important in the decision to join than how they felt about the company itself.

2.6.3.2 Evidence of Employee Share Ownership Schemes

The literature on employee share ownership has provided mixed evidence. For example, on the positive side, financial participation was found to be related to significant improvements in company performance on the stock market (Richardson & Nejad, 1986). Conte and Tannenbaum (1978) similarly found that companies with employee ownership were more profitable than comparable firms without such schemes. Marsh and MacAllister (1981) reported higher productivity increases for Employee Share Ownership Plan (ESOP) companies of medium size. Wagner (1984) analyzed thirteen companies that were at least 10% employee-owned, concluding that, on specific financial criteria, performance in these companies was higher than in traditional companies. Similarly, Rosen and Klein (1983) showed that companies with all-employee profit-sharing schemes outperform similar non-profit sharing

companies. Estrin, Grout and Wadhvani (1987) concluded that most of the studies suggest that financial sharing, such as employee shareholding, leads to higher productivity. In a more recent study, Mauldin (1999) found that companies who reported positive increase in total employee retirement benefits after ESOP adoption (where, the ESOP was in addition to, not a substitute for existing retirement benefits) had a significant increase in sales per employee.

On the other hand, some researchers (Bhagat, Brickly & Lease, 1984; Edwards, 1987; Livingston & Henry, 1980) have found that employee share ownership has negative effects on company profitability. Tannenbaum, Cooke and Lohmann (1984) found that there is no significant difference in profitability and financial growth from firms without an employee ownership scheme. And some studies have found no effect of share ownership on organizational profits (Blasi et al., 1996; Brooks, Henry & Livingston, 1984; Dunbar & Kumbhakar, 1992; Pugh et al., 2000).

Nevertheless, there is evidence to suggest that attitudes, rather than behaviour, are more affected by the introduction of share ownership schemes. A number of positive individual level attitudinal and behavioural outcomes have been explored in relation to employee share ownership. Blanchflower and Oswald (1987) found profit-sharing has a significant effect on employees' attitude to work. Bell and Hanson (1984), who studied employees' attitude towards their firms and its objectives, found that those who participate in a profit-sharing scheme became more positive and more profit-conscious. Tannenbaum (1983) and Long (1978a), in particular, found that employee ownership results in an increase in levels of worker participation and control. Long (1979), for example, concluded that employee share ownership increases worker influence at organizational policy levels. It also increases 'organizational identification', which, in turn, leads workers to become more interested in the affairs of their places of work (Long, 1981:851). Rhodes and Steers (1980), in their studies of worker cooperatives, pointed to improvements in participative arrangements. However, some studies on individual firms (Hammer & Stern, 1980) found no significant relationship between employee ownership and perceived or desired worker influence.

A further argument in the literature relates to employee satisfaction and commitment. Long (1978a) argued that share ownership may directly affect satisfaction, as it is a form of company benefits, as well as being able to increase employee influence and involvement. Some studies (Hammer, Stern & Gurdon, 1982; Long 1978) have found a positive relationship between employee ownership and employee satisfaction in individual firms. Another study, by Rosen and Klein (1983), suggests that under the right conditions, employee share ownership can lead to increased employee satisfaction. However, some other studies reported no significant difference in employee satisfaction between shareholders and non-shareholders (French & Rosenstein, 1984; Hammer, Landau & Stern, 1981).

Other findings suggest that satisfaction and commitment would be significantly influenced by the degree of the company's contribution to the schemes (the amount of shares received). According to Rosen et al. (1986), employees may regard the company's financial contribution as an important element in improving their morale and satisfaction at work. Similarly, other studies pointed out that employees would be more committed to remain with the company, and hence develop an organizational rather than an individual or career commitment (French & Rosenstein, 1984; Hammer, Stern & Gurdon, 1982; Long 1978b, 1980). Nevertheless, some studies pointed to the appreciation of financial rewards associated with employee share ownership plans was found to be commonly expressed, leading the authors to conclude that employees are mostly motivated by the potential financial rewards of employee share ownership plans. In summary, the research findings on the consequences of employee share ownership remain contradictory, and do not clearly point to a conclusive relationship between ownership and employee involvement or employee satisfaction and commitment.

As seen in the above discussions, the whole rationale for introducing EI in the form of financial participation, such as employee share ownership is to increase levels of commitment so that positive outcomes are ensured. Nevertheless, the research findings on the consequences of employee share ownership and organizational commitment remain contradictory. Thus, particular attention in this study will be

focused on the relationship between employee share ownership schemes and organizational commitment.

2.6.3.3 Attitudes towards Employee Share Ownership Schemes

Workers involved in employee share ownership schemes tend to have positive attitudes towards those schemes. Bell and Hanson (1984) found that 70 per cent of workers in 12 British companies with profit-sharing schemes thought they were 'an excellent idea'. In a British company that was about to introduce a share-ownership scheme, Dewe et al. (1988) found 69 per cent of workers agreed with the idea that it was 'right for workers to own part of their company'. Fogarty and White (1988) found between 88 per cent and 96 per cent of the workers in three British companies to be 'very much' or 'fairly' in favour of their own firm's share schemes. Baddon et al. (1989) found that 66 per cent of employees in five British companies were in favour of their firm having share schemes, while Poole and Jenkins (1990) reported even higher percentages (80%) in favour of different types of profit sharing in 12 British firms. Rosen et al. (1986) reported that 75 per cent of worker shareholders in 37 American firms agreed with the statement that they were 'proud to own stock in this company'.

Other evidence also shows that financial schemes lead workers to become more interested in their company's performance. Bell and Hanson (1984) found that 76 per cent of the respondents in firms with share schemes declared a greater interest; Fogarty and White (1988) found between 71 per cent and 86 per cent of respondents in three firms with such an interest; and Rosen et al. (1986) reported 84 per cent of stockholders across 37 companies saying that they were now more interested in their company's financial success. Taken overall, the studies suggest that many workers do have positive attitudes towards employee financial schemes themselves, and that the schemes are associated with greater worker interest in company affairs.

In addition, there were several studies conducted on 'them and us' attitudes; some studies showed a lower 'them and us' attitudes among participants of the share

schemes (Bell & Hanson, 1984; Hammer & Stern, 1980; Long, 1978a,b; Long, 1980). However, other studies have shown no improvement over time in the 'them and us' attitudes following the introduction of employee financial schemes (Griffin, 1988; Long, 1982; Wall et al., 1986). Studies also show no attitude differences between participants and non-participants in employee involvement schemes (Baddon et al., 1989; Poole & Jenkins, 1990; Russel et al., 1979), and some other studies showed only a small number of participants in employee financial schemes reporting a sense of ownership or equality (Dunn et al., 1990; Klein & Rosen, 1986; Kruse, 1984). Other studies reported mixed results (Bradley & Hill, 1983; Dewe et al., 1988; Forgarty & White, 1988).

2.7 Chapter summary

Chapter Two has presented a review of the literature on employee involvement (EI) and its relationships to employee attitudes and outcomes. The chapter reviewed the development of theories and definitions of employee involvement. Theories are largely based on motivational theory and models for reinforcing employee commitment. This chapter also reviewed concepts and definitions of organizational commitment and examined cross-cultural issues in order to understand their effect on the implementation and practice of EI. Empirical research on EI programmes and practices in organizations, and issues regarding the effectiveness of EI were addressed, highlighting some critics who question the rhetoric of EI. Leadership and management style were found to be important background factors influencing participation in EI programmes, and this led to a discussion of organizational culture in relation to employee involvement, and following this, the link between EI and organizational commitment. This discussion highlighted the importance of understanding what effect the degree of participation and management support has on attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment within the specific Malaysian context of the present study. The chapter ended with a detailed discussion of the various forms of EI, including its recent formulation within discourses on teamwork and high performance work systems. The main focus of the discussion, however, was on quality circles and Employee Share Ownership Schemes, which

form the primary concern of the present study's examination of EI in Malaysian public sector organizations.

CHAPTER THREE

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND GENDER

3.1 Introduction

As discussed in Chapter Two, interest in employee involvement (EI) or participation by academics and practitioners has seen the emergence of a rapidly growing body of literature. Management of the employment relationship has changed markedly throughout the world in the last two decades in response to the intensified degree of competition. This fierce competitive environment is forcing many organizations to implement programmes that aim to improve their operations and quality so they can serve their customers better than their competitors (Shelton, 1991). Among the major elements of this change has been the extension of EI or participation in the workplace. These trends have been well documented but the literature is largely silent when it comes to considering employees' experiences at different levels of EI and in particular when considering gender issues. It is surprising how little attention the potential for differential access to participative management practices on the basis of gender has attracted in the traditional literature of EI and participation.

Male bias in management research is a phenomenon that has been commonly noted. Wilson (1996) discusses gender blindness and accuses management theory of being "male stream"; firstly, because it makes little or no room for any analysis of those actual individuals who occupy the role, treating management as an abstract set of functions, principles or processes, and secondly, because it fails to recognise gender as a significant variable, even in the face of overwhelming empirical evidence. Linstead (2000, p.297) views this gender blindness as an inculcated way of not seeing or being unaware and argues that the "founding fathers" of management theory were very gender aware but they actively worked to "suppress gender" in their theories. He cites Matterson and Ivancevich's (1988) claim that Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory is built on flawed research, and distinctly gender biased. It is as gender blind as the sample used in his research was based on extraordinary people, all of whom were male. Similarly, Chusmir's (1990) study of the motivation

of managers questioned the lack of research examining gender as a factor in management research. Most business colleges teach motivation theory based upon the results of studies of men, but Chusmir pointed out that existing knowledge of the drives of managerial men might not apply to managerial women who are likely to be affected in different ways by their background.

Managers and researchers often adopt a posture of gender blindness. This attitude towards gender is justified on the basis that people are equal, regardless of characteristics such as gender. Therefore such an attribute should not be singled out. This approach, while appealing philosophically, ignores the reality of the workplace. In spite of the literature and attention, many people believe that substantial gender bias continues in organizations and that firms do not use diversity effectively (e.g., Powell, 1988). Morisson and Von Glinow (1990) stressed the importance of focusing on gender to understand why women face a glass ceiling in management. They also mentioned that adopting a gender-blind attitude offers an easy way for managers and researchers to avoid gender questions, but does little to address the practical realities of the workplace.

Studies in EI have tended to use demographic factors such as age and level of education, and some have also included gender. As an example, Kahnweiler and Thompson (2000) collected data from non-management, on actual and desired levels of involvement as well demographic factors. With respect to gender, the findings showed that males and females do not differ in terms of how much they wish to be involved in decision-making. Their findings are similar to the earlier finding of Miller and Prichard (1992), where their results also showed there are no gender differences on actual and desired decision-making among employees. Nevertheless, in many other similar studies of EI, gender is being overlooked.

The purpose of the present research was to address some of the critical needs expressed by those who have synthesised prior EI research. It attempted to tap the attitudes of employees, both participants and non-participants, and above all, includes gender as the main variable. In this thesis, it is argued that the research in EI

continues to operate as gender blind. The researcher tries to avoid this common error by including gender as one of the key independent variables in examining the relationship between EI and organizational commitment. By testing for gender differences or similarities in employee attitudes towards EI schemes, gender is taken into account and the common mistakes of oversimplified generalisations about responses pertaining to gender are rectified.

The present chapter, first, considers the nature of gender bias, beginning with the construction of gender differences through the effect of social systems. Secondly, differences with respect to the work orientations of women are discussed, both generally and, thirdly, with respect to possible cross-cultural differences in work orientations. Fourthly, gendered organizational cultures and fifthly, the disadvantages faced by women are summarised, highlighting, for example, the masculine cultures of many organizations and workplaces, and the segregation of women into low-skilled occupations and part-time employment. Finally, as the present study concerns the nature of EI in a non-western national culture, Asian and Malaysian research on women and gender divisions as they relate to workforce participation, is presented.

3.2 Construction of gender

The term “gender” in psychological and social research reflects feminist efforts to distinguish between biological differences and those determined by social and cultural forces (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1988; Sapiro, 1986). Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988) note that conventional meaning, as well as psychological inquiry, has constructed gender as difference, although there is no agreement on what constitutes “difference”. Sex difference implies the existence of some stable, inherent traits, while the concept of gender difference recognises the impact of social systems on the differential perceptions of men and women (Unger, 1990).

Hare–Mustin and Marecek (1989) suggest that rather than attempt to determine which representation of gender is correct, theories of gender should be evaluated in a

constructive framework. "Theories of gender, like other scientific theories, are representations of reality organized by particular assumptive frameworks and reflecting certain interests" (Hare-Mustin & Marecek, 1989,p.456). In the constructive framework, theories of gender, which are constructed as theories of difference, can be categorised by one of two competing biases - alpha bias and beta bias.

Alpha bias sees differences in men and women. As an example, it provides a rationalisation for excluding women from certain occupations or restricting women to lower-status positions within an occupation. The separation of public-masculine/domestic-feminine into a "natural" dichotomy comes from biological differences that are said to affect orientations towards women's and men's role in society (Guttek et al., 1981). The research of Crawford and Marecek (1989) emphasises gender differences that characterised a woman as a "problem or anomaly". Men's behaviours are set as the norm against which women are evaluated, and if differences are observed, they usually are interpreted as a female deficiency. Women are then pressed to change their behaviour to conform to a masculine stereotype.

In alpha bias, even if women are given the opportunity to participate, women may continue to struggle for participation in EI. This is because then they might be trying to compete against the forces that highlight and rationalise the differences between men and women.

Beta bias assumes differences but ignores the differences or minimises them, as in an organization already gendered as masculine. According to Mustin and Marecek (1988), beta bias occurs any time that generalisations about human behaviour are made based on observations that are restricted to males. Beta bias underlies the traditional representation of the organization as gender neutral. Acker (1990) observes:

To say that an organization or any other analytic unit is gendered means that advantage and disadvantage, exploitation and control, action and emotion, meaning and identity, are patterned through and in terms of a distinction between male and female, masculine and feminine. Gender is not additional to ongoing processes, or conceived as gender neutral. Rather it is an integral part of those processes...(p.146)

Acker argues that to talk abstractly about “the worker” or “the job” actually invokes a traditional masculine image. And Welsh (1992) added, the concept of a job assumes distinct boundaries between job and domestic life. The ideal worker is one whose central life interest is work and who has few “outside” demands affecting job commitment. That ideal worker has been construed as male, given traditionally gendered divisions of responsibility for home and family. To ignore a masculine orientation in the organizational structure is a form of beta bias.

Beta organizations are gendered and so bias will prevail in such organizations. One may assume that women may find themselves ignored in term of EI because there will be less chance to prove themselves; that is, they may take bias for granted and accept the masculinity of the organization. This is because people take for granted the masculinity of beta bias in the workplace. Thus, women may not find opportunities for EI.

Therefore, its important to study EI with respect to gender so as to see what prevents women from participating in EI and what could be done to eliminate the “taken for granted” bias in the case of beta bias and the rationalised version in the case of alpha bias.

The organizational hierarchy is based on the presumption that lower-level positions carry a lower level of complexity and responsibility; women often predominantly fill these positions. Male workers with presumably undivided commitment to paid employment are considered more suited to positions of authority. Some even argue that women’s inferior labour status is not a problem to be solved, but rather something women choose freely in their efforts to adapt paid work to household responsibilities (Bergmann, 1989; Hakim, 1996). However, job complexity and

responsibility are defined in terms of managerial tasks from which women are excluded (Acker, 1990). For example, elementary and secondary teachers are predominantly women, while men are more likely to fill administrative positions. If the allocation of power and compensation is based on job complexity and responsibility, classroom teaching must be presumed less demanding than administration. There is also evidence that when women enter a traditionally male-oriented profession in significant numbers, salaries decline as work becomes identified as women's work (Stewart, 1982).

3.3 Women's orientation towards work

Women's orientations to work have been viewed basically in a negative way through a number of stereotypes; in summary, it has been implied that women are more interested in being housewives and having children. The stereotypes of women and paid employment have included a variety of sometimes conflicting opinions; for example, that women only work for pin money, that they only work in order to find a husband, that women do not mind boring work and may even prefer it since they have no intrinsic interest in working, and so on (Dex, 1985). The most common stereotypes tend to suggest that, compared to men, women are less interested in and less committed to work. Women's agency research has maintained that women as agents (mothers, spouses, daughters) will have domestic responsibilities which influence their commitment and participation in the workplace (Kabeer, 1999). The argument is that because of domestic responsibilities, women's ability to participate fully in activities in the workplace is restricted. Because of their roles and other feminine characteristics, they are in a disadvantaged position compared to men, with regard to peer and gender relations. Men, on the other hand, view themselves as the 'breadwinner', or family sole earner, and thus identify themselves more with their work.

Some studies draw attention to the differences between men's and women's reported attitudes, which rely on gender-based explanations of the statistical differences in behaviour. Fieldberg and Glenn (1979) showed through the analysis of two case

studies that men and women have been treated inconsistently. They analysed the way women's and men's orientations to work were explained in Blauner's (1964) *Alienation and Freedom* and in Beynon and Blackburn's (1972) *Perceptions of Work*. They suggested that men were approached via a 'job model' whereas women were approached using a 'gender model'. Although the gender model is considered old in organizational literature, it is still considered valuable in understanding certain characteristics of work in relation to gender.

The job model suggests differences in working conditions as a primary independent variable in explaining the attitudes and the work commitment of men and women. In the gender model, type of job and working conditions were ignored in favour of personal characteristics and family circumstances. Thus men are the workers and breadwinners who were analysed through the job model and women were examined through the gender model as wives or only secondary workers. They also pointed out that most studies assume homogeneity among members of each sex, and if there are variations, they are ignored.

On the other hand, in Fagenson (1986) and Kanter (1977), the lower levels of job involvement shown by women are attributed to women occupying lower levels and disadvantaged positions that are devoid of intrinsic satisfaction and with limited advancement opportunities, rather than some gender-related differences. And in a study of gender and job involvement, Lorence (1987) reported that gender socialization and family responsibilities did not explain the lower job involvement of women, and that women tend to be more job-involved than men after controlling for differences in autonomy. A study by Brown et al. (1983) found that 'the same kinds of reasons dominated men's and women's responses' on the question of the reasons for being dissatisfied with a job. When examining the question of the importance attached to different aspects of work, they found that men and women have similar satisfaction scores for all features of work except promotion, women being less satisfied with their promotion prospects than men. Brown et al. also found that when second and third (and so on) choices were considered in an aggregate form along

with the first choices, men's and women's attitudes and priorities appeared to be more similar than dissimilar.

Mottaz (1989) also found that, overall, gender and work satisfaction were fairly similar for women and men. The findings of the Women and Employment Survey published in Martin and Roberts (1984) show that women have much more positive views of work than might have been expected. Judith Agassi (1982) discovered that there are minimal gender differences in their orientation or attitudes towards work. Differences that did exist were in attitude towards promotions at work and attitudes as a result of job content where most women did not find their job to be as challenging as compared to men.

Although the above literature about women's orientation towards work is dated, it is still valuable, as there are not many differences between the previous and the latest findings. There has been considerable continuous debate, and a controversy, about women's orientation to women's employment. These centre on one of the most controversial questions; do women want to work outside home or would they rather give priority to home life and childcare? Many feminists and socialists would have believed this question settled rather long ago. It was triggered by Hakim, where she argued that only a small number of women (20 per cent) were 'work-centred' in the same way men are; most other women are either 'home-centred', prioritizing home over paid work, or 'adaptive', attempting to combine home and children with paid work (Hakim, 1996).

In more recent research Hakim (1996, 2000 and 2002) has argued from the point of what she has labelled "Preference Theory", and explains her statements on the orientation of women who work. Her central argument in preference theory is that women are not 'homogenous', they don't all feel the same about priorities and preferences to work (Hakim 2000:4). How they wish to live, or whether they want to work outside the home, is different for each individual and for different societies as well.

Hakim posited the classification of women into three groups, based on their work-life preferences. The first group are the 'home-centered' women, those who consider their highest priority to be home and family life. The second group are the non-career oriented adaptive women who either did not plan on a career or wish to combine their work and their family. These women as a group are highly diversified and can include women who do not marry or marry later in life. Hakim stresses that their adaptiveness comes from a lack of commitment from the very beginning, even though they may work full-time their whole life and achieve a high level of success in their career (Hakim, 2000: 166, 277).

Hakim goes on to mention that women in higher grades and positions have 'invested' in their qualifications, work full-time, work continuously, are just as determined and ambitious as their male counterparts, and have concentrated themselves in male-dominated or integrated occupations with a high earnings ratio. Women who have decided to make their career as a homemaker tend to be secondary earners, do not use the qualifications they might have, choose jobs that are more 'convenient' or fulfil social obligations, rather than as a 'career', tend to concentrate in "female" jobs, and have a lower earnings ratio.

Frequent criticisms of Hakim's Preference Theory have surfaced from other researchers who have argued that there are constraints on women's preferences based on situations dealing with financial, family and personal situations. Whether or not a woman decides to go into paid labour is based on a set of complex incentives, ranging from self-esteem and the opportunity to meet other people to economic and financial necessity (Crompton and Harris, 1998; Dooreward et al., 2004; Fagan, 2001; Rose, 2001). The orientation of women towards work is supposed to vary according to factors such as family background, economic background, age and educational level. Beyond individual preferences, the heterogeneity of women's work-life orientation is also dependent on personal or family circumstances (Crompton & Harris 1998; Fagan 2001; Rose 2001). Betz and O'Connell (1989) stated in their research that gender socialisation explained most of the differences in work orientation between men and women.

Work orientation for both men and women has become a major subject for investigation, and often appears multi-faceted. Traditionally, women are thought to have different attitudes than men towards employment, but with an increasing number of women entering the workforce these attitudes may be changing. This may cause some conflict in generalising about women's attitudes, or in comparing women's attitudes with men's attitudes.

Stereotypes probably suffer regularly from such inconsistencies, if they have little empirical support. Also, it is often difficult to pin down exactly what women's attitudes towards work are supposed to be. One can only make progress in documenting and understanding women's attitudes by empirical examination.

This study attempts to correct this mistake by trying to understand women's attitudes towards EI schemes and, in particular, whether women's attitudes to work differ from those of men, whether women are less committed, or whether they are more constrained. If they do differ, what are the reasons for the difference? Such an approach will enable one to see how far the commonly expressed views are stereotypes or correct.

3.4 Work orientation across national cultures

A series of cross-national comparative studies were carried out in the 1980s to see if there were important cultural differences between societies in the strength of the work ethic and in work attitudes more generally (Hofstede, 1980, Harding, Phillips & Forgarthy, 1986). However, this research also revealed the male-centred character of theory in this field (Hofstede, 1980, 1991).

Kalleberg's (1977) analysis identified six dimensions in work orientations; features of work situations that can be of greater or lesser importance to individuals and be the source of greater or lesser satisfaction with a particular job or type of work. The intrinsic dimension refers to the work task itself, whether it is interesting, challenging, and develops and utilises skills. The convenience dimension refers to

practical characteristics that make a job 'comfortable' for a worker; convenient hours, convenient journey to work, pleasant workplace and so forth. The financial dimension combines rates of pay, fringe benefits offered by the employer and job security, the monetary value of a job. Relations with co-workers emerged as a separate dimension and referred to the social character of the work situation, whether it provided opportunities for friendly interactions. The career dimension refers to opportunities for promotion and advancement in career. Finally, the sixth dimension, labelled resource adequacy, refers to practical factors facilitating work performance, such as adequate equipment, authority and information required to do the job, helpful colleagues and supervision. The six dimensions combine features of paid work that may influence decisions to work, or not, with features affecting satisfaction with a particular job, the meaning that someone attaches to the work role as well as sources of satisfaction with the work role.

The most successful of the comparative studies was that by Hofstede (1980, 1991). Surveys of some 120,000 IBM employees around the world provided, in effect, carefully matched samples of occupations across 66 countries. Hofstede's analysis identified four dimensions of work orientations across national cultures: the relationship between the individual and the group (often labelled individualism-collectivism); ways of dealing with uncertainty, relating to control of aggression and the expression of emotions, which he labels uncertainty-avoidance; power-distance, which focuses on the degree of equality, or inequality, between people; and a social ego dimension that contrasted dominance, reward and challenge against good social relations and job comfort factors, and which he finally labelled the masculinity-femininity dimension because it reflected gender differences in work orientations.

In addition to analyses focused on national culture differences, Hofstede analysed work orientations at the occupational level, and then looked for any sex differences within occupations. At this level, only two of the four dimensions emerge as important. Power-distance emerged even more strongly than at the national level, with no sex differential within occupations; education was the main correlate. The social-ego dimension was also most salient at the occupational level and displayed

sex differences so large that they provided the masculinity–femininity label. This dimension reflects apparently universal differences in the work orientations of men and women. Also derived from sex role differentiation the ‘masculine’ goals of high earnings, promotion opportunities, up-to-dateness and opportunities for training and updating contrast with the ‘social’ goals which were thought to be of greater importance to women: good relations with colleagues and managers, a friendly atmosphere and a pleasant workplace. As secondary earners, women can afford to discount the financial and career features of a job in favour of social and convenience factors. On the other hand, in countries where more women hold jobs and more households have two earners, men too can afford to place less emphasis on the aggressive achievement-oriented features of work. Hofstede (1980) shows that sex differences are largest among the less educated in lower grade occupations and smallest among the more highly educated in higher-level jobs. He shows that work is more central in life within countries with high masculinity scores, such as Japan, Germany and Britain, whereas in some other Asian countries and in countries with high femininity scores such as Sweden, Norway, the Netherlands and Denmark work has a less central role in life. These results show men are usually the main income earners and their work orientations (and behaviour) show less variation than those of women, for whom work is a matter of choice and may either be central or secondary.

3.5 Gender and organization culture

The terms “sex” and “gender” are often confused. Sex is biological type. However, gender is socially constructed (Garrett, 1987) and subsequently learnt. Because it is socially constructed, individuals may tend to be more male or female in a gendered sense. The concept of gender can be applied to cultures as having a masculine/feminine dimension. It is suggested that masculine cultures are likely to be dominated by power relationships, and result orientated. Feminine cultures are likely to be more concerned with interpersonal relationships and be process-oriented. Power cultures are likely to be experienced by the vast majority of men and women as being less satisfying than are task or team cultures which place a greater emphasis

on expert knowledge than on positional power and allow members more individual autonomy (Cartwright & Gale, 1995).

Different culture types promote and nurture different managerial styles. Power cultures that suggest and epitomise masculinity are characterized by command structures and expect employees to “do what they are told without questioning”. They are also highly politicised environments and operate on the axiom of “survival of the fittest” (Alimo-Metcalf, 1993).

Women’s increased participation in the workplace may be influential on organizational cultures, at a relatively superficial level. However, the impact of the existing organizational culture(s) on women as they seek entry and membership to that culture may have an even greater and deeper influence on their experiences and behaviour. It is argued that, because the culture of project-based industries is inherently “masculine” in orientation, a culture change will not necessary occur merely as a result of an increase in the critical mass of women entering this environment (Gale, A & Cartwright, S; 1995).

Research by Gale (1994a & b) finds that men and women converge in their perceptions of the construction industry, the industry’s culture is masculine, education is a “gatekeeper” to that culture and women in construction do not define themselves as feminists. Interview data (ibid) suggests that men and women were found to converge in the images they hold of the industry as they progress towards professional occupations; thus “fitting in” to the culture of construction. She further elaborated that those who select a career in the construction industry appear to seek the construction culture and are socialised into the construction culture through the education system. The culture is characterised by male domination, aggression and conflict, gallant behaviour and traditional attitudes.

Because of “perceived” domestic commitments and responsibilities, women are often assumed to be less mobile, less committed to the organization and more inclined to be absent from work than men, despite contradictory research evidence.

Consequently, women tend to be overlooked in the promotion stakes, are more likely to be regarded as “non-professional” and receive fewer training opportunities than their male colleagues (Elias & Main, 1982). Authors such as Davidson (1987) and Lewis and Cooper (1987) suggest that women’s advancement in the workplace is affected by the availability of appropriate role models and mentors, and the degree of social support both at home and work.

3.6 The sources of women’s disadvantage

There are various sources that make women disadvantaged at work. Some were highlighted in earlier sections, but deserve separate discussion.

3.6.1 Male dominated occupations – gendered organization culture

Gale and Cartwright (1995) argued that women encounter problems gaining entry and acceptance in the project environment because the culture of traditional project-based industries like construction and engineering is “masculine” in orientation. Culture is considered to be such a powerfully enduring and pervasive influence on human behaviour that it even affects the language, dress code and physical layout of the organization (Schein, 1985). While national cultures according to Hofstede (1980) may influence the style of work organization and the preferred organizational culture within that same national culture, different organizations, different business sectors or occupational groups will have different cultures. Payne (1987) stated that different organizational cultures, as they serve to create different psychological environments, influence achievement and affect satisfaction and the degree of psychological strain experienced by individual members.

Various typologies have been suggested as useful means of describing differences in culture between organizations. Hofstede (1980) analysed cultural differences between nationalities and suggested that culture has four dimensions: power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism-collectivism, and masculinity-femininity. According to Cartwright and Cooper (1989) culture can impact on

culture change and on the commitment, job satisfaction and psychological wellbeing of organizational members working in various industries. Their research indicates that individuals working in organizational cultures that are incongruent with their individual cultural preference or values have a greater propensity to leave and are more likely to experience low job satisfaction and psychological ill-health. Furthermore, organizational cultures that place a high degree of constraint on the individual and offer little autonomy are generally experienced by the majority of employees, irrespective of sex, as less satisfying and potentially more stressful.

Gale (1992) suggests that it is meaningful to describe certain professions and industry cultures, like construction, which is demonstrably male in terms of horizontal sex segregation, as “macho” or masculine cultures. According to Harrison (1972) it is a characteristic of power cultures with regards to terms such as static hierarchies, command structures and macho cultures. These power cultures place the highest degree of constraint on individuals compared with other culture types.

A similar study into male-dominated professions in Malaysia by Maimunah (2003) gathered data through in-depth interviews with 20 engineers about their subjective-career experience. Her study shows that in promotion, women respondents perceived that they face some barriers in their career progression. Male engineers have the advantage in terms of informal networking and negotiations regarding who could be promoted or tipped to be appointed to a new post. Furthermore, gender stereotyping formed another barrier for women. Male engineers felt that some areas of engineering, such as mechanical, civil and automotive, are male-dominated, while women are suited to more sedentary functions such as in a laboratory that deals with chemical testing, processes, instrumentation, and design and other jobs dealing with computer applications. Added to all the above, the traditional demand of family responsibilities are seen as career barriers to women who are engineers. This explains the reason why women who built-up their careers in engineering are normally those who stayed single or married late (Catalyst, 1999; Gabor, 1994).

3.6.2 The masculine nature of management

Patriarchy is commonly used to describe the context and process through which men and male dominated institutions promote male supremacy. This can be through both control of access to hierarchical power and characteristics of knowledge claims (Nicolson, 1996, p.22).

Many commentators claim that significant transformations have occurred in terms of women's opportunities and expectations. Some suggest that the end of grand (gendered) narratives, universal (gendered) role models and shifts in (gendered) public and private power and space, signal a new 'social order' whereby the end of masculinity is upon us, with the end of patriarchy and the gender order (Linstead, 2000, p. 1).

However, Wacjman (1998) contends that while the legitimacy of patriarchy has been eroded, it is far from being rendered absolute and the material and institutional structure of patriarchy is still largely intact. According to Cockburn (1991) women cannot escape patriarchy; they can only be liberated through a struggle to change the system and for men likewise, patriarchy is not optional.

Burke and Davidson (1994) argue that managerial and professional women live and work in a larger society that is patriarchal, a society in which men have historically had greater access to power, privilege and wealth than women. In patriarchal organizations dominated by men, the informal rules and masculine discourse of management establish the requirements of conformity to the dominant culture (Ledwith & Colgan, 1996). Patriarchy forms a backdrop within organizations to dominant and traditional forms of management that have developed within a general male-dominated social context, characteristically performed or assumed to be performed, by men (Hearn, 1994).

The model of a successful manager has historically been masculine. The very language of management is resolutely masculine. Organizations are then a crucial

site for the ordering of gender and for the establishment and preservation of male power (Wajcman, 1998). Hearn (1994) maintains that it is generally taken for granted that it is men who are managers, or at least the dominant group, both socially and numerically in management, and so it may be taken for granted that women are in second place in management (Marvin, 1999).

3.6.3 Part-time employment

Growth in part-time work has occurred throughout most of the industrialised market economies, although it has usually not been as extensive as in Malaysia. A study by Markey and Monat (1997) shows that there is rarely any specified proportional representation, that is from part-timers, and without that, full-timers are expected to dominate representative positions because they will be available more often to perform these functions, and if the positions are elective. Attendance at meetings may also be a problem. Most consultative committees meet during “standard” working hours, but if part-timers become members of consultative committees the question arises as to whether their duties will be performed during their own time or during working hours. If they are paid for extra hours, performing these duties, this represents a greater cost for employers, and the part-time employees may still encounter difficulties in participating if they have family commitments outside work, which is the case with many women part-timers. Similar constraints operate with teams, workgroups and quality circles, especially if they are composed of a mixture of full and part-time employees, since these also requires meetings. Markey *et al.*, (2002) cited that their studies confirm Australian survey results for workplaces and employees. Their results offer strong evidence that part-time employees do not share the same level of opportunities for employee participation enjoyed by full-time employees, and have a lower sense of empowerment in the workplace. Women, therefore, do not enjoy the same degree of opportunities for employee participation that men do, mainly because part-time employment is predominantly a female form of labour market activity.

The argument suggests that it is employers who have systematically sought to create 'poor work' for women. Alternatively, it might be argued that this emphasis is not correct: rather women have demanded part-time work to fit with their domestic responsibilities, and employers have simply responded to this demand (Hakim, 1996). Meanwhile, Rubery et al. (1993) suggest that part-time work contributes to gender inequality. In their study they found that part-time jobs were poorly paid in relation to full-time jobs, but when other differences, such as skill levels, between part-time and full-time jobs were taken into account, female full-timers were not paid much more than female part-timers. In terms of pay, the major gap is between men and women, rather than full-time and part-time employment. Their findings also suggests that it is largely in relation to employment benefits and opportunities for promotion, rather than pay or job security, that women's part-time work is inferior to full-time work.

These choices by different types of women, argues Hakim, explain otherwise surprising findings, such as, for example, the fact that part-time workers, who do not enjoy particularly good pay or job security, often say that they are very 'satisfied' with their employment because it allows them to fulfil their domestic priorities. Hakim has described such women as 'grateful slaves' (1991). She argued as follows: that women were less committed to work than men and that their childcare responsibilities were not the main reason for them working part-time. She further argued that part time jobs were not necessarily worse, and at the same time women were less likely to be in stable employment.

These claims contradict much of the existing research on women's work (Agassi 1982; Dex, 1985, Martin & Roberts 1984; Rubery, 1993). This has shown that women too have positive views towards work. As compared to Hakim's analysis, this suggest that women's roles have not really changed, that the majority are still homemakers, and that these women are positively choosing to stay home. Most women are in low paid, low grade jobs, and, according to Hakim, that is precisely what they want.

However, according to German (1996) and Doorewaard et al. (2004), the opposite appears to be true. More women are now going back to work full-time after the birth of children, and according to them these are not simple 'career women' targeted by Hakim. Far more women are obtaining qualifications for work at every level and in every industry with hardly a sign of lack of interest.

On the other hand, elsewhere, Hakim herself provides evidence that there are few gender differences in term of commitment to paid work between women and men who are in paid employment, and that there is little evidence of sex differences in work orientations amongst those who are highly educated and in higher grade jobs (Hakim 1996: 102,103). She states that 'working women's work orientations and behaviour have grown closer to men's (Hakim, 1996:106). At the same time, she argued that a significant number of women are not in the workforce, and because most studies of work orientations exclude them, the similarities between women and men have been overstated.

Rose (2000) found no substantial differences in the levels of work commitment of women who worked part-time and full-time. He also found that levels of work commitment amongst full-time homemakers varied according to their future intentions in relation to work. Rose's analysis, using the 'lottery question' as a measure of work commitment, showed that women would continue to hold paid work, would continue seek it, or would continue wishing to return to it, even if the financial need to do so was removed.

3.6.4 Sex segregation at work

Within manufacturing industries, sex roles appear to be clearly defined. The Low Pay Unit reported, from a study of clothing manufacturing in Leeds, that men had a virtual monopoly of the cutting process, which was considered to be skilled labour and a higher-status job than sewing, although men comprised only 15% of all workers in the industry. Machining, which was much lower paid, was generally carried out by women (Low Pay Unit, 1983). Coyle (1982), similarly, reported that

women in the clothing industry were employed as semi-skilled and unskilled labour in the assembly process, while men occupied a diminishing range of jobs that are accepted as 'men's work' and 'skilled'. Armstrong, (1982) noted in his study of a footwear-manufacturing firm that the moulding and pressing operatives were male, while the machinists, and those who trimmed and packed the footwear once it had been moulded, were female. Westwood (1984) observed that women in the factory where she worked were machinists, pressers, ironers or packers. Men drove vans and serviced and repaired machinery. Likewise, in Griffin's (1982) study, the young women who found employment in clothing manufacturing experienced similar segregation by sex, as did others who went to work as assembly workers in the light engineering industry.

Pollert (1981), in her study of a tobacco plant, noted the division of labour into intensive, heavy-machine processes, and labour-intensive processes. Men operated plant and machinery, while women performed the labour-intensive work: weighing, packing, stripping, and spinning. The rigid division of labour along gender lines carries with it two implications for women workers. The first is that 'men's work is skilled, women's is not.' Higher grading structures for work carried out by men is generally justified on the grounds that the men's work is of a higher skill level. Armstrong (1982) notes that women machinists were not considered to be skilled operatives by the firm's management, while the male operatives and craftsmen were recognized as being skilled or in control of a technical operation. Yet the distinction between skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled is unclear. Armstrong (1982) points out that the women machinists, for example, operated machines which were more complicated than the hand presses operated by the men. In fact, recruitment notices specified skilled machinists. Pollert (1981) describes the work processes performed by women in the tobacco factory, which showed that speed and precision were required, but the work was not recognized as skilled. Manual dexterity, an important attribute required for the job, was merely seen as an innate attribute of females. This was an attitude adopted by other employers, as Griffin (1982) discovered; one of the engineering firms she visited employed young women for monotonous assembly

jobs. The firm's manager felt that this 'fiddly repetitive work' was particularly suited to young women.

At this point, it might be appropriate to consider the concept of skilled work. The question of 'skill' is one that requires some re-appraisal. In general, the concept of 'skill' is regarded as unproblematic: work is either skilled or unskilled, as a matter of fact rather than of opinion. However, as Dex (1985) points out, feminist writers have begun to draw attention to the fact that the meaning of 'skill' is not unequivocal. Moreover, in its everyday sense, it excludes much of women's work from being counted as skilled. More importantly, the meaning of 'skill' is integrally bound up with a gender division of labour.

The perception of certain work being skilled or unskilled therefore acts as a legitimate basis for grading structures of pay differentials. This occurs regardless of whether the work performed by men is actually higher in skill. As Armstrong (1982) points out, some of the 'skill' required for operating machinery was minimal; in fact, a foreman remarked that he "could train a pair of chimpanzees to do this job." The concept of skill, therefore, appears to be used as a means of justifying a system of division of labour where grading structures and pay rates vary between different groups of operatives, and where some tasks, especially labour-intensive ones, are not perceived as being skilled, frequently because they necessitate some ability which is perceived as being a natural female attribute, not in itself a 'skill'.

The second implication following from the division of labour is that frequently the work processes are divided in such a manner as to allow the male workers to have control over the work performed by women. This does not only occur because managers and many supervisors are male. Westwood (1984) explained that, in the sewing factory, technical control over the production process was in the hands of men. All machinery in the department was serviced, repaired and removed by male mechanics. So if the machine broke down, the (female) machinist had to wait for the (male) mechanic to arrive in order to repair it. All of the women worked according to a complicated piecework system whereby a certain amount of work had to be

completed each day in order to earn the basic rate of pay; women therefore suffered loss of production, and thus loss of earnings, while waiting for a machine to be repaired.

Secretarial work is notorious for sex segregation, and differing skill levels are rarely recognized (Griffin, 1982). Typing, for example, is a skill that must be taught over a period of time, and practiced regularly in order to maintain and improve one's proficiency. Yet typing tends to be recognized as a skill, as it involves that traditional 'feminine attribute', manual dexterity. As one secretary pointed out: "I mean, however far we go, we'll never be the bosses, will we? We'll always be the secretaries to the boss" (cited in Griffin, 1982). Another woman, qualified as a book-keeper, obtained a job as a P.A. (Personal Assistant), but found that, despite her qualifications, she was treated just like a servant to the boss, and at times almost like a substitute wife (or mum!).

The choice of factors to be used in a job evaluation scheme can also serve to institutionalise discrimination. For example, Walker and Bower (1982) point out that many schemes use factors that are biased towards the perception of work and men's work, so the selective use of factors can result in women's jobs being placed at the bottom of the grading structures. For example, they suggest that working conditions and physical strength are usually included in schemes covering manual workers; both these factors will appear in jobs performed by men. On the other hand, factors associated with work done by women, for example, manual dexterity and concentration, may not be used as factors at all.

Thus, while the process of job evaluation may appear, on the surface, to be a scientific process, attaching as it does specific values and weights to particular aspects of a job, in fact the process is not at all objective. It permits the incorporation of sex-biased perceptions about job content and the value of aspects of a job. In addition, there is the question of the job description, usually drawn up by a manager or supervisor. While the involvement of a manager or supervisor is important as regards stating what is required of the job, as Walker and Bower (1982) point out,

there is a possibility of bias being introduced at this point also, because of the manager's perceptions of the job, which may be based on gender stereotypes. Therefore, there is a strong possibility that job evaluation schemes, however objective they may be considered to be in theory, in practice serve to reinforce and institutionalize sex stereotypes and gender division of labour. As a result of the extent of job segregation, and the re-grading of work, the further separation of 'skilled' and 'unskilled' work widens.

3.6.5 Promotion opportunities

Promotion is rarely available for women engaged in low-level 'female' jobs, and even where women may begin by performing similar tasks to those carried out by men, promotion seems less likely for women. As Crompton *et al.* (1982) noted, "The young woman entering employment with the organization with GCE qualifications, i.e., not into a 'balkanised' labour market, begins apparently as equal to her young male colleagues. It is the intervention of her socially defined domestic role as a wife and mother which upsets this equal relationship most damagingly and permanently." Whether domestic commitments actually do interfere with the working life of individual women or not, the generalisation is already there, and is used as a justification for the poorer promotion prospects experienced by women.

Crompton *et al.* (1982) did not find quantifiable evidence of discrimination, but it was clear that this had been a factor in the failure of women to obtain promotion, although another contribution was the attitude of the women themselves: those who would like promotion but did not want the added responsibility, or the additional working hours, the divided loyalty between home and workplace, or the need to pass exams. Yet there were others who did want to have their abilities and efforts recognized, but realized that their one disadvantage was biological: "Being a woman doesn't help...they prefer men here, no doubt about it. Because I'm a woman and married they think I'm going to have children" (cited in Crompton *et al.*, 1982).

Griffin (1982) noted similar barriers to advancement for women that served to deter many of her interviewees from moving upwards in their chosen field of white-collar work (Crompton et al., 1982). Similarly, with regard to married women, it is usually assumed that the husband's occupation is of higher importance; therefore, if promotion carries with it a possibility of geographic mobility, women are less likely to be considered. In many cases, the women concerned might well turn down an offer of promotion if it involved moving or travelling.

Crompton et al. (1982) pointed out that women tend to remain 'on the production line' for their working lives. Promotion opportunities seem even less likely, especially for women in manual work. Since work processes are very much segregated into 'male' and 'female', where female work is perceived as 'unskilled' processes, one position frequently held by women is that of supervisor (supervising women, or much younger men).

3.7 Studies from non-western cultures

General perceptions about Asian culture are that it is male-dominated and that there is a lack of access for women. Hutching's (2000, p398) research examining equity in companies operating in Thailand, for example, found that organizations were "not incurring the time and resource costs associated with introducing policies that could potentially help reduce the economic, social and political inequality of women in the nation." Roffey (2002) conducted research on women managers in Filipino management and found that their culture valued collectivism and integrity as opposed to western individualism. In a small-scale survey in the central business area of Manila, industry peers considered women managers to be both strategic managers and effective leaders. Overall, Roffey's (2002) research found that the expectation of women managers in the country is grounded in cultural role expectations and women leaders are associated with values of grace, charm, humility and integrity. Similarly, Andaleeb and Woford's (2004) research on participation in the workplace in Bangladesh presented an organizational climate with a traditional

male–dominance in the organizational setting resulting in adverse effects on participation among women.

3.7.1 Women in the Malaysian labour force

Studies with a specific focus on women have slowly emerged in Malaysia within the last two decades. However, at the early stages they focused on family planning, nutrition and health, and later, concentrated on women factory workers and the rural labour force (Ariffin, 1995).

While monetary factors, for economic reasons, may actually motivate husbands to encourage their wives in their career, a study by Yahya (1991) brought to surface one other crucial point. The majority of husbands are at least at an equal standing with their wives in terms of education qualifications attained. At least 70 per cent of them have a tertiary education, with some 26 per cent from this group possessing post-graduate degrees. There are more post-graduate degrees among women, but the effect is tempered by the salary and occupation of the husbands; the men appear to be better paid than their wives. Fifty-five per cent of husbands earn more than their wives, 6 per cent have the same income, and only 24 per cent of husbands earn less than their wives.

Women in Britain have tended to be located in a narrow range of occupations, notably clerical work, semi-skilled factory work and semi-skilled domestic work (e.g. waitress, barmaid, home help, war orderly); semi-skilled domestic work is likely to be part-time work. The Women and Employment Survey of 1980 revealed that 30 per cent of all working women were in clerical jobs, 10 per cent were in semi-skilled factory work and 11 per cent were in semi-skilled domestic work.

Similarly, in Malaysia, women have also become dominant in clerical work and semi-skilled factory work, services and sales. The Labour Force Surveys of 2000 showed that 17.7 per cent of all working women were in clerical jobs, 22.7 per cent in semi-skilled factory work and 17.6 per cent in service and sales. The situation

was different in 1957 when the male share of employment in these categories was higher; 93 percent of total employment was in the clerical and related workers category, 90 per cent in the sales workers category and 79 per cent in the service workers category. As more women acquired at least a secondary education they could compete with men for employment in these occupational categories. In addition, the growing importance of the manufacturing and service sectors in employment creation since 1980 had changed the nature of tasks associated with these occupations, which required different skills and more feminine traits. Employers were recruiting more women as they were more suitable for these occupations, thus contributing to the increased share of female employment. In 2000, nearly half or 47.5 per cent of all these women employed were concentrated in these occupational categories.

The female labour force continues to be an important component of the labour supply in Malaysia, accounting for 3.17 million or 33.1 per cent of the total labour force in 2000. This is however low compared to the proportion of women who are in the working-age group of 15-64 years, which is 48 per cent. The situation was different in 1957 when the size of the female labour force in Peninsular Malaysia was only 2.04 million or 24.3 per cent of the total labour force. In 1970, women accounted for 32 per cent of the total labour force in Malaysia although 50 per cent of them were in the working-age group. Nevertheless, the participation rate of women has shown an increasing trend during the period 1957–2000 as shown in Table 3.1. The female labour force participation rate (LFPR) for Peninsular Malaysia in 1957 was only 30.8 per cent. In 1970, the LFPR for Malaysia as a whole was 37.2 per cent for women and 79.3 per cent for men. Further increases by 2000 for both women and men to 83.3 per cent for men and 46.7 per cent for women is largely due to the expansion of employment opportunities as well as women's improved educational attainment.

Table 3.1 : Labour Force Participation Rate by Sex, Malaysia, 1957 - 2000

Year	1957	1970	1980	1991	1995	2000
Labour Force Participation Rate (%)						
Male	88.7	79.3	84.8	85.3	84.3	83.3
Female	30.8	37.2	42.2	47.8	44.7	46.7

Source: Census of Population and Housing 1957, 1970, 1980 and 1991; Labour Force Surveys 1995 and 2000.

The share of female employment within the administrative and managerial occupational category also registered a perceptible improvement, rising from 2.0 per cent in 1957 to 20.2 per cent in 2000 (see Table 3.2). The increase is attributed partly to the rise in the employment of female diploma-holders and degree graduates, as the labour force participation rate of women with a tertiary education had been increasing and was 61 per cent in 2000. Among the women in gainful employment in 2000, at least 16 per cent had a tertiary education while 51.6 per cent had completed secondary education. With higher levels of educational attainment, 2.3 per cent of all employed females were holding jobs in the administrative and managerial occupational category, compared to 4.9 per cent of all employed males. It is interesting to note that only 12.5 per cent of the total number of males employed had acquired a tertiary education in 2000. According to Idris and Mohd (2003), the increase in women's participation is due to factors such as education and social factors. There is a significant increase of 60 per cent in the workforce participation of women in the period 1995-2000 (Malaysia, Economic Report, 2001).

Table 3.2: Share of Employment by Gender within Occupational Categories, Malaysia, 1957 – 2000

Occupational Category	1957		1970		1980		2000	
	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)	Males (%)	Females (%)
Professional & Technical	71.8	28.2	66.1	33.9	61.8	38.2	55.4	44.6
Administrative & Managerial	98.0	2.0	96.9	3.1	91.7	8.3	79.8	20.2
Clerical	92.6	7.4	74.7	25.3	56.7	43.3	42.3	57.7
Sales Workers	90.1	9.9	81.8	18.2	75.2	24.8	62.3	37.7
Service Workers	79.2	20.8	68.2	31.8	67.9	32.1	50.5	49.5
Agricultural Workers	66.9	33.1	61.5	38.5	62.6	37.8	73.7	26.3
Production Workers	88.9	11.1	83.4	16.6	78.4	21.6	76.0	24.0
Total	75.5	24.5	67.4	32.6	68.0	32.0	65.3	34.7

In another study on women's participation in the workforce, Ismail and Mohd Nor (2003) discovered that the rise in the standard of living encourages women to work. The education standard of women in Malaysia has risen at least to that of men. More girls go to school and universities in order to prepare themselves for skilled jobs. In 2000, 60% of them enrolled in sciences and 30% in technical subjects (Malaysia 2001). Social factors have tended towards greater independence of women inside and outside the family, which their male counterparts have to reluctantly acknowledge. Better job opportunities and better pay also induce more women into paid jobs. The family income rises and so does their living standard.

In most cases, women represent the main reserve of labour. However, when women regard a salaried job as their source of income, and when married women come to depend on wages to meet the financial commitments of their families, this reserve diminishes (Ismail & Mohd Nor, 2003)). Women remain more responsive to economic fluctuations than men. Likewise, in Malaysia, many of them work in industries that are sensitive to fluctuations in the business cycle, such as consumer

goods, trade and personal services. Thus, the position of married women is particularly vulnerable, as often these women are the first to be cut back when staff is reduced.

Women's contribution to the development of the country (company) is unquestionable, and is a fact recognised by all. However, some of the provisions of the present legislation show obvious discrimination against woman workers, despite the age-old attempts made by various individuals and organization to eliminate it. This is indeed a regrettable state of affairs, considering that Malaysian women contribute significantly to the labour force in this country (Idris, 2001).

Furthermore, it is important in Malaysia to understand the reality within the workplace in relation to gender, given that the Government of Malaysia has aimed to make it into a developed country by the year 2020. In such a mature democratic society there is not only equal opportunity within ethnic groups, but also across gender. This will help Malaysia to become a role model for other developing countries as stated in the third challenge of its 'Vision 2020' (Mohamad, 1991).

3.7.2 The dual role of Malaysian women

Women in Malaysia, as in many other countries, have two roles. In private, they act as wife and mother, while in public, they are employees or self-employed outside their house. In attempting to discharge each of the two roles and to reconcile the contradictions inherent in them, women encounter various problems. Research on the problems faced by women is isolated, sporadic and often not published (Ariffin, 1994). Ariffin suggested, however, that, although the Malaysian woman is better-off than most of her Asian counterparts, she is still far from achieving a position of equality and fulfilment as a human being, all of which is made clear, whether based on the investigation of statistical data, impressionistic surveys, or the examination and analysis of culture values and popular images.

In the present situation, with the rapid process of industrialization in most new nations, this tends to have tremendous impact on women (Hing, 1986). The impact of unprecedented growth in Malaysian's industrialisation has drawn women into the industrial sector, as noted by Hing (1986) in "Impact of Industrialization on the Social Role of Rural Women". However, being ill equipped with education or skills, women workers tend to be concentrated in the lowest rank of urban occupations. For most of these women, employment is merely seen as a response to the financial needs of the family, and not as a means of widening one's social network.

Faced with the difficulties of trying to co-ordinate and balance home-life with work, the women tend to have more marital problems. The strain of having to cope with traditional 'wifely' chores and waged-work can lead to marital discord (Daud, 1980). Daud's study shows that the divorce rate is higher amongst the poor working class families, as contrasted with the more educated and wealthier Malay families in Petaling Jaya.

Notwithstanding all these problems, women have always advocated increased participation in the formal sectors, as well in voluntary organizations. In entering the wage sector, the division of labour based on sex is more than a mere technical division, as seen in section 3.6 of the present chapter, in that it helps enforce relations of domination and subordination, creating structures of discrimination and privilege. For women, it has both domestic and external effects, which are intertwined. The premium placed by society on women's reproductive role has militated against women entering the labour force on an equal footing with men. So when women do work in the wage sector, the majority are distributed among the most poorly paid and static jobs. Thus, women's role in society at large is determined to a large extent by their position in the domestic sphere (Ongkili, 1980).

Throughout their early lives, it is to marriage, and specifically to the role of motherhood within marriage, that the media, education and family expectations direct women. These ideologies have a marital effect. The type of formal education opportunities open to women is limited and orientated to these perspectives. Women

are preferred in jobs needing female 'natural' capacities, such as endurance for tedious, delicate and intricate work. Such an unequal situation arises in part because women's employment is seen as secondary to their role as mother, and in part, because for women it is in fact secondary, at least while they have domestic responsibilities (Hing, 1986). A survey of Malaysian men by Hing (1986) found 93 % preferred their wives to stay at home, the reason being that the children would be neglected. Two-thirds of men and 90 per cent of women themselves thought it 'unnatural' and just 'not right' for men to work in the house while the women went out to earn a living.

3.7.3 Disadvantaging of Malaysian women

Despite gains made by Malaysian women in recent years, they are under-represented in the skilled, high-income earning group. This is, of course, a legacy of the earlier structural conditions of Malaysian society, whereby women were perceived as being responsible for the production of labour, the rearing of children, and the maintenance of the home. Their work was also regarded as 'private labour'.

The exclusion of women from higher levels of society structures renders women essentially powerless over decisions which may crucially affect their lives: legislative change, employment, planning, social welfare, wage bargaining, medical ethics, the content of education, and the practice of religion. According to Jomo and Tan (1985) available data suggests that planning of these basic services without doubt benefits women, nevertheless, in reality it is dubious. More and more, the bureaucracy makes decisions and women have little, if any, control over the direction that planning takes within these organizations. In other words, the implication is that within the bureaucracy, the 'integration of women into development' means providing women with services without involving them as active participants of the development process, or in control of their lives. Similarly, in the case of women in Ireland, Beale (1986) suggests that simply to incorporate women into these structures in greater numbers is not sufficient, as the existing

structures are patriarchal, and the presence of women in such structures does not guarantee any real change in the distribution of power or in decisions that are made.

Another study, on women and political participation, by Wazir (1982) noted that commonly traditional male elites have maintained their power through a multiplicity of new-economic and political roles within the existing government machinery; female leaders continue to be descendants of highly educated or wealthy families from rural areas, or of women who have enjoyed high professional status mainly because they come from such families. Thus, Malay female leaders are the counterparts of Malay male leaders; in many instances, they are spouses of men who are already active in politics and who have ready-made network ties and connections.

Wazir (1982) further comments, "It is logical to assume that since participation of Malay females in politics reflects a closed restrictive circuit of patrons and leaders, the majority of women would continue to function as followers, even if they have the necessary leadership qualities or potential skills of leadership and decision making." The pattern of female leadership has crucial implications for the position of women. As a researcher of Wanita United Malay National Organization (UMNO) observed, "Despite the participation of women in politics, the role of women did not change in essence but rather drew its inspirations and its mode of operation from tradition. The participation of women in politics has neither presupposed nor affected change in their fundamental role" (Manderson, 1980).

Male dominance without doubt exists generally in the society. Consequently, it is the men who decide what is appropriate for women. Men perceive women's vocation in terms of running the households. Some Malaysian researchers blame it on colonial policy practice. Karim and Don (1985) said that under British administration, the system of education that was set up (and which is still used today) emphasized women's nurturing and domestic roles. Because of this, the subjects that girls were taught included sewing and needlework and domestic science. In boys' schools, subjects like woodwork and metalwork were taught. She did admit that these

attitudes towards women's role may well have existed in Malaysian society, but pointed out they were institutionalized and reinforced by the colonial administrators. She argued that the colonial attitudes fostered the notion that women do not have the natural affinity for machines that men have. Consequently, women were not (and still are not) encouraged to develop competence and familiarity with machinery. Similarly, she argued, the Malaysian education system therefore is partly responsible for inculcating attitudes of a distinctive "female model temperament".

Negative attitudes of factory workers in particular arise from the process of unequal trade and production relations (Rohani, 1988). The term 'cheap labour' often carries with it undertones of condemnation of the workers themselves, women in particular, as they are the majority who make up the factory workers' population.

According to Jomo (1986), the low status of women generally stems from their subordination within the family. Although culturally diverse, all the major ethnic groups in Malaysia similarly identify domestic work as the responsibility of the female. It is such gender typing that determines what is deemed suitable for women and, consequently, what roles are to be designated for them within the context of national development. Ramachandran and Bharadwaj (1980) point out that the prevalent ideology that sees the family as a key source of strength and social stability militates against progressive changes in family relations for fear that these may lead to social dislocation and unrest. Hence, planners and policy makers are often at pains to stress that women should not neglect their traditional roles as wives and mothers in their quest for greater social and economic participation. Hence, this made it worse for women; the super enhancing of women's roles by policy that reminds women not to neglect their traditional roles.

It seems as if sexual segregation is here to stay. Similarly, in a study by Hakim (1996), she shares her view on the assumptions of the conventional sexual division of labour: the wife's main task is looking after the home, whether or not there are any children at home. When there are children at home, around half of all husbands believe that their wife should only work if her job fits in with family life; and she

stressed that this view is widespread and does not vary across subgroups. A survey conducted among the highest echelon of women leaders in Malaysia revealed that none of them would have so engaged themselves without explicit approval from their husbands (Wazir, 1982).

In the light of such perceptions, it is not surprising that many of the researchers are responding to policy makers' stereotyping outlook, not to mention these attitudes towards what is considered as appropriate roles of women. For example, Ramachandran and Bharadwaj (1980) proposed that sexual segregation be accepted as "a fact of life" and recommended "the planning methodology should perceive and incorporate the significance of women in their economic roles, in their roles as home-makers and in the interaction between these two roles".

The fundamental fallacy of such conceptions lies in the acceptance of ideologically defined masculine and feminine roles - the sexual division of labour - and the delineation of domestic work, child minding and reproductive labour in general as women's work. They fail to recognize that it is this definition of roles that forms the crux of women's subordination. The burden of domestic work, which women have to bear single-handedly, often forces them to accept discontinuous or part-time work instead of permanent, full-time employment.

In the light of the gender bias argument, it is not surprising that projects in Malaysia intended for the development of women, are frequently ill conceived and poorly organised (Padmini & Idris, 2003). More often than not, they are mere appendages of larger development schemes for men; for example, the Rubber Industry Smallholders Development Authority (RISDA) and Federal Land Development Authority (FELDA). Much smaller scale projects are known as 'one district one industry project', where the main participants are the housewives.

The supplementary nature of these schemes for women means that women's domestic roles continue to be regarded as primary, and there will not be much impetus to relieve women of some of their domestic tasks. It must be emphasized

that greater economic participation of women without concomitant reorganization of domestic work only increases the workload of the already overburdened women. It has been shown that in many societies women already bear a heavier load than men (Krishna, 1982). It should be stated, however, that the impetus for restructuring the sexual division of labour within the family should stem from a concern for the equality of women, rather than to facilitate their exploitation in the labour market.

3.7.4 Choice for Malaysian women

Despite the problems of structural inequalities and oppressive ideologies, there has been a considerable growth of women's organizations. Attitudes among women continue to change more rapidly than the structure in society. Many women are aware of big differences between themselves, their mothers and daughters. Women today are much better educated and more articulate, and want to make choices about how their lives conform to a particular role. The level of educational attainment is an important indicator of the social status of women, because most channels for self-advancement are opened through education. Women constituted 60 per cent of the total university enrolment in 2000 (Malaysian Economic Report, 2001) and the figures have shown some obvious increase over the past years. The corresponding figures were 50 per cent in 1995 (Idris & Mohd, 2003), and 55.5 per cent in 2000 (Malaysian Economic Report, 2001).

There has been a huge improvement of educational standards in Malaysia, where, RM20.1 million has been allocated for the education sector; this represents one quarter of the Malaysian Budget for 2004. RM128.6 million has been allocated for women and development in the small-scale industrial sector (Malaysian Economic Report, 2001).

Lie and Lund (1994), among exceptional findings about working women in Malaysia, point out that young women just like men, would prefer to stay in a job. As wages and general satisfaction increase, work takes a prominent place in their

lives and is not easily given up. According to the authors, most of these girls have more schooling than men and may be job-oriented from the beginning.

Nevertheless, Padmini and Idris (2003) noted that there was hardly any improvement of women's status in Malaysia. The status of women would continuously remain the same even if there were a lack of focus on the subject. With the present development, it should encourage women to be more active in participation at the workplace. However, many other factors affecting women also need to be addressed. As explained in Adler and Izraeli (1996), favourable economic and demographic conditions, supportive government policies, changing family roles and emerging support system have all lead to an increased proportion of women in management. Nevertheless, despite the positive outlook, it is still plausible for women to remain where they are, if stereotypical perceptions of women's abilities and qualifications, and traditional attitudes towards women's family roles still exist.

3.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has addressed the importance of recognising gender in the workplace. Most research on the nature and effects of Employee involvement (EI) still remains homogeneous with respect to distinguishing between men and women. The chapter highlighted some potential differences between men and women and considered the nature of gender bias, particularly with respect to the orientations of women towards work. Some literature, particularly Hakim, suggests a more patriarchal view of women's orientations towards work, maintaining that women are secondary to men. Others recognise women as agents: mothers, spouses, daughters. Since the study is conducted in non-western cultures and countries, gender culture and cross-cultural related issues were also highlighted. The disadvantages faced by women were summarised, including the nature of male-dominated organization, the masculine nature of organizations, the segregation of women into part-time employment, and their disadvantage at work and with regard to promotion opportunities. As the present research focus is EI in Malaysia, some Asian and particularly Malaysian research on women was considered.

From this discussion, one may conclude that it is critical to study whether differences, similarities or issues such as gender blindness are present in Malaysian organizations. Statistical data on Malaysia presented in the chapter suggested an increase in the education of girls and an increase in total female participation in the workforce, but it remains to be seen if women's involvement in participation schemes is similar or different to that of men and what attitude toward women and gender is encouraging or preventing this happening in Malaysian organizations. This is one of the major issues of interest with respect to EI and gender for this particular piece of research.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1 Introduction

This chapter provides an explanation of the research methodology and design of the study to understand how participation, management support and gender issues affect the relationship between employee involvement (EI) and organizational commitment in Malaysia. Research design, according to David and Sutton (2004) refers to a framework or plan that guides the collection and analysis of data. Although there is no one method that can be claimed better than others in designing research, as Churchill (1998) suggests, attempts have been made in this study to ensure that the required information for fulfilling the aims of the present study can be accomplished.

The research aim in this thesis is to understand the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment particularly with respect to gender within the Malaysian context. This general aim was approached through two specific research objectives:

Objective One: To investigate the relationship between attitudes to employee involvement and organizational commitment in a Malaysian context, considering the effects of gender, participation in EI schemes, and management support as potential moderators.

Objective Two: To explore the reasons for gender differences or similarities in a Malaysian context with respect to employee involvement. This lead to an examination of perceptions of women's commitment, and and their experience in the workplace.

A two-stage research design was developed to examine these two objectives. Objective One, or the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment, and the effects of moderator variables (i.e., gender, participation in EI schemes, and management support for EI) on this relationship,

was examined through quantitative research. The three largest utility companies in Malaysia were chosen as the research settings for this study and a survey of their employees was considered sufficient for being able to generalize findings with respect to the effects of EI practices for employees in such companies and companies with similar backgrounds and with similar characteristics. This is important as the research findings can be of particular relevance to policy applications, whereby, companies can utilize the findings to gain an understanding into the issues of employee involvement, its effects on organizational commitment and the role of gender and management support.

In order to explore the role of gender further, however, as expressed in Objective Two, a second qualitative stage was required. Understanding gender is a complex phenomenon and a questionnaire as a tool is not rigorous enough to capture those complexities. Bryman (2005) commented that a 'scientific' approach in the form of surveys and experiments fails to take into account the differences between people and objects, but qualitative research, such as interviews, is more appropriate as it enables the researcher to get closer to the people under investigation.

Thus, to capture richer data with respect to possible gender differences in orientation and barriers in access to and participation in EI in the three research case studies, the researcher used management interviews and non-management focus groups. Zelditch (1994) and others, mention that an interview enables respondents to explore complex feelings and develop a rapport that the interviewer uses to draw out opinion. Interviews provide richness and enable the researcher to probe for a deeper understanding of, for example, whether women's interest or disinterest in EI is because of their choices or other constraints beyond their control. Hare-Mustin and Marecek (1988) suggest that representation of gender should be evaluated in the social setting it takes place. This evaluation is better achieved using interviews, as the researcher has a chance to capture details of the context within which the social construction is developed (David & Sutton, 2004). According to Morgan and Krueger (1988), using focus groups is the best method to use when the researcher needs to probe gender issues amongst lower level workers. This is because by the

nature of their job they are limited in their power and influence and focus groups are suitable for probing into their views in a non-threatening and permissive environment.

The research, nevertheless, was framed primarily within a positivist paradigm and used qualitative methods to add meaning to the findings. Combining both quantitative and qualitative methodology, also has been shown to be especially appropriate in studies conducted in the area of EI (Marchington et al., 1994; Ramsay et al., 1990; Rudestam & Newton, 1992). For example, Marchington used a range of methods to collect data, which included questionnaires to employees and interviews with managers in understanding the meaning of participation. Ramsay et al. (1990) adopted a multi-dimensional approach using surveys, case studies and interviews in studying employee behaviour and attitudes on employee share ownership. Therefore, in order to answer the present research questions on EI and gender, mixed methods were thought to be appropriate and complimentary.

4.2 Blending quantitative and qualitative research

Quantitative and qualitative research differ in many ways, but they can be complimentary (Newman, 2003). Qualitative researchers emphasize firsthand knowledge of the research setting as it ensures that their research accurately reflects the evidence (Becker, 1970). Qualitative research seeks to stress how social experience (for example, in the area of feminism and culture) is created and given meaning (Nelson et al., 1999). According to Denzin and Lincoln (2005) qualitative research involves an interpretive, naturalistic approach, attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of meanings and hoping to get a better understanding of the subject.

In contrast, quantitative studies emphasize the measurement and analysis of causal relationship between variables, where a theory is an interrelated set of constructs or variables that presents a systematic view of phenomena (Babbie, 1979; Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973). Quantitative researchers stress objectivity. The techniques

employed derive from the natural sciences and are based on the premise that the phenomenon can be explained by objective and factual measures that help to keep data free from researchers' bias. Quantitative research addresses the issue of integrity by relying on an objective technology, such as precise statements, standard techniques, numerical measures, statistics and replication (Bryman, 1993; Collin, 1984) and allowing the generalization of findings.

However, both quantitative and qualitative researchers are concerned with capturing the individual's point of view, and some contribution to society that is worth telling, and a variety of forms of media and means are used to communicate their findings (Becker, 1986). Blending quantitative and qualitative provides a more rigorous method of research. According to Carlton (1997) researchers need to tackle important problems according to prevailing standards of rigour, and these methods on an "armoury of techniques".

The combination of the several methods is sometimes called triangulation, and this can apply to the combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection (Denzin, 1989). Triangulation was first used in the social sciences as a metaphor describing a form of multiple operationalism or convergent validation (Campbell, 1956; Campbell & Fiske, 1959). In these cases, triangulation was used largely to describe multiple data-collection technologies designed to measure a single concept or construct (data triangulation). However, Denzin (1978, p.292) introduced an additional metaphor, line of action, which characterises the use of multiple data-collection technologies, multiple theories, multiple researchers, multiple methodologies, or combinations of these four categories of research activities. For many researchers, triangulation is restricted to the use of multiple data-gathering techniques (usually three) to investigate the same phenomenon. This is interpreted as a means of mutual confirmation of measures and validation of findings (Mitchell, 1986). Fielding and Fielding (1986, p.31) specifically addressed this aspect of triangulation. They suggest that the important feature of triangulation is not a simple combination of different kinds of data but the attempt to relate them so as to counteract the threats to validity identified in each.

More recently, Yin (1994) argued that, triangulation is the process in which three or more complementary methodological techniques are applied to study a single research problem. Triangulation allows the researchers to interpret the same information from different methodological angles. It helps to uncover gaps in data gathered from questionnaires, to allow the researcher to detect errors of interpretation, omission, and commission when analyzing data.

However, the use of multiple methods, or triangulation, reflects an attempt to secure an in-depth understanding of the phenomenon in question. According to Flick (2002), triangulation is not a tool or a strategy of validation, but an alternative to validation (p. 227). The combination of multiple methodological practices is best understood as a strategy that adds rigor, breadth, complexity, richness, and depth to any inquiry (Flick, 2002, p. 299).

In this study, the approach adopted was mixed method rather than adopting all the features of triangulation discussed above. The three methods adopted - (1) survey/questionnaires, (2) interview, and (3) focus groups – provided multiple measures of the same phenomena. The aim was to minimize the weaknesses of both qualitative and quantitative approaches by counteracting the threats to validity identified in each method (Fielding & Fielding, 1986). At the same time, as the multiple methods mutually confirm and validate findings, it provided more lines of insight, and a richer and in-depth understanding of the same phenomenon (Mitchell, 1986; Webb et al., 1981).

4.3 Research design

This study used a cross-sectional research design. Such a design has been widely employed in employee involvement and organizational commitment studies. According to Bryman (1988), this design enables observations to be made, at a single point of time, in order to discover the degrees to which variables relate to each other. The utilization of this in the present study entails the following advantages: a

truer picture of the phenomenon or the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment as it exists, without having to create 'superficial' changes to the environment; the possibility of obtaining more information on the relationships between employee involvement, organizational commitment and its antecedents or correlates at the same point of time; and the possibility of generating generalizations about employee involvement or its relationship with other variables from the data collected from the sample of study.

As opposed to longitudinal study design, cross-sectional research design, however, lacks the ability to effectively interpret causal processes of a phenomenon that occur over time. It is not possible for instance to employ the former to apply a cause-effect interpretation for the relationship involving employee involvement and its correlates. Should this basis alone be considered in the choice of research design, then it would appear more appropriate to employ longitudinal design to the present study. However with due consideration of the economic and time constraints associated with this research, it was not possible to undertake such a design.

4.3.1 Selection of companies

Babbie (1992) outlined five steps in the practice of sampling: defining the population, identifying the population, identifying the sample frame, determining sample size, selecting a sampling procedure and selecting the sample. An account of what has been adopted in the present study with respect to each of these steps, is discussed here.

The sampling frame contained public utility companies in Malaysia, of which there are four. Three companies from these four were chosen on the basis that they comply with the researcher's requirements; that is, companies adopting the EI programmes of both quality circle and employee share ownership schemes. One of those companies deals in electricity, another deals in gas, and the last, with telecommunications. These companies are similar in the respect that all of them are large companies which were once government organizations but privatized between

the recession from 1992-1996. The workforce of each of these companies is about 20,000 employees - 20,000 in the electricity supply company, 19,000 in the gas company and 22,000 in the telecommunications company - with a majority of 98 per cent Malays in all three organizations together. This represents a typical government organization. Despite Malaysia being a multiracial country with Malays the majority, then Chinese and the minority being the Indians, organization such as these are more likely to be made up of Malays. These companies have another common characteristic in that they are technical companies with most staff having engineering backgrounds. Also, the majority of management is dominated by men, and women occupy the lowest ranks of the hierarchy.

At the time the research was conducted, quality circles were widely adopted by both private and public companies, and spread all over Malaysia. Nevertheless, employee share ownership was a new phenomenon then. Only government owned public companies that were undergoing the process of privatization had issued shares to their employees. At that time of the research, only these three utility companies were privatised from originally government owned public utility companies, and were the only companies that issued employee share ownership. With that criterion, they met the researcher requirements for a research site which adopted both financial and task participation, namely employee share ownership and team working/quality circles. These companies are situated in the Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory, the capital of the country. The research was conducted within a three months period, between November 1996 and January 1997.

4.3.2 Company accessibility

With large organizations, it is important for a researcher to demonstrate competence and legitimacy within that organization network. To obtain a measure of legitimacy, the researcher obtained references and recommendations from various key personnel prior to approaching the organizations. Permission for the investigation required a formal letter, which was an introduction letter from the researcher's supervisor and the researcher's personal introduction letter, both printed on the official stationery of

the Human Resource Management Department, University of Strathclyde. With those endorsements, the individual companies were contacted.

The researcher first established a network of contacts within these companies from the UK before leaving for fieldwork in Malaysia. Contacts were made initially by sending the introduction letter. Secondly, the researcher made many phone calls to follow-up on the companies' human resource senior managers. The reason that the follow-ups were made from a distance was because the researcher was studying in the UK. The request was warmly welcomed by the HR senior managers, and access to the company was permitted.

Similarly, during visits, the companies were very cooperative in responding to the requests for access to their employees. Nevertheless, at times the researcher needed to do some networking within the company in order to gain access to some senior management officials. The formal letter of introduction from the supervisor had been useful in getting access to some of these high ranking officials. At the end of the survey period, the researcher was allowed access to interview the lower level employees, the middle managers, the top senior management, including the chief executive officer (CEO) and some directors. The researcher was always treated cordially and arrangements were very good for the overall three-month period of fieldwork with the companies. This warmly welcome could be because of it is not very often for these companies to receive researchers, especially from Phd students. Or perhaps they are supportive of PhD students doing their research. Most of the companies showed their interest in the study, and one of the companies requested that a summary presentation be made to them upon its completion.

4.3.3 Population

The target population of the study is the Malaysian workers from the three biggest utility companies in Malaysia that had introduced financial and task-based (quality circle) employee involvement schemes to their employees. It was the intention of the researcher to include all levels of staff, the senior managers and middle managers, and workers. As the study investigated gender issues, the researcher tried to reach both female and male workers. The researcher was, by this means, able to explore the likelihood that different levels and genders within the organization were concerned with different issues, or viewed issues in a different manner.

4.3.4 Sampling design

In modern sampling theory, two categories of sampling design are available: probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In probability sampling, each sampling unit has an equal, non-zero chance of being included in the sample. In the non-probability sampling, there is no way of specifying the probability of each unit's inclusion in the sample, and there is no assurance that every unit has the same chance of being included (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996).

For this study, within each company systematic random sampling was conducted. The researcher requested the list of salary records of the employees, as this record consisted of all employee names of the company and that record was used as a sampling frame. Human resource managers of these companies used this sampling frame to select respondents using systematic random sampling. A total of 1280 questionnaires were personally delivered by the researcher to the heads of human resource management in each organization. The population of each was around 20,000 employees, in total the population for this study was 60,000 employees. In order to obtain 10 per cent of this population, the researcher would have needed to send out at least 6,000 questionnaires. This number was too big in term of costs and time for the company to manage. In fact, the human resources managers did request a manageable number of questionnaires only. The final breakdown was 400

questionnaires for the gas company, 430 questionnaires for the electrical company and 450 questionnaires for the telecommunications company.

The researcher decided that the respondents should consist of random samples of managerial and non-managerial employees, such as senior managers, middle managers and workers. For reasons of time and cost limitations, it was thought impractical however for the researcher to opt to include all employees in the companies. Managerial levels were included specially to understand the reasons for implementing EI; for similar reasons, both managerial and non-managerial level employees were included, to investigate their attitudes towards EI schemes introduced by the companies. Similarly, the researcher decided to include both managerial and non-managerial employees to study gender differences or similarities in attitudes towards EI and in relation to organizational commitment. Nevertheless, the researcher emphasized including women at the managerial level as the researcher realized that women tend to be fewer in number as they get higher on the companies' hierarchical levels.

4.4 The quantitative phase

According to Parasuraman (1986) quantitative research is a type of conclusive research, descriptive and causal/experimental, which involves large representative samples and fairly structured data collection procedures. Since this study seeks to generalize the results from three Malaysian companies to others with similar characteristics (e.g., large, non-western, former public sector organizations), a quantitative approach was adopted. The research sample for the survey research had to be representative, controllable and sufficiently large for statistical generalization. Moreover, any questionnaire measure used to produce a quantitative estimate of the key constructs being measured had to be reliable (Babbie 1990; Fink 1995). This section addresses these concerns.

4.4.1 Survey questionnaire

A survey questionnaire is a method of collecting information by putting a set of formulated questions in a predetermined sequence in a structured questionnaire to a sample of individuals drawn so as to be representative of a defined population (Cox, 1979). The survey method allows for the use of statistical techniques in which the characteristics of the population could be estimated from a small representative sample group. Survey data are collected using a set of questions directed to respondents. A well-designed questionnaire is therefore necessary for obtaining accurate and useful data. In studying employee involvement, various options with regard to the level of analysis are possible - the industry, organization or individual firm, and the individual. In this study, the individual employee was the unit of analysis.

4.4.2 Development of the questionnaire

The measures used in the questionnaire were mostly adopted and modified from several established sources. The measure for organizational commitment was adapted from the Organizational Commitment Questionnaire (OCQ) (Porter, Mowday & Steers, 1974). This has been commonly used in empirical studies, by both Porter, Mowday and Steer's (1974) and more recently by Allen and Meyer (1990). Hackett, Bycio and Hausdorf (1994) and Allen and Meyer (1990) have offered statistical evidence supporting the belief that the OCQ represents a unidimensionally affective-based measure of organizational commitment.

For measuring job satisfaction, the items developed by Warr, Cook and Wall (1979) were used. Nine items were used to represent satisfaction with extrinsic and intrinsic job factors (refer to questionnaires in Appendix II, page 8: no.1,2,3. Page 9: no. 13,14,15,16,17,18) For 'intention to stay', which represents the consequence of organizational commitment in this study, three items were developed by Keller (1984) (refer to questionnaires in Appendix II, page 8: no. 7,8, page9: no.9). For measures of reasons for working, the item developed by Martin and Roberts (1984)

was used (Appendix II, page 12 Q.11 except: 'to be respected' and 'make social contribution by the work you do').

With regard to attitudes towards EI most of the measures included in the questionnaire were taken from existing sources, although, some were developed by the researcher because not all items in the available literature matched with the focus of this study. Measures taken from the literature were as follows. For quality circles, two items on 'greater say over workplace issues' from Kochan et al, (1985) (Appendix II, page 3: no.2,4); four items on 'increased satisfaction and commitment' from Mohrman, et al., (1986) (Appendix II, page 3: no. 3,12,14,15); five items on 'lack of management support' from Collard and Dale (1989); (Appendix II, page 2: no. 5, 9, 10) and one item on 'team approached' from Guzzo and Waters (1982) were used (Appendix II, page 3: no. 1).

It was also necessary to consider the meaning of EI for employees in their specific organizational context. This necessitates some consideration of orientations to work (Brown, 1992; Daniel, 1969; Gerth and Mills, 1991; Goldthorpe et al., 1968; Silverman, 1970), which enables the study to focus on the reasons employees give for working, as well as their perceptions of the organization for which they work and management attitudes to EI. Robertson and Wilkinson (1991, p.410) also suggested that, in evaluating the meaning of EI, greater attention needs to be paid to aspects of structure and process elsewhere in the workplace. Through this approach, the results gained from attitude surveys can be related to studies of employee involvement and participation, and can aid our understanding of its potential impact on employee commitment to organization.

From Goldthorpe et al. (1968), Daniel (1969), Silverman (1970) Gerth and Mills, (1991) and Brown (1992), several reasons for management's interest in EI were identified, for example, getting people to work harder, improving efficiency, and enhancing employee satisfaction. Items were then developed to reflect these themes and included in the questions measuring employee perceptions of why management adopt EI. The items were: 'it makes people work harder', 'it gets the employees

involved in management decision making', 'it promotes better communication between employee and management', and 'it gets the employee to feel committed to the company' (Appendix II, page 5: no. 7,9,11,12).

For employee share ownership, items drawn from the literature were as follows: one item on 'them and us' from Kelly and Kelly (1991); one item on 'join for investment appeal' from French (1987); one item on 'greater involvement in decision making' from Long (1981) and French (1960); three items on 'satisfaction and commitment' from Poole and Jenkins (1990), French (1987), French and Rosenstein, (1984), Tannenbaum et al (1984) and Long (1978a,b, 1980), and one item on 'improve the degree of communication with management' from Poole and Jenkins (1990) (Appendix II, page 5: 2,5,6,9,10,11).

The items developed for the purposes of this study regarding attitudes to EI were as follows:

For participants in QCs: 'I dislike managers taking all decisions', 'I feel a duty to serve the programme', 'I can't sit back if by pushing I can achieve something', 'a chance to get something done', 'my manager is open to employee suggestions,' 'I can on my supervisor as a circle leader,' 'I have confidence in my section when it comes to getting the job done', 'I gain more knowledge,' 'I like the idea of getting chance to compete among the other QC teams' (Appendix II, page: 3)

For non-participants in QCs: this list mostly contained the oppositely worded questions of the above except: 'I can't attend meetings outside normal hours', 'I don't normally have much to contribute, 'I haven't had the time yet to join', 'it doesn't actually do anything useful', 'It is just another management fad, it won't last,' 'it takes too much work', 'I feel managers should do the decisions,' 'only men are listen to in QC,' only women are listened to in the QC.' (Appendix II, page: 2: no. 3,4,6,7,8,12).

For participants in ESOS: 'I think it is something for nothing', 'it is too good an opportunity to be missed', 'it makes my work more challenging' (Appendix II, Page: 7-8: no.3,11,12).

For non-participants in ESOS: 'I plan to leave the company soon', 'I will be in a retirement plan soon', 'I don't understand how it works', 'I prefer to invest outside the company', 'only men are encouraged to join', only women are encouraged to join' (Appendix II, Page: 6-7: no.1,2,5,6,11,12)

These items were combined to create several scales representing attitudes towards EI; the reason for QC non-members not participating; the reasons for QC members participating; the reasons for ESOS non-members not participating; and the reasons for ESOS members participating (see Appendix II,, Page: 2,3,6,7). An attitudinal scale is an instrument that should be robust enough to produce information or data eligible to be statistically interpreted. In determining the type of scales to use in this study, the level of measurement and desired statistical tools were considered. There are three major types of attitude scales according to Kerlinger (1964), namely, summated rating scales, equal to appearing interval scales, and cumulative scales. A summated rating scale is also known as a Likert-type scale, which is a set of attitude items, all of which are considered of approximately equal attitude value (Kerlinger, 1964). A Likert-type scale was considered appropriate for this study, as the scales allow for the intensity of attitude expression - respondents can merely agree or they can strongly agree or disagree. The main advantages of this Likert-type scale are that it has greater variance results, and it has five or even up to seven responses. Hence, the Likert-type scale was used extensively in this research.

For this Likert-type scale, each item in the questionnaire is scored arbitrarily on 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), so that the greater the score, the higher the agreement. For example, a scale of employees' opinion about quality circles that has 15 items is scored on 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). When the item scores are summed (by adding the numerals assigned to responses), the sum represents a meaning that can be ascribed to an opinion/attitude towards quality circles. The higher the summated score, the more positive or negative (depending on how the questions are structured) is the opinion/attitude towards quality circles. Once the level of measurement has been established, appropriate statistical tools can then be applied to produce data useful for drawing meaningful conclusions.

The final questionnaire used in this study consisted of 87 items. These items represented the constructs shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Questionnaire constructs and items

Abbreviation	Item descriptions	Source	Items
QCRNM	Reasons for QC non-members not participating	Mohrman, et al. (1986) Kochan et al. (1985)	12
QCRMM	Reasons for QC members participating	Guzzom and Waters (1982)	12
FSOPN	Opinion about ESOS	Kelly and Kelly (1991) Poole and Jenkins (1990)	11
FSRNM	Reasons for ESOS non-members not participating	Long (1981) French (1987)	11
FSRMM	Reasons for ESOS members participating		11
PCEFFSCH	Views about effects of financial scheme		10
OC	Organizational commitment	Porter, Mowday and Steers (1974) Keller (1984)	10
JS	Job satisfaction	Warr et al. (1979)	10
LACKSUPP	Lack of management support	Collard and Dale (1989)	3
RESWORK	Reasons for working	Martin & Roberts (1984)	6

4.4.3 Translation of the questionnaire

Survey questionnaires were conducted in English and Bahasa Malaysia (Malaysian language) (see Appendix II). The original English version questionnaire was used for the managerial level, whereas the Bahasa Malaysia version was used for the workers' level. The questionnaire had to be translated to the Malaysian language for

the workers because their educational standard was too low to enable them to understand good English. Hence, they felt more comfortable answering in the Malaysian language.

Before it could be administered to employees in Malaysia, it had to be translated into Bahasa Malaysia. For this purpose, a university lecturer who is competent in both languages translated the questionnaire into Bahasa Malaysia. The translated version was then given to another lecturer to back-translate into English. Comparison was made between the back-translated and the original versions of the questionnaire. Some corrections were made on those items that did not represent the original English version when back-translated.

4.4.4 Pilot testing of the questionnaire

A pre-test generally refers to testing one or more aspects of the study design, which includes the sample design, the research instrument, the data collection, data processing, and data analysis. Pilot studies are important, as they are considered a miniature sample of the entire study design. Ideally, conducting a pilot study that involved all aspects of study design mentioned above would be the best thing to do in survey research. However, practically, this is seldom accomplished simply because of constraints, particularly with respect to time and economic considerations. Similar limitations characterized this research. The pre-test stage in this study thus only encompassed the testing of the research instrument, i.e., the questionnaire.

According to Moser and Kalton (1996), there are several purposes of pre-testing the research instrument. It avoids investing a large sum of money and effort, only to realize later that it fails to accomplish the research objectives, due to unforeseen error. It also allows the detection of any bugs or weaknesses, whether in its format, phrasing of the item measures, or administration of field work.

Nevertheless, the most significant aspect of pre-testing the questionnaires is what Bryman (1993) and Nachmias and Nachmias (1997) mentioned concerning the question of validity. Although construct validity subsumes all categories of validity, face validity is a primary concern in pre-tests of questionnaires as this is about whether the participant understands the questionnaires. It addresses why respondents should be motivated to respond to it, what motivates them to do so, and generally whether participants think it is an appropriate questionnaire. Face validity is about how to measure what one intended to measure, whether the researcher believes that the instrument is appropriate (Bryman, 1993; Nachmias & Nachmias, 1997).

Obviously this approach of establishing validity is highly judgmental and prone to bias, as there is no precise procedure to evaluate the instrument (Nachmias & Nachmias, 1997) and especially when the concept itself is complex and fuzzy (Bryman, 1993). Content validity is related to face validity. It is however, also a subjective measure and does not constitute a scientific measure of survey instrument accuracy. It is rather an organized assessment of survey contents by a reviewer who has some knowledge of the subject matter. Despite the weakness mentioned, this type of validity serves as a good foundation for establishing further supporting strength in an instrument's validity.

In this present research, pre-tests of the questionnaires were conducted twice: firstly, with the initial prepared English language version, and secondly, with the translated Malay language version. The pre-test of the English language version of the questionnaire was carried out on a sample of 25 Malaysian students of both men and women who were pursuing postgraduate degrees in the United Kingdom. In Malaysia, these students work in Malaysian companies. These students were chosen from those who only had some exposure to at least one of the employee involvement schemes being studied in Malaysia, such as quality circles. The Malaysian Language version of the questionnaire was carried out on some of the lecturers in the National University of Malaysia.

A number of meaningful comments resulting from this pre-test helped the researcher to improve on the questionnaire. These included suggestions related to not only the clarity of the questions posed, but more important than this, certain aspects of the employee involvement schemes. As an example, one suggestion was to include time as one of the main constraints for employees to participate in quality circles in Malaysia. The researcher then added this point into the questionnaire. The need for specifying a realistic return time also was realised. The pilot respondents were told they were given a two week period, but only seven respondents met this time frame, and the rest took almost three weeks.

4.4.5 Administration of the survey

The questionnaires were personally delivered by hand by the researcher to the human resource (HR) manager of each company. All these companies kept a confidential record of the names of their employees. The researcher could only advise the HR manager of each company to choose at random the name of employees to complete the questionnaire from the list of names available. They were requested to distribute the questionnaires by pre-selecting respondent using systematic random sampling for the employees in their respective organizations. To ensure the survey questions were answered, the purpose of the study was explained, and at the same time employees were assured of complete confidentiality. This message was included in a personal introduction letter. The introduction letters were written in Malaysian national language, which is Bahasa Malaysia.

The breakdown of questionnaires sent out in each company was as follows; 450 to the telecommunication company, 430 to the electric company and 400 to the gas and petroleum company. A period of three weeks was given to return the questionnaires, because results from the pilot test suggested that 2 weeks was not long enough. The respondents were asked to complete the questionnaires on their own, take them home, fill them out, and then mail their questionnaire to the researcher's address in Malaysia. A self-addressed stamped envelope was included with the questionnaire to encourage respondents to return the questionnaires.

4.4.6 Reliability and validity

The essential characteristic of measurement that must be considered to establish whether an instrument is appropriate or useful is reliability. To have a reliable measure of an attitude, the instrument developed should be able to withstand replication when used in other contexts, and be able to produce consistently similar results. As Bailey (1982) put it, reliability is a matter of whether a particular technique applied repeatedly to the same object would yield the same result each time. According to Nunnally (1968), repeatability of measurement is a fundamental necessity in all areas of science. A good estimate of the reliability coefficient is important, as it provides a useful index of the extent to which results of the instrument can be trusted in basic research (Nunnally, 1968).

Some error is involved in any type of measurement. This error can be in the form of systematic bias. Reliability is assessed by determining the proportion of systematic variation in a scale. This is done by determining the association between scores obtained from different administrations of the scale. To the extent to which measurement error is slight, a measure or an instrument is said to be reliable. In statistical terms, the concept of reliability refers to the degree of accuracy of the estimate of the true score in a population of objects to be measured.

Cronbach's coefficient alpha is a test of the consistency of respondents' responses to all the items in a measure. Cronbach alpha coefficients are based on item-total correlations. To the degree that items are independent measures of the same concept, they will be correlated with one another (Sekaran, 1984). According to Rust and Golombok (1989), Cronbach's mathematical model is very well developed, so that it is able to make its increased conceptual clarity and practical precision available to psychometrics. It is suggested that internal consistency reliability coefficients 0.70 or above are acceptable for basic studies for basic investigations of a human judgment type (Nunnally, 1978; Rust & Golombok, 1989).

Table 4.2 summarizes the reliability coefficients for the scales used in this study. The results show that almost all the scales employed in the present work have Cronbach alphas above .70, with the majority above .80. Only opinion about the employee share ownership scheme needs to be further improved. Therefore, it can be stated with confidence that the reliability of the measures is acceptable in the present work.

Table 4.2 Reliability analysis of questionnaire scales (Cronbach alpha coefficients)

Abbreviation	Item descriptions	Cronbach alpha
QCRNM	Reasons for QC non-members not participating	0.88
QCRMM	Reasons for QC members participating	0.87
FSOPN	Opinion about ESOS	0.64
FSRNM	Reasons for ESOS non-members not participating	0.75
FSRMM	Reasons for ESOS members participating	0.85
PCEFFSCH	Views about effects of financial scheme	0.83
OC	Organizational commitment	0.80
JS	Job satisfaction	0.77

Validity refers to the extent to which the indicators accurately measure what they are supposed to measure (Hair et al., 1995). In order to secure the validity of the questionnaire, four experts in the area of quality circles from the National University of Malaysia were involved in the pilot studies of this research, pre-test the research instrument i.e., the questionnaire. The experts were chosen from human resource managers of four companies that were recently, at that point of time, engaged in an employee share ownership scheme.

Although factor analysis is necessary to establish whether the scales are measuring distinct constructs, the researcher chose not to conduct a factor analysis due to the small samples (less than 300). Tabachnick and Fidell (1996) mentioned that correlation coefficients tend to be less reliable when estimated from small samples, with sample sizes of 300 considered good, 500 very good and 1000 as excellent

(p.640). In the present study, the data available was from 271 responses, an overall response rate of 21 per cent. The response profile was acceptable despite the response rate not being high. It was representative of the population of the three companies' employees; that is, it represented adequately the three companies, all levels of hierarchy in the company from top management, to middle management and the workers' levels as well as both genders. This representativeness is shown by the sample profile of the respondents in Chapter 5, Table 5.1. The distribution of men and women is comparable for age, marital status, and years of tenure (between 10-20 years). Regarding the non-response rate, this was most likely to occur at the workers level and for women even though women were a larger proportion of the total population. Plausibly, this may have been because the workers' level in Malaysia is not familiar with answering academic surveys of this kind. Women also made up a larger proportion of the workers level. The researcher could only carry out a limited number of follow-ups with the HR department of each company due to time constraints.

4.5 The qualitative phase

Interviews with management provided rich descriptions that enabled a deeper understanding of the issues surrounding gender variations in employee attitudes towards employee involvement schemes. Interviews may result in more accurate and honest responses since the interviewer can explain and clarify both the purpose of the research and individual questions. Moreover, the interviewer can follow up on incomplete and unclear responses by asking additional probing questions.

While interviews were the method used to research middle management, focus groups were used at the workers level, especially for women employees. The researcher anticipated that interviews would not generate much open discussions among Malaysian lower level workers, as it is not very common for this level of employee to be exposed to interviews by researchers. The non-threatening and permissive environment of a focus group is especially useful when working with categories of people who have historically had limited power or influence (Morgan

& Krueger, 1988). A focus group is a small group of participants selected from a well-defined target population, mainly to discuss a set of pre-selected topics under the guidance of a moderator. It is also considered complementary to sample surveys, a method designed in advance to yield qualitative research perspectives on the topics under investigation (Morgan & Krueger, 1993; Wolff et al., 1993). According to Wolff et al. (1993), incorporating focus groups into an integrated research design with a major sample survey component can enhance the quality of the resulting analysis and the confidence that can be placed in it. Van Maanen (1982) also suggested that a qualitative approach could produce a description of a given reality and the truths it contains and Rudestam (1992) suggested that qualitative methods are especially useful for the generation of categories of understanding human phenomena and the investigation of the interpretation and meaning that people give to events they experience.

4.5.1 Trust and sensitivity

Employee involvement is a scheme of common tools being practiced in large organizations. As such, the issues surrounding the subject can be highly sensitive. As an example, issues surrounding employee share ownership schemes (ESOS) in one of the companies under study had caused some difficulty in accessing some information. While this study was conducted the company had been receiving some generally unwarranted, negative media publicity on their employee share ownership scheme. The impact was that it caused trouble for some managers, so they had difficulty in sharing information regarding the ESOP with the researcher.

It was therefore essential to use some of the techniques described by Lee (1993) when dealing with behaviour, attitudes and beliefs, which the respondents may not wish to admit. In relation to this study, as an example, the respondents were shown, at the beginning of the interview, some descriptions which were phrased in a way that precluded any individual being identified. As this research was especially sensitive when drawing out attitudes on gender, the creation of trust, confidentiality and integrity were the major factors leading to the researcher's success in generating

useful responses giving assurances about confidentiality and the academic nature of the research, as well as building rapport by creating awareness of the interviewer's knowledge of the schemes, issues surrounding them, as well as gender issues. During the interviews, the respondents' views were not challenged and no hint was given of the researcher's view, but clarification was asked for where necessary, along with examples or supporting evidence. As Hosseini and Armacost (1993) have demonstrated, the very presence of a researcher can lead to intensified social desirability effects or non-response, so the interviewer had to tread a fine line between neutrality and naivety.

4.5.2 Interviews with management levels

The interviews addressed several common gender themes in the workplace, namely, perceptions regarding women in the workplace (whether women are the same or different from men), women bosses, women and commitment, and women and their experience in the workplace (differential treatment, stereotyping, reasons for working, and domesticity). They also allowed an analysis of the extent to which organizational variables and individual variables moderate employee involvement outcomes, as well as perceived superiors' support. In this study, interviews were conducted with the managers, from middle management right up to the Chief Executive Officer.

The objectives of the interviews with top management and management levels were to gain an in-depth understanding of theories, attitudes and assertions. They are what Eden et al. (1983) have said are an understanding of causalities. Fontaine (1989) prefers the description perception, being the process by which we define, give meaning to, interpret or make sense of the world around us. Easterby-Smith et al. (1993) described a situation in which people view the world not as real, but as a social construct. To investigate that world, researchers must attempt to understand the meaning people put into this world rather than to measure the perceived 'reality'. For that reason, the researcher adopted personal or face-to-face interviews (Dutka & Frankel, 1993). This type of interview is able to obtain valid data on attitudes, likes

and dislikes, and personal satisfaction. Before the interviews began, the questions were tested for clarity on several doctoral students. Contact with interviewees was first established through a variety of channels, including telephone calls, letters, personal or third-party introductions.

Another reason for using the interview is that if the initial response to a question is not clear to the interviewer, the answer can be probed. The interviewer can use explanations or examples if the question is not clear to the respondent. There is comfort to the respondent to know that he/she is being asked the same set of questions as other people of the same or different gender, religion or race. For example, during one interview, the researcher obtained a detailed description from two women managers of how they have managed and been managed over a number of years, have been exposed to sexual harassment, and have felt disadvantaged at their so-called senior level, at the highest level in the organization hierarchy. The researcher is culturally sensitive or at least culturally aware, being a Malaysian herself, as well as having mixed with many different types and levels of people in her working life. She has developed a substantial ability to build rapport with a wide variety of individuals, as may be seen from some of the answers given in the results section of this thesis.

Nevertheless, the researcher is aware that socially desirable responses might affect behaviour, as an interviewer might affect the interviewee. As an example, the researcher being a woman interviewing men in male-dominated companies might itself elicit socially desirable responses, especially as a female Muslim researcher. It was anticipated that being a woman and 'covered' could be a problem when interviewing a male, especially as gender was part of the study. This is because being 'covered' might be seen from a man's perspective as someone who has her own values on the subject of gender. Surprisingly, in the researcher's experience, she did not face much difficulty; instead she received supportive responses. It is proposed that the researcher portrayed herself in such a way that gained the respect and confidence of the respondents. Communication skill, knowing the subject area well, as well as appropriate dress, helped to gain the confidence of the respondents.

It could also be argued that Malaysian working life, especially at middle managerial levels and above, is open enough to being neutral in responding to women researchers, partly because most managers are graduates. It is also possible that because the majority of the working population of these companies was Malay (98 per cent), and all Malays are Muslim, that it was not out of place for the researcher to be a Muslim woman.

The interview schedule was semi-structured. In total, there were 37 interview participants, 27 of whom were male and 10 female, in the three utility organizations in Malaysia. The study takes into account several vantage points, including managers' motivation in introducing the employee involvement schemes, managers' attitudes towards employee involvement schemes, and whether there are gender differences or similarities. The interviewees included the Chief Executive Officer, the Head of Human Resource Management, the senior managers, and middle managers.

Dutka and Frankel (1993) have demonstrated that occasionally bias is introduced by respondents who fear that others in power will become aware of their attitudes. Hence steps were taken by the interviewer to ensure that all respondents felt assured of confidentiality. This was done by getting employees' permission to record the discussion before the start of each session and confidentiality was explained and stressed at all times. No personal information was taken from employees participating in the discussions, therefore there was no way in which respondents could be identified. The result was that, on balance, the interviews yielded robust and rich information, which Campbell et al. (1982) contend is the role of research data gathering.

The researcher used a tape recorder. There were no objections from employees participating in the discussions to its use. Most respondents felt comfortable when this was suggested, with the exception of two cases, where both were managers retiring from their present posts. In these cases, notes were taken on paper, and were transcribed in full to a word processor. The transcription was done on the day of the

interview. The note-taking was intended to be an accurate record of the words used rather than to summarize the meaning of the answer. This was to minimize potential bias in interpretation. The interview was semi-structured and was designed to add richness and in-depth coverage of the same phenomenon; to provide more insight into the research objectives, especially issues pertaining to gender. The interview was in a way a semi-formal guided conversation, where the researcher/interviewer sets the general parameters for responses, constraining as well as provoking answers that are germane to the researcher's interest. The pertinence of what is discussed is partly defined by the research topic, where interview questions were designed in such a way that most of the questions were taken from the main questionnaires, and partly by the substantive horizons of the ongoing interview exchange. Hence, despite the researcher trying to obtain objective information from the interviewee, the researcher realized that her subject lies in the construction of meaning behind the respondent.

4.5.3 Focus groups with non-management levels

Similarly to the interview, focus groups played an important role in the qualitative phase of this study, particularly for women at lower levels of the organization. Focus groups are especially important as the study also focuses on issues surrounding both participation and non-participation on employee involvement schemes. It was intended to analyze the extent to which organizational variables and individual variables moderate employee involvement outcomes, and perceived superiors' support was chosen as one of the variables in this study.

The reason focus groups were used was because the researcher had anticipated that interviews would not generate much open discussion among the lower level workers. Malaysian lower level workers are seldom interviewed by researchers, hence, they would not find themselves at ease with such a "formal" method, and they would be more responsive within a group interview, where they would feel more "informal" and more comfortable having company in the discussion. According to Newman (2003) focus groups are applicable for the workers level where focus groups can

open-up their views, as it takes place in a group setting and people feel that they are informally 'interviewed'. The focus group, therefore, was best suited for probing gender issues at lower levels. The focus group interview is especially useful when working with categories of people who have historically had limited power and influence, when conducted in a non-threatening and permissive environment (Morgan & Krueger, 1988). Similarly, in this study, the researcher found it was useful working with the lower level women, who are labeled in feminist literature as the disadvantaged group. According to Murdoch and Pratt (1993) and Cloke and Little (1997), it has been emphasized by feminist researchers that the voice of women in lower levels tends to be neglected in social research, so the use of a focus group is the method that could help them be heard.

In total, 39 respondents, 21 female and 18 male, participated in the focus groups in three different organizations. Some groups consisted of only four members while the largest had five participants. These sizes are within the range recommended in the literature (Greenbaum, 1998) with the variation reflecting women's availability. Focus groups ran for two hours, which reflected the need to balance having sufficient time for discussion of issues against moderator and participant fatigue.

In selecting the participants, the researcher focused on women or men who had demonstrated some willingness to participate in a discussion of employee involvement schemes, and this could include both participants and non-participants. The human resource staff provided assistance in locating suitable and available women and men. The researcher decided to have mixed sex groups in each focus group to avoid any feeling of suspicion among the respondents that the researcher was trying to 'fish' about gender issues that could have a negative impact on the harmony of the company. Nevertheless, due to the department composition, one of the groups was composed of male technicians only as there was no woman available, and another comprised women clerks only as no men were available.

Similar to the interview, steps were taken by the interviewer to ensure that all respondents felt assured of confidentiality. Permission to record the discussion using

tape recorder before the start of each session and confidentiality was explained and stressed at all times. Socio-demographic information was not taken from the focus groups, therefore there was no way in which respondents could be identified. The researcher also used a tape recorder. There were no objections from employees participating in the discussions to its use.

One limitation observed by the researcher while conducting the focus group was that discussions amongst employees who knew each other could potentially impede the degree of freedom that employees felt in expressing their views. As an example, in one of the group sessions, one of the workers was concerned that some disclosure to a higher level might occur from the members of the focus group. To avoid such a problem, especially when working with sensitive issues, the researcher had made plans to both encourage appropriate disclosures and discourage disclosures beyond the legitimate aims of the research. Nevertheless, beyond the researcher's expectation, in most of the focus groups, the researcher found that employees readily talked about a wide range of personal and emotional topics. The researcher did observe that women only and men only groups tended to talk more in depth about the opposite sex. Women showed concern about authoritarian managerial style from their male superiors and men talked about their disapproval of women technicians or engineers. Nevertheless, these views also persisted in mixed groups as well, except that these views were expressed in more detail in single sex groups. Another noticeable feature from the focus groups was that age was not a barrier for respondents to participate. The age of participants ranged from a junior clerk in their early twenties to a senior clerk in their forties. It appeared that the junior could speak freely of their opinions in the presence of senior peers. Furthermore, the issues raised and concerns were similar across ages.

In the researcher's experience, the focus groups enabled the researcher to find out as much as possible about participants' experiences and feelings in relation to the research subject. Morgan (1988) mentioned that the ideal focus group would be one in which the initial question caught the interest of the participants who would then go on to deal with the topic exactly as the researcher would have wished, without

intervention. Nevertheless, to avoid conformity, the researcher always strived to create an open and permissive atmosphere, in which each person felt free to share her or his point of view. At the same time, the researcher always stressed that she wanted to hear about a range of different experiences and feelings, and more and more questions were being used to probe the topic of discussion, for a subsequent point of view. The researcher also showed a genuine interest in learning as much as possible about their experiences and feelings; in general, conformity was seldom a problem. Another potential problem was that it would be very difficult to determine the extent of such bias in this situation, and for the sake of the analysis, the assumption must be that employees were being open and honest. As mentioned, the use of both quantitative and qualitative instruments should serve as further checks in detecting bias.

The focus group is often cited as an advantageous method for saving time and resources (Krueger, 1988; Stewart & Shamdasani, 1990). The researcher's experience was that this is not necessarily the case. It can be time consuming, as in the process of conducting the initial groups; huge personal resources were demanded of the researcher, drawing people in, keeping the discussion flowing and on track, building relations between the members, and the researcher as well as among group members. This time and attention, however, were not without reward, for both researcher and participants.

Among the obvious rewards of the focus groups that came about from this study are that focus group involvement can make what is invisible regarding women's reasons for not participating in employee involvement schemes, visible, and the illustration exemplifies how focus group participation caused women to make connections between their own individual experiences and the experiences of others. Even with the mixed group of female and male workers, they were able to discuss their attitudes towards EI without much difficulty. In fact, male and female opinions about women managers were in conformity; both male and female workers suggested that men make better managers than woman. As mentioned by Kitzinger and Farquhar

(1999), the focus group method is that group process which can help to explore and clarify views in ways that would be less easily accessible in a one-to-one interview.

Again, similar to the interview, it is a semi-formal guided conversation, the purpose being to add richness and depth with regard to the research topic. The discussions were within the parameter of survey questions, with more emphasis on gender issues. The discussions were recorded and data transcribed and then analyzed using conventional techniques. The researcher acted as a moderator, who prompted and probed discussions.

To ensure that the focus group was productive, the researcher ensured that distractions from work were kept to a minimum by requesting a proper venue. Most of the time, focus group discussions were conducted in meeting rooms with refreshments served. In order to enable full participation, the researcher encouraged quiet participants, discouraged talkative ones, and was aware of sensitive or ethical issues. Overall, the researcher experienced personal closeness among and with respondents. The 'naturalism' of the discussions was observed with jokes, arguing, teasing, and challenges. This contributed to the researcher's own observations, and enabled the construction of meaning behind the respondents' answers, which were made-up of facts, reflections, opinions and other traces of experience.

4.6 Limitations of the study

The researcher was aware that as in some other parts of the world, it is not just the words that are important, but also the meaning behind them. Malaysia is a 'high context' culture, in which meaning is strongly influenced by intonation, posture, and expression, as well as timing and the people involved. In such a society, language contains many subtleties that have to be understood by those working within them. The researcher had to be aware of this and draw out meaning through empathy and rapport as well as careful questioning. There are also conventions concerning questions and meanings - for example, one must approach each question in a polite way, in a certain manner of voice or general approach, and at the same time, one

must also understand what issues are considered sensitive. For sensitive issues, it is best to use indirect questions rather than direct, especially when they come from a woman. The researcher was also aware, from the Hofstede (1980) studies, that in a desire to be helpful, the respondents might feel a cultural need to be hospitable and give views that would not offend, even at the expense of truth.

Another potential problem that may occur in the focus group, highlighted by social psychologists working with group decision-making, is conformity (Morgan & Krueger, 1997). Having a clear understanding of the type of groups that one is working with, however, makes a difference. As a focus group is unlike any other kind of group, focus groups almost never push members to make decisions or reach a consensus. The issue of conformity did in some instances emerge during the focus group interviews, with the tendency for one outspoken respondent from the group to dominate. The researcher recognized symptoms of conformity; for example, other group members remained silent if they disagreed with an issue. The researcher has to be on alert to recognize the presence of a domineering respondent in the group. This was addressed by encouraging the rest of the group members to re-evaluate their opinions and then delimiting the domineering ones. In doing this, the researcher still managed to explore the richness of data from all respondents on various issues explored.

The respondents' current emotional state also can influence his or her expression of opinions, attitudes and beliefs. One of the interviewer's skills is to identify current emotion, as emotions can sometimes lead subjects beyond the parameter of research objectives or data required. As an example, in asking about the prospects of women with regard to promotions (in women focus groups only), emotions ranged from not seeing any future of any involvement, to losing faith in ever being recognized in a male dominated department, and ending with much crying. In this situation, the researcher again needed to recognize the 'inappropriateness' of the situation and to be able to decide when to call the interview to an end. This is because no useful data could be gathered beyond that point, as compared to the richness of data already recognized just before the crying took place. Another example from a male interview

where emotions were overpowering was a result of conflicts within the management team. In these situations, the researcher must not only be able to decide about the usefulness of the data to be gathered, but also what is ethical to listen to.

4.7 Chapter summary

Several important aspects of research design and methodology have been discussed in this chapter regarding the empirical study to understand the relationship between EI, organizational commitment and gender in a Malaysian context. The chapter described the cross-sectional research design involving all levels of staff, women and men at the top-level management, senior managers, middle managers, and workers in the three largest utility companies in Malaysia. The chapter justifies the use of mixed methods, to conduct both exploratory as well as confirmatory research. This approach was based on management interviews, non-management focus groups and an employee questionnaire. The chapter also described the determination of the population, sample, sample size, and pilot testing of the survey instrument. Further data collection procedures and issues involving the interviews and focus groups were also discussed. Finally, the potential limitations of the study were presented.

CHAPTER FIVE

QUANTITATIVE DATA ANALYSIS

5.1 Introduction

This is the quantitative analysis chapter addressing Objective One which was to investigate the relationship between employee attitudes towards employee involvement and employee organizational commitment. The chapter begins by outlining the research questions and hypotheses to be tested by the quantitative analysis. The hypotheses were specifically constructed to test the relationship between employee involvement (EI) and organizational commitment and examine the effects of the other independent variables, namely, gender, EI participants versus non-participants and perceived supervisor support. These variables were reviewed in Chapters Two and Three, and here a case is developed for each hypothesis addressing these relationships.

The current chapter also summarises the sample profile, describes the analytical strategy, and presents the results for each of the hypothesis tests relating to Objective One. The general profile of respondents based on gender differences is illustrated. Results of t-tests then follow, to show a comparison of men and women's attitudes towards employee involvement (EI) schemes and in other work-related attitudes (job satisfaction, organizational commitment, attitude towards management and attitudes towards women and work). The rest of the chapter reports the results of the remaining hypothesis tests.

5.2 Development of hypotheses

The general research aim of the thesis is to understand the relationship between EI and organizational commitment and the effects of gender, degree of participation, and management support within a Malaysian context. Two research objectives were identified:

Objective One: To investigate whether there is a relationship between employee attitudes towards employee involvement and employee commitment.

Objective Two: To explore the reasons for gender differences or similarities in a Malaysian context with respect to employee involvement.

As explained in Chapter Four on research methodology, Objective One was addressed through quantitative analysis, and hence a hypotheses testing approach, whereas the second objective, was addressed using the qualitative methods of interview and focus groups. Five hypotheses were derived to examine Objective One:

H1. There are differences between men and women in (a) attitudes towards EI (b) organizational commitment (c) job satisfaction (d) general attitudes towards management and (e) attitudes towards women and work.

H2. Amongst EI participants (both for ESOS and quality circles), there is a positive relationship between favourable attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment.

H3. Amongst EI non-participants (both for ESOS and quality circles),
(a) attitudes towards EI will be less favourable than those of participants
(b) there will still be a positive relationship between these attitudes and organizational commitment.

H4. Amongst EI participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.

H5. Amongst EI non-participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have favorable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two showed the importance and notable features of EI, and the strong links between EI and organizational commitment, yet many authors also have raised concerns over its real effects and outcomes and its limitation. This was the reason for investigating the relationship between EI and organizational commitment, one of the main expected employee outcomes of EI programmes, in the present study.

Moreover, in common with management theory, gender issues have not been a central concern in EI literature (see Chapter Three). This thesis aimed to reconcile the gap by testing for differences between the attitudes of men and women towards EI programmes and in their general work-related attitudes. In the present study, the attitudes examined were organizational commitment, job satisfaction and attitudes towards management. The goal of Hypothesis 1, therefore, was to examine whether there were any gender differences in workplaces attitudes, particularly with respect to how men and women react to EI initiatives. Further exploration of why differences may or may not exist was the focus of the qualitative analysis for Objective Two presented in the next chapter, Chapter Six.

It was expected that different results would be found for participants and non-participants of EI schemes. For example, in the case of employee share ownership, there were several studies conducted on attitudes of employees towards the scheme. One of the benefits of ESOS is 'the reduction of them and us attitudes' (Kelly & Kelly, 1991:25), which became the 'selling' idea of ESOS from management to employees. By reducing 'them and us' attitudes, the gap between management and employee was lessened and management/employee conflicts reduced (Keller, 2002). Studies have shown mixed results, however, with some showing fewer 'them and us' attitudes among participants of the share schemes (Bell & Hanson, 1984; Hammer & Stern, 1980; Long, 1978a,b; Long, 1980), and others showing no improvement over time in 'them and us' attitudes following the introduction of employee financial schemes (Griffin, 1988; Long, 1982; Wall et al., 1986). Studies also show no attitude differences between participants and non-participants in employee involvement schemes (Baddon et al., 1989; Poole & Jenkins, 1990; Russel et al., 1979); yet others

show only a small number of participants in employee financial schemes reporting a sense of ownership or equality (Dunn et al., 1990; Klein & Rosen, 1986; Kruse, 1984); and other studies report mixed results (Bradley & Hill, 1983; Dewe et al., 1988; Forgarty & White, 1988).

Thus, in developing Hypothesis 2 and Hypothesis 3, to examine the relationships between EI and organizational commitment, the researcher aimed to investigate both participants and non-participants of the EI schemes. The focus was on the effects of participating or not for both quality circles and employee ownership schemes.

With regard to the emphasis on management style (Hypotheses 4 and 5), studies that highlight problems and failure in the implementation of EI programmes, suggest culture to be the probable cause. Literature demonstrates that most EI failures can be attributed to attitudinal problems with either employees or middle managers (Frazer & Dale, 1986) or more generally problems related to organizational culture (Cunningham & Hyman, 1999; Snape, et al., 1995), especially the lack of a climate of trust and confidence and established formal mechanisms for successful implementation. Managers appear to give insufficient priority to 'softer' people management issues and the skills necessary to foster a culture of high commitment and motivation among staff.

An important factor influencing respondents participating in EI programmes, therefore, is likely to be the democratic style of management. Transformational leadership, perceived organizational support for participative decision-making and meeting expectations of employee were also found to be significantly related to trust in leaders (Dirk & Ferrin, 2002). Thus, an increasing body of literature focuses on management inadequacies as a source of failure in EI initiatives. This provides further reason to examine its operation, particularly with respect to the cross-cultural validity of these claims in a Malaysian cultural context. This present research, would like to understand whether the perceived support or lack of support from managers towards the schemes will affect the attitudes of employees towards EI schemes and the feeling of being committed to the organization.

Each of these hypotheses, although they have been the focus of many other studies conducted on western samples of men and women, was examined for a Malaysian population. Chapters Two and Three highlighted the problem with drawing inferences about non-western management practice from primarily western-based studies. Within the Malaysian context, with competitive pressure on the private sector, many different schemes and principles of managerial efficiency, such as EI, are being practiced. Most of these schemes are being imported from western countries. Thus, a further intention of testing these hypotheses was to understand whether similar results as those found in western literature can be observed or whether Malaysia and in particular Malaysian women, reflect issues particular to a non-western culture.

5.3 Sample profile

Responses from 271 employees in three Malaysian utility companies (125 women and 146 men) are analysed in this chapter. The sample profile of the respondents (described in Table 5.1) covered level in organization, age, years of tenure, levels of education, marital status, number of dependents and salary scale of the employees. As shown in Table 5.1, the sample covered all levels of employees, most of the respondents being from worker (153) and middle management levels (95); there were 23 senior management level respondents. Table 5.1 also indicates some variations between genders. Each of these variables is discussed further below.

Table 5.1 Sample profile of respondents by gender

	Men %	Women %
Organizational levels:		
Senior	8.9	7.8
Middle	40.7	28.4
Worker	50.4	63.8
Age :		
Below 45 years	91.1	90.1
46-54	8.9	9.1
55	0	0.8
Years of tenure:		
Less than 10 years	22.0	38.3
10-20 years	60.0	50.5
Above 20 years	18.0	11.2
Levels of education:		
GCE (SRP)	13.2	0
O Level (SPM)	32.6	51.4
College Diploma	0	44.9
Degree	39.6	0
Post-graduate	14.6	3.7
Marital status:		
Married	89.7	81.7
Single Parents	8.2	3.3
Single	4.1	15.0
Number of dependants (under age 16):		
Fewer than 3	14.9	39.0
Between 3 and 5	66.7	50.0
Between 6 and 8	17.0	10.0
Between 9 and 12	1.4	1.0
Salary scale: per month		
RM215-RM1,704	36.6	68.0
RM1,710-RM3,000	35.3	26.0
Above RM3,000	28.1	6.0

Organizational level

The job levels of the 271 respondents were as follows: for the 146 male respondents, senior managers 8.9%, middle managers 40.7% and workers 50.4%. For the 125 female respondents, senior managers 7.8%, middle managers 28.4% and workers 63.8%. In general, the ratio of women respondents to men tends to decrease as the organizational level rises. The criterion for including higher organizational levels was considered necessary in order to explore attitudes and behaviour according to the extent of the individuals' investment in the scheme, as this differs according to

the seniority and position in the company; for example, senior managers in the higher hierarchical levels received more shares than those in the lower and less senior levels. Most of the participants in quality circles came from the workers' level, which included most of the women respondents from clerical and secretarial jobs, and men from technical jobs.

Age

The sample can be described as consisting mainly of individuals in their mid-life and in their early and middle career. 91.1 % of the total 271 respondents were below 45 years of age, 8.5% age between 46-54; and only 0.4% respondents were at retirement age of 55. It was also found that 50% of the total respondents were below 37 years, indicating that the sample was comprised of young respondents. For variations between men and women, ages below 45 between men (91.1% from 146 male respondents) and women (90.1% from 125 female respondents) are almost similar, but 26.9% women as compared to 13.3% men belong to the younger group, below age 30.

Tenure

From the 271 total respondents, around one third (30%) reported less than 10 years of tenure, around 15% of the respondents indicated tenure above 20 years, whereas most of the respondents, 55%, reported 10-20 years of tenure. From 125 female respondents, around one third (38.3%) of them as compared to 22% men (from 146 male respondents) reported less than 10 years of tenure. More men (18%) than women (11.2%) indicated tenure above 20 years, whereas most of the respondents, 50.5% of women and 60% of men, lie in between 10 to 20 years of tenure. In general, women show a shorter tenure than men.

Education

In educational attainment, generally the greatest percentage of lower level respondents was at O-level or equivalent (SPM level in Malaysia), 51.4% women (from 125 female respondents) and 32.6% men (from 146 male respondents) although men started even at a level lower than that, 13.2% at GCE-level or

equivalent (SRP in Malaysia). Generally, the higher level for women was until college diploma level (44.9%) and a degree for men (39.6%). 3.7% women and 14.6% of men respondents were at post- graduate level.

Marital status

From the total number of 271 respondents, most of the respondents (87%) were married, 6% single parent, and 7 % single. From 146 male respondents, 87% of them were married, while 81% of 125 women respondents were married. A higher percentage of women, 15% of women respondents, than 4.1% of male respondents, reported being single.

Dependants

From the total 271 respondents, 24.9% of those who were married reported having fewer than 3 dependants (under age 16); 59.8% having between 3 and 5; 14.1% having 6 and 8; and the minimum of 1.2% having between 9 and 12 dependants. In the differences in percentage of married respondents having different numbers of dependants, more women (39% out of 125 women respondents) than men (14.9% out of 146 respondents) reported having under 2 dependants; most of them, 66.7% men and 50% women, reported between 3 and 5; 17% men and 10% women reported between 6 and 8; 1% of women reported having 9 dependants; and 1.4% of men reported between 9 and 12 dependants.

Salary distribution

The salary distribution of the respondents was as follows. From the total 271 respondents, the salary of the majority of respondents (50.9%) was from RM215 to RM 1,704 per month. From 125 female respondents, the majority of them (68%) and 36.6% of men (from 146 male respondents) had a salary from RM215 to RM1, 704. In fact, for 13% of women, their salary falls below RM900 (equivalent to £130 Sterling), as compared to 2.4% of men; 26% of women and 35.3% of men had a salary between RM1, 710, and RM3, 000, and the salary of 6% of women and 28.1% of men salary was above RM3,000. Again, in general, the ratio of women

respondents tends to decrease as the salary increases, and the majority of the women were at the lower end of the scale, while the majority of men were at the upper end.

Racial make-up

Most respondents (91.3%) were Malays, the minority were Chinese (5.1%), Indian (2%), and of other origins (1.6%).

Table 5.2 presents the mean scores for each of these demographic differences by gender. The results of t-tests for the differences between the means are also given in Table 5.2. All demographic differences were significant at least at the 95% level of confidence, except for job level. Age, education and tenure were significant at the 99% level of confidence.

Table 5.2 Comparison of mean scores of demographic variables, by gender

	Women		Men		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Age	35.79	7.1	37.95	6.04	-2.59 ^b
Education	3.1	1.38	3.6	1.95	-2.28 ^b
Dependants	3.11	1.97	4.09	1.88	-3.92 ^a
Tenure	13.5	8.23	15.2	6.68	-2.05 ^b
Job	1.44	.64	1.59	.65	-1.70
Basic salary	1729	1686	2563	1617	-3.80 ^a

Notes. ^a p < .05, ^b p < .001 **Coding:** Education: (British educational equivalents) 1. GCE level, 2. O level, 3. A level, 4. College diploma level, 5. University level. Job: 1. non-executive, 2 executive, 3 senior-executive

5.4 Overview of analytical strategy

The unit of analysis in the quantitative phase of the study was the individual employee. The statistical techniques employed to analyze the data were t-test, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The t-test was used to test differences between male and female respondents with regard to participation in employee involvement schemes.

The main statistical procedure used in the analysis was regression analysis. The reason for using regression analysis is because the nature of the research is

understanding a relationship between X and Y (where X is attitudes to EI and Y is organizational commitment). According to Pedhazur (1997), the “main emphasis is on understanding phenomena” (p.196), where the regression analysis is utilized for “prediction”, that is when the relationship is derived from a research question pertaining to a relationship from collection of variables, (Xs), which “make sense” and potentially interpretable as construct. The stepwise procedure was used along with the forcible entry procedure in the regression analysis.

5.4.1 Multiple regression analysis

Multiple regression analysis was used by investigating the patterns of relationships between demographic variables and employee attitudes towards employee involvement schemes with organizational commitment (OC). Regression analysis is a statistical technique that is utilized to investigate the relationship between two or more variables. The emphasis is on the strength of the relationship between the variables. Basically, it determines the degree to which one variable can be predicted from the other. The relationship is directly related to predictability, i.e., the greater the relationship, the greater the predictability (Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989).

Here, a variable of interest, the dependent variable (Y), is related to one or more independent or predictor variables (Xs). The objective of regression analysis is to build a regression model or a prediction equation relating the dependent variable to one or more independent variables. The model can then be used to describe, predict and control the variable of interest on the basis of the independent variables.

The construction of a simple linear regression model usually starts with the specification of the dependent variable and the independent variable. This can be represented by the following general form of regression equation:

$$Y = a + b_1x_1 + b_2x_2 + \dots + b_ix_i$$

where

Y = dependent variable

x_1, x_2, x_i = independent variables

a = the Y - intercept, represents value of Y when x 's = 0

b_1, b_2, b_i = regression coefficients , i.e. slope of regression line

Multiple regression analysis can be conducted by three different methods (Cohen, 1983). First, in the standard regression procedure, all independent variables are assumed to be of equal importance and are entered into the regression equation simultaneously. Second, in the hierarchical regression procedure, independent variables are added to the regression equation in an order pre-determined by the researcher. Finally, in the stepwise regression procedure, independent variables are entered one by one on the basis of some pre-determined statistical criterion.

The choice of a regression procedure depends upon the objective of the analysis. The hierarchical approach is suitable when the researcher has theoretical expectations of causal ordering. The stepwise technique is suitable when the researcher wishes to reduce a large number of variables to a smaller set for some later analysis (Cohen, 1982). In the present study, it was not possible to identify a causal path amongst the independent variables, and since all independent variables were of immediate and potentially equal interest, the regression technique was used.

5.4.2 Assumptions of multiple regression analysis

Techniques of multiple regression analysis and its associated significance tests are based on a number of assumptions (Hair et al., 1995), which are the following:

1. Normality of Distribution

It is assumed that the scores of dependent variable (Y) are normally distributed at each value of independent variable (X). Kim and Kohout (1975) point out, however, that if the sample size is large (as was the case in the present study), this assumption may be relaxed.

2. Linearity

It is assumed that each of the independent variables has a linear relationship with the dependent variable. Linearity can be examined by looking at the scatter diagrams of relationships between each independent variable and dependent variable. In the present study, the scatter diagrams of the relationships between attitudes towards employee involvement schemes and organizational commitment appear to exhibit linear relationships with the dependent variables.

3. Independence

The individual values of the dependent variable are statistically independent of each other, that is, its observations are in no way influenced by other observations. The assumption could be satisfied in the present study because the respondents were individually asked to indicate their responses on the commitment measures, without collaborating with other respondents.

4. Metric measurement

It is assumed that all variables in the regression equation are measured on metric scales. This assumption can always be met by the transformation of non-metric measures to interval scales through the application of dummy variables. In the present research, all the categorical variables (gender, ethnic origin, and marital status) used in the regression analyses were re-coded into dummy variables, thus satisfying the requirement of metric measurement.

5.4.3 Tests of significance in regression analysis

There are several tests of significance that could be applied to the results of multiple regression analysis. Two of the most common tests are discussed here:

1. Test of R^2 coefficient

An important component of any statistical procedure or coefficient of determination which constructs models from data is determining how well the model fits. R^2 is a

measure commonly used for evaluating the goodness of fit of a regression equation. It indicates the portion of the variance of the dependent variable that is explained by the joint effect of the independent variables. If there is a perfect linear relationship between the dependent and the independent variables, R^2 equals 1. If there is no relationship between the dependent and independent variables, R^2 is 0. R^2 can also be interpreted like an ordinary coefficient of correlation, except that values range from 0 to 1, whereas r ranges from -1 +1. This study mostly works with R^2 , because its interpretation is unambiguous (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973).

A significant F ratio indicates that the increment in R^2 is statistically significant (Kerlinger & Pedzahur, 1973). The significance of the regression equation is then assessed by subjecting R^2 to hypothesis testing procedures (null hypothesis that $R^2 = 0$), using the following F ratio:

$$F = (R^2 / k) / ((1-R^2) / N-k-1)$$

where

N = number of cases

K = number of independent variables in equation

Degrees of freedom are: k and (N-k-1)

For example, if the F ratio is significant, it can be interpreted that the independent variables contribute significantly to the variance of the dependent variable. and for R^2 , since the R^2 tends to be an optimistic estimate of how well the model fits the population, adjusted R^2 is usually used to correct the R^2 so that it reflects more closely the goodness of fit of the model in the population (Norusis, 1990). The adjusted R^2 is given by:

$$\text{Adjusted } R^2, R_a^2 = R^2 - (k(1-R^2)) / (N-k-1)$$

2. Test of Regression Coefficients

If the overall null hypothesis is rejected, one or more population partial regression coefficients have a value different from zero. To determine which specific

coefficients are non-zero, additional tests are necessary. Testing for the significance of the regression coefficients (b's) can be done in a manner similar to that in the bivariate case, by using t-tests (Aaker et al., 1995). The significance of the partial regression coefficient is tested using the following equation:

$$t = b / S_b$$

which has a t-distribution with $n-k-1$ degrees of freedom, and where b is the parameter estimate for the particular independent variable, and S_b is the standard error of the estimate of that variable.

When regression analysis is used to compare the relative influence of the independent variables that are measured on different units of measurement, the regression coefficients are converted to beta coefficients. Beta coefficients (β) are simply the regression coefficients multiplied by the ratio of the standard deviations of the corresponding independent variable and the dependent variable (Aaker et al., 1995):

$$\text{Beta (for variable } i) = b_i (\text{standard deviation of } x_i) / (\text{standard deviation of } Y)$$

Beta coefficients can be compared to each other. The larger the beta coefficient (β), the stronger the impact of that variable on the dependent variable (Aaker et al., 1995).

In testing Hypotheses 2-5, the F-ratio in the regression analysis was used to determine whether to reject or to accept the hypothesis. A 95% confidence level was used throughout. The F-test is for overall regression, and the t-test is an important test for the individual independent variables. If any of the t-tests for the individual regression coefficients prove significant, the F for testing all the regression coefficients will usually be significant (Chatterjee & Price, 1991). As the F ratio only tells about the by chance occurrence of the relationship, one next needs to refer to R^2 to infer the magnitude of relation. R^2 measures the proportion of the total variance about the mean explained by the regression (Draper & Smith, 1981). But if the F

ratio is not statistically significant, on the other hand, magnitude of relation is not required (Kerlinger & Pedzahur, 1973).

In many regression situations, it may be found that the regression of Y on each of the independent variables, when added individually and in combination to the regression equation after the first independent variable has been entered, may add little R^2 . The reason is that the independent variables are themselves correlated (Kerlinger & Pedhazur, 1973, Nunnally, 1968).

5.4.4 Stepwise and hierarchical regression

Stepwise regression and hierarchical regression are extra methods to standard multiple regression, the reasons for using them being the need to test whether additional available predictors increase predictability. In hierarchical regression analysis, there is the need to test for the significance increment in variance to some variables after others have been accounted for (Pedhazur, 1982; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). This is brought by entering independent variables either one at a time or in a blocks (Pedhazur, 1982; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). The analysis proceeds in stages, and the information about the variables in the equation can be gathered from computer output. In the SPSS package, hierarchical regression is performed similarly to standard regression by the Regression program.

Stepwise regression is an attempt to select the best regression equation. The best equation partly depends on the selection of variables in terms of usefulness (Pedhazur, 1982). This is brought about by a procedure that selects the significance of regression coefficient of the variables in a series of steps. These procedures have a feature of introducing or deleting of variables from the equation, one at a time. Significance of the regression coefficient introduced in the equation is judged by the standard t statistic computed from the latest equation (Draper & Smith, 1981; Pedhazur, 1982). The procedure is terminated when the last variable entering the equation has a significant regression coefficient, as all the variables are included in the equation (Chatterjee & Price, 1991). The forward selection procedure was used.

Stepwise regression procedure is different from hierarchical regression, in the order of entry of variables. In hierarchical regression, independent variables enter the regression in some order specified by the researcher. Importance of variables in the prediction equation can be manipulated by the researcher according to logic or theory. In stepwise regression, the sample data control order of entry. At each step, the variable that adds most to the prediction equation, in terms of specified criteria of entry (e.g., F- to -enter, increment in R^2), is entered. The procedure is repeated until the last block is selected. (Pedhazur, 1982; Tabachnick & Fidell, 1989). Stepwise regression is considered especially appropriate for cases when there are a large number of potential exploratory variables (Chatterjee & Price, 1991), as in this present study, which is partly exploratory in character.

In this study, the method used was a combination of hierarchical and stepwise regression. The set-up for combination of hierarchical and stepwise regression can be achieved by specifying block stepwise entry levels for independent variables (Pedhazur, 1982). That is, a combination of forcing some blocks into the equation and doing blockwise selection. Hierarchical analysis is done by forcing blocks of predictors into the equation. The purpose is to note whether blocks that entered add meaningfully to the prediction of the criterion. In this study, the following hierarchical analysis was done: (1) force into the equation perceived supervisor support, and (2) do a stepwise selection on the demographic control variables. The control variables were education, age, pay and number of dependents. The reason for using this combination of methods is for testing the specific hypotheses. Stepwise regression can be useful for the purpose as eliminating variables that are clearly superfluous in order to tighten up future research (Pedhazur, 1982).

5.5 Hypothesis 1: There are differences between men and women in (a) attitudes towards EI (b) organizational commitment (c) job satisfaction (d) general attitudes towards management and (e) attitudes towards women and work.

5.5.1 Comparison of gender attitudes towards employee involvement schemes

Table 5.3 presents descriptive statistics for the male and female respondents and results of t-tests for differences between means for the attitudes towards employee involvement schemes (EI) scales used in the research. They measure the attitude towards quality circles and employee share ownership scheme in their companies. The variables presented in Table 5.3 show all employees' opinion of the schemes, attitudes of participants of the schemes, and attitudes of non-participants in the schemes.

No significant gender difference was found for participants' attitudes towards quality circles. Significant gender differences were found, however, in non-participants' attitude towards quality circles with differences in the direction of higher attitude scores for women non-participants ($t = 2.76$).

Table 5.3 Comparison of mean scores for attitudes towards employee involvement schemes (QCs and ESOSs) by gender

QC Scheme	Women		Men		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
1. Opinion about QC	3.71	.50	3.83	.40	-1.93
2. Participants' attitude towards QC	3.95	.42	3.96	.36	-.22
3. Non-participants' attitude towards QC	2.60	.62	2.27	.59	2.76 ^a
Financial Scheme (ESOS)					
4. Opinion about ESOS	3.18	.40	3.19	.42	-.22
5. Participants' attitude towards ESOS	3.80	.50	3.60	.53	1.83
6. Non-participants' attitude towards ESOS	2.72	.50	2.55	.58	1.18

Note. ^a $p < .05$

5.5.2 Comparison of gender attitudes towards the organisation, job and management

Table 5.4 presents mean scores for male and female respondents and results of t-tests for differences between those means for three types of workplace attitudes towards the organization and the employees' jobs. No differences between men and women were found in any of these

Table 5.4 Comparison of mean scores of attitude towards organization by gender

	Women		Men		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Organizational commitment	3.58	.65	3.59	.55	-.13
Job satisfaction	3.26	.60	3.35	.53	-1.18
Attitude towards management in workplace	2.86	.86	2.81	.76	-.42

5.5.3 Comparison of gender scores on attitudes towards women and work

Table 5.5 presents mean scores for the male and female respondents and results of t-tests for differences between those means for the attitudes towards women who work. Significant gender differences were found, with the major difference in the direction of lower scores (less positive attitudes) held by males towards women and work.

Table 5.5 Comparison of mean scores on attitudes about women and work by gender

	Women		Men		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Attitude towards women and work	2.75	.79	2.11	.19	-4.87 ^b

Note. ^a p < .01

5.5.4 Summary for Hypothesis 1

Comparisons of the attitude means for men and women found few significant differences. The only significant gender differences found were in the non-participants' attitudes towards quality circle schemes where women non-participants tended to be more positive than male non-participants, and in more negative male attitudes towards women and work. There were no differences in any of the comparisons for ESOSs, and no differences between male and female participants in either quality circles or ESOSs. Thus, Hypothesis 1 could only be supported for non-participants of quality circles, and in the case of general attitudes towards women and work.

As a result of the finding that there was no difference between men and women for organizational commitment, gender was excluded as an independent variable from the remaining regression analysis testing Hypotheses 2-5.

5.6 Hypothesis 2: Amongst EI participants (both for ESOS and quality circles), there is a positive relationship between favourable attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment.

1. Quality Circles

The results of regression analysis testing Hypothesis 2 are presented in Table 5.6. The relationship between positive attitudes towards quality circle among circles members and organizational commitment was statistically significant ($F=12.642$, $p<.001$, $b=.37$, $t=3.96$, $p<.01$). The results, therefore, do support the hypothesis that amongst EI participants in quality circle, there is a positive relationship between favourable attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment.

Table 5.6 Hierarchical regression for relationship between favourable attitudes towards Quality Circle scheme and organizational commitment among participants (n=92)

Variable	Beta	t	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²
Length of service	.25	2.69 ^a	.074	
Attitudes towards QC	.37	3.96 ^b	.204	.130

Notes. $F(2.89) = 12.642$ ^a $p < .05$, ^b $p < .001$. Control variables entered with stepwise procedure. Only statistically significant control variables are shown.

In Table 5.6, it can be seen that adding X_2 (positive attitudes towards quality circles to X_1 (length of service), resulted in a statistically significant increment to R^2 . This means that of the total variance in the dependent variable (e.g., the organizational commitment of the 271 employees studied), 20 per cent is accounted for by the combination of length of service and attitudes towards quality circle. In other words, a good deal of employee commitment to the organization is explained by the length of service and favourable attitudes towards quality circles among QC participants.

2. Employee Share Ownership Schemes

Table 5.7 presents the results of the regression analysis for Hypothesis 2 for participants in the employee share ownership scheme. The relationship between the favourable attitudes towards the employee share ownership scheme among participants and organizational commitment is statistically significant ($F=10.040$, $p<.001$, $b=.35$, $t=3.67$, $p<.01$). The result therefore does support the hypothesis that participation in employee involvement schemes can explain the variations in the commitment to the organization.

Table 5.7 Hierarchical regression for relationship between favourable attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme and organizational commitment of participants (n=88)

Variable	B	t	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²
Length of service	.28	3.02 ^a		
Attitude towards ESOS	.35	3.67 ^b	.238	.112

Notes. F(3,84) = 10.04^a p <.05, ^b p <.001. Control variables entered with stepwise procedure. Only statistically significant control variables are shown.

5.7 Hypothesis 3: Amongst EI non-participants (both for ESOS and quality circles) (a) attitudes towards EI will be less favourable than those of participants and (b) there will still be a positive relationship between these attitudes and organizational commitment.

Table 5.8 presents descriptive statistics for the attitude towards EI both for quality circles (QC) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOS) in the case of both participants and non-participants to compare the attitudes among them towards EI schemes. It also shows a t-test of the differences between means for each of these groups. Significant differences were found between the attitudes of participants and non-participants, with differences in the direction of higher scores for EI participants for both for ESOS and quality circles. Hence, among EI non-participants attitudes towards EI were less favourable than those of participants.

Table 5.8 Comparison of mean scores for attitudes towards employee involvement schemes (QCs and ESOSs) between EI participants and non-participants

	Participant		Non-Participant		t-value
	M	SD	M	SD	
Attitude towards QC	3.93	0.30	2.435	0.605	2.052 ^a
Attitude towards ESOS	3.70	0.515	2.635	0.54	2.132 ^a

Note. ^a p < .05

1. Quality Circles

The result of the regression analysis for non-quality circle members is presented in Table 5.9. It indicates that the relationship between non-favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme among non-participants and organizational commitment is statistically significant ($F = 5.883$, $p < .05$, $b = .29$, $t = -2.73$, $p < .05$). Thus it can be said that the degree of organizational commitment is related to attitudes towards quality circles among non-participants. Despite the less favorable attitudes towards EI among non-participants as compared to participants, however, there is still a positive relationship between attitude towards EI and organizational commitment. All employees had been exposed to some basic understanding of quality circles, and reasons for non-participation could be either that they were not selected to participate or for some other reasons of their own.

Table 5.9 Hierarchical regression for relationship between non-favourable attitudes towards Quality Circle schemes and organizational commitment among non-participants (n=83)

Variable	B	T	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²
Age	.20	1.90 ^a	.035	
Attitudes towards QC	.29	2.73 ^a	.106	.071

Notes. $F(2,80) = 5.883$ ^a $p < .05$ Control variables entered with stepwise procedure. Only statistically significant control variables are shown.

2. Employee Share Ownership Schemes

The result of the regression analysis predicting organizational commitment for non-participants in the employee share ownership schemes, presented in Table 5.10, is not significant ($t = -1.12$). The less-favourable attitude towards share ownership among non-participants has no relation to their organizational commitment.

Table 5.10 Hierarchical regression for relationship between non-favourable attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme and organizational commitment among non-participants (n=52)

Variable	B	t	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²
Attitudes towards ESOS	.16	-1.12		

Notes. $F(1,50) = 1.243$ Control variables entered with stepwise procedure. No control variables were significant

5.8 Hypothesis 4: Amongst EI participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.

In order to test Hypotheses 4 and 5, a forced entry method of hierarchical regression analysis was performed. If the addition of the forced variables results in an increase in the amount of explained variance (R^2) at a significant level, then it can be concluded that the variable affects the relationship between attitudes towards employee involvement schemes and the dependent variables. The sign of beta weights was used to determine the positive or negative direction (Cohen & Cohen, 1975).

The results of the regression analysis testing Hypothesis 4 are presented in Table 5.11. The relationship between favourable attitude towards quality circles and organizational commitment among participants who perceive their superiors have favourable attitudes towards the scheme was not statistically significant ($t = -1.09$; ns). The results indicate that an additional variable - the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme - does not add anything more to the existing relationship between favorable attitudes towards employee involvement schemes and organizational commitment among quality circle participants. The hypothesis is therefore rejected. This finding indicates that it does not matter to the participants whether they perceive there is superior support of the quality circle scheme or not. This may be because their attitudes towards the quality circle scheme are already positive ($r = .470$).

Table 5.11 Hierarchical regressions for relationship between attitudes towards employee involvement (QC) and organizational commitment for participants and non participants who perceive superiors have favourable attitudes towards quality circle scheme.

Variable	Participants (n=92)				Non-participants (n=83)			
	b	T	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²	b	t	Adjusted R ²	Change in R ²
Length of Service	.24	2.53 ^a						
Age					.18	1.69 ^a		
Attitude to QC	.39	4.09 ^b	.204		-.20	-1.81 ^a	.106	
Perceive supervisor listens to suggestions by QC members	-.11	-1.09	.205	.001	.22	1.92 ^a	.135	.029

Notes. For participants $F(3,88) = 8.839$. For non-participants $F(3,79) = 5.275$ Control variables entered with stepwise procedure. No control variables were significant

5.9 Hypothesis 5: Amongst EI non-participants (for quality circles only), the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme will be positively related to organizational commitment.

Hierarchical regression analysis again was used to test Hypothesis 5. This is also presented in Table 5.11. The relationship between non-participant's attitudes towards quality circles and organizational commitment among non-participants who perceive their superiors have favourable attitudes towards the scheme was statistically significant ($F = 5.275, p < .05, b = .216, t = 1.92, p < .05$). Hypothesis 5, therefore, can be supported.

These results indicate that an additional variable – the perception that superiors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme - does contribute to the relationship between attitudes towards employee involvement schemes and organizational commitment among non-participants. There was a considerable change in the adjusted R² when this variable was added to the equation (2.9%).

It appears that one of the critical factors in establishing positive attitudes to the scheme among non-participants is the manager's values and orientation. The

orientation needed is a positive leadership style and a conviction that organizational objectives can be achieved through increased employee involvement in the decision-making process of the quality circle scheme.

5.10 Chapter summary

This chapter addressed the derivation of five hypotheses and the data analysis for the hypothesis testing related to Objective One of this study. The statistical procedures used were t-tests in order to test for differences between gender (Hypothesis 1) and stepwise and hierarchical regression analysis in order to examine the relationships between attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment for participants and non-participants of EI schemes (Hypotheses 2 and 3) and the effect of perceived supervisor support on organizational commitment for participants and non-participants of quality circles (QCs) (Hypotheses 4 and 5). The hypotheses tested allowed an examination of the integrative impact of all independent and control variables in the present study on relationship between attitude towards employee involvement and organizational commitment; the independent effect of attitudes of participant and non-participants towards EI schemes (QC and ESOS schemes); and moderating effect of superior support among attitudes of participants and non-participants towards EI scheme (QC only).

The results indicate that there are few significant differences between the attitudes of men and women towards their jobs, towards management or in terms of commitment to the organization. The only significant gender differences found were in the non-participants' attitudes towards quality circle schemes where women non-participants tended to be more positive than male non-participants, and in more negative male attitudes towards women and work. There were no differences in any of the comparisons for attitudes towards ESOSs, and no differences between male and female participants in their attitudes towards either quality circles or ESOSs. Chapter Six presents the results of the qualitative phase of the study which attempts to explore further potential reasons for these observed similarities and differences between men and women in their orientations towards work and EI schemes.

CHAPTER SIX

INTERVIEW AND FOCUS GROUP RESULTS

6.1 Introduction

The quantitative study addressing Objective One found few significant differences between the attitudes of men and women towards their work (in terms of job satisfaction), towards the organization (in terms of organizational commitment) or towards management in general. The only significant gender differences found were in the non-participants' attitudes towards quality circle schemes where women non-participants tended to be more positive than male non-participants, and in more negative male attitudes towards women and work. There were no differences in any of the comparisons for attitudes towards ESOSs, and no differences between male and female participants in their attitudes towards either quality circles or ESOSs.

The purpose of the qualitative research as explained in Objective Two was to explore further gender issues suggested by the quantitative analysis which could not be studied sufficiently through a questionnaire. More specifically, the qualitative phase of the study was designed to examine the following issues further: (a) attitudes towards employee involvement schemes amongst management and employees, both participants and non-participants in the schemes; (b) gender issues with respect to the effects of perceived superiors' support in quality circles schemes, both on participants and non-participants; and (c) the potential reasons for differences or similarities between men and women in attitudes towards women at work, concerning, for instance, opinions that women are different, attitudes towards women bosses, towards women and commitment, and towards women and their experience in the workplace (e.g., differential treatment, discrimination, stereotyping, reasons for working, domesticity).

Similar questions were asked of interview and focus group participants (see Chapter Four for a full account). Interviews, however, which involved the management level, also asked questions on the objectives of employee involvement schemes, since it

was management who implemented the employee involvement schemes. For focus groups, since by definition quality circles only involved the worker or non-supervisory levels, questions focused on reasons for participation and non-participation in the scheme. Similar questions were asked for both interview and focus groups pertaining to attitudes towards employee involvement schemes and gender.

There were 37 respondents who took part in the interview, 27 male and 10 female. The organizational levels included four top management executives, (3 male and 1 female), 11 senior management (8 males and 3 females), 19 middle management (15 males and 4 females) and 3 junior managers (1 male and 2 female). The detailed breakdown of the respondents by gender and organizational level for each of the three companies is shown in Table 6.1.

For focus groups there were a total of 39 participants, 21 female and 18 male. Out of 21 females, 7 were quality circle participants and out of 18 males 10 were quality circle participants. There were altogether 9 focus groups, with 3 groups in each of the organizations. The smallest focus groups were made up of 4 members and the biggest group made up of 5 members. There were 13 focus group members per organization. The detailed breakdown by focus group and gender is shown in Table 6.2.

Table 6.1 Interview respondents by gender and organizational level

Organizational level	Company 1		Company 2		Company 3	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Top Management	1	0	1	1	1	0
Senior Management	3	2	3	0	2	1
Middle Management	5	1	5	2	5	1
Junior Management	0	1	0	0	1	1
Total, by gender	9	4	9	3	9	3
Total, by company	13		12		12	

Table 6.2 Focus group participants by gender

	Company 1		Company 2		Company 3	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Focus group 1	2	2	4	1	2	3
Focus group 2	3	1	2	2	0	4
Focus group 3	1	4	3	1	1	3
Total, by gender	6	7	9	4	3	10
Total, by company	13		13		13	

6.2 Attitudes towards Employee Involvement (EI)

Employee involvement in general is still a new concept in Malaysia. What concerned most chief executives was that the Malaysian economic situation at that time was progressing favourably. Most industries were facing fierce competition within the market, and that included the organizations under study. Mainly for these reasons, most chief executives felt that they needed to come up with schemes that could boost the performance of their staff. They acknowledged that workers need to be recognized for their contributions, as opposed to the old style of being tightly controlled by management, with narrowly defined jobs. Instead, the broader responsibilities encourage contributing, and help to create satisfaction with work.

In this study, chief executives were asked reasons for having employee involvement in the organization, as well as their attitudes towards employee involvement (“What are your comments about the employee involvement in your organization?”)

The response from one organization’s CEO was:

“The environment of company [this company] is changing; what is asked from the company today is more than what was asked from the company before [Interviewer’s note: the company had just changed from governmental control to a privatised company]. People have to change quickly enough with the environment. The question is, how do we change people; how do we get people to work even harder, to help make the organization more responsive? For me (the interviewee), rewards are not enough; what is needed is for people to see that their contribution is recognized and important; what is important is to train these people as drivers/leaders, not followers, involved in the company as an employee. Through mechanisms set in place by the company, such as quality

circles and ESOS, the employees can be actively involved in the company, which leads to loyalty and commitment to the company” (Resp. 1, M, Co1).

The vice-chairman of another company in the research made an almost identical comment:

“After our company was privatised in 1989, competitors started up by 1990. The first thing we saw we needed to do was to change our vision statement to reflect the new situation. Our vision now is to provide the best possible customer service; the way to do this is by retraining our people. People, products and services of the highest quality, ready to serve the nation, the company and the shareholders. Going from an engineering company to a public service company is a real paradigm shift.”

“What I’m trying to say is, I’m trying to get people (in his organization) involved; if you scare people, they run away and say ‘who cares, man’. We have to be really tactful here; for support, we have the whole programme of reward and recognition, for cooperation we have all these programmes (quality circles and ESOS)” (Resp. 2, M, Co2).

One common shared reason between these two chief executives for having introduced employee involvement in their organization seems to be for the reason of competitive advantage. Nevertheless, the chief executive (Resp.2) seems to imply more of a tactical measure for handling their problem of high staff turnover.

A comment from a slightly different perspective, the HR chief executive of Organization 3, was regarding employee involvement:

“In the act of management, creating a better environment so that the best performance can take place; creating a high level of trust and commitment is the best operating environment. When talking about involvement or empowerment, its about giving workers power to decide. What empowerment are you talking about when they are working around processes and procedures. I worked in a manufacturing company before, there was little room for any

decisions by employees. If they worked as a bonder, what decision can they make? They will sit with the boss who tells them their target, I don't expect them to tell you to do more. That is participation not involvement in decision making, because you are a bonder, you are a bonder! Your decision is you want to work fast or you want to work slowly, no decision" (Resp.3, M, Co3).

Respondent 3, the HR chief executive of the third organization, had joined the company where formerly he had been the QC consultant to the company. It is rather contradictory that, having been a QC consultant, in practice, he was not applying what he had been preaching before. The above remarks showed that he did not believe that workers have any room for improvement in decision-making in their daily jobs.

In general, referring to the above three remarks regarding employee involvement, which came from top rank executives in each of the three organizations, it seems that all three supported the idea of employee involvement in their workplace in order to get commitment and loyalty out of their workforce. They also believed that was necessary, as a stimulus of change, in order to face the change in their business environment. Nevertheless, conventional approaches to management style still existed. There was still a strong belief that decision-making must always come from the top. In essence, workers are there just to do everyday, basic, repetitive and routine jobs that do not need any involvement in decision making. All they need to do is to follow the rules and orders that have been set by top management.

6.3 Attitudes towards quality circles

Quality Circles were introduced in all the organizations under study. As most chief executives mentioned above, for almost a similar reason, they were required due to the changes in the competitive business environment. Hence, the idea of employee involvement, in getting employees involved and getting recognition, was designed to eventually get them to become committed to their work. The qualitative phase of the study was designed to explore further the differences in employee attitudes between men and women towards the schemes; three themes are the focus here - the

perceived objectives of the scheme, the issue of quality circle training and the differential access afforded women, and the effect of quality circles on developing a “quality control” attitude to work.

6.3.1 Perceived objectives of quality circles

Top management views were typified by a very clear comment which came from one of the CEOs, when he said:

“Quality circles are important to get the involvement of employees at the lowest level; but if it is not properly directed, it is a waste of time” (Resp.1,M, Co1).

The workers’ view from some of the focus group participants, nearly most of the women, seemed to accept this reasoning by management. One of the focus group participants commented:

“It is due to the environmental factor, this company needs to compete with its competitors” (Resp.57, F, Co1, FG).

Nevertheless, mostly women respondents in the focus groups claimed they were not clear on the purpose of a quality circle, and this was the case even among those who had attended quality circle training programmes. A common answer was: “I am not really sure why management introduced the quality circle” (Resp.58, F, Co1, FG).

Quite a substantial number of employees were confused about the real reason behind quality circles. They perceived quality circles as nothing more than for the purpose of competition, to win a company-wide presentation at what are commonly known as company conventions. On these occasions, most teams will come out with a ‘good’ project hoping to get recognition from management. In a way, it is quite a motivational tool to get employees keen on participating.

A male technician (focus group) was trying to figure out what was the purpose of quality circles:

“...to present something to management; some improvement that we made”
(Resp.50, M, Co1, FG).

However, the negative impact was that a team unable to come up with a so-called ‘good’ project would end up being demoralized, and this would often lead to inactive circles or even discourage non-members’ participation in the scheme. Moreover, women were the majority belonging to this group, the reason being that they were in non-technical functions (e.g., clerical). Hence, whatever project they could come up with, they could never be able to compete with the technical groups. As some realized, cost saving and ‘real problem solving’ projects were the main criteria for winning the award. Some similar comments were made by the female clerical staff:

“When management does not accept our recommendations, we just feel we have lost motivation to go on. Usually the one that wins in the convention is the one that results in a big profit to the company, even though it is just a small project. And they always come from the technical department, never from clerical” (Resp.60, F, Co1, FG).

Nevertheless, there were employees who had a clearer concept of a quality circle. A male technician whose team has continuously won company awards was able to express a clearer reason for quality circles when he said:

“The meaning behind a quality circle is to be involved in your daily work activity, otherwise there is no meaning for having quality circles” (Resp.55, M, Co1, FG).

Most executive respondents shared the same view that the objective of introducing quality circles is to involve workers in quality improvement. As one senior manager from HQ explained his understanding regarding quality circles:

“A quality circle is a continuous improvement team ... in a way it is also team building. A platform on which they can create certain projects related to their work. There is a lot of effort from people down below” (Resp.5, M, Co1).

Another district manager saw quality circles as a success in his district performance:

“I would say more on the positive side, because we can see after introducing all these things, they tend to be more open to us, more innovative; their views or opinions tend to be more open rather than just talking among themselves. Partly, we can see there is communication going between them and management” (Resp.69, M, Co3).

What was stressed was that there seems to be a shift in culture in the management style towards a more participative management. A study by Kamal (1990) on Malaysian organizations shows the Malaysian organizations, in comparison to other cultures, were among the highest in power distance. From the perceptions described above, Malaysians seem to have a positive attitude towards the idea of workers participating in quality circles, as part of EI initiatives.

Another manager, more or less sharing a similar view commented:

“A quality circle originates at the top; it’s up to the workers to adopt the program. It’s where the staff can give their ideas to management in a more open way, and becomes a way for the employees to give suggestions or comments” (Resp. 12, M, Co3).

A somewhat different view was held by one human resource chief executive:

“The fundamental problem about quality circle is where you give the impression that they can decide, but when they realize the truth that there is nothing much in it, it kills the initiative in itself. ‘We were told we could decide, but we really can’t’ is the prevailing thought among the employees. What works (at Motorola) doesn’t necessarily work somewhere else” (Resp.3, M, Co3).

Consistent with this, some managers’ views were that the ideology behind what should be in a quality circle is only in theory, but hardly in reality. Hence, they observed, such expectations would dampen the initiative and spirit of the workers. Added to that, managers felt that quality circles might only be suitable for some organizational cultures, and not fit some others.

The employees' misconception about quality circles was realized by some managers:

“I observed, many have the concept for competition; I feel they had wandered away from the real concept” (Resp.9, M, Co 1).

Many managers saw the reasons for quality circles as moving towards the company's vision. A HR manager from one of the companies explained:

“Basically, quality circles are to improve services. This programme is a must to upgrade us. Secondly, of course, is for our vision itself. This company vision is to work for quality” (Resp.17, M, Co2).

Some male managers felt that quality circles were not a new concept, and the activities were found in their daily jobs. It was common for the technical group to discuss among themselves regarding their daily work, working as a team to carry out problem-solving activities. The only difference was that the activity was not called a quality circle:

“Quality circle activity was already there, in their (technicians') daily activities; only now it is named 'QC'” (Resp.16, M, Co1).

Top management took seriously the introduction of the quality circle programme. Allocation was made to key personnel to take the responsibility. These key personnel were from the top senior management of the organizations. A steering committee was set up to oversee the implementation of the programme, with the senior managers (all male) as project managers. As one of them said:

“We started two years ago to implement quality controls, and I was given the responsibility to implement quality controls throughout the company. At that time I was the head of Internal Auditing; I still am the head of Internal Auditing. At the same time I take care of quality. I have auditors, around 100 of them, ... 18 of them I put as quality consultants, 6 of them are residing in out station, 12 of them here in the head office, so that is how we organize ourselves” (Resp.4, M, Co1).

In addition, quality circle coordinators were appointed across the organizations to assist in the detailed implementation of the quality circles. Another senior manager who was one of the branch coordinators stated:

“I am part of the secretariat for quality circles... I monitor the curriculum, quality system review as well as working to get commitment from the other heads of department in this regional office” (Resp.22, M, Co2).

On the other hand, some other managers observed contrasts in the manner of the early phase of the quality circle being introduced, compared to the later years after introduction. One HR manager (male) commented on the subject of poor implementation:

“ By itself, a quality circle is good but the implementation could be haphazardly done. Everyone is too eager, and so many programs are presented that people tend to forget about earlier programs [laughter]; like there’s no follow-up on any earlier programs. It may not be fair remark, but I have been working at this company for only a year, and found three different programs. If people forget the earlier programs, then how can a program be gauged to be successful or not.” (Resp.17,M, Co2).

A more general remark was in relation to top management’s commitment. It is considered that whilst some managers were committed to quality, this was by no means true of all management. It seems that many were aware that top management only paid lip service to quality. One district male manager, in much elaboration, explained the scenario:

“One day, the previous CEO came to the office and said it was time to implement quality circles. ‘Everybody is doing it, the Japanese are doing it, telecommunication companies are doing it, why don’t we do it?’ It was no surprise to us (the interviewee) that once it had been introduced, it was only used to utilise the workers’ capacities. The management provided the quality circle tools, they took bits and pieces of knowledge of what the workers had done before, and a year later called it a quality circle. But after 4 or 5 years of this, there is still no direction to it; people don’t know where they’re heading...where

are we heading? We are still in the maze in trying to adopt the quality circle culture into the company, and what are the expectations? A good example, after the convention, some workers got the reward; a trip to Singapore or Yokohama because they won a big innovative project...but the end result from the so-called big innovative project, it has never been implemented. It's a so-called nation-wide program, yet there is no committee to sort of follow-up, to look into what will happen after that" (Resp.65,M,Co2).

One HR male manager made almost a similar statement: "Quality Circles are flavour of the month kind of thing. I would rather go to the core and deal with it than a symbolic title, set structure of quality champion, blah, blah, blah, but you still don't change the core. The core is the organization itself, changing the attitude" (Resp.3, M, Co3).

6.3.2 Quality circle training and problems of access for women

Training was the key element within the programme. The organizations' bulletins were used to publicise the programme, with articles on quality circles, quality updates and reports on circles that won awards in conventions.

In relation to training, in some organizations, training teams developed training courses mainly for managers and technicians/supervisors within the company, hoping that managers and foremen/supervisors would come back to train their staff. This was explained by one woman involved in training quality circle key personnel in one of the organizations: "The technicians, that is supervisors and some managers, are given four days' training, not the staff. And we expect them to train their staff with the knowledge they acquire" (Resp.7, F, Co1).

Generally, two problems arise here. First, most training participants came back still lacking clarity of the concepts. One technician commented (focus group):

"The course is far different than the technical courses we were used to, learning more management concepts, more new terms as well. It's not easy to

learn all of this in four days; we also tend to forget the concept behind the training (quality circles) and we also need to refer to the quality circle handbook from time to time” (Resp.27, M, Co2, FG).

And another technician (focus group) commented:

“There are so many (quality circle) concepts that I am still uncertain about; we all took the course, but when it comes down to actual practices, it differs in how much of it each of us really understands; we still need to consult the QC handbook and then we discuss everything as a group.” (Resp.28, M, C2, FG).

The second problem was that, even those who are clear about the concepts, especially the managers, are not committed to training their staff. Generally, staffs were selected from each department to attend a short quality circle training programme. It was a short training period, they mostly still came back with lack of clarity. However, the quality circle management team did not see it as a problem, as they had a high expectation from the managers and supervisors to pass their knowledge to their staff, for the sole reason that they were all working in the same department. As one observation from a quality circle managing coordinator, the woman already mentioned, shows this was not happening,

“It is very common for the workers to complain about not receiving proper support from their supervisors. I ensure that all of the employees attend quality circle training, but when they return to their workplaces, they’re still not clear as to what is going on. The most common remark is that they don’t get proper support from their bosses” (Resp.7, F, Co1).

One district, female member of staff commented (focus group):

“Our boss had attended quality circle training, even quality circle conventions held in head office, but we gain nothing from him” (Resp.31,F, Co3, FG).

In another organization, the vice-president, who was a key person involved with quality circles, stressed that 100% of the employees had attended quality circle training. But the researcher later found out many more were still not sure of what quality circles were all about, and many more had no chance to attend the training, especially the female staff. In fact, generally, from all these

organizations under study, the researcher found that women were at a disadvantage as far as quality circle training was concerned, as were the majority of non-managerial and non-technician levels. As mentioned above, only managerial and technical groups were mainly chosen to attend quality circle training. For clerical staff, they were chosen only at random, to represent their department (focus group). “We don’t know much about quality circles”, seemed to be common saying from women staff in answering the question from the researcher. This was confirmed explicitly by one of the junior district managers: “...There is a lack of training within the female staff” (Resp.66,F,Co3)

The disadvantage among women staff can also take another form, not just from their position in the workplace, but at home as well. The disadvantage is among those who are married, especially those with children under school age. As one woman quality circle training co-ordinator observed:

“Married ladies they are not very interested in attending all quality circle training activities, merely for the reasons of their children, unless we do it during school holidays. Whereas men, especially the technicians, are glad to take a break to attend courses away from their fieldwork...”(Resp.7, F, Co1).

And another almost similar comment from a male manager:

“There is a gender issue in training, we found there are problems within the non-technical ladies. The problem of sending them for quality circle training, is that they can’t leave their children” (Resp.12, M, Co3).

6.3.3 Quality circle training and “quality control” attitudes

Nonetheless, training did initiate ‘quality thinking’ and provided an awareness of the quality concept as management was trying to convey. The training covers areas of quality concepts and the use of quality techniques. These included evolving ideas through ‘brainstorming,’ problem-solving techniques through ‘fish-bone diagrams,’ ‘doing things right first time,’ ‘quality customer service,’ and presentation skills. The training was given by key responsible senior management, as well as outside established consultants. Quality co-coordinators were appointed throughout the country; these individuals identified examples of best practice in their areas, and

these chosen examples were recommended for conventions. The selected project teams were rewarded, and their projects often were implemented. Male participants explained what the quality circle course was about (focus group):

“In the process of quality circle training, the indirect effect is that attitudes have changed. So, it’s good and it’s effective. Our relationship with the customer has changed, we feel much closer” (Resp.55, M, Co1, FG).

Another explanation came from a male technician quality circle member (focus group):

“We are put into various quality teams within our sections, each one with different functions, not just technical. Every year we have a competition with these other teams to design a project that will increase the quality of the job” (Resp.56, M, Co2, FG).

The above comments tend to suggest that at least some staff were enthused by the ideas, concepts, and even the ideology behind it. It would appear those customer service concepts, and the emphasis on teams, were welcome, and began to generate new meaning for some staff of ways in which to understand the work they performed.

There were some other staff who took quality circle much more seriously. A female clerk from one of the branches elaborated (focus group):

“The company is facing a lot of competition at present. Quality circles are a way to improve the quality of products and services for the company. If we don’t give quality service to our customers, they will leave us and go to our competitors. This is what really matters, working for quality so the company can survive. By saving costs, profits go up” (Resp.45,F, Co2, FG)

6.4 Perceived objectives of employee share ownership schemes (ESOSs)

In general, employees believed that employee share ownership is for sharing the ownership with the company prosperity. Male staff commented (focus group): “For

us to feel loyal to the company, as everything in the company is shared between us (Resp.46, M, Co3, FG). "...my understanding, the objective of employee share ownership scheme is basically for ownership" (Resp.44, M, Co2, FG).

Managers viewed ESOS as a reward (Resp.69). "The objective is not for performance, but just recognition" (Resp.76, M, Co3). "... the company objective is to let employee feel the ownership" (Resp.65, M, Co2).

Two junior female managers commented:

"They want employees to feel part of the company, so that we are committed, so hopefully we would contribute more" (Resp.64,F, Co3).

"It is supposed to motivate us to work harder" (Resp.23,F, Co2)

Another supporting motivational factor, from a female financial chairman, who was among the policy makers for the company employee share ownership scheme, said:

"Another factor is to motivate employees and build up their loyalty; also that it is a part of Government policies to get employees involved in buying shares in the company" (Resp.14,F, Co2).

Another similar view from a human resource vice chairman was:

"The government wants the staff to have some ownership of the company. Though in ...(name of the company) throughout the company the number is small; I feel the number is not important. What is important is the feeling that management is looking into it, because numbers can be subjective" (Resp.3, M, Co3).

As noted above, part of the government policy is to get the employees involved in the shares of their companies. Many believed the purpose is to motivate workers, as a reward, and some related to it loyalty and commitment of the employees to the organization.

6.4.1 Employee attitudes towards employee share ownership scheme

As most male workers in the focus groups pointed out, they feel that the management is unfair to them when they work for much longer years but receive much fewer shares as example, compared to a new executive who just graduated from a university and came in, and easily earns 5-6 times more shares. Many, especially the veterans, who have been working for decades with the company, felt that if they were also responsible for the prosperity of the company, then why were new recruits recognized before them? Or at times it is not so much for the money, or the fact they feel hurt, as they have been working for years, but someone new would just enter the organization and enjoy the success of the company. They questioned the concept of sharing and recognition and did not feel that they were being properly rewarded. What concerned them most, they argued, was the lack of justice in the employee share ownership scheme policy, as it did not take into consideration their years of contribution to the company. This was mostly felt within the male groups of workers.

One technician spoke for many when he said:

“It is unjust and not fair; we have been working so hard, and slogging through for fifteen years. A new executive comes in, fresh from the university, and gets 10, 15 shares, where we only get 2-3 shares, whereas we who brought about the company’s name” (Resp.37,M,Co2, FG).

Another dissatisfied male staff member said:

“It depends on rank and grade. From the very beginning, we didn’t agree to the allocation of the shares. What is not satisfactory is that our ‘group’ gets two or three shares, and the executives get anywhere from twenty-five to one hundred shares” (Resp.41,M,Co1,FG).

The growing distance between workers and the management over share policy was highlighted by most of the workers. One technician spoke for many when he said:

“What I find is hard to accept is the disparity; it’s unbelievable, and it’s too far” (Resp.38, M, Co2,FG).

Another dissatisfied technician felt strongly on the unfairness of the share allocations when he made quite a strong comment:

“They (the top management) made policy to their own advantage, to satisfy their own greed. The directors, the vice chairman can get as high as 100 shares, we workers working for our life here, and receive only a few shares. Believe me or not, no matter whatever scheme is introduced here, their attitude towards us the workers is still the same” (Resp.39,M,Co2, FG).

The comments above show strongly that the employees did not believe that the introduction of an EI scheme at their workplace would make any difference in the attitudes of top management towards workers; what this means is, that ‘them and us’ attitudes still remain.

Men from the non-managerial group were very concerned about the unfairness of management in distributing the shares, and some even attacked the policy makers in relation to the employee share ownership scheme. Some women also shared their opinion. On the other hand, many others seemed to have low expectations of themselves, and the end result was that women had fewer complaints. Several women employees made a point of accepting their lower bracket ‘position’ in the company: “Yes, we feel bad about the allocation of the shares, but anyway who are we to demand?” (Resp.24, F, Co3, FG); “ we realized our status of education” (Resp.4,F,Co2,FG).

‘Alhamdullillah’ (Quranic sentence means ‘we are very grateful’) (Came from almost all the respondents of one focus group)

One member of clerical staff was almost admitting the facts when she said:

“Women are easily satisfied just like children, but men, they may not be satisfied when newcomers, the new executives, get much more ...it could just be the issue of being a man” (Resp.35,F, Co2, FG).

Another woman clerk was more concerned regarding her financial ability to cope, when she said:

“... I am also interested, but only if I have the money. Right now, all the money goes to my basic necessities” (Resp..40,F,Co1,FG).

On the other hand, some women staff saw the unfairness in the ‘gap’. Many others echoed one senior woman when she just said: “The gap is too large” (Resp.34,F,Co2, FG).

6.4.2 Issues in the implementation of employee share ownership schemes

Most staff at lower levels were concerned about how the company manages the implementation of the employee share ownership schemes. They felt there was a lack of communication from management regarding implementation of the scheme, whereas they felt it is important that all employees, including them, be kept aware and informed. They claim that they were left in the dark on most of the issues in relation to the ESOS. Despite their attempt to voice their concerns, they were not being heard. Their main concern was the size of allocation of the shares. They claimed management refuses to listen to their complaints, and that the scheme was all to the advantage of the management.

As one male staff member mentioned (focus group)

“...we looked forward for management discussing the issue with us, but it never happened” (Resp.46, M, Co2, FG).

A similar comment by another male staff member (focus group) was:

“We appreciate it if there is an open communication between us and management, where we can contribute our opinions ... but they (management) always used a loudspeaker as a means of passing down information” (Resp.48).

This shows what was happening in one of the companies where the communication was so poor that they were unable to communicate directly; for example, in meetings

or team briefings. Instead, only a broadcasting medium, in this case a loud speaker, was used.

A female member staff who shared a similar view had some reservations regarding the issue, when she mentioned (focus group):

“... even if there is a meeting, it is only for each section; and I am sure the message will get filtered by the time it gets to the top, as it needs to pass through layers and layers of other meetings” (Resp.58, F, Co2, FG).

Another female staff member had something to say about the lack of concern of management about the workers' welfare when she said (focus group):

“This company has always talked about targets, but never the social aspect, such as employee share ownership scheme” (Resp.42, F, Co3, FG).

On the other hand, one female manager had yet another view on the issue of lack of communication in relation to concern for employee share ownership:

“...actually the open communication system is there for them (the staff) whenever they are dissatisfied, but these staff seem somewhat timid to be open, ...scared of being blacklisted. I guess it could just be the culture rather than anything else” (Resp.63, F, Co1).

The above comment shows what Hofstede called a “power distance” culture, where employees feel being open with management is close to disobeying.

One female staff member commented that they did not received support from the members (focus group):

“...they (management) don't really care about our welfare; the share scheme is all to their advantage” (Resp.42, F, Co1, FG).

Another almost similar comment from a female staff member (focus group):

“...we are not of importance to them, they know that at our level it is difficult for us to get job anywhere else. No matter how much they give us, we are here

to stay, unlike the managers...” (Resp.36, F, Co1, FG)

6.4.3 ESOS allocation between management and workers

One straightforward statement made by one of the chief executive officers regarding the allocation formula of the ESOS was:

“At the workers’ level they might not be able to afford it anyway, as it’s not for free” (Resp.1,M, Co1).

A more subtle statement came from one of the HR managers of another company:

“...in my own opinion, let’s say 10 lots are given to each individual in the company, then those in a higher earning group would be able to finance their shares, but it would be difficult for the staff that are unable, for example between an executive and an office boy. It is kind of meaningless to give it to them [office boys], they might just change ownership by selling to a third party, because they can’t afford it” (Resp.11, M, Co3).

A male company HR chief executive made a similar statement:

“... you have to have a rational formula,...you shouldn’t come to the point that the manager gets 100 lots and the driver 1 lot. ... it may be that the driver still get less than the manager , but say now the ratio becomes 50 lots to 5 lots. At the end of the day, the driver has to pay for all those shares, the company can’t give shares for free ... the driver has to buy at \$1,000 per lot; how much money can they (workers’ level) muster?” (Resp.3, M, Co3).

At this point, the interviewer interrupted him and said, “Let me be clear. What about the loan, can’t they get some loan as well?” He was rather blunt this time when he replied:

“Sure, but the thing is, the bigger the job, the more effect that you have on the whole company, so it’s only fair you get over and above” (Resp. 3, M, Co3).

A somewhat similar view, but which was a little more tactful, was when a female financial chairman involved in setting policy for the employee share ownership scheme explained:

“In the past, there was no guideline for the company to allocate numbers of shares among the employees. ... But now, with the existence of a commission, there is a guidelines that we have to follow; there is not much leeway for the company, all subject to rules and regulations. Of course, there are some who are happy and some who are not ...if share price performs, everybody will benefit” (Resp.14, F, Co2).

At this point, she was interrupted by the interviewer with a question, “Is the purpose of the share scheme to create loyalty for a certain level of responsibility?” She answered:

“No, no. Loyalty is from everybody...I think to recognize the level of responsibilities, because of course when they are in a higher position, they have most responsibilities. It isn't that we say we don't want loyalty from category 'A', but we want loyalty from category 'B', because I think overall we create some kind of share ownership” (Resp.14, F, Co2).

Another similar view came from another senior manager, when he said:

“...it's difficult about shares; given too little they are angry, and everyone wants more. But we have it only for certain ranks, there are limits. ... That is where new staff members who just joined the company for 1-2 years get the same as those employees who had been here 12-15 years with the company. This means the service in the company is not being recognized.” (Resp.15, M, Co1).

Some staff acknowledged the reasoning of management that the lower earner group is unable to finance their shares. One respondent put his view (focus group) like this:

“...in the beginning, when they issued the shares, they assumed that executives can afford to be involved in buying shares, unlike us. Later, they realized even some executives find it hard to cope, unless they apply for a loan. The

company later made such an arrangement for them. But not for us, we still remain in the same bracket of ‘non-affordable’ staff.” (Resp.62, M, Co1, FG).

Some managers did share the view of the workers:

“I would prefer for the gap not to be too wide. It is not the problem of being able to pay. If given 10 shares, I still need to take out a loan. Bigger pay doesn’t mean you have savings; you still end up in debt” (Resp.16, M, Co1).

Another female district manager shared a similar view, but with somewhat different feeling, an indication of some empathy, when she said:

“I think it was a wrong decision made by management. Although I am a manager I feel sorry for my subordinates, as they too should get the shares. In fact, I even feel guilty and much ashamed even to collect my shares ... as part of my excellence in performance is as a result of their contribution, not anything else” (Resp.63, F, Co1).

One female human resource manager had a fair comment when he said:

“I disagree with the gap, I think everyone is important to the company” (Resp.8, F, Co1).

The above comments show the contradictions between theory and reality here. At one end, top management were saying that the main objective of introducing the shares was so the employees feel ownership; on the other hand, they did not see the logic behind why lower level employees should be given shares equal to management level

6.4.4 Justification for implementing employee share ownership scheme

A question was asked, “If nothing much has been achieved with regard to getting employees involved through employee share ownership, then why bother?” To that question by the interviewer, what one of the chief executives had to say was:

“...but if you don't give (shares) you are in trouble, because other companies give (shares). Another reason why we give is a means of sharing a little of the benefits of the company.” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

This suggests that it has become management fashion with one company following others in the trend of adopting these practices. A similar answer, showing that it has become an expected benefit, came from one of the vice-chairmen:

“Employee share ownership scheme is actually known as profit sharing, so that people who work for the organization have the opportunity to benefit from the prosperity of the organization. But if it is not managed properly it can become a burden, and can cause a lot of rift. I can see it has an impact if it is managed properly; there must be something good, otherwise why are some companies still using it as a main rewarding device” (Resp.2, M, Co2).

A different answer, indicating a concern with attitude came from the HR vice chairman of the other company:

“...the fact that the staff are happy being given the shares shows at least that they appreciate what the company has done for them, because staff feeling towards the company is also important. It's not that we can see that they work more, at least they have positive attitude and feeling, that is just as good. If you like the company, surely you are willing to work hard for the company, and if you don't have the right feeling, things would not work” (Resp.3, M, Co3).

Table 6.3 summarises the employee perceptions of EI schemes in general, and quality circles and ESOS specifically. From the employee point of view, the majority claimed they were not clear what quality circles are all about, as they hardly had a chance to attend real quality circle training, and had only received feedback from their supervisor or direct superior. As for ESOS, only a few amongst top management and management perceived that the scheme created a feeling of commitment. The majority of them thought it did not. The majority took for granted that it is part of their benefits package and believed it was just a trend. As for employees, they claimed the scheme was not meant for them, as the portion was too

small compared to middle or top management. Most of them received around 1-3 shares, whereas middle management started with 30 shares, and top management received above 100 shares.

The fact that most of the lower staff, even some middle managers, were not clear regarding the objectives of these schemes, may mean that they were not properly implemented. There seemed to be some similarities in comments regarding implementation problems: firstly, problems of communication, and secondly, the management were not clear about the objectives themselves. Management focused so much on winning the 'project', with the ultimate aim of being nominated to participate at the national conventions, rather than managing the quality circle process, for example, by getting the employees at the worker level to be involved in problem solving and to share their ideas with higher levels. It was also found that training was overlooked.

Apart from this, it was also clear that there existed bias from management at lower levels against women in terms of both schemes. For the quality circles, there was an absence of a conducive environment for them to take part and of support from superiors. The employee share ownership scheme also was seen as unfair mainly because the gap in the allocation of shares between management and workers was perceived as too big. They did not see the scheme was for them, but to management's advantage. With all these issues, it is not a surprise that the data generally suggested varied attitudes towards the schemes, and particularly from women employees at the workers' level.

Table 6.3 Attitudes towards employee involvement (EI), quality circles (QCs) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOSs)

Attitudes	Interview				Focus Groups	
	Top Management	Middle Management		Workers		
		Men	Women	Men	Women	
Attitudes towards EI	To gain competitive advantage, to gain loyalty and commitment from employees	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Attitudes towards QC	Positive; to get employees involved	Good scheme; but concept is not clear. Some felt that it did not work in their organizations.	Positive; platform towards getting recognition	Participants: Positive, projects recognized Non-participants: poor support from management.	Participants: some agree with management on importance of QC, but most felt 'project' hardly being recognized. Non-participants: extra-time, role conflict	
Attitudes towards ESOS	Positive; sharing company benefits	Positive; for recognition	To build loyalty, some felt gap should be reduced	Not fair, too big a gap between management and workers	Not for them, too big a gap between management and them.	

6.5 Reasons for non-participation in quality circles among workers

Table 6.4 provides a summary of the interview results providing reasons for non-participation in quality circles. Each of these themes is presented below.

6.5.1 Perceived lack of support

Section head commitment was of some concern among lower-level staff. However, although some staff initially welcomed quality circles, management did not play their roles, as they failed to reinforce and support its ideas. One junior manager commented:

“After completing the quality circle course, I am interested in forming a quality circle team in my department, but what can I do? I want to do it but there is no support, only with their (top management) approval things can get started”
(Resp.74, F, Co3).

There is a similar concern, expressed by one of the companies' CEOs, implying the lack of a participative approach among the senior management staff:

“What is lacking and what is not visible, is more of the way the participation of the senior staff, as they are the ones who are running the organization”
(Resp.1, M, Co1).

Initially, in the promotion of the quality circle programme, direct involvement came from the top-level management. As many activities were going on within the centres and the branches, more top-level management was needed to facilitate cross-organizational development. However, this was not happening, especially at the centres. Hence, there were problems faced, especially in the branches. First, senior managers were not given full authority to make decisions on areas affecting the development of quality circles. They still had to refer to the centres for approvals. As one frustrated district male manager commented:

“... I received an instruction, ‘Dear Mister District Manager, please implement this quality circle project.’. But no one mentioned to me anything more about it, what job number I should charge the project to; nobody mentioned what budget I had...I still need to refer to a higher level. Another problem, there are two heads, both from different quality departments, reporting to chairmen who are from different corporate services...so, what is being planned at division is not properly seen by the corporate services in which they are the guardian.” (Resp.70, M, Co2).

Table 6.4 Summary of issues with regard to non-participation in quality circles

Perceptions/ views	Interview				Focus Groups	
	Top Management	Middle Management		Workers		
		Men	Women	Men	Women	
Training	-	Haphazard, gender issue in training	Women lower-level staff do not get support from their boss	Attended direct training; still not clear	Did not attend direct training; supposed to get trained from supervisor, but even that sometimes did not happen	
Superior support	Lack of participation from the senior management	Poor; as middle managers/regional managers, no clear direction from top mgt, authoritarian culture. Some concerned about absence of incentives	-	Poor; technicians working at branch feel lack of support	Poor; as a clerk, difficult for 'project' to be recognized. Authoritarian culture, absence of involvement opportunities among women staff	
Pressure of time	Middle management are defensive because it meant extra work for them	Pressure of workload and time. Do not have time for QC.	-	Job too demanding. Work is priority over QC.	Do not have time for break during working hours. Most concerned about family commitment after office hours.	
Gender issues	N/A	Contribution should be recognized through job evaluation. Some observed gender differences in participation; women have time constraints after working hours, need to attend to family needs.	See QC as opportunity for women to be recognized. Some thought that in QCs women staff are appointed to do clerical jobs; men will dominate with the real work.	Concerned about lack of incentives for working extra hours.	Not involved in meetings; taking down minutes. Can't afford extra hours, have to balance family needs.	

The above comment tends to suggest not only that a district manager lacks power to decide, but also that the supporting top management structures seem still too bureaucratic and hierarchical for the employee involvement scheme to be materialized. Another almost similar comment was made by another district administrative manager from another organization:

“...as part of the secretariat for quality circle service (Quality Customer Service), I find it hard to conduct the quality system review as I require other sections heads’ approval ... It makes it worse when most of them are at the HQ.” (Resp.68)

Another simple fact put forward by another district manager was: “... the fact that we are too structured, that hinders the programme” (Resp.67, M, Co3).

There was yet another district manager who had a similar concern on the lack of commitment to the schemes, from section heads themselves, and the fact that the organizations are still too structured and there is a strong place given to bureaucracy which makes involvement for the staff problematic:

“Things get very difficult when you depend on the heads for commitment, but here the section heads are not committed. It is often for meetings to be postponed because they have other more important things to deal with. You as a coordinator have to send them memo after memo, still hardly any feedback, and it’s really a waste of time. And the meeting cannot go on without their presence. Sometimes they only send their representative. It might be all right with the representative, but if the boss is still not committed, the end results are that you don’t get the work done” (Resp.73, M, Co1).

And Resp.73 was supported by most of the workers from that section. One comment made by one of the male technicians (focus group) was:

“Here problems differ, depending on different sections. Commitment normally will come when the circle is more active, able to conduct more meetings, then most problems will be solved easily. But again it so much depends on the section heads” (Resp. 62, M, Co1, FG).

Most top management had anticipated lack of support within the middle management. One of the vice-chairmen shared his opinion:

“... in this process of getting employees involved through quality circle, this group (middle managers) is not happy, because they are getting less responsibility and these people (the workers) are playing a greater role” (Resp.2, M, Co2).

The CEO, from one of the organizations had a slightly different opinion:

“Managers are not positive about the programme because it is extra work for them; once the programme gets ritualized, once it gets routine, it can be dangerous; dangerous in the sense it becomes work. When it is not directed properly, from the top, that is what it becomes. There must be a clear reason why we are doing.” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

This CEO commented on the middle managers who were not supportive in accepting the programmes. One vice-chairman strongly felt leadership was the reason behind it all:

“...of course there is always a difference, some regions have more force than the others, because of leadership. Leadership is the number one reason that determines whether quality circles are a success or a failure. I have seen success stories created because of the leadership, not because of anything else. The leader who is willing to work within the culture of that, that is commitment” (Resp. 3, M, Co3).

An ex-district manager shared his observation on other district managers:

“It all depends on the initiative of the boss, as there is no hard and fast rule on how we run our division. Most of them (district managers) are not the sorts that are inclined towards a worker; that’s where the root of the problem lies, in implementing employee involvement. And it is not easy to change such attitude among these managers. Top managers in the district are less particular on the issue of employee involvement, it is all left to the discretion of the district manager themselves, it all depends on their commitment”

(Resp.9,M,Co1).

Another observation made by a quality circle key coordinator was:

“One common reason given among the facilitators; there are very busy with their work, and quality circles don’t make their job any simpler, as it’s only added on. Whereas workers, they still claim they lack understanding of the concepts. One thing for sure, the paradigm shift is still not there” (Resp.22, M, Co2).

6.5.2 Authoritarian style of management

A second problem regarding quality circle participation and summarised in Table 6.4 was that most branch managers traditionally operated in a fairly authoritarian style. This seems to be a major problem, putting a limit to staff involvement, even in the areas concerning their work. Employee involvement was hardly encouraged, even if there were quality circles formed, quality improvements suggested by the staff had a limited impact.

It appears that the most critical factor in establishing positive attitudes to the quality circle scheme among non-participants is the manager’s support. The most common factor given as the reason why workers do not participate is merely because their supervisor (middle manager) never listened to their suggestions. One strong comment from one of the women clerks (focus group) was as follows:

“To me the quality circle does not bring any kind of benefit. There is no change here despite that the boss had frequently attended quality circle training programmes and conventions. I think I kind of favour the quality control concept, the concept of no boss, all working together to solve work problems as a group. But what if the boss is still concerned about giving orders, everything remains the same, with no changes, the boss remains boss, the workers remain workers, there is no involvement here, ... the culture will still remain despite any amount of quality circle exposure he went through” (Resp.31, F, Co3 FG).

Another similar comment made from another woman participant (focus group):

“The culture here (in that department) is that we at the lower level have no say, and the bosses will never listen to our ideas. It should always come from him (the boss); one must always refer to him, if you refer to anyone else, especially higher than him, you are in trouble. ...There is no question about giving ideas; even basic communication doesn't exist between the lower level and them (referring to their superiors). Employee involvement has no chance, it doesn't exist here” (Resp.32, F, Co3, FG).

Another similar shared perception among these dissatisfied respondents was on the ongoing conflict between management and the workers on matters of authority, control and decision-making prerogative. A woman staff member commented (focus group):

“Management does not want to let go their management influence in the decision- making process. It's hard for them to sit there and listen to us. It's a kind of role reversal type of situation. Although it may benefit employees like me, I believe middle managers have a hard time adjusting to the type of situation” (Resp.36, F, Co1, FG).

From the above comments, some picture of the organizations' authoritarian cultures has been formed. In fact, even some managers shared these feelings. Some employees portrayed themselves as victims of an organizational culture whose managers are not readily participative. Some managers are perceived to prefer the status quo or the old autocratic management style. It is frustrating to discover that beside the merit of the participative management concept, they are in a context of managerial resistance to the very concept.

These views were shared by one of the junior district managers:

“The management here is too authoritarian in the extreme. This approach to the staff has resulted in 'non-involvement' in most of the activities here, which includes quality circles; it has been widely frustrating, I can see a decline in the pride of a job done well. Commitment of the majority of the staff has gone very low” (Resp.66, F, Co3).

These shared impressions vividly indicate that the organization's authoritarian culture stems from how people become managers. In one interview with one of the district managers, he tried to explain how culture shapes the manager to be authoritarian.

From one district manager's own perspective:

"... How I learned to become an authoritarian manager; you have to go back to how people became managers. First, they take a person who works on a line, and say you are best qualified in that unit because you are doing 100 per cent of the work and everything, which is in accordance to their standard. Then, all of a sudden you are the manager. As a manager you deal more with experience. From the day you start work you see how your manager works and these experiences are carried along with you. Then when you finally become a manager, you tend to apply what you have learned through your earlier experiences" (Resp.67, M, Co2).

6.5.3 Pressure of work and time

A third issue, concerning district staff especially, was that they felt themselves to be under increasing pressure of work, so that there was insufficient time to devote to the quality programme. One respondent was a district section manager, and what he said reflects some of the constraints of middle managers that he knew of:

"I have been involved in the quality programme, as a facilitator I can see the problem. I don't have the time to work with people down the line, they haven't got the idea, and they are not convinced. The scheme is a system, but if I don't have the time, on a more regular basis, then it doesn't work. They too will find excuses; no time, lots of work, so involvement on my part is really needed, that's the part where I feel really handicapped...I have ideas, but having an idea and just talking about it and putting into practice are two different things. When we realized that the circles are not productive, we realized all we need is time most of us don't have. Even for the fact that we realize the importance of the quality circle, I don't think we (he and his peers) are putting a high enough priority on it

or enough effort into it. We still put priorities on our core business, or actual functions as a top executive here. So, until the priority problems are corrected, I don't think there is a chance. That's the challenge I am facing" (Resp.20, M, Co2).

Another district manager commented, regarding time pressure:

"I find it is difficult to run quality circle activity here; it's very difficult when each of us (his peers) is burdened with a heavy workload, and ...we all have the same constraints. All this year we are unable to reduce the workload; the cycle time is too much" (Resp.75, M, Co3).

Some staff did basically acknowledge that the top management does make a significant effort to involve workers' levels through the employee involvement scheme, such as the quality circles, but they felt that they did not receive proper support in terms of easing them from daily work activity. As one junior district manager observed:

"Over here, the meetings are done during working hours; the staff is busy at work, and this will surely interrupt their daily work activities" (Resp.72, F, Co1).

Another quality circle participant felt the same, especially about the inactive circles; one woman commented (focus group):

"In my opinion, the only problem I can think of is time constraints. We work at shops dealing directly with customers, face-to-face; we just don't have the time to take a break to have quality circle meetings. We can't just leave the counter and everyone attend meetings; the problem is that it takes so long to proceed from one stage to another where quality control is concerned" (Resp.58, F, Co2, FG).

Another similar comment from a male technician (focus group) was:

“Whenever your job is too demanding, you put priority on your work rather than extra activities, like quality circles, unlike some sections at the HQ; they are at an advantage, because they have larger headcounts. This means they can have more members in the group. So, while some of the members are working on quality circle activities, the rest can concentrate on the daily work. Hence, they can still have both; be active in a quality circle, and get the daily job done” (Resp.46, M, Co2, FG)

What is meant here is that most of the members felt that their work pressure was unable to release them to concentrate on quality circle activities. Some felt that at headquarters, they tended to have more staff, hence, quality circle members from the headquarters can afford to have more members in their groups. This ‘excess’ staff will concentrate on quality circle activities on behalf of the members. This is normally found in clerical positions, where the jobs can be easily shared; it frequently happened when the circle was working towards a convention. So while some portions of the staff were working towards the quality circle convention or presentation, the rest of the members of staff would try to complete their colleagues’ unfinished work. This seemed to work on a rotational basis.

6.5.4 Absence of direct incentives

Absence of direct incentives seemed to be another concern. Apart from the three main problems that affected especially the branch, staff felt that management was trying to intensify work without offering any reward in return. As one comment made by a woman human resource manager for one of the engineering departments shows,

“They do practice quality circles basically in power station, and the nature of their work requires them to work in a team. They feel good about the project after being given recognition for what they have done; they think that extra time put in is not being rewarded, in terms of their job performance, but now we are trying to tie in with performance” (Resp.8, M, Co1).

The concern for reward, as mentioned by the engineering human resource manager, seems mostly to affect the male workers more than the female. One comment made by one of the technicians that almost echoed the rest of the male participants (focus group) was:

“...whenever your job requires you to work extra than normal hours, then you would be paid overtime allowance. My concern is when we need to work extra hours to have quality circle meetings, weekdays and even Saturdays, why we are not being paid the overtime allowances or any kind of reward” (Resp.41. M, Co1, FG).

Some managers did share these concerns about not having motivational incentives to encourage more participation among the staff:

“It will encourage them to participate if their contribution is recognized through their yearly job evaluation, that will be a kind of reward for them” (Resp.13, M, Co2).

One female senior manager observed some gender differences between her staff in relation to incentives:

“I observed male staff are more concerned pertaining to monetary aspects of any scheme. For quality circles their argument is on overtime allowance if the meeting falls after office hours. Perhaps they are the ‘breadwinner’, they have family to support. Whereas the ladies are easily satisfied; as long as they can do they job well, they are happy. I think women have this culture that they are easily changed, whereas, men, you really have to convince them” (Resp.6, F, Co2).

Thus, some observations seemed to show gender differences in that women by character were though to be more easily satisfied, whereas men needed to be more convinced.

6.5.5 Extended quality circle meetings and married women (focus groups)

Married women's explanations focused on the barriers women face in working on so-called 'extra curricular' activities during non-working hours. Although women may be as interested as men in attending quality circle meetings, when they seek to attend those meetings they may encounter problems not faced by men. First, one possible barrier stems from the kinds of jobs that have been available to them. According to Hong (1990), the rapid growth rate of female employment in Malaysia arose from deliberate government policies to redress gender imbalances in public sector employment, as a result of which women have always been over-represented, especially in clerical occupations. The facts that their jobs are non-professional, non-technical, and non-managerial, means that these jobs are viewed as less important, and lacking in urgency by many, especially by their spouses. Hence, they are expected not to work any longer hours than their usual eight-hour routine job. The same principle applies when it comes to their need to attend any 'extra curricular' activities within the company; they are viewed as unnecessary.

One comment made by a female accounts clerk, represented many:

"My husband is not supportive; I have to be back sharp by 5.30pm. Whenever he comes to fetch me I have to leave sharp by 5.15pm, otherwise he will be annoyed. Well, we are just clerks, we are not executives, and it is difficult to justify why we need to work longer hours. There is always tomorrow to complete any incomplete job" (Resp.49, F, Co3, FG).

This is one view of women's clerical work, which is seen to be unimportant and monotonous. Secondly, many women who wish to participate may confront additional barriers because of family commitments and time pressures. Another comment made by one of the general clerks that echoed most of the women staff was:

"...not that we are not interested, we just can't afford the extra time, I have 'rows' of children (laugh) waiting for me. That is very common among us women staff once we are married, to come up with such an excuse such as, no

one to look after the children, which is real” (Resp.26, F, Co3 FG).

It was on this point that many of the women participants agreed; that the meeting times that fell outside working hours made it difficult for them to participate. Here again is one of the many views reflecting this point:

“Usually once women have started to have a family, there are always similar reasons why they can’t attend quality circles activity after working hours, there is no one to look after their kids or any kind of similar constraint” (Resp.59, F, Co1, FG).

And this is one of the many women who felt, simply:

“Actually, it is true that we have limitations, as family women” (Resp.45, F,Co2, FG).

This sums up what seems a common gender problem in EI - the time constraints felt by women in attending quality circles that are held after working hours. However, there were still many more married women who participated in the quality circle programmes, even with meetings after office hours. These were women who were in the categories of either having children above school age, or not having children, or having children who were well taken care of by helpers or extended family members or, above all, having a supportive husband. As one senior female clerk who received all the support explained:

“... in my case I have someone to look after my children, and at the same time, my husband is supportive, so working comes naturally to me. I have no problem to participate in any of company’s programmes” (Resp.57, F, Co3,FG).

6.5.6 Gender issues in meetings

Generally, the perception from the women in the focus groups was that they are not confident in putting their ideas across in meetings, although there were some who felt that they were treated similarly to men in meetings. One respondent commented:

“I feel we are all just the same, even in the meeting both ideas being taken into consideration, only that we sometimes don’t have many ideas, and it’s best to remain silent” (Resp.53, F, Co1, FG).

Some shared almost the same opinion, but felt that there are differences between men and women, in the sense that women are less confident when it comes to contributing ideas, as well as their having a different function in a meeting. As another participating woman commented:

“It’s quite frequent for me to attend meetings but I am there for taking down minutes of the meeting; obviously I have no chance to speak, just listen” (Resp.59, F, Co3, FG).

Some raised the issue of not being involved more in the meeting because they were in the ‘position’ of writing the minutes (i.e., secretary), and some were simply shy participants:

“When I am the only woman in a company of all men, I just can’t speak, unless I have another friend” (Resp.58, F, Co2, FG).

Nevertheless, women still felt they were as good:

“I know there are some ladies who still speak out although she is the only woman in a meeting” (Resp.no.59, F, Co3, FG).

It is also true that many active women participants feel good about the scheme, especially when they receive good support from their male peers:

“ I am enjoying myself working in the mixed team; the guys, they make us feel the confidence we need, so I feel happy about it. That makes it easy to contribute ideas” (Resp.25, M, Co 2, FG).

Some women saw QCs as a platform, which gave them a chance to prove themselves. One female district manager perceived participating in any scheme introduced by management as an opportunity, or a means of getting recognized (interview):

“Too frequently we hear people say men are having better leadership qualities. There is where I feel women have to prove themselves. We can do it, in whatever management-introduced schemes. A programme of this kind (QC), when we have a chance, we will try to prove we can do it, and always try to do it better than them [men]” (Resp.63, F, Co1).

However, the difficulties for women were a common theme. A female executive of the Quality Operation Unit had this to say (interview):

“...in group meetings, ladies will be more involved in doing all the clerical work, working on computers, making phone calls; ladies are there basically to do the paperwork. Even for technical groups where there are no ladies, they will still appoint a clerk to do the paperwork. Men tend to dominate and give the orders, women are the ones who carry out any orders.” (Resp.7, F, Co1).

One male marketing section manager made the following observation (interview):

“Regarding gender differences in participation, females in the general office tend to have problems of time constraints when involving married women after working hours, as they need to attend to their families’ needs, and we understand that. Normally, we give them the flexibility to have meetings during working hours or after working hours. There are women who are really involved, but they are rare. [Pause] During meetings we have to close the gap, otherwise they refuse to talk, being management we have to think of ways to make them talk; You don’t expect them to be closer to you, you have to move towards them. ... It so much depends on the leader.” (Resp.9, M, Co1).

Whilst some managers were stereotypical in their approach to the gender issue, this was by no means representative of all the management. It seems that with some understanding from their bosses, women could get as involved as men in any participation schemes introduced by the companies.

Revisiting Table 6.4, what seems the biggest problem that resulted in non-participation from the women employee is that they felt that their contributions were

not being recognized. In the case of quality circles, they felt that they were not being recognized in their 'projects' that derived from their quality circle problem-solving activities. These 'projects' created competition among employee levels. In this study, the male employees were mostly made up of technicians and the women made up the clerical posts. The nature of their work and positions made it hard for the women to compete with their 'project' with the men.

Another issue that added to their frustrations was lack of support from superiors and lack of training. Some of the more unavoidable reasons also were lack of support from spouse and having to attend to children and family needs after office hours. Literature on disadvantages of women does support these findings, in such a way that the women in this study are being disadvantaged in both worlds. In their working environment, they hardly received support from their superiors; most of them claim that the culture was not conducive for a participative scheme to take place. And, similarly, from the perspective of personal life, they did not receive enough support from their spouse to enable them to participate in a company involvement programme that exceeded working hours, such as a quality circle. There is almost a consensus view from women interviewees, regardless of whether they were managers or workers; they felt strongly that the positions and nature of women's work put them at a disadvantage. This resulted in differences of attitudes towards employee involvement compared to women at a higher level in the hierarchy. Similarly, in their attitude towards employee share ownership schemes, they hardly felt they belonged, because they did not believe the shares were meant for them and there was a gap between them and higher levels.

As for the male employees and managers (both women and men), they were most concerned with non-participation mainly because of time constraint in relation to their work and the implementation of quality circles. Many issues were raised, including the unclear conceptual understanding of the quality circle itself, training not being done professionally, time being too short, and too many being involved in that short period time. The majority of the middle managers viewed that it was just a 'lip service' thing from top management; some saw it as a joke; and some thought too

many programmes were being introduced in one short period of time - some observed three major programmes in a year. The question they raised was ‘when people forget about the earlier programme, then how do people gauge whether the programme is successful or otherwise?’ Generally, some of the issues of concern to the managerial level were similar to those raised by women employees - in short, lack of support from higher levels in making the quality circle manageable.

6.6 Attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment

6.6.1 Attitudes towards quality circles and organizational commitment

Table 6.5 provides a summary of interview and focus group findings related to the attitudes towards both types of EI (quality circle and employee share ownership scheme) and organizational commitment. The views of top management are expressed in the following comment.

“Quality circles are important to get the involvement of employees at the lowest level... it can create teamwork and it can create ownership in the group. ...it becomes our job rather than my job or your job. We share the problem together... [Using the example of a specific project] an output that actually reduces paper waste may not be as good as having a group of workers thinking it together, working as a team, working it together, taking the ownership of the problem, and that has a bigger effect on the organization. The reward is they feel consulted. When they start taking the ownership, the outcome will be that they feel more committed to the organization” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

This could not be clearer in terms of the perceived effects of employee involvement on organizational commitment. To add to this, another respondent from senior management in a different organization commented:

“In this company, the quality circle is a way of recognizing contribution by the workers. Management needs to make them feel part of the company not only as workers. The company cannot grow or survive without them, so in order to get their commitment; we must recognize whatever they do. ...We let them air opinions through presentation, to share their view with management,

rather than we do the entire managing not all that well. After the completion of their project, they become more motivated, which is good. In fact, we have many other kinds of disciplines like quality circles, quality circle service, all these things are to get everybody involved in whatever they do. What we observed, when people are doing things for commitment, contribution is different, so we recognize them, and we need that” (Resp.4, M, Co1s).

A similar view from a manager in the same organization as Resp.4 noted:

“The result of solving their work problem through the quality circle way does contribute to their commitment to the organization. I think the quality circle procedure in itself, which leads to good decision- making process, helps, as at the end of the day it made them realize they are working towards the company’s goal. That could relate to changing of attitudes towards their work as well as the organization” (Resp.No13, M, Co1).

Thus, two of the above managers were positive about QCs in relation to employee commitment. In contrast to the management view, a woman participant who was in an active circle commented in one of the focus groups:

“It all depends on which quality circle level you are at. Anyway, it is how it got to be an active circle. As we are at a higher level of circle success, then feelings are different; we feel much more confident about our work. The feeling of commitment will naturally be there, together with many other good feelings.” (Resp.57, F, Co3, FG).

Another female perspective given was:

“Quality circles give us a chance to share our feelings, especially regarding some frustrations in relation to work. Once we can solve problems at work, it makes the workplace a better place” (Resp.41, F, Co2).

This was part of the focus group interviews which especially picked up on the issue of attitude towards QC in relation to the feeling of commitment. This shows that if they are allowed to participate, they do recognise the benefits, particularly the

feeling of confidence that follows. In earlier discussions the focus was on the fact that they did not even have a chance to participate, although they did recognise that it was beneficial in terms of being able to prove oneself to management.

6.6.2 Attitudes to ESOSs and organizational commitment

The question was asked by the interviewer, “does the feeling of being unfairly treated regarding the scheme affect your daily work or commitment towards the organization?” The responses among the workers in the focus groups were almost all the same and no gender differences were identified in the interviews.

A clerical staff member was quick to reply: “... it never affects our work, only that we feel it is not fair” (Resp.40, F, Co1, FG). Another woman made a comment, which the rest of her focus group agreed with, including the male staff: “I hardly have the time even to think about it” (Resp.41, M, Co1, FG). This was referring to the pressure of work which was mentioned by several staff. One technician claimed:

“All that we asked for is just some recognition from the management”
(Resp.46, M, Co2, FG).

Another female respondent (who did not participate in the ESOS) said:

“Those who are unhappy, the technical staff will quit but not clerical, ... we have no choice” (Resp.58, F, Co2, FG).

This reflects gender differences with regard to the nature of the job, where men are perceived as having the advantage of being able to leave the company if they are not satisfied, while women are perceived as having minimal choices.

Table 6.5 Summary of interview and focus group themes related to EI and organizational commitment

Perceptions/ views	Interviews			Focus Groups	
	Top Management	Middle Management		Workers	
		Men	Women	Men	Women
General perception of relationship between QCs and organizational commitment	Perceived that QCs encourage involvement of employees	Perceived that QC activity encourages team working & problem solving	N/A	Participants: there is a relationship between the two. Feeling of being recognized	Participants: there is a relationship. QCs increase confidence, and feelings of being committed
General perception of relationship between ESOS and organizational commitment	Most said no relationship. Share portion given in relation to companies too small. Few believed in a relationship from managers onwards.	No relationship. Big gap between top management & middle	No relationship. Recognition for responsibilities, meant only for higher levels.	No relationship. Huge gap between management and us. Nevertheless there was a feeling of being committed towards work	No relationship. Gap is huge, but felt that they have no choice. Nevertheless, there was a feeling of being committed towards work.

Another respondent claimed:

“...just because we are not offered [the opportunity for other work]; if we were offered we would also leave” (Resp.41, F, Co2, FG).

Another male staff member who was a non-participant in the ESOS spoke for many when he said:

“The important fact is that we have no choice, our work still needs to be done” (Resp.46, M, Co2, FG).

A similar statement from another female staff ESOS non-participant was:

“We feel responsibility to our job, but the feeling of unfairly treated is still there” (Resp.26, F, Co 3, FG).

Many others supported these comments, that regardless of being unfairly treated, at the end of the day, it is still their responsibility to get work done. Hence, commitment to work still exists, despite being badly treated by management. A somewhat concerning view was held by one of the women ESOS non-participants:

“... it would be difficult if we have disciplinary actions, for example, being suspended from work, if we let that affect our work. It's different with executives; they can always get another job somewhere else with the qualifications they have” (Resp.41, F, Co2, FG).

Another female non-participant stated: “...it's difficult for us to leave the company” (Resp.36, F, Co1, FG), but a somewhat different outlook from a male member of staff was:

“...why should we leave the company; all we have to do is ask the management to review the policy of the scheme” (Resp.40, F, Co1, FG).

Another similar view, but more accepting of the situation was this woman's point of view:

“...there's nothing much we can do; that's all they decided to give” (Resp.49, F, Co3, FG).

Yet another male technician felt strongly for the company when he said:

“...for the love of the company, because they still decided to give us part of it. Something is always better than nothing” (Resp.50, M, Co1, FG).

The chief executive officer of one of the organizations made the following observation regarding the link between the ESOS programme and commitment to the organization:

“...it has to be big enough for it to be an element to gain loyalty, but in a big company like [name of company], where you owned only .0001 percent of the company, what kind of loyalty or commitment are you talking about?” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

And he continued to explain the fact that once the share was being exercised (sold), that it would be the end of a sense of ‘ownership’. This statement held true for several others, when he said:

“...the question is, how do you get the value of your share by selling it. So, the very thing is that once you sell it, what do you earn? ...nothing” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

Human resource managers and some of the senior managers and managers almost all made similar statements. For example:

“...what are you talking about ownership, when 5, 10, or 20 lots, once sold, there goes the ownership. I don’t feel part of the owners in this company, it doesn’t gave me any worry whether the shares go down, because the majority had sold them off, ...everybody is selling their shares, including me” (Resp.16, M, Co1).

“...people are leaving, generally the middle managers. As the top managers are receiving a very high recognition by the company, there is no reason for them to leave” (Resp.17, M, Co2).

“Shares are not the critical factor to change the employee attitude in the company. It is a kind of recognition, as a result we give them a kind of ownership” (Resp.67, M, Co3).

“...the way I look at it, an employee share ownership scheme does not mean ‘do more’, it doesn’t mean they are more committed: they earn some money, they received and they sell it. If one makes a study, one can see that not many retain their shares, most will sell whenever they get a chance” (Resp.10, M, Co3).

A senior retiring manager who was once very involved in the company employee share ownership scheme policy remarked:

“The ESOS in this company is meant for recognition of contribution, but only for all executives, that is to say to motivate executives onwards but never the staff. To retain all these people, nevertheless some still quit. When they received 30 shares, they exercised all the 30 shares. Commitment does not relate to shares, when the need comes they still leave, especially at the managerial level” (Resp.15, M, Co1).

These quotations reflect the many views from top management that shares were not related to commitment. One manager stated similar view: “It’s not very tangible, to give shares to get people committed to the company.” (Resp.63, M, Co3), and another statement from one of the senior managers that rounded off the issue was:

“...commitment has nothing to do with shares, but if you are already committed, regardless of shares you are still committed. The shares will just enhance the feeling of belonging” (Resp.5, M, Co1).

From Table 6.5, it is clear that the majority perceived that there is a relationship between quality circles and organizational commitment but most of the respondents perceived no relationship between ESOSs and organizational commitment. Some factors in Tables 6.3 and 6.4 contribute to the above results. For example, it was noted that quality circles implemented well can result in them meeting the objective of getting a high level of commitment among employees - this relates to the feeling

of being recognised. Employee share ownership schemes, on the other hand, have hardly any relationship with commitment partly due to the nature of the participants, especially, at the managerial level, who may see it as a perk or as an extra benefit. According to top-level management, adoption is because employees take for granted that their company will do so as other companies are doing it.

6.7 Reasons for gender differences

This section directly addresses Objective Two which set out to explore further the reasons for observed differences or similarities in the attitudes of men and women towards EI, and also towards women and work generally (e.g., stereotyping, opinions of female leaders, differential experiences in the workplace, such as differential treatment, discrimination). Findings from the quantitative data showed gender differences were identified only amongst non-participants' attitudes towards quality circles (more positive attitudes were found for women non-participants) and in attitudes towards women and work (where less favourable attitudes were held by men towards women and work). No gender differences were identified in job satisfaction, organizational commitment or attitudes towards management, and this was the same for both participants and non-participants of ESOS.

Using the interviews and focus groups to explore these findings further, the findings can be organized into several themes. These are summarized in Table 6.6 and discussed further below.

Table 6.6 Summary of interview and focus group themes related to gender differences or similarities

Perceptions/views	Interview						Focus Groups	
	Top Management		Middle Management		Management		Workers	
	Women	Men	Women	Men	Men	Women	Men	Women
Are women the same or different at work?	Similar. Differ in positions	Similar. Sometimes more committed than men.	Similar. Work harder for dual role	Different in technical positions	-	-	-	-
Are women committed at work?	Yes	Yes, from managers onwards	Yes, from managers onwards	Women at lower level not committed	-	-	-	-
Women bosses	Similar. But emotional, sensitive and not far sighted	Lack of confidence in decision making Set too high a standard	Perceived lack of respect from men	Lack confidence in decision-making. Not involved in fieldwork, more to admin/lab, emotional, can't accept pressure	Lack confidence in decision making, sensitive, emotional			
Discrimination	No discrimination.	Yes, in technical positions. Some say yes also to managerial posts. Partial say no, for clerical	Yes, in meetings women's view is hardly taken	Yes, in hard engineering. Women ok in electrical engineering	Yes, in training, and contribution not recognised, office functions, communication			
Harassment	-	Yes, in technical positions	Sometimes, some men.	Yes, in technical positions	-	-	-	-
Stereotyping	Yes, males more robust in technical disciplines, women efficient if passed 'reproductive age'. Work context: women not suitable in technically high risk job	Yes. But some others were not critical.	Yes; perceive that men believe they are superior, women have to work 3-4 times harder	Yes, women in technical not suitable, Clerical more suitable.	Yes, perceived women managers are equally biased towards women staff.			
Women's reasons for working	-	-	Initially work. Later, career/profession	-	Secure income, support family			

6.7.1 Perceptions of women in workplace

Women as the same

Summarising first the perceptions of men who believed there were no differences between men and women, one district section manager voiced a typical view:

“...if women and men working here are different, I am really not aware of it. I really don't think they are” (Resp.20, M, Co2).

Another district senior manager had a somewhat more positive view:

“Women, they are not only similar, but in some cases they can be a better performer” (Resp.65, M, Co3).

A technician had some concern for women whenever they have to do shift work (focus group):

“...there is not much of a problem for ladies in clerical, they only have problems if they join the technical line; shift work, working late nights is tough for a lady” (Resp.27, M, Co2, FG).

Another rather strong view came from one male district manager:

“Sometimes people said that women can't work, with which I strongly disagree; they are just the same, as there are men who still can't. A woman too has a career to be fulfilled. They are similar, I don't see any difference” (Resp.70, M, Co2).

A manager felt that it had nothing to do with gender but individual attitude instead, when he said:

“Women normally working in a group, they'll get involved, be technicians or clerks, it is so much depends on each individual attitude” (Resp.76, M, Co3).

A male district manager had some strong views on comments made about women's lack of commitment to work when he elaborated:

“I tend to disagree with saying that women are less committed. Another point that I disagree on is how they measure commitment. Commitment is not factor of time, men too do take it easy at work then work a little late, whereas women tend to be committed when they are at work. From my observation, I feel the difference is women have 100% commitment, whereas men only 60%” (Resp.69, M, Co2).

Another senior vice- chairman was saying the difference is not in gender but in their position instead:

“...as far as women, sex wise there is no difference, but there are a lot of differences between the layers in the organizations...shows very high commitment around a certain area instead” (Resp.2, M , Co2).

Another male manager whose views are similar, reasoned that time plays a part, when he mentioned:

“... my comment is men and women are at par. In those days we might think that their thinking/mind is being controlled by something, ... men as ‘breadwinner’...things like that, but time has changed” (Resp.13, M, Co3).

Many women also believed there were no differences. One district female junior manager made a comment that there was not much difference where work is concerned, when she mentioned:

“In terms of work I don’t think there is any difference. Whenever I am required to go outstation, I just do it; I don’t put any limitation to it. I am a family lady, I have one child, and there is someone to help me in looking after my child. In the technical line, if you don’t have family support, then you have to think twice” (Resp.23, F, Co2).

Another female manager claimed that she saw no difference, except for the similar concern of the need to work harder, for domestic reasons, when she explained:

“I don’t see any difference, only that we have to work harder, because of our family obligation; it is harder for women actually. Harder because we’ve got

our homes and at the same time we've got our careers; you know to balance dual roles, there's more pressure for women.”((Resp.18, F, Co 2).

A female finance vice-chairman felt no difference, when she claimed:

“... I compete equally with them (men)... I think I also put in a lot of hard work. And I never felt that because I am a woman I'm prejudiced...maybe in the finance line it is more suitable for a woman, that could be it. I think, women when they do things they put patience into it, women do a lot of thinking which is lacking in men... even the level of commitment sometimes, I feel women are more patient” (Resp.14, F, Co2)

6.7.2 Women as different

The majority view was that there were significant differences between men and women. Some observed contrasts in personality. Most male respondents felt women are different in many ways, behavioural as well as in terms of possessing certain limitations. Although some women did acknowledge their limitations, especially in relation to domesticity, most felt that they were being treated differently at the workplace.

Taking first the perceptions of men, one comment that came from top management mentioned women's limitations and the differences in behaviour, but stressed that there was no discrimination on their part:

“...the problem with ladies, they have some limitations, so there is always a limitation, a handicap. In terms of character too they are different, I find it's quite difficult to open up with ladies, I don't want to tell them openly as they are sensitive. It is OK if you stay on the boundary. But I think other than that they are fine, we don't have any discrimination at all” (Resp.3, M, Co2).

A male senior technician made an almost similar comment when he said (in a focus group):

“In my own observation of women engineers, once they have a family,

whenever the job requires them to attend to a problem in the night, they will never be there, they will end up delegating it to their male subordinates” (Resp.44, M, Co 3).

An HR manager made another similar claim of no discrimination on their part, but he had a somewhat different view, when he said:

“There are differences in an artificial sense, discrimination no. If there is difference I would say more towards showing respect, towards expectations between gender. If there is job to be done, I wouldn’t send a lady, as I know it’s tough and rough, so those kinds of things still have effects...because of my concern” (Resp.3, M, Co3).

He also had some comment to make on the differences, not only in behavioural but leadership style as well, when he said:

“...Yes, they are visibly different; Women who are managers tend to be more picky than male managers. Even though we tell them, it is very difficult for them to change, because of the high standard they set themselves. It is difficult for them to be here last time, see, so they have to set a very high standard on themselves. ...they can’t change from managing a situation to leading a situation, that is what our leadership is focusing on.” (Resp.3, M, Co3)

Similar comments from senior managers and managers on behavioural differences and working standards are given below.

“Ladies tend to get more emotional, though they are committed. The difference is they focus on insignificant issues instead of main agenda; not to be expected at executive level” (Resp.75, M, Co3).

“...there is a difference, they tend to focus on petty things, small agenda” [laughter] (Resp.15, M, Co1).

“Men tend to be more direct to handle any grievances, but women tend to just talk among themselves” (Resp.67, M, Co3).

Other comments focused on women and decision-making. Many respondents felt that because of their lack of confidence in character, this impeded the decision-making process. For women engineers, it was common to identify that they were often too timid in decision making. One male engineer observed:

“...However, in my own experience I’ve been working for tens of years, I am as scared whenever I’m required to make a decision that would involve life, you are talking about 11 KV (to shut down a power cable). Normally, despite the feeling, we still go on. But in the case of ladies, they are rather different. If they are given a choice, they would rely on someone else for the decision” (Resp.21, M, Co1).

A senior technician made a similar comment, when he said (in a focus group):

“To my own point of view, I feel women lack in aggressiveness; the nature of work, breakdown, needs a quick decision. You need to have rather pushy habits or be more aggressive in tackling those issues. Women, they are more suitable for computer work or administration” (Resp.48, M , Co 1, FG).

Another difference was mentioned in relation to technicalities, when one technician mentioned (in a focus group):

“... differences between them as engineers, men when they give instruction they still follow us and get involved, whereas women, they too give instructions but they just stay in their office, not involved in the physical job activities” (Resp.46, M, Co 2, FG).

A more direct opinion came from a recruitment senior manager, who summarised why women are “incompetent” at work, when he pointed out:

“We prefer men, as in this line of work (hard engineering), they are more efficient. That is not to say that women are not successful (in the similar nature of the job), but it is those small issues such as harassment, that in the long run

will affect their performance. Another reason is mobility, if women can be as mobile, then there is no problem, but normally it is difficult once they are married. For men, they are willing to try, as their wife will be following them. But we cannot say these to the ladies because this is their nature...if women are prepared to get dirty in overhauling engines, etc., I'm not aware of it, but we [representing recruitment] will still not give it to women. Another thing about women, when it is 4.15pm, they started to think of their family.”
[Malaysian working hours 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.] (Resp.11, M, Co3)

This comment is particularly demoralising for women as it reflects an attitude of not believing in women's abilities to work for particular jobs. The recruitment personnel in this company reflected stereotyping and prejudice. This gives an impression of constrained opportunities for women, who are restricted from getting into 'male' posts in the company.

6.7.3 Women as bosses

The interviewer also asked the respondents for their view on women as a boss. Most found it different from having a male boss, in a negative way, with few seeing it in a positive light. An atypical comment came from one senior district administrator who acknowledged the differences between male and female bosses but in a positive way:

“There is some difference between them, women bosses tend to be more caring. In my experience I had this lady boss, whenever I needed to go outstation, she made sure that all my needs were taken care of, very detailed, very caring” (Resp.68, M, Co2).

Most others saw differences in a negative light. One senior administration manager spoke as follows:

“This is not my first time having a lady boss. Because she is a lady, we try not to be aggressive. I think, a lady, you give a bit of discount [laughter]. With men you can bang on the table, with a lady you don't bang on the table, something inside you tells you, 'she is a lady'. Sometimes, I feel it is a

problem because she is not one of you (male worker).” (Resp.13, M, Co3).

Another senior retiring manager touched on decision making, when he said:

“...the difference is male bosses are more confident in making a decision but ladies are slightly timid (less confident), they tend to stick to guidelines. If you don't stick to that, then you need to answer all her questions. I feel they are a bit dogmatic, is not just a rule, if you don't give them a chance to explore they will not. Men are a bit different, but they too need to inculcate the sense of empowerment, freedom of work, then only they work differently” (Resp.15, M, Co1).

A senior clerk found that women bosses are different, in the sense that they are difficult, when he said (focus group):

‘My bosses tend to be ladies. I find that it is rather difficult to work with them, ...men are easier they are more direct. Lady bosses, they are not consistent and at times tend to get emotional” (Resp.55, M, Co1, FG).

A similar view came from one of the male staff, when he said (focus group):

“I had a lady boss. Lady bosses generally can't accept pressure...they are not professional in handling that kind of situation” (Resp.37, M, Co2, FG).

Women's views were expressed in the focus groups. Surprisingly, they mostly shared the same thoughts as men. A woman clerk made a comment similar to what other men had said, when she said:

“Male bosses, they are more open-minded, and they are fit to be a leader. Whereas, lady bosses, their decisions are not very good...slow and also sensitive in personality” (Resp.no.,24, F, Co 3, FG).

Other female members of staff stated:

“Women bosses - they are emotional, it affects our work. They tend to raise their voice, though it can be solved rationally” (Resp.45, F, Co2, FG).

“...they are ruled by their heart” (Resp.44, M, Co3, FG) from male technician.

Another member of clerical staff from a company HQ made her point that women staff can also be discriminated against by female bosses, when she said:

“Women bosses, in most cases, they don’t accept a decision that comes from a woman subordinate, they prefer men. When we felt our ideas are not recognised, then when she asks for one next time, we just don’t feel like contributing any more” (Resp.35, F, Co2, FG).

Being objective or not in their outlook in making judgements is one of the factors for having a contrasting view among the respondents. Basically, women workers were committed to work, despite it being mentioned by most respondents that the women are different in some ways, but basically they were committed. As one male engineer said:

“...in working relationships, women are the ones who usually will come for advice, but nevertheless, they are committed to their work” (Resp.21, M, Co1).

And another male manager defined commitment after office hours:

“I find my lady staff are committed to their work, problems arise only if they are required to do extra-curricular activities after office hours, such as, attend quality circles. To extra-curricular work, they are not committed” (Resp. 22, M, Co2).

A similar comment from a male junior district manager, where he had a fairer outlook on gender differences in relation to commitment:

“... commitment just the same, men prefer to stay late to complete their work. Some women, when the husband is outstation, they also do the same; it’s not that men are more committed by staying late. It could be that their efficiency is not as good...can’t complete on time...female efficiency during working hours is more productive.” (Resp. 76, M, Co3).

A human resource manager observed that the higher women get in the hierarchy, the more they are becoming like men. Nevertheless, he found there are still some differences in a certain way when he mentioned:

“I notice women; the higher they are, the more aggressive they get [laughter]. I feel as though they have to maintain their status. Again, this is their culture, they have to prove more than men more often than not.” (Resp.17, M, Co2).

A further area of distinction which arose amongst managers was that differences also related to hierarchical level in the organization.

“At managerial level they are equal, and at workers’ level they are different. I think it is related to education, the higher you get, the more exposed you become, and then you know that is no different in terms of work life...but those people who are not exposed to that kind of environment, they still have that concept” (Resp.16, M, Co1).

This manager continued by adding:

“Like a paradox, we are talking about women and men, lower and top level, men at the top realise, they know women are as capable as men, whereas men at a lower level always feel that women are not fit, you know (laughing), not as good as men” (Resp.16. M, Co1).

This comment shows that men at various levels in the organization view women differently. Men at lower levels tend to stereotype more, whereas at top levels they seem to accept women as capable. If this is true, then women at lower levels are the ones that are disadvantaged because of their peers’ stereotyping outlook.

6.7.4 Women’s experiences in the workplace

Differential treatment

The interviewer sought opinions from women, both lower level workers and managers, on whether they experienced any gender differences in the workplace. Women’s views were expressed in the focus groups as follows by one female district

staff member who had something to say on being unequally treated.

“We women workers are always at a disadvantage. We are not being treated as those women staff in HQ [more of departmental issue than company as a whole]. Lately, there has been some big training going on, men are given a room to work in but we are not given any [unequal treatment]. During lunch, men staff can join the meal with the management, able to socialise, but not for us, we are being separated” (Resp.31, F, Co3, FG).

Another female staff member from the same focus group voiced her frustration, when she said:

“... the boss never recognised our contribution, he is not open minded. Our view as lower rank can never be accepted. ‘I am a senior district engineer, you are just a clerk’ (being cynical), he goes for level, that’s makes it hard” (Resp.32, F, Co3, FG).

Another female member of staff, concerned about lack of interaction with the male superior, said:

“... there is not a question of lack of communication, the fact is there is hardly any. We are never called for meeting. And we can’t even voice our concern, he [the boss] didn’t even bother if we have things to say” (Resp.33, F, Co2, FG).

Another response, from a female staff member, who was concerned about the lack of understanding from her superior was as follows:

“...I find it hard to understand, they too having a family of their own; similarly applies to lady bosses, they too have children like us, then how come they can’t understand our concern?” (Resp.35, F, Co1 FG).

A female clerical staff member was equally concerned when she said:

“...we are not asking too much, all we want is to be treated as equal as our male colleagues; just treat us like a friend” (Resp.58, F, Co2, FG).

Female junior managers, exemplified by this female district manager, agreed that

management treat men and women differently when she commented:

“Management always believe that men are much better than you (ladies) I think maybe because the management are made of men (laugh); top management are men, so they always think they are always better. So, they think men should be the leader for everybody” (Resp.74, F, Co3).

In response to the interviewer’s question, “What do you think of women generally?”, a woman manager was quite spontaneous in her reply, when she said:

“Undervalued by management. General Manager will listen to men and in most cases accept men’s view. With us (ladies), he will always try to add comments on our decisions. Even though we felt that our ideas are good enough, they will still come up with some other ideas. Well, in some sense, sometimes it is a better idea” (Resp. 63, F, Co1).

Almost a similar version of meetings, given by another junior manager, was:

“In meetings, our decision tends to be overruled. I can see one potential weakness, in every managerial meeting the chairman is always a man. Ever since I worked, there has never been a female decision maker; the final decision must always come from them, the men” (Resp. 64, F, Co3)

Moving to the views of female senior managers, one senior manager in head quarters claimed she had had a tough experience.

“... very challenging, lots of sensitivity, we [women] are viewed little as compared to them [men]. They say we are supposed to be at home, so even though how well you work, how well you perform, the view still remains. The fact is that they tend to associate with femininity, regardless of our slog through ‘our blood and sweat’. In my position, I have to work 3-4 times harder than any men, just to be as par” (Resp. 23, F, Co2).

Thus, this data suggested that women, even at managerial levels, find it hard to compete with men, with the stereotypical attitude that women’s place is in the home. With that, women have to work 3-4 times harder just to be equal to men.

Another female HR manager who took charge of handling mostly male engineers and technicians had almost the same experience - that chauvinism did exist, when she mentioned:

“... being a leader, I think there is some chauvinism, to prove something..., but I always had the opportunity to end up with a good boss. An example of chauvinism; they say men are better, but I think in my circle [of men] it's more a question of imposing opinions on you. Anyway, I find it is not a problem, it's only a minor group; you can be embarrassed by them, even in a circle of level-headed men.” (Resp. 8, F, Co1)

Discrimination

The main theme which emerged from the discussion on discrimination was that women were not given a chance to prove themselves. This explanation for differential treatment was suggested by this female staff member in a focus group:

“...since I came to work here they did not recruit any lady technicians” (Resp.53, F, Co3, FG).

Another woman from the same focus group suggested:

“I would say they should try to recruit a lady, then see for themselves whether ladies can do the same job as men. As till now it is not yet proved, as they haven't ever had a chance” (Resp.54, F, Co3, FG).

Another similar opinion came from a district female manager, when she said:

“Perhaps it is a woman's dilemma, in an actual sense we can work, but they [men] don't trust us. For that reason, we have to work doubly hard to prove we can do it.” (Resp. 23, F, Co2).

One female manager echoed many others when she mentioned that most bosses are men:

“In meetings, the ladies' voices are hardly heard; it's very difficult for their opinions to be heard, as most people at meetings are men, and it's made all the worse because the chairman is always a man ... bosses are all men here.

(Resp. 72, F, Co1).

Another female manager trying to suggest some explanation for this behaviour, commented:

“...the fact is, men are comfortable to be among their own kind (other men)”
(Resp. 64, F, Co3)

Denial of any discrimination

A common denial was approached among top management. At the beginning of the interview process, most top management denied the occurrence of any discrimination; not until the interviewer probed further did the other side of the picture appear. A remark made by a senior male engineering administrator represents some of the other managers also:

“... to me, I see them all as workers, gender comes secondary. There shouldn't be any discrimination kind of feeling that men can work better than women. Here, in the general office, I think the output [between gender] is almost the same. There is nothing much to be expected in the office work anyway” (Resp. 10, M, Co2).

In other words, where the job is not challenging, women are perceived as more suitable. This is noted from the sentence; “there is nothing to be expected in office work anyway” (the majority of female employees carried out office work).

A CEO who was trying to claim there was no discrimination commented:

“In my decision making, gender does not come into it, especially at a higher level. Of course, when I speak at district level, the male engineers are more robust, in terms of dealing with the contractors. But if you come at a higher level, women can be more efficient, because at that time their children have grown up; they can be as efficient as men. Usually by that age, they are very productive in terms of work and they are not restrictive any more” (Resp.1, M, Co1).

Added to that he claimed he saw no difference in women:

“In fact, I have a few who are very vocal (real laugh). Nevertheless, it is subjective, it depends on personality, also environment. I don’t feel any difference, except that when two girls sit together they tend to talk in the meeting, so you cannot let them sit together, you have to separate them” (Resp.1, M , Co1)

Stereotyping

Some managers seemed to give reasons or excuses for stereotyping, arguing that the masculinity of the workplace makes the difference. As one HR manager explained:

“Here opportunities are equal, the only difference is over here, there are more male senior staff, simply because [name of company] is a technically-based company; naturally, there are more male managers” (Resp.11, M, Co3).

In referring to suitable jobs for women many seemed to identify a theoretical type rather than a physically- involved job. As one male technician explained (focus group):

“Ladies can work, they can be as high as GM for example ...[here he named one woman general manager lady in the organization]. Once they become engineer or manager, then there is not so much a problem, as all they need to do is to give orders; they are all right in that function. Managers don’t really have to do the job, it’s more of theoretical application; whereas, a technician you have to be totally involved” (Resp. 38, M, Co2, FG).

Male staff members shared this view that for other reasons women are not suitable for hard engineering. One technician mentioned (focus group):

“... women, their constraint is not so much of body structure; there are women who have a tough body structure, ...but it’s so much in the context of work itself, a very high risk for them” (Resp. 28, M, Co2, FG).

And another similar opinion came from one male in a focus group:

“... if men were to jump up and down the lorries, who cares, ...but when a

lady does that, you know we, as Muslim men, feel awkward” (Resp. 44, M, Co1, FG).

Stereotyping was not only evident amongst men, but it was also present in women bosses. In one example, a female HR manager put forward the following opinion:

“HRM is easier for ladies. I think women are better utilised in the areas that require thinking, rather than brute force; leave the men to do actual sweating. There are areas where men do better, ...I think we are made different, we are created different, so it’s no point wishing something against what you are by nature, but like when I was doing engineering, that does not mean I have to compete with men in a physical way, the test is on capability in what they are taught in school. During recruitment, we tell them about job expectations; actually, it’s open to you to chart your own future.” (Resp. 8, F, Co1).

Another female manager who admitted herself discriminating against women sometimes mentioned:

“... normally at that level, I need to ask myself who to pass the job responsibility to, lady or man. Because at times it is true they (women) tend to be committed to their families instead of work” (Resp. 18., F, Co2).

Many reasons were given for this action; for example, that the nature of the job was technical or hard engineering (hence a masculine job) which made it hard for women to get to the top management level. Others blamed history. A woman human resource manager explained:

“Back to history, education, etc. Now it is changing, in those days the majority of workers were male; only these days you can see many more workers are female.” (Resp. 8, F, Co1).

One CEO claimed he was sorry about the nature of the job. Referring to the example of a retiring female GM, he said:

“...I don’t have anybody; a lady to become general manager. But unfortunately for this company, we grew out of a really hard engineering

company, so it's the nature of the job..." (Resp 1, M, Co1).

He continued to claim that selection relied more on nature:

"Now it is changing. Women are more into engineering, but women who are engineers are still going for soft engineering. In [name of the company] it is still hard engineering, which unfortunately are men, so by the time I have to pick the best person for the job, the persons around are all men [laugh], so a natural process of selection has taken place" (Resp. 1, M, Co1).

And lastly, he claimed a man is still a better worker:

"At the moment there are more girls getting better grades ...but somehow, having said all that, when it comes to work, somehow, because of robustness, an average boy may do better in the field at the job, there is where the thing comes in...A production engineer, a district engineer, the supervising factors, ...it doesn't have to be first class; so more the robustness, ruggedness, and manliness, that's what counts more. So, it is the nature of work" (Resp. 1, M, Co1).

Male staff too tended to share this common view. One male technician mentioned (focus group):

"Men tend to be more mobile than women, whenever we need to go outstation. Women may have more responsibility at home, whereas men have less. For that reason, managers here prefer to recruit male technicians." (Resp.55, M, Co1, FG).

And another male technician whose view was similar to management's (focus group) said:

"... if women were to choose engineering as a career, ... it's acceptable if it's electrical, you can just use you fingers" (Resp. 44, M, Co3, FG).

Women and supervisor support

Non-stereotyping bosses tend to be more ready to understand, support and encourage women to be involved. A male junior district manager mentioned:

“Actually it so much depends on how the section is managed; whether women are motivated by their boss to achieve or not” (Resp 75, M, Co3).

A senior manager showed understanding when he explained:

“...I mean those who are married; the dual role syndrome. I understand when they have problems working extended hours, but as long as the output in the office (during working hours) is done, then it's not a problem ... in that sense, yes, women are committed. In higher levels, it depends on your standing, like my GM who is a lady, she works till late” (Resp. 5, M, Co1).

From some views of ‘concerned’ managers, it seems that their understanding and support do make a lot of difference. For example, one manager, sharing his experience when he was a district manager argued:

“... initially, ladies they are a little timid to speak out, but when we [managers] encourage them by giving them clarifications and explanations, they can be just as good. When we are more open, they too can come out with good ideas, not only just the men” (Resp. 68, M, Co2).

A similar comment from a HR manager showed that he felt their support will decide whether it will impede their performance or encourage their confidence:

“It depends on a person who managed it. In my perception, when I give the opportunity to somebody, I can see some difference in their performance, they too can do it” (Resp.17, M, Co2).

These remarks reflect ‘supportive’ managers who noted that women can get involved, if given the opportunity and support. Company support, therefore, does make a difference in the gender issue. One example was the issue of women lacking mobility. A district manager had some comments on how the company plays a role,

when he mentioned:

“On the issue of mobility, the beauty of this company is that it tries to consider if the ladies are married. So where mobility is concerned for ladies, they will take that factor into consideration in relation to their spouse’s working factor. They will try as far as possible not to transfer the lady involved” (Resp. 69, M, Co2).

Women’s reasons for working

Female employees in the focus groups provided several different reasons for why they worked.

“My reason to work is as a source of income. When we have to stay at home and there are no children to attend to, we feel bored” (Resp. 24, F, Co3, FG).

“My first early reason was as a source of income to support my family. But as time goes by the reason has changed. Now I love working” (Resp33. F, Co2, FG).

“I will only stop working when someone wants me to do so. Either I get married and my future husband prefers me to stop working, or because of a retirement” (Resp.52, F, Co3, FG).

“In my case, although I’m married, I will continue working as I have someone to take care of my children and I have my husband’s support. We need the money” (Resp. 56, F, Co1, FG).

“To support my family” (Resp. 33, F, Co2, FG).

“For a rainy day; you never know when your husband’s work will end” (Resp. 42, F, Co1 FG).

“I have a high ambitions but it’s not achievable; but I will still working even if

basic financial needs are met” (Resp.54, F, Co3, FG).

In general, women’s main reason for working was financial need. However, some mentioned, that although that was the initial reason, this later changed when they found satisfaction in their work. At the same time, although most felt they needed to work to support their family, they continued working even when the financial need was met. Hence, basically, contradictory to most stereotyped beliefs that women prefer to stay at home, working only out of necessity; in these findings they in fact liked working.

Female managers voiced similar opinions. A finance vice-chairman shared her reason as follows:

“When I first worked I thought I had to work, but as I went along with work...job satisfaction ...changes as you get older. Now the reason is more for career”. (Resp. 14, F, Co2)

To the question by the interviewer “Will you ever stop working?” the same respondent replied: “I will not stop as long as the company needs me.” To the question, “What if you have more than enough money?”, her answer was:

“Even then, I don’t think I’ll stay at home, I’ll do something else to contribute” (Resp.14, F, Co2).

A similar version came from a female junior manager, when she said:

“In my early working days, the reason for working was for money, but now it’s more for work satisfaction. As you continue working, your attitudes towards work change, its much better now” (Resp. 64, F, Co3).

To the question of whether she will ever quit if she has excessive money:

“No, I will not quit, ... you’ll get bored staying at home, and furthermore we get used to it” (Resp.64, F, Co3)

A district female accountant manager had a common reason, when she mentioned:

“I work for career and for my profession, of course.” (Resp, 63, F, Co1)

To the similar question, whether she will ever stop and stay at home if she had plenty of money, her answer was:

“No, I think for most executives we prioritise our career, to go all out” Resp. 18, F, Co2).

The reasoning is more obvious for the women executives; even though initially some worked for money, that changed when they found satisfaction in work. Some did stress however, that they even began their job with a career in mind and continued working with their profession in mind. Nevertheless, almost all claimed that they would not stop working even when they exceeded their financial needs. They definitely would not give up their jobs to just stay at home.

Why are these women different?

Generally, female staff's reasons for working were for basic need (money). For the female executives/managers, some did initially enter the workforce for money, but most mentioned their career and profession. Whether it was for career or for money, some commented that this was related to their attitude to work generally. From most comments made by women managers, they felt dedication to work comes only when you gain satisfaction from what you are doing, in working for a career.

One female district manager spoke for many when she explained:

“I think, clerks, generally they work for money. When money is a factor, they even have to work at the job that they don't like doing. The best thing is doing something that you like, then you can see the dedicated workers come in ...you might need to enrich their work” (Resp 23, F, Co2).

Poor support from husbands was a problem, as another female manager explained:

“I think their husbands are more domineering, ...their husband expects them to finish at four o'clock. I think their job is not so much on management; they

basically do what they are supposed to do. Their scope normally depends on their immediate boss" (Resp. 74, F, Co3).

A female junior manager mentioned a narrower outlook:

"There are differences if you compare executives and the staff level. Executives, they are more open minded, so they tend to be more objective in their outlook; whereas at clerical level, where most gender differences exist, they tend to have many limitations in relation to their home and work commitment" (Resp. 19, F, Co).

The reasons for working changed with time, according to one district manager:

"I think the priority changes as time goes by, initially they wanted a career, but when later they found out that they are doing it at the expense of their family, and when there are more children, then they just quit." (Resp. 23, F, Co2)

She continued by saying that the difference with such managers is that they are career-orientated.

"We are career women ... I think for most managers we did prioritise our career, to go all out, but if one thinks the family is more important, then they are willing to sacrifice their career" (Resp. 23, f, Co2).

Here she was assuming that all managers are career-orientated and that lower level staff are not. In her statement, she said the managers prioritise their careers whereas the workers do not. Most other managers spoke of women workers who do not enjoy their job because of lack of commitment, without realising that these workers have no choices with their limited education. Some others presumed that these women workers sought temporary jobs as having children and taking care of home was their priority.

Not surprisingly, there were some comments from workers that, besides men, even female managers refused to understand their constraints, even though these women managers had children and families of their own.

At this point, the interviewer was trying to get opinions from the respondents about some claims (e.g., Hakim, 1996) that women prefer to stay at home. She replied: "...if you can resolve your domestic problem, I don't think they would like to stay at home, they will feel bored, as they are so used to the working life" (Resp.23, F, Co2).

Work-life balance

Work-life balance is a major issue among working women, as the whole problem is about responsibility at both home and workplace and the dual role this entails. It can result in a major difference between working mothers and men in the workplace. One male manager mentioned:

"... due to the problem of balancing work life, their working hours are totally only during working hours for women, their efficiency and commitment are only during working hours. When they are single they are quite flexible. And when it comes to outstanding staff, seldom do you see female staff get the award, as they are more routine, they don't like additional responsibilities" (Resp. 73, M, Co1).

From a female vice- chairman on the point of what would help, she believed:

"... it would help if there is a domestic help (a maid or child taker). In my case, my maid has been with me for eight years. I have no worries, I work with a peace of mind, a very practical problem." (Resp. 14, F, Co2)

At this point the interviewer suggested having a company child minder/nursery, instead. (Resp. 14). She then replied:

"... for some jobs but not all, like mine in top rank, there are certain hours you have to be around, still difficult unless with computers now, maybe cyber technology... [working at home] (Resp. 14, F, Co2).

A female finance senior manager made a similar comment, but she added the fact that it needed husband support as well:

"... the only handicap about women is, when it comes to children, they have

to sacrifice sometimes. So if only they have good domestic help; of course, husband has got to understand. Well, nowadays, husband too wants to have a quality life, wants to have a lot of money” (Resp.8, F, Co2).

All of the reasons for differences or similarities between men and women are summarized in Table 6.6. In general, women are perceived as lacking commitment at lower levels of the hierarchy, but as equal at higher levels. Nevertheless, women bosses are viewed to be emotional, lacking confidence in decision-making, and as similar to lower level women employees; lacking in commitment when they have to attend to home or children. Lower level women are being discriminated against mostly because of the perceived nature of their job; in this study, men perceived women as unsuitable for a technically based job. At the same time, the findings suggested that some harassment has taken place against those women employees who associate themselves with technical jobs especially those requiring fieldwork. On the other hand, women had clear attitudes towards work; at the female managerial level, they claimed that they worked for career or for fulfilling their professional needs, and lower level workers claimed they mostly worked for income to support their family, although there were claims that they enjoyed working and gradually gained more satisfaction from their work the longer they were in the workforce.

6.8 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided an analysis of the interview results from the three big utility companies in Malaysia. The interviews covered all managerial levels, from junior managers to Chief Executive Officer, and the focus group interviews were conducted with lower level staff, the majority being clerks and technicians. The scope of the interviews covered their attitudes towards employee involvement (EI) schemes, represented by quality circles and employee share ownership schemes, as well as the relationship between employee involvement schemes and organizational commitment. The interviews and focus groups, were also trying to uncover whether there was a difference or similarity in gender in the scope of attitudes towards

employee involvement. Reasons for being different or similar are further explored in looking into some common gender issues in the workplace, such as commitment, stereotyping, and reasons for working.

Top management claimed the rationale for employee involvement was basically for competitive advantage, and because of this they felt it was related to the organizational commitment of employees. As an example, being involved was thought to lead to being recognised by management, which could lead to commitment, and hence increase performance for the company. With regard to quality circles, from the employee point of view (more so, the women), the majority claimed they were not clear what quality circles were all about; they perceived them as something to do with winning a project. On the other hand, some participants agreed with management that it was about competitive advantage. As for the employee share ownership schemes, only a few among top management and management perceived that the scheme created a feeling of commitment. In relation to their perception of the relationship between employee involvement and organizational commitment, the majority of the management perceived there was a relationship between quality circle participation and organizational commitment, provided the quality circle was well implemented. Nevertheless, most of the managers perceived that there was no relationship between ESOS and organizational commitment.. Most participants took it as a good investment, and some took it for granted that it was their right to receive it.

The majority of the managers were of the same opinion (that it was their right as part of their benefits), and some saw it as just a good investment. The majority also argued that relative to the companies' profit, the shares portion received was too small to create any kind of feeling of belongingness. The justification for the implementation of EI from top management was that competitors or other companies did it, and if they did not, they would be troubled by their employees. Some claimed that it was an increasing trend. As for employees, they felt management was unfair in implementing employee share ownership schemes across the company; the gap between them management was viewed as too great. Most of them received around

1-3 shares, whereas middle management started with 30 shares, and top management received above 100. Nevertheless, they still maintained that this did not make them indifferent towards their work.

Their perceptions of the objectives of EI schemes (both QCs and ESOSs) did seem to be related to their attitudes towards the scheme. The fact that most of the lower level workers, and even some middle managers, were not clear regarding the objectives, may simply mean the implementation of the schemes was not properly done. There seemed to be some common themes emerging regarding implementation problems; firstly, there were problems of communication, and secondly, the management were not clear about the objectives themselves. Management focused so much on "winning the project" with the ultimate aim of being nominated for participating at a national convention. A thorough quality circle process itself and training were often overlooked.

One thing was clear, however - the existence of bias from management at a lower level, mainly, against women, for both schemes. For quality circles, there was an absence of a conducive environment for them to take part, which included not getting support from superiors. For employee share ownership schemes, there was a perceived "big gap" between workers and management, which meant they therefore saw the employee share ownership scheme as not for them, but to management's advantage instead. With all these points, different attitudes towards the schemes were expressed, more so from lower level workers.

The majority of non-participants in either the QC or ESOS programmes came from the women employees, and the majority of these were clerks. What seems to have been their biggest problem that resulted in non-participation was that they felt their contributions were not being recognized. Firstly, the environment was not conducive for any participative scheme to take place, as an authoritarian culture and management prerogative still existed. Secondly, they had to 'compete' with male technicians, and given the nature of their jobs, the technicians were the ones that almost consistently 'won' the 'projects'; men therefore were more likely to be

recognized. As for the male employees and managers (both women and men) their main concerns leading to non-participation were because of time constraints related to their work. The majority of the middle managers viewed it as 'lip service' from top management; for example, some saw it as a joke, with too many programmes being introduced in one short period of time. The root cause of the problem here is that management emphasize so much winning the 'project', with the ultimate aim of being nominated in participating at the national convention, rather than managing the quality circle process. This attitude was shared among all participants of quality circles.

The impact was mainly on women at lower levels of the workforce; the qualitative findings highlighted their experiences of being disadvantaged in the workplace, and the stereotyping attitudes around them from male managers as well as their spouses. The 'competition' they have to go through with their peers (i.e., the majority, male technicians) increases the disadvantage as they are unable to be involved equally.

There was almost a consensus view from women interviewees, regardless of whether they were managers or workers, although the workers level seemed to report the most impact; they felt strongly that their positions and the nature of women's work put them at disadvantage. This resulted in differences of attitudes towards employee involvement. The greatest impact seemed to come from women's different experiences at work. Results showed that women at the workers' level were at a disadvantage in many respects; they were mostly perceived as lacking commitment towards work, and as not committed towards the employee involvement programmes, such as quality circles. This was especially the perception of the male workers. Moreover, their own experience at work reflected the stereotyped outlook of men and management, and the significant effects of the lack of support from their superior at work as well as their spouse back home. Keeping other things constant, they were perhaps also interested in getting involved as were men. Although women at higher levels reported being at an advantage in their positions, they too experienced some disadvantages and stereotyping that women were still considered different from men. Men implied they were better suited for the top jobs, for

example, because women were emotional and lacked confidence in their decision-making. It seemed that the patriarchal system would ensure that no matter how many women entered the organization, nothing would change in terms of the perceptions of gender differences.

CHAPTER SEVEN

DISCUSSION

7.1 Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to discuss findings of the empirical study presented in Chapters Five and Six. In Chapter Five, the quantitative analysis addressed Objective One, which investigated whether there is a relationship between employee attitudes towards employee involvement (EI) and employee organizational commitment for both men and women. More specific hypotheses were constructed to test for expected differential relationships between participants and non-participants' attitudes and the effects of management support. These concepts and their importance for understanding EI schemes were reviewed in Chapters Two and Three.

Significant gender differences were found only in non-participants' attitudes towards quality circle schemes where women non-participants tended to be more positive than male non-participants. In summary, the hypothesis tests also showed a significant difference between non-participants and participants in their attitudes towards quality circles, with the latter tending to be more positive. Findings for attitudes towards Employee Share Ownership Schemes (ESOSs) showed there was a significant relationship between attitudes towards the scheme and organizational commitment among participants, but a non-significant relationship among non-participants. There was no relationship between ESOSs and organizational commitment. With regard to superiors' support for quality circles, the result was consistent with other common findings that quality circles fail due to a lack of management support. Moreover, management support seems to act as an important moderator of the relationship between attitudes toward EI and organizational commitment in the case of non-participants. In this research, there was no significant relationship between attitudes towards EI and organizational commitment for participants of quality circles who perceived their superior's support, but there was a

significant relationship for non-participants. It indicates that leaders play an important role for non-members.

Chapter Six presented the findings for the analysis of Objective Two which explored the reasons for gender differences in the workplace by examining the qualitative data gathered from management interviews and employee focus groups. The reasons for gender differences or similarities that emerged focused around orientations to work, perceptions of women at work, and perceptions of women managers. Findings from the focus groups also showed that in organizational cultures where managers do not readily participate managers refuse to let go of old autocratic styles of leadership.

In the present chapter, the findings for Objectives One and Two are integrated around the study's main themes in order to draw from the data produced by all the methods (survey, interviews and focus groups). The discussion is organized into six sections dealing with the relationship between quality circles and organizational commitment, between ESOSs and commitment, the role of management support in facilitating employee attitudes towards schemes, managerial issues, implementation issues, and finally, issues related to gender differences.

7.2 Quality circles and organizational commitment

The research found that, for participants, attitudes towards quality circles and organizational commitment among participants were related. This result is in line with the focus group findings, where participants suggested their involvement in decision making regarding their work is an important determinant for maintaining a sense of commitment to the organization. When the organization provides them with such a vehicle, the probability of developing such commitment is enhanced.

For non-participants at the lower levels of the workforce, also, attitudes towards quality circles and organizational commitment were related even though non-participants, in general, tended to have less favourable attitudes towards the QC schemes. Both sets of positive attitudes were, unsurprisingly, related, even for the

generally less positive staff with respect to QCs. The findings showed, moreover, that there were more positive attitudes among female non-participants as compared to male participants. To explain this phenomenon, we may take into account the different positions of men and women in the organization, with the men being mostly technicians and the women mostly clerks. From the focus group findings, non-participation among women was attributed to the fact that they were not being recognized and being asked to 'compete' with the male technicians in order to 'win' a quality circle project. The majority also highlighted the absence of a non-participative climate surrounding the work area. What most concerned them was the authoritarian management style, which at the lower end positions put them at a further disadvantage. Their argument was that with such an environment they found it hard to believe that involvement practices can be fully implemented.

Nevertheless, if they are being treated as equal, it may for instance even be that women express a stronger demand for influence than men, given their circumstances. This could explain the finding of a significant difference between genders, where non-participant women workers have more favourable attitudes towards the scheme than non-participant men. Another possibility is that, despite their position low down in the hierarchy and not being given a chance to participate, women's attitudes are better than men's. Women, or at least those in powerless jobs, may be more readily impressed by management initiated EI initiatives, as has been noted by Allen et al. (1991) who found that in the late 1970s/early 1980s at least, women were if anything more supportive of the worker-director idea.

Findings from the interviews, suggested that even women at managerial levels claim that QCs are seen as a platform for them to get recognition. This points to one thing, that women in any position felt a disadvantage, even though it was more so at lower levels; they saw QCs as a chance to enhance their ability to compete with their male colleagues. Hence, participating in quality circles was presumed to be an advantage for being recognized by the management.

As for men at middle management, especially the district managers, they commented that their main constraint on participation was more time and work pressures. Most of them commented that top management did send directives for them to participate, but nevertheless top management did not fully support them in realizing their workload. As an example, when running QCs they felt that they were overburdened with extra workload but with no extra rewards.

The root cause of the problem is that top management or management in general put emphasis on the wrong focus - 'winning' quality circle projects. While presentation of the completed quality circle projects is part of the process, it is just part of the many other processes which need to be focused on. As an example, the processes of identifying a problem, of problem solving, of analyzing data, of brainstorming, of working as a team, and above all training are a crucial part and parcel of a quality circle. Workers at the lower level can never gain their confidence in quality circle success if not exposed to the proper training. This is where the majority of the non-participating women felt they were located.

From the interviews and focus groups findings, it was apparent that there was a 'culture' in these Malaysian public organizations that membership of QCs was perceived as primarily an exercise in being nominated for participating at the national conventions. Unfortunately, this attitude was shared by QC participants as well as the majority of the employees. The negative impact of this was felt mainly by the women at lower levels in the organization, who were further disadvantaged when 'competition' for projects was against the generally male technicians.

The holistic approach to quality circles concerned with getting employees involved in their daily work activities may indeed have a positive impact on employee satisfaction, organizational commitment and organizational efficiency. The quality of work life is also expected to be enhanced as a result of employees being given an opportunity to participate in problem solving and decision making (Hutchins, 1985; Yager, 1980). Women workers should be able to demonstrate the benefits of QCs in achieving worker involvement in problem solving, which eventually can lead to

personal development and greater recognition. This will only happen, however, according to Robson (1984), if companies can think fully through the meaning and implication of developing an open participative management culture, as would be expected in a well-implemented quality circle.

7.3 Employee share ownership schemes (ESOS) and organizational commitment

7.3.1 The findings for ESOS members

This questionnaire found that attitudes towards employee share ownership schemes (ESOSs) and organizational commitment among employees who owned shares were related. The argument for more positive attitudes, in this case, would see the notion of cognitive dissonance as a relevant factor (Festinger, 1957); in this situation, employees who join the scheme in the hope of making a good financial return would find their attitude to the company becoming more positive so as to be consistent with their new status as share owners (French, 1987). This reasoning is supported by these survey findings.

However, it contradicts the findings from the interviews with employees, the majority of whom disagreed that their positive attitudes towards the share schemes had any relationship with their feeling of commitment towards the organization. It cannot be assumed that those who owned shares in these utilities had sought active involvement with the company through share ownership any more than it can be supposed that those who did not own shares had actively chosen not to 'participate'. The great majority of those eligible for the shares in these ESOSs accepted them, but merely accepting to obtain company shares cannot by itself be taken for granted as an indication of commitment to the organization.

Indeed, upon more careful consideration of the focus group findings with employees, it appears that employees often considered the scheme to be just another part of the benefits package, no different from other benefits like pensions, for example. A similar result was found by Ramsay *et. al.*, (1990).

Furthermore, while there was no affective orientation noted in these findings, neither was there complete support for French's (1987) investment model that posits that the size of the investment should be an important predictor of attitudes. There was evidence for an investment orientation, but the size of the investment was not specifically a predictor of attitudinal outcomes. The results, therefore, generally indicated a lack of significant association between membership of the scheme and any attitude to the company or job.

7.3.2 Other predictors of organizational commitment

Referring to the survey findings, job satisfaction, satisfaction with the organization, educational attainment, and length of service were all positively related to organizational commitment. As in most studies concerned with predicting organizational commitment, all these variables were controlled for in the study. These findings are consistent with findings from other studies of the antecedents of commitment (Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; Meyer & Allen, 1984; Mowday, Porter & Steers, 1982), and the results are seen as giving an added validity to the measure of commitment used here.

Considering all these points, it is possible that the participants in ESOSs are in the bracket of having high educational attainment and length of service. As suggested in most studies, length of service especially has a positive relation to organizational commitment. It is, then, plausible that it is not the attitude of the participants to ESOS that relates positively to organizational commitment, but it is other characteristics of the participants (i.e., length of service, position in the company) that contribute towards organizational commitment.

Findings from the interviews and focus groups generally indicated a lack of significant association between the scheme and any attitude towards the organization. Even executives who received more shares than their subordinates would leave the firm when and if they felt it was necessary. Having the shares in the company did not stop them from leaving. Partly, this can be attributed to the fact that

the shares can be sold at any point of time. The majority of employees who own company shares were not convinced that ownership of shares transforms their attitudes or behaviour. They viewed ESOSs as just another benefit given to them; some had even taken it for granted that most companies these days would provide such a scheme for their employees.

7.3.3 The findings for non-members of ESOS

For non-participants in any of the ESOS programmes, there was no relation between attitudes to the schemes and organizational commitment. Perhaps the entitlement policy of ESOS programmes has a role in explaining this finding. As employees, they have no personal choice in becoming a shareholder or not. It is all predetermined by policy, rank and seniority.

In addition, employees who do not own shares also had two particular characteristics with regard to employment status and length of service. One possibility is that non-shareholders who had substantial tenure (i.e., length of service) were not given a chance of share ownership due to their position or employment status in the company. The majority of employees in this bracket were from clerical and manual employee ranks. Nevertheless, the suggestion made from these research findings is that length of service does relate to organizational commitment.

Another possibility is that the non-shareholders qualify for rank or having a higher position than general workers, but they were not entitled for ESOS membership as they did not meet the minimal length of service criteria, e.g., being at least a year with the company. Hence, with these possible mixtures of characteristics among the non-shareholders, it is unlikely for their attitudes towards ESOSs to have had a relationship with organizational commitment.

Nevertheless, common themes emerged for participants and non-participants with regard to the qualitative findings. The interviews, including the focus group interviews, showed an inclination towards no relationship between employee share ownership and organizational commitment. The majority of the non-participants,

who were unable to purchase the shares due to their non-eligibility through their position in the company, disagreed that employee share ownership had such a consequence. Regardless of negative attitudes towards the shares, they still felt committed to the company. The interviews revealed that most of the respondents shared the common understanding that large differences in the number of shares being allocated between managers and workers were unfair. The next other strongly supported statement that appeared from the focus groups was their disagreement that the ESOS reduced feelings of a gap between management and the employees.

As the majority of non-shareholders were at the lowest ranks of the company (i.e., manual and clerical workers) these views were unexpected. Although they felt unappreciated by management, nevertheless the feeling of commitment to their companies, which they have served for years, had not changed. Perhaps the feeling of commitment to the organization, which has been developed over the years, could not be traded even for their negative attitude towards the employee share ownership scheme.

If there was any difference between these two categories of employees, it was that those who did own shares in their company were slightly less likely to disagree that share ownership had any great transformative power. The divergence of opinion on these questions was greatest with respect to the idea that share ownership reduces feelings of a gap between management and employees.

7.3.4 The size of investment in ESOSs

As noted earlier, there have been contradictory findings noted in previous studies with regard to the impact of the investment size on subsequent attitudes. The finding from this survey and from the interview results shows that the size of the investment is not a significant predictor of attitudinal outcomes. It is consistent with Long's (1982) results, but contradicts Klein's findings (1987). Looking more closely at the two studies, however, there are important differences to be taken into consideration. For example, Klein measured attitudes across companies and compared the influence

of various features of different share schemes. She observed that the size of the company's contribution to the employee stock ownership plans was positively related to satisfaction with the scheme and to organization commitment. While the unit of analysis in Klein's study was the company, Long's study used the individual level of analysis. In this respect, the present study is more similar to Long's research, and therefore the findings would be expected to be more consistent with his results.

This studies varied in other aspects as well. An important difference between them may have been the degree to which participation in the share scheme was voluntary. In this study, participation was completely discretionary, and employees were invited to opt in by contributing a portion of their salaries to the scheme. In Klein's study, in contrast, participation was automatic, with employees being allocated shares, regardless of their own interest in the share ownership, and without any contribution on their part. Long's study offers yet another variation in which employees contributed some of their own savings to the purchase of shares in a fairly small-scale enterprise; employees then became sole owners of the organization.

Because of these differences in the schemes, it is difficult to assert definitely that one set of findings is more strongly supported than the other. Based upon the combined findings of Long (1982) and this study, it would appear that the investment size is not a particularly important predictor of attitudinal outcomes, but this interpretation should be accepted only with a degree of caution, as the differing circumstances and features of each scheme may have impacted in unknown and unspecified ways upon the findings reported.

At the time when the company issued shares and the time when the employees sold them off, the share price consistently rose. The assumption must therefore be that employees felt they were obtaining a satisfactory return on their investment. This was particularly likely, as their own contributions were matched by an employer's contribution of equal value, thereby raising the return on their personal investment.

If French's (1987) hypotheses were to be upheld, then all things being equal, employees with larger relative investments in the schemes should have had more positive attitudes than employees with smaller investments. This was not the case; however, as the interview results showed, the size of employees' investments had no bearing on their subsequent attitudes, either to the company or to the job. The main premise was not therefore supported in this case.

These results indicate that the scheme did not have much effect on employee attitudes, in this case feeling committed to the organizations. If, as may be suggested by the importance of the financial capacity variables noted in Chapter Five and Six, employees took primarily an investment-orientated view of the scheme, it was perhaps unrealistic to expect them to develop more positive attitudes as a result of their participation.

7.4 The role of supervisory support

When quality circle (QC) participants perceived their supervisors to have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle schemes there was no additional increment in the prediction power of their own attitudes towards the QCs and organizational commitment. In other words, the relation between attitudes towards the QC and organizational commitment already existed, and it did not matter to the participants whether they perceived there was support from their line managers for the scheme. Having a sense of confidence and success perhaps made the participants more confident in being independent in carrying out their quality circle programmes. Hence, they did not require much support from the superiors.

For non-participants, on the other hand, the leadership or manager's orientation did play an important role. This finding is in line with focus group findings, where some of the women clerks claimed that they had very little understanding of what QCs were about, as their superiors seldom communicated with them. Cultures with a low power distance tend to encourage participation, as mentioned in Hofstede (2001). From Hofstede's findings, Malaysia has very high power distance scores, which may

partly contribute to the claims from lower level workers that there are communication problems between them and their superiors. On the other hand, in claims from QC gurus, full support of management and development of an organizational climate is significant for establishing a participative management environment. Nevertheless, this contradicts the culture mentioned by Hofstede. High power distance as well as high uncertainty avoidance is not a conducive environment for a participative management culture to grow. According to Marsh (1992), culture is the backbone for successful adoption of QC.

A democratic leadership style, with the conviction that organizational objectives can be achieved through increased employee involvement in the decision-making process of the QC scheme, seemed to be critical for non-participants. In focus groups, most of the non-participants suggested there was no reason for them to participate, as their superiors (middle managers) would not listen to their suggestions. This was especially so among women workers, who felt strongly that their superiors disregarded them in any decision or contribution regarding their work. They seldom had a chance to attend training and this was further aggravated by their experience of being disadvantaged at work. In this situation, it is not surprising that most managers and technicians viewed women as uncommitted to the workplace or employee involvement schemes, although these women workers claimed that they were in fact interested.

This phenomenon of women being disadvantaged, even in participative management, is serious given that QC or 'problem-solving groups' were established with the threefold objectives of increasing productivity, motivating towards commitment and providing a forum for increased communication between management and lower level employee (Wilkinson, 1992). Further, according to Geber (1986), QCs should give employees the opportunity to exercise influence in decisions affecting their work. This is in contrast to the assumption that problems arise mainly from employees' indifference and lack of responsibilities. Findings in this study indicated that employees were keen about QCs, especially women.

According to Hill (1991) and Harley (2005), if managerial authority still remains, there is no room for the spontaneous formation of QC by employees.

This phenomenon of women being disadvantaged in EI is supported by the argument of Alpha and Beta bias (Hare-Mustin and Marecek, 1988). They claim that women continue to struggle in both biases. In Alpha bias, it shows differences in men and women. Women continue to struggle even given the opportunity to participate as they try to compete against the rationalized differences between men and women. Similarly, in Beta bias, differences are less visible as organizations are already gendered masculine. Hence, women in regards to participation in EI, find few chances to prove themselves as the masculinity of the workplace is taken for granted.

7.5 Managerial problems in employee involvement

One of the shared perceptions among those dissatisfied with the participative management concept was the ongoing conflict between management and staff on matters of authority, control and decision-making prerogative. Some staff members portrayed themselves as victims of an organizational culture whose managers did not readily participate. Some managers were perceived to prefer the status quo or the old autocratic management style. It is unfortunate to discover that despite the merits of the participative management concepts, there was frequent management resistance to the very concept. Organizational authoritarian culture still persisted despite the implementation of participative management. In these findings, most managers suggested that participation had accomplished little and rarely broke down walls of bureaucracy. There was a substantial majority of staff that was very pessimistic about the climate of their organization. They believed that lack of trust and tension between managers and staff prevailed throughout the organization (two out of the three organizations studied reflected such a negative climate). According to Zamanou and Glaser (1994), participation is not all just about introducing decision-making into the current system, but requires commitment, fundamental organizational changes, and necessitates a serious effort to enhance the entire

organizational system. Hence, participation must be part of the organizational culture.

Hierarchy is one of the defining features of bureaucratic forms of organization and bureaucracy, and in a variety of guises, has been one of the key features of modern work organizations (Thompson & McHugh, 1995). Managers are managers by virtue of their positions within hierarchies, which affords them the capacity to exercise power over their subordinates, as well as granting them a relatively high level of autonomy. Subordinates are subordinates by virtue of the fact that they have a lesser capacity to exert control over production than do managers. In this sense, as hierarchy remains a feature of organizational life, there are limits on the extent to which managers could 'give away' power, in the way that Foy (1994) proposed. According to Harley (2005), team working suffers from management prerogatives and according to Warhurst and Thompson (1998), while 'vertical divisions' remain the case, the prospects for empowerment overturning hierarchy as a key determinant of employee autonomy appear bleak.

Another group of staff considered that the days of portraying the character of employees as passive recipients of instructions and orders were waning in the organization. From their perspectives, employees were becoming more involved as active participants in their quality circle decision-making process.

Thus, it is impossible to avoid the conclusion that institutional, that is, management, support for employee involvement schemes is both instrumental and superficial. Management are willing to implement and support employee involvement schemes only so long as they yield profitable results and do not impinge on their own power and status. Yet these are the very constraints that limit the impact of employee involvement techniques on 'them and us' attitudes.

7.6 Implementation issues with quality circles

From the interviews, it is obvious that leadership seems to be the main problem with the implementation of quality circles, as mentioned by one of the top management interviewees. His statement showed that if a quality circle is not properly managed, and if the employees are not clear about the purpose of such efforts, then the objective of the scheme will not be accomplished. In particular, it is unlikely to lead to increased employee commitment.

Findings from interview and focus groups showed that most participants shared the perception that their organizational work culture was authoritarian. They perceived management as having simply introduced the concept of participative management because politicians or higher officials in the Civil Service mandated it, but in actual day-to-day operation, they were only paying lip service to participation. Their answers also illustrated that management had an attitude of looking down on the employees. For them, this attitude was antithetical to the true spirit of participation in decision-making. It is ironic that every management that introduced and implemented the participative concept in the organization was perceived by the employees as more interested in protecting their territories and prerogatives than in advocating and demonstrating openness and commitment to a participative culture.

Exaggerated claims and attention from management gurus, for example, on teams, have tended to turn into typical 'management fashions' (Clark, 2004; Watson, 1994). According to Bender and Van Veen (2001), there is a danger that fashionable concepts wear out through use, as prospective adopters may jump on the bandwagon rather than reflect critically on why teams should be implemented and, if so how. This increases the likelihood of failed implementations (Vallas, 2003), disillusion, and even large-scale abandonment. In that case, the concept itself may backfire on its reputation. Nevertheless, Ramsay (1991, 1996), in his popular life and death cycles of fad and fashions, claimed this is typical to the world of EI generally rather than anything specific about teams or QCs.

From the focus groups with the lower level workers, it was shown that they felt communication was the main problem whenever management was concerned. Management did not 'listen' to their issues or concerns, and one-way communication seemed to be the most popular means of communication among the managers. This 'one-way flow of authority' from above arguably hampers employees' motivation to participate. These views were expressed most amongst the women who were found mostly at the lower levels of the companies.

Management respondents appeared to give low priority to 'softer' people management issues and skills to foster a culture of high commitment and motivation among staff. For example, a majority of the managers noted that they did not have sufficient time to operationalize both requirements, of the job and of EI. This was defined by Lillrank and Kano (1989) as 'dualism', or the failure of most companies to overcome and integrate QCs into the mainstream of managing. In 'dualistic organizational structures', one side comprises the official management hierarchy, and the other, informal arrangements created by QC activities. This partly signals top management as showing a lack of commitment to the QC programme after an initial period of enthusiasm.

In most research evidence, the main reason for the failure of quality circle schemes is because of lack of management support, which is more a closed management style, and also lack of management recognition (Bradly & Hill, 1983; Lillrank & Kano, 1989; Robson, 1984). This study comes close to these common findings; the only difference is that it uncovers how women are being restricted from involving themselves in quality circle schemes. This is because the majority of them are in the secondary job of clerical work, the type of work for which it is hard to gain recognition, even though they make an attempt to be involved. The results are in line with research suggestions that most individuals cannot establish higher commitment to the organization when the leadership excludes them from the decision-making process, to which they can make an important contribution (Vroom & Jago, 1988; Zaleznik, 1989).

There have been many critiques in the past and more recently that QCs fail when they are implemented out of their cultural context (Head, 1997; Hyman & Mason, 1995; Ishikawa, 1985; Lillrank & Kano; 1989; Marsh, 1992; Rodriques, 1994; Watanabe, 1991). Ishikawa claimed that Japanese high trust and welfare corporatism encouraged participation among employees. Added to that, Marsh and Watanabe, claimed that QCs are difficult to transplant outside Japan due to misconceptions; in Japan, QCs are intended for identifying and solving problems. Cunningham and Hyman (1996) pointed out that there were a number of cultural constraints which appeared further to cascade against the successful implementation of empowerment.

The teams literature emphasizes that what organizations need is a fundamental organization or cultural change in order to develop participative design. EI needs to be implemented as an organizational change and a long-term paradigm shift. There is a failure of some organizations to think through fully the meaning and implication of developing an open and participative management of which QC is part. The trend towards EI has meant a redefinition of the employer-employee relationship and, for many organizations, is a fundamental change in culture (Hyman & Mason, 1995; Rodriques, 1994; Troxel, 1993). Effective involvement allows employees to act professionally at work within their authorities.

7.7 Gender differences

7.7.1 Attitudes towards EI - differences between men and women

The only gender differences found in the survey research were in non-participants' attitudes towards quality circles (QCs), with differences in the direction of more favourable attitudes for female non-participants. This finding supports previous empirical findings (e.g., Allen et al., 1991), which suggested that women were more supportive of a programme that was introduced by management, such as the worker director idea. However, the findings do not support claims that women are less likely to participate or be involved at work (e.g., Hakim, 1995).

The more positive attitudes from women non-participants can be partly attributed to characteristics of the job stratification of the organization itself, whereby the majority of women were employed in clerical and administrative posts, and therefore most of them represented the lowest income earners in the organization. From descriptive statistics, slightly more than half (51%) of the respondents were the representatives of the lowest bracket of the organization pay levels, and the majority of women (68%) made up the lowest salary group. Perhaps, coming from the lowest level of the organization made them eager to participate whenever given a chance, as generally they never had any. This is in line with interview and focus groups findings, where some women felt that QCs gave them a chance to 'prove' themselves to management. They saw quality circles as an achievable means of getting involved, over and above their daily routine, mundane job. Quality circles could also be a vehicle for them to gain recognition from management. In these companies, especially, getting the participants to compete towards contributing to company presentations at conventions seemed to be the main motivating factor keeping circles active. One respondent in an interview even saw it as an activity that could provide her with an opportunity to outperform male colleagues. She stressed that they were rarely given a chance to be involved in company activities other than the quality circles, hence that was the only means for them to prove themselves to management. Therefore, it is not a surprise that women workers showed a more positive attitude towards the scheme than the male workers, as they saw it as an advantage

There were no other significant difference in the attitudes of male and female participants in the present survey. One possible reason could be that although women workers want to take advantage in proving themselves through quality circle, after a while, they realize it is difficult to 'compete' with male workers, who are mostly made-up of technical ranks, in getting recognition from management.

7.7.2 Organizational commitment, job satisfaction and general attitudes towards management – differences between men and women

Other studies have found that men and women differ with respect to their attitudes towards their workplace, organizational commitment, and even job satisfaction. However, the comparisons between the survey responses of men and women in the present study showed no significant differences in this respect women were found to be just like men in their attitude towards their organization. One similarity observed was that both felt less positive towards management in their workplace. Therefore, the common saying that woman are less interested and hence less committed does not always hold. The findings here contradict Hakim (1991), who claimed that women are less committed to work than men. Contrary to this, though, Hakim (1996) also herself counter argued that the similarities between women and men have been overstated, as significant numbers of women are not in workforce, and also because most studies of work orientations exclude them.

For job satisfaction, too, there was no significant difference between men and women. Similarly, Mottaz (1986) found that, overall, work satisfaction was similar for women and men. Brown et al. (1983) also found that men and women have similar satisfaction scores for all features of work except promotion. In general, a common pattern starts to emerge, that despite both men and women having less positive attitudes towards their organization, they are similar in the sense that they are both committed to their organizations, and similarly they are satisfied with their jobs. This finding supports and complements suggestions in the literature regarding the positive aspects of women at work. Male employees were only a little more committed to work than women employees (e.g., Rose, 1994). Similar patterns of response were found in the interviews.

Hence, we can conclude from these findings, generally, that perhaps women are just as likely as men do take their work seriously, Agassi (1992) discovered minimal gender differences in orientation or attitudes towards work. In fact, Martin and Roberts (1984) show that women have much more positive views of work than

might have been expected. Nevertheless, men and management still perceive women differently.

7.7.3 Attitudes towards women and work - differences between men and women

Many men in this study seemed to portray a stereotyped opinion of women who work. Hakim (2000) also claims that the 'modern homemaker career' is chosen by over half of women of working age in Britain and reflects this in two quite distinct groups. Women at senior positions tend to care more about work, are as ambitious and equal to men in their outlook towards work, and are concentrated in male dominated occupations. Women who pursue a homemaker career are secondary earners, choose jobs for convenience factors and social interest rather than with a view to a long term career, are concentrated in female occupations, and have lower earnings.

The findings comparing attitudes towards women at work indicate that there is a significant gender difference with men generally less positive. This finding does not come as a surprise; as mentioned above, gender stereotyping in the workplace would generally lead to a prediction that women will be less interested in work than men. To them, work for women is seen as a temporary measure, only to supplement their family income, whereas men see themselves as primary earners, and hence have more reasons to work.

Findings from interviews and focus groups showed the female respondents' orientation towards work was best represented as a voluntary decision. These women, particularly those in the lower earning groups, had a planned and conscious involvement in work despite the fact that they too had childcare responsibilities (although some women did report that childcare responsibilities limited their involvement at work).

Nevertheless, the attitudes of most men towards women in this study fit Hakim's notion that women, especially at the lower end, are not as committed to their work compared to women in the upper echelon, although some found women were as committed. To list some examples, an HR manager observed that the higher women are in the hierarchy, the more they become like men. His comment was, "I notice the higher they are, the more aggressive they get" (R.11, p270). Another manager commented, "at the managerial level they are equal, and at the workers' level they are different. I think its related to education"; another view was that men at different hierarchical levels perceived women differently, "...men at the top realize, they know women are as capable as men, whereas men at the lower level always feel that women are not fit, ...not as good as men" (R.16, p 271). One senior manager claimed - "women they are not only similar, but in some cases they can be better performers" (R.65, p 261) and another manager - "some people said that women can't work...I strongly disagree, they are just the same, as there are men who still can't. A woman too has a career to be fulfilled..." (R. 70, p261).

Many other men preferred men, especially in technical posts. In this study, it sometimes had serious implications, as the opinion came from a senior recruitment manager himself, saying "We prefer men in engineering, they are more efficient. That is not to say women are not successful [in similar jobs] but the issue of harassment, in the long run will affect their performance..."(R.11,p.267).

On the other hand, the work of Hakim about women wanting to be at home fails to take into account changes in women's situations and in their attitudes. In this study, women employees, especially at the lower end, face increasing discriminatory treatment compared to male employees. As a clear example, in QC training mostly men were sent for full training, while women received training 'secondary' to men's, as they received training from men who received the primary training. The justification given is because women in clerical positions are greater in number compared to men, hence, it is a more economical and efficient way of training. This is conducted regardless of whether men and women have similar attitudes towards EI.

It is, finally, the absence of any serious consideration of the constraints on the enactment of lifestyle preferences that is the essential weakness of Preference Theory. Hakim (2000) argues strongly that British and North American women in her sample, who live 'in the new scenerio' have genuine choices about employment; that their preferences can be fully realized; that there are no major constraints on how they wish to live their lives. In taking this stance, Hakim appears not to consider voluntary action with genuine or unconstrained choice. Perhaps some women do voluntarily choose to stay home with young children when to do so may harm their future employment opportunities. Still, many others, as in this study, find that women voluntarily juggle work with children, and still others try to work harder to be equal to men regardless of which position the women have. For example, Catalyst (1999) and Gabor (1994) found that the demand of family responsibilities poses a major constraint for women who are engineers.

It is also arguable that a difference in preferences results in conflicts between different types of women. Men, on the other hand, are much more homogeneous in their preferences, and thus have an advantage over heterogeneous women. On the other hand, it is arguable that if lifestyle preferences and work orientations have a strong impact on women's activities, and especially on married women's choices, then patriarchal values have virtually no impact on behaviour, and also have virtually no connection with orientations to employment and family roles. In this study, this was proven not true, as women do encounter problems in gaining entry and acceptance as an engineer or in technical jobs. Many studies stated that engineering is "masculine" in orientation. Gale and Cartwright (1995) and Gale (1992) argued on similar bases that women do encounter problems in finding jobs in project environments because of cultural traditional project-based industries like construction and engineering, which are demonstrably male-segregated, "macho" or masculine cultures. Another similar study in male-dominated professions in Malaysia (Mainunah, 2003) found that women engineers faced barriers in their career progression due to the male-dominated profession because of the existence of informal networking between male engineers and gender stereotyping.

These negative attitudes among male employees can be partly attributed to the characteristics of the organizations in this study, basically engineering utility companies, which were hence male-dominated. This is also in line with implications and suggestions in the literature that when women comprise a smaller proportion of the organization's workforce, they encounter greater discrimination (e.g., Fagenson, 1986; Kanter, 1977). Kanter's (1977) theory also implies that the acceptance of women should be lowest in organizations such as those in the engineering sector.

Wacjman (1998) contends that patriarchy is still largely still intact despite claims that the legitimacy of patriarchy has been diminishing, as women cannot escape patriarchy; thus, they can only be liberated through struggles to change the system (Cockburn, 1991). Perhaps, as Lewis and Cooper (1987) suggested, availability of role models and mentors, and the degree of social support both at home and work, may affect women's advancement at the workplace.

7.7.4 Women's orientations to work

The interviews and focus groups showed that, generally, women's orientation to work is not always fixed; rather orientations shifted towards career when they later found work satisfying. The implication can be drawn that, after some years of exposure to work, the work experience itself will shift their work orientation. Most respondents claimed that when they later found work interesting, their initial reason to work did not apply any more. Instead their reason now moved towards career, instead of necessity. These findings contradict Hakim's (2000) claims that the only people who care about work outside the home are those already in high paid professional jobs.

More generally, findings from this study lend support to the argument that women's involvement in work may fluctuate over the life cycle according to dependent child care responsibilities and past work experiences (Crompton & Harris, 1998; Fagan, 2001). Crompton and Harris pointed out that the work patterns of women are a product of particular circumstances, opportunities and constraints and the choices

they make in response to these. They suggested that work and home orientations might fluctuate according to occupation, life cycle and national context. Thus, the need for money may gain more significance with responsibilities for children and may be particularly important, for example, for those who have children entering higher studies. In this study, however, most respondents, both women and men, valued work for its own sake. They did not necessarily prioritize work over home but work was very important in their lives and was often just as important as home. When the 'inherited money' question was put forward (e.g., "What if you inherit enough money that much exceeded your family requirement?"), women claimed they would still work, as now they found work just another part of their lives, and staying at home made them bored. This finding parallels men's view. This parallels Rose's (2000) analysis using the 'lottery question', which showed that they continue to hold on to their work, even if the financial need to do so was removed.

Hence, from the interview and focus group findings, it can be shown that women's orientation to work is not always fixed, as argued by Hakim (1996, 2000). The study has shown that orientation to work is complex, and women work for a range of reasons and motivations. This provides evidence that involvement in and commitment to work may change with changing circumstances. Similarly, work orientations can also change and the relationships are not as straightforward as Hakim claims. In the future, other literature could be considered; for example Kabeer's (1999) view on women as agents (mothers, spouses and daughters) when examining participation and commitment at the workplace.

In line with participation in EI, the women workers demonstrated lower participation, for example during quality circle meetings, compared to their male counterparts. From the focus group findings it seemed this was because women felt relatively excluded over decisions at work; nevertheless, this is despite a desire equivalent to men for participation. Some QC non-participant women respondents shared a concern that they were being totally displaced from any kind of company activities or information, with the least involvement in QCs, which they claimed to have very little knowledge about. Training for quality circles was another common

issue that most women QC participants and non-participants showed concern about, as most of the male technicians who were able attend were also later informally 'trained' by these men. These findings perhaps indicate a failure among line managers to appreciate important skills that are required in understanding and practicing QC among a majority of staff. This finding is similar to Cunningham and Hyman (1995), who found that half of their managers identified at least one issue with respect to employee relations was the lack of training and development.

Most of the family women found it hard to participate in QC meetings which took place after working hours, for domestic reasons. Similarly, with ESOSs, most women did not participate because a majority of them were at clerical levels, at the lowest hierarchical level of the company; their level and pay did not meet the criterion to qualify as members of the ESOS programme.

This then suggests that it is a misconception that women do not wish to participate in EI programmes or are uncommitted toward work; their lack of interest may be due to socialization within a patriarchal system. As pointed out by Gale and Cartwright (1995), regardless of the critical mass of women entering the labour force, this does not change an organizational culture with an already "masculine" orientation.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

8.1 Introduction

This research investigated the association between employee involvement (EI), in this case quality circles (QCs) and employee share ownership schemes (ESOS), and organizational commitment in three public utility companies in Malaysia. Based on data from these companies' managers and workers, and from both participants and non-participants of the EI schemes, the research concluded that the mere presence of EI, such as share ownership, is not a guarantee of increased involvement and commitment for employees, highlighting instead the significance of other variables, particularly supervisor support and organizational culture.

From the theoretical point of view, this study fills a gap in Malaysian literature on EI and gender. It also shows that findings with regard to gender in a Malaysian context are similar to what is found in western literature. In these Malaysian organizations, women did not appear to feel any differently towards EI compared to men; but women still were more likely to fill the secondary jobs and to lack opportunities to perform higher level tasks. These findings and their contribution to our understanding of EI and gender are discussed further in the remainder of this chapter with respect to the two research objectives.

8.2 Objective One

Objective One was to investigate the relationship between attitudes to employee involvement and organizational commitment in a Malaysian context, considering the effects of gender, participation in EI schemes, and management support as potential moderators.

The findings of the study confirmed the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between attitudes to employee involvement schemes (both QCs and

ESOSs) and organizational commitment among participants. However, in the case of non-participants, the results were less consistent. In the case of quality circles, there was a significant relationship between attitudes to EI and organizational commitment among both participants and non-participants. For ESOS, the findings were different, with no significant relationships between attitudes to EI and organizational commitment among non-participants.

Hypotheses derived under Objective One also aimed to determine whether there is a significant relationship between attitudes towards employee involvement (QCs only) and organizational commitment among participants and non-participants of the schemes who perceived superiors' support for the scheme. The findings of the survey confirmed this relationship for non-participants but not for participants. The attitudes towards quality circle are not related to organizational commitment for participants who perceived their supervisors have favourable attitudes towards the quality circle scheme. The attitudes towards the quality circle scheme and organizational commitment were related among non-participants who perceived that there is superiors' support towards the scheme. This finding emphasizes the importance of top management support especially for non-participants observing the scheme. Qualitative findings also showed that this was especially so for women, and for workers who through pressures of time and work, found it difficult to participate in the EI schemes.

With respect to the expected gender differences the survey showed that there were few differences in male and female attitudes towards EI (both for QCs and ESOSs), among participants; only non-participants of quality circles showed a significant difference, whereby women non-participants were more positive towards the schemes than their male counterparts. With regard to attitudes towards women and work, the study also found less favourable attitudes amongst men. There was no significant difference, however, in men's and women's attitudes towards organizational commitment. This is in contrast with the common stereotyping norm that women will be less interested in and committed to work, and less concerned about workplace influence than men. This affirms Hakim's patriarchal view on

women's commitment towards work. Hakim (1995), for instance, would claim that women are less likely to participate or be involved at work. However, there was also evidence of women taking up multiple roles which influenced their participation and commitment at the workplace (for example, women as mothers and wives), which also supports notions of women as more powerful agents (Kabeer, 1999).

The results support findings from French and Rosenstein (1984), Hammer, Landau and Stern (1981) and Poole and Jenkins (1990), that there are no significant difference between shareholders and non-shareholder in satisfaction and commitment. The implication for HR is that ESOSs should not be used for reasons of securing satisfaction or commitment among employees; it seems, rather, that these may be just another aspect of the benefits package to be offered employees.

8.3 Objective Two

The second objective was to explore the reasons for gender differences or similarities in the workplace. This led to an examination of perceptions that women are essentially the same as men, that women are different, perceptions of women bosses, perceptions of women's commitment, and women and their experience in the workplace.

The findings suggest that gender differences are due to women's unique experience and environment in the workplace, whereby they are treated differently from men. This was found to occur in provision of and chances to attend training, and in the attention paid to them by superiors who often disregarded them in any decision or contribution regarding their work. In addition, male colleagues tended to view them as uncommitted towards the workplace or the employee involvement schemes, although these women workers claimed that they were just as interested. At the same time, they received little support from their spouses for participating in quality circles which required additional working hours.

Hence, despite their interest in the EI schemes, they were unable to participate equally given the stereotyping of men and management. Otherwise, as shown by the survey findings especially, women and men were capable of being equally committed to the organization, if only they were equally treated.

8.4 Contributions and Recommendations

8.4.1 The importance of management trust

The first significant contribution of the present research was to show that 'them and us' attitudes still persisted in these workplaces despite the introduction of involvement schemes. This reflected divisions between workers and management, between men and women, and between those who were given the opportunities to participate in EI schemes (e.g., male technicians, those with longer tenure) and those who were not (lower level clerical staff, mainly women).

The importance of management trust before implementing any new programme was evident from the present findings. More so, as found in this research, management culture in these organizations is still very much of an autocratic style, where a top down management style is extensively practiced. As argued earlier in the review of the EI literature, Cotton et al. (1988, 1993) and Pennington and Hammersley (1997) show that the success or failure of participative programmes is related to management style. This shows that more positive relationships between members of the organization and better subordinate attitudes towards the enterprise will come from a democratic style of leadership. This finding is in line with Ramsay's (1977) comment that unless the organizational culture is taken into account, the decline of EI or life and-death cycles will continue.

Specifically, this suggests that management must prepare before implementing any imported programmes. They may, for example, market the concept, make it acceptable to people, or communicate the benefit down to people. It is not all about best practice but rather getting feedback and getting the people involved before the

involvement scheme is introduced. This might mean changing the culture of the organization in order to be more receptive towards future participation schemes. Most of the failures in EI identified in the present and other studies were due to the prevailing culture in the organization, where among other factors, management control still persisted (Cunningham & Hyman, 1996; Hill, 1991; Kieser, 1997; Parnell & Crandall 2001). Once management get beneficiary consensus for the schemes, then, it is appropriate that they are introduced, thus making commitment to some extent a more realistic outcome. Heckers (1995) argues that the programmes requires a certain context beyond a set of techniques or programmes. In his findings, he shows that most managers suggested that participation has accomplished little and rarely breaks down a wall of bureaucracy.

Others have argued that many schemes represent nothing more than fads and fashions in management (Cole 1999; Ramsay 1991, 1996) which are not implemented with the full commitment of management. As an example, Bradly and Hill (1983) mentioned that they anticipated difficulties in getting QCs to flourish outside Japanese employment system, whose characteristic features were said to be high trust and a welfare corporation.

8.4.2 The importance of context

The second major contribution of the research is to show that the meaning of participation must be considered in the context in which it is to be implemented. Malaysian organizations appear not to be using schemes like quality circles in the Japanese spirit for quality; rather these schemes are being employed more in a symbolic sense as a kind of affiliation that would give good name to the workplace. Hence, once schemes become a lip service then the organization will ignore the other key characteristics such as problem-solving processes that will make the scheme effective. As mentioned by Guess et al. (1995) there is a significant gap between prescription and practice in implementing EI programmes. The implication then would be that when organizations adopt schemes that have been successful elsewhere, the decision makers should adopt and evaluate schemes holistically and

understand the concept of participation at the level of implementation and not just at the level of attractiveness. Similar criticisms have been identified elsewhere in the management literature "... we had the flavour of the month mentality" (Sam Malone, Worldwide Marketing Manager at Xerox, quoted in Brennan, 1994: 36).

Participative design requires commitment, fundamental organization change, and necessitates serious effort in order to enhance the whole system (Zamanou & Glaser, 1994). According to Vallas (2003), improper implementation and self-assessment will lead EI to gain a bad reputation and to initiatives which are not suited to their current state of development. Management needs to understand the questions underpinning the integrated system on which self-assessment is being made. Various elements and practices have got to be in place, such as the development of interpersonal skill. EI relies significantly on the employer–employee relationship, and for many organizations, is a fundamental change in culture (Hyman & Mason, 1995). Hofstede (2001) indicated that reviewing each country's historical experience with employee participation may help to put their results into a meaningful context, and this can begin at an organizational level.

8.4.3 Gender differences

The findings of the present study also highlight the need for addressing gender issues in future management research. As demonstrated in the study, the majority of gender issues actually resulted from women working in secondary jobs, such as clerical roles. Hence it is important that their experience at work is considered when conducting research in the workplace. This is especially important if we are to demonstrate how women are restricted in terms of empowerment to a far greater extent than men.

Literature shows the frequent occurrence of stereotyping (Degler, 1980; Dex, 1985) showing that women are indeed thought of as different and women themselves feel they are being treated as secondary employees at work. To avoid women feeling this way, women must be given a chance to prove themselves in so-called masculine

jobs. As an example, women engineers must be given a chance to prove themselves in higher technical jobs rather than absorbing them into administration work as their career progresses. This is not only important for some women to prove themselves but also to create mentors for those at lower levels. As there are not many female mentors for EI issues, recognising more women may reduce gender differences in involvement problems. Davidson (1987) and Lewis and Cooper (1989) suggest appropriate models and mentors for this situation. They also suggest that a degree of support both at home and work is essential for women's advancement in the workplace. The present study is consistent with these views.

Furthermore, if more women participated at higher levels, this may address some of the major issues raised in gender theory. The argument that women are less committed than men (e.g., Bergmann, 1989; Hakim, 1996) does not always consider the opportunities afforded women to perform at a higher level. If given a chance that is comparable to that of men, and they do not perform as well, this may lead to the conclusion that men are more suitable for technical jobs than women. However, other issues may explain the difference between genders, for example: access to training, politics, socialising, government, mobility, or life outside the workplace including family structure and domesticity issues.

8.4.4 The need for incentives

A common problem associated with a company's inability to sustain quality circles is the failure of top management to incorporate an incentives programme through other human resource functions. As mentioned in other literature (e.g., Bradley & Hill 1983), Japanese scholars anticipated difficulties in getting quality circles to flourish outside the Japanese employment system which gave QC members an incentive to search for improvements. Therefore, this study particularly makes a significant contribution to management of quality circles by highlighting the necessity for incentives.

8.5 Recommendations for practice and future research

Seven recommendations for management practice or future research emerge from this study. Firstly, it identified some of the variables that prevent women from participating equally in schemes introduced by management at work. These include inequality in training, lack of recognition, and lack of support from both management and spouse. These variables should be validated in other employee involvement implementation studies. Future studies can be carried out in other companies across regions, such as Asia, Africa or Latin America, to enable comparison of the findings.

Secondly, the study validates the stereotyping view of gender and suggests that more should be done to resolve these stereotypes. Women can perform equally as well as men given an environment that is more conducive to working. Women need employee involvement for the same reasons as men, but in many organizations, particularly in this Malaysian context, women's interests are not given priority; this is especially the case at lower levels of the hierarchy. It was notable that the gender findings in this study mirrored western literature in terms of women being located mainly in secondary level jobs relative to men and experiencing differential access to participation (Hare-Mustin & Maracek, 1989; Fagenson, 1986; Gutek et al., 1981; Kanter, 1977; Markey et al., 2002; Marvin, 1999).

Managers wishing to provide equal access to EI opportunities for women may, for example, support working women by providing extended childcare facilities as has been suggested by family-friendly research (for example, Poelmans and Sahibzada, 2004). This study's findings highlight that women were uncomfortable over the issue of domesticity, particularly child care that hinders their participation in quality circles. On the other hand, in some situations where it is not practicable for children to use child-care facilities due to mobility problems or perhaps because of their young age, then management can provide a child care allowance for the employee (see also Poelmans and Sahibzada, 2004). The study showed that the lowest level

employees are most affected, hence, these people may be most in need of monetary support.

Women comprise a large part of the current and potential pool of labour. It is a loss of resources to organizations if women are opting out because of shortfalls in child-care or other domestic constraints. Models of 'best practice' by organizations, including flexible working hours, may create opportunities for women, and solve difficulties in sustaining female ambition over the long run. The range of possibilities management can offer includes part-time, flexitime or staggered hours, home-working, a compressed working week, job share and term-time working. This would enable companies to move towards implementing flexible firm structures (Thompson & McHugh, 2002 p.166).

Thirdly, for women, problems at work are aggravated by problems at home. Spouses are found to be gender biased. They will only submit to their partners, if the scheme provides tangible benefits. This further emphasizes the need for effective HRM. Managers need to be convinced that involvement has practical benefits and is not only ideological; for example, quality circle participation could be included in the performance appraisal and reward systems. The organization's human resource management system should stress compensation and appraisal systems.

Fourthly, in implementing employee involvement schemes, managers should try to narrow the gap between "them and us" perceptions and be willing to recognize decisions made by the lower level employees. It is important that when implementing an involvement scheme, managers not just pay lip service to the objectives of the scheme and genuinely make the workers feel as though they are involved. Based on this study, future researchers could further investigate whether ineffective human resource management is a factor that leads to ineffectiveness of other employee involvement schemes, such as other team working programmes, high-performance work system, empowerment, team briefings, and suggestion boxes.

Fifthly, apart from effective human resource management, top management support and effective communication are found to influence the implementation of employee involvement. It means getting away from the 'lip service' syndrome, and instead ensuring that the scheme to be implemented has undergone all the necessary steps and is getting the concept right. Employees need to understand the scheme's objectives, and this can be done through an effective communication system. If training is required, it has to be ensured that it is effectively done right across the organization/people.

Sixthly, it is important for management to recognize gender issues in the workplace. For example, gender stereotyping should be reduced, otherwise it would generally lead to a prediction that women will be less interested in and committed to work and concerned about workplace influence. As shown in this study, this prediction is not true. Top management should consider training the managers in the importance of management diversity, especially concerning women. Above all, managers/supervisors must ensure their subordinates, and the lowest level staff, especially women, are well taken care of.

Management should address the seriousness of discrimination of women at the workplace by establishing policies in accordance to such behaviour. This is important as large numbers of accomplished talented women are entering mainstream careers, and management needs to devote their energy to maximising this talent, rather than not recognising them because of the stereotyping behaviour of men in management.

Given the nature of such gender stereotyping and its apparent pervasiveness across national and organizational cultures, future researchers may use this study to further examine gender differences or similarities in other industries, such as services, research and design, and manufacturing. Future research should examine the issue of why stereotyping still continues to exist despite the introduction of participative management at the workplace. Among the recommended steps suggested by these findings may be providing extended childcare facilities, providing childcare

allowance, providing flexible working hours, convincing managers on the importance of involvement, tying in compensation and appraisal system in quality circles participation, narrowing the gap of 'them and us' perceptions, recognising and 'implementing' lower level participation, and addressing gender issues.

8.6 Limitations of the study

The sample of this study was restricted, entirely, to three Malaysian public utility companies. These companies were privatized from originally government owned public utility companies, and hence may have had some of their own unique characteristics. These had certain common characteristics in that they were technically based companies where staff had engineering backgrounds, where the majority of management was dominated by men, and where women occupied the lowest rank in the hierarchy. As a result of these features, the findings may not be generalizable to the broader population or other contexts with different sample characteristics

References:

- Aaker, D.A, Kumar, V. and Day, G.S. (1995) *Marketing research*. (5th ed.). New York: John Wiley.
- Achrol, R.S. (1988) Measuring uncertainty in organization analysis. *Social Science Research*, 17 (1): 66-91.
- Acker, J. (1990) Hierarchies, Jobs, Bodies : A Theory of Gendered Organization. *Gender and Society*, 4(6): 139-58.
- Acker, J. and Van Houten, D.R. (1991) Differential recruitment and control: The sex structuring of organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19 (2): 16-25.
- Adler, N.J. (1991) *International dimensions of organizational behaviour*. 2nd Edition. Boston: PWS-Kent Publishing.
- Adler, N.J. and Izraeli, D.N. (1994) *Competitive frontiers : Women managers in a global economy*. Cambridge: Blackwell Publishers.
- Agassi, J.B. (1982) *Comparing the work attitudes of women and men*. Massachusetts: Lexington Books.
- Ahlbrandt, R., Leana, C. and Murrell, A.(1992) Employee involvement programmes improve corporate performance. *Long Range Planning*, 25(5): 91-98.
- Albrecht, T.L., Johnson, G.M. and Walther, J.B (1993) Understanding communication processes in focus groups. In Morgan, D.L. (ed.) *Successful focus groups. Advancing the state of art*. London : Sage. pp.51- 64.
- Alimo-Metcalf, B. (1993) Women in Business and Management – the United Kingdom. In Davidson, M.J. and Cooper, C.L. (ed.) *European Women in Business and Management*. London: Paul Chapman.
- Allen, D.B. and Meyer, J.P. (1990) The measurement and antecedents of affective, continuance, and normative commitment to the organization. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 63: 1-18.
- Allen, D.B. and Meyer, J.P. (1991) A three component conceptualization of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1 (1): 61-89.
- Allinson, CW., Armstrong, SJ. and Hayes, J. (2001). The effects of cognitive style on leader-member exchange: a study of manager-subordinate dyads. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 74: 201-220
- Allinson, CW., Armstrong, SJ. and Hayes, J. (1986) The cognitive style index: A measure of Intuition - Analysis for Organization research. *Journal of Management Studies*, 33(1): 119-135.

- Andaleeb and Wolford (2004) Participation in the workplace: Gender perspective from Bangladesh. *Women in Management Review*, 19 (1):13-21.
- Angle, H. L. and Lawson, M.B. (1993) Changes in affective and continuance commitment in time of relocation. *Journal of Business Research*, 26:3-15.
- Angle, H. L., and Perry, J. L. (1981) An empirical assessment of organizational commitment and organizational effectiveness. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 2(6): 1-13.
- Applebaum, E., Bailey, T., Berg, P., and Kalleberg, A. (2000) *Manufacturing Advantage: Why High Performance Systems Pay Off*. Ithaca, NY: ILR Press.
- Applebaum, E. (2002) The impact of new forms of work organization on workers. In Murray, G., Bélanger, J., Giles, A. and Lapotine, P. (eds.) *Work and employment relations in the high-performance workplace*. London: Continuum. pp 25-31.
- Argyris, C. (1957) *Personality and organization*. New York: Harper & Row.
- Argyris, C. (1960) *Understanding Organizational Behavior*. Homewood, Ill: Dorsey Press.
- Ariffin, J. (1994) *Women and development in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications.
- Ariffin, J. (1995), *Reviewing Malaysian women's status: Country report in preparation for the fourth UN world conference on women*, Population studies unit, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur
- Armstrong, P. (1982) If it's only women it doesn't matter so much. In West, J. (ed.) *Women, work and the labour market*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. pp 45-51.
- Babbie, E.R. (1990) *Survey research methods*. 2nd Edition. California: Wadsworth.
- Baddon, L., Hunter, L., Hyman, J., Leopold, J. and Ramsay, H. (1989) *People's Capitalism? A critical analysis of profit sharing and employee share ownership*. London: Routledge.
- Bailey, K.D. (1982) *Methods of social research*. 2nd Edition. New York: The Free Press.
- Balfour, D.L. and Wechsler, B. (1990) Organizational commitment: A reconceptualization and empirical test of public-private differences. *Review of Public Personnel Administration*, 10(3): 23-40
- Banas, P. (1988) Employee involvement: a sustained labor/management initiatives at the Ford Motor Company. In Campbell, J.P., Campbell, R.J. and Associates (eds) *Productivity in Organizations: New Perspectives From Industrial and Organization Psychology*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass. pp 68-82

- Bank, J., Wilpert, B. (1983) What's so special about Quality Circles? *Journal of General Management*, 9: 21-37.
- Bartlett, C. A. (1986) Building and Managing the Transnational; The New Organizational Challenge. In Porter, M. E. (ed) *Competition in Industries*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard Business School Press. pp 25-32
- Basset, J.C. (1991) *Cross-cultural dimensions of participative management*. Unpublished Doctorial Dissertation, The Ohio University. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Service.
- Bateman, T.S. and Strasser, S. (1984). A longitudinal analysis of the antecedents of organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 27 (1): 91-112.
- Batt, R. (2002) Managing customer services: Human resource practices, quit rates and sales growth. *Academy of Management Journal*, 45 (3): 587-597.
- Beale, J. (1986) *Women in Ireland – voices of change*. London: McMillan
- Becker.H.S. (1960) Notes on the concept of commitment. *American Journal of Sociology*, 66: 32-40
- Becker, H.S.(1970) *Whose side are we on? In Qualitative methodology*. W.J. Chicago: Markham.
- Becker, H. (1986) *Writing for social scientist*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Becker, T.E. and Billing, R.S. (1993) Profiles of commitment: An empirical test. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 14 (2): 177-190.
- Beer, M. (1980) *Organization change and development: A system view*. Santa Monica, CA: Goodyear.
- Beer, M., Spector, B., Lawrence, P.R., Quinn Mills D and Walton, R.E (1984). *Managing Human Assets*. New York, Free press.
- Bell, D.W. and Hanson, C.G. (1984) *Profit sharing and employee shareholding attitudes survey*. London: Industrial Participation Association.
- Benders, J. and G.V. Hootegem (1999) Teams and Their Context: Moving the Team Discussion Beyond Existing Dichotomies. *Journal of Management Studies*, 36 (5): 609-627.
- Benders, J. and van Bijsterveld, M. (2000) Learning on Learn; The Reception of a management Fashion in Germany. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 15 (1): 50-64
- Benders, J. (2005) Team working: A tale of participation. In Harley, B., Hyman, J. and Thompson, P. (ed.) *Participation and Democracy at Work: Essays in Honour of Harvie Ramsay*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 55-74

- Ben-Ner, Avner and Putterman, Louis (2003) Trust in the New Economy. In Jones, D.C. *Handbook of the New Economy*. New York: Elsevier Science: pp.1069-93.
- Bennet, D. and Bennet, A. (2002) *The rise of the Knowledge Organisation*. In C.W. Holsapple (ed.), Springer Verlag handbook on Knowledge Management, 1. Berlin:Springer Verlag. pp 85-97.
- Berggren, C. (1993) Lean Production: The end of History? *Work, Employment and Society*, 7 (2): 163-88.
- Bergmann, B.R. (1989) Does the market for woman's labor need fixing? *Journal of Economic Perspective*, 3: 43-60.
- Beynon, H. and Blackburn, R. (1972) *Perceptions of Work: Variations within a factory*. Cambridge:University Press.
- Bhagat, S., Brickly, J. and Lease, R. (1984) Incentive effects of stocks purchase plans. *Journal of Financial Economics*, 14: 195-215.
- Blanchflower, D. and Oswald, A. (1987) *Shares for employees: A test of their effects*. Discussion paper No. 273. Centre for Labour Economics, London School of Economics.
- Blauner, R. (1964) *Alienation and Freedom*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Blumberg, P. (1968) *Industrial democracy: The sociology of participation*, London: Constable
- Bouchard, C. (1976) *Methods of social research*. New York: McGraw – Hill.
- Bozman, R. and Gibson, P. (1986) Implementing participative teams in the hospitality industry. *Quality Circles Journal*, 6(2): 10-13
- Bradley, K. and Hill, S. (1983) After Japan: The Quality Circle transplant and productive efficiency. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 21: 291-311.
- Bradley, K. and Hill, S. (1987) Quality Circles and management interests. *Industrial Relations*, 26: 68-82.
- Bradley K. and Nejad A. (1989) *Managing Owners: The National Freight Company Buy-out in Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Breakwell, J. (1985) *The quiet rebel: Women at work in a man's world*. London: Century.
- Brooks, L. Henry, J. and Livingston, D. (1984). Employee Stock Benefit Plans: An Analysis of Employee Shareholder Returns. *Akron Business and Economic Review*. 15 (3):74-84.

- Brown, R.K., Curran, M. and Cousins, J. (1983) Changing attitudes to employment, *Department of Employment Research Paper No.40*.
- Brown, R.B. (1990) *Organizational commitment and its effects on behaviour*. PhD Dissertation, University of Massachusetts. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Services.
- Brown, R. (1992) *Understanding industrial organisations : Theoretical perspectives in industrial sociology*. London : Routledge.
- Bryman, A. (1992) *Charisma and Leadership in Organizations*. London: Sage.
- Bryman, A. and Cramer, D. (1994) *Quantitative Data Analysis for Social Scientist*. London: Routledge.
- Bryman, A. and Cramer, D. (2005) *Quantitative Data Analysis with SPSS 12&13*. London: Routledge.
- Buchanan, B. (1974) Building organizational commitment: The socialization of managers in work organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 19: 533-546.
- Buchanan, D. and Storey, J. (1996) Role taking and role switching: a fresh perspective on the expertise of change agents. In McLoughlin, I. and Harris, M. (ed.) *New Perspectives on Technology, Organisation and Innovation*. London : Routledge.pp 52-63.
- Bullock, Lord A. (1977) *Report of the Committee of Inquiry on Industrial Democracy*, Cmnd 6706 London: HMSO.
- Burke, R. and Davidson, M. (ed.) (1994) *Women in Management, Current Research Issues: Chapter 1*. London: Paul Chapman Publishing.
- Burns,R.B., (1990) *Introduction to Research Methods*. Cheshire, Melbourne: Longman.
- Cabana, S. (1995) Participative design works, partially participative doesn't. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, January/February: pp.10-19.
- Camman, C. (1984) Productivity of management through QWL programs. In Frombun, (ed.) *Strategic Human Resource Management*. New York: Wiley. Pp 71-86.
- Campbell, D.T. (1957) Factors relevant to the validity of experience in social setting. *Psychological Bulletin*, 54: 297-312.
- Campbell, D.T. and Fiske, D.W. (1959) Convergent and discrimination validation by the multitrait – multimethod index. *Psychological Bulletin*, 56: 81-105.
- Campbell, D.J. and Gringrich, K.F. (1982) The interactive effects of task complexity and participation on task performance: A field experiment. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, 38: 162-180.
- Caplow, T. (1954) *The sociology of work*. New York. McGraw Hill.

- Carlton, E. (1997) *Ideology and social order*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Cassar, V. (1999) Can leader direction and employee participation co-exist?: Investigating interaction effects between participation and favourable work-related attitudes among Maltese middle-managers. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 14 (1): 57-68
- Cartwright, S. and Cooper, C.L. (1989) Predicting success in joint venture organization in information technology – a cultural perspective. *Journal of Gender Management*, 15: 39-52.
- Cartwright, S. and Gale, A. (1995) Project management : Different gender, different culture? A discussion on gender and organization culture – part 2. *Leadership and Organization Journal*, 16(4): 12-16.
- Catalyss (1999) *Women Scientists in Industry: A Winning Formula for Companies*. New York: Catalyst.
- Chatterjee, S. and Price, B. (1991) *Regression analysis by example*. 2nd Edition. New York: Wiley.
- Cherns, A.B., and Davis, L.E. (1975) Assessment of the State of the Art, in Davis and Cherns (ed.), *The Quality of working Life*. Vol.1. New York: The Free Press.
- Churchill, W. (1998) *I am an Idigenist: Notes on Ideology on the Fourth World*. Boston South End.
- Chusmir, L. H. (1990) Men who make nontraditional career choices. *Journal of Counseling and Development*, 69: 11-16.
- Chusmir, L.H, Parker, Barbara (1992) Success strivings and their relationships to affective work behaviours: gender differences. *The Journal of Social Psychology*, 132: 87-99.
- Cloke, P., and Little, J., (1997) *Contested countryside Cultures: Otherness marginalisation and rurality*. London: Routledge.
- Cockburn, C. (1991) *In the Way of Women: Men's Resistance to Sex Equality in Organisations*. London: Macmillan.
- Cohen J. and Cohen, P. (1975) *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioural sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ :Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cohen J. and Cohen, P. (1983) *Applied multiple regression/correlation analysis for the behavioural sciences*. Hillsdale, NJ :Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Cohen, S.G. and Bailey, D.E. (1997) What makes teams work: group effectiveness research from the shopfloor to the executive suite. *Journal of Management*, 23: 239-90.

- Cole, R.E. (1971) *Japanese Blue Collar: The changing Tradition*, (Berkeley/Los Angeles/London: University of California Press).
- Cole, R.E. (1979). *Work, Mobility and Participation: A Comparative Study of American and Japanese Industry*. Berkely, CA :University of California Press.
- Cole, R.E. (1999) *Managing quality fads*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Cole, R.E. (1989) *Strategies for learning: Small group activities in American, Japanese and Swedish industry*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Cole, R.E. (1990) US quality improvement in the auto industry: Close but no cigar. *California Management Review*, 33(5): pp 71-85.
- Collard, R. and Dale, B (1989) *Quality Circles*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Collins, R. (1984) Statistics versus words. *Sociological Theory*, 2: 329-362.
- Conger, J.A. and Kanungo, R.N. (1988) The empowerment process: Integrating theory and practice. *Academy Management Review*, 13: 471-482.
- Conti, M. and Tannenbaum, A. (1978) Employee Owned Companies: is the difference measurable ? *Monthly Labor Review*, 4: 23-8
- Conti, R and Warner, M. (1993) Taylorism, New Technology and Just-in-time System in Japanese Manufacturing. *New Technology, Work and Employment*, 8(1): 31-42.
- Cook, J. and Wall, T. (1980) New work attitude measures of trust, organizational commitment and personal need non-fulfillment. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 53: 39-52.
- Cooke, W. (1989) Improving productivity and quality through collaboration. *Industrial Relations*, 28(2): 219-239.
- Coopey, J. (1995) Managerial culture and the still birth of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 5 (3): 56-76
- Cotton, J.L. (1993) *Employee Involvement: Methods for improving performance and work attitudes*. London: Sage
- Cotton, J.L., Voltrath, D.A., Froggatt, K.L., Lengnick-Hall, M.L. and Jennings, K.R. (1988) Employee participation: Diverse forms and different outcomes. *Academy of Management Review*, 13: 8-22.
- Cotton, J.L., McFarlin, D.B., Paul, D (1993) A cross-national comparison of employee participation. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 8(1): 10-20.
- Cox, E.P. (1979) *Marketing research: Information for decision making*. New York: Harper and Row.

- Coyle, A. (1982) Sex and skill in the organisation of the clothing industry. In West, J. (ed.) *Work, women and the labour market*. Place: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Crawford, M. and Marecek, J. (1989) Psychology Reconstructs the Female 1968-1988. *Psychology of Women Quarterly*, 13(June): 147-65.
- Creed, E. E. D. and Miles, R. E. (1996) Trust in organizations: A conceptual framework. In Kramer, R. M. and Tyler, T. R. (eds.) *Trust in organizations, Frontier of theory and research*. London: Sage.pp 16-39
- Cressey, P., Eldridge, J., and MacInnes, J. (1985) *Just managing: Authority and democracy in industry*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Crompton, R. Jones, G. and Reid, S. (1982) Contemporary clerical work: A case study of local government. In West, J. (ed.) *Women, work and the labour market*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. pp142-150.
- Cummings and Staw, B.M. (1990) (ed.) *Leadership participation and group behaviour*. Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Cunningham, I., Hyman, J. and Baldry, C. (1996) Empowerment: the power to do what? *Industrial Relations Journal*, 27(2): 143-154.
- Cunningham, I. and Hyman, J. (1999) The poverty of empowerment? A critical case study. *Personnel Review*, 28(3).
- Dachler, H.P. and Wilpert, B. (1978) Conceptual dimensions and boundaries of participation in organizations: A critical evaluation. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 23: 1-39.
- Dale, B.G. (1984) *Quality Circles in UK manufacturing industry- a state of the art survey*. Occasional Paper No. 8402, Manchester: School of Management, UMIST.
- Dale, B.G., Elkjaer, M.B., Van der Wiele, A. and Williams, A. (2000) Fad, Fashion and fit : An Examination of quality circles, business process re-engineering and statistical process control. *International Production Economics* 73: 137-152.
- Dale, B., Y-Wu, P., Zairi, M., Williams, A. and van der Wiele, T. (2001) Total quality management and theory: An exploratory study of contribution. *Total Quality Management*, 12(4): 439-49.
- Daniel, W. (1969) Productivity bargaining and orientation to work: A rejoinder to Goldthorpe. *Journal of Management Studies*. 6(3): 366-375.
- Daud, F. (1980) Masalah konflik peranan di kalangan wanita Melayu [The problems of conflict in role among Malay women]. *Bingkisan Pertiwi*, 6: 12- 32.
- David, M. and Sutton, C.D. (2004) *Social Research: The Basic*. London: Sage.

- Davidson, M.J. (1987) Women and Employment. In Warr, P. (ed.) *Psychology at Work*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. pp 78-84.
- DeCotiis, T.A., and Summers, T.P. (1987) a path analysis of a model of the antecedents and consequences of organizational commitment. *Human Relations*, 40(4): 445-470.
- Degler, C. (1980) *At Odds: Women and Family in America from the Revolution to the Present*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Delaney, J., Lewin, D. and Ichinowski, C. (1994) *Human resource policies and practices in American firms US Department of Labour*. Bureau of Labour Management Relations, Washington, DC.
- Delbridge, R. and Whitfield, K. (2001) Employee perceptions of job influence and organizational participation. *Industrial Relation*, 40(3): 472-490.
- Denzin, N.K. (1989) *The research act*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice Hall.
- Denzin, N. K. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2005), *The Handbook of Qualitative Research*, 3rd Edition, Sage, London
- Dessler, Gary and Farrow, Dana L. (1990) Implementing a Successful Quality Improvement Programme in a Service Company: Winning the Deming Prize. *Successful Quality Improvement*, pp.45-53.
- Detert, J. R., Schroeder, R. G. and Mauriel, J. J. (2000) A framework for linking culture and improvement initiatives in organizations. *The Academy of Management Review*, 25 (4): 850-863
- Dewe, P., Dunn, S. and Richardson, R. (1988) Employee share option scheme: Why workers are attracted to them. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 26: 1-20.
- Dex, S. (1985) *The sexual division of work*. Brighton: Wheatsheaf Books.
- Dickens, L. (1994) Wasted resources? Equal opportunities in employment. In K. Sisson (ed), *Personnel Management: A Comprehensive Guide to Theory and Practice in Britain*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Dirks, K. T. and Ferrin, D. L. (2002) Trust in leadership: meta-analytic findings and implication for research and practice. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87: 611-28
- Dong, X., Bowles, P. and Ho, S. (2002) Share ownership and employee attitudes: Some evidence from China's postprivatization rural industry. *Journal of Comparative Economics*, 30: 812-835.
- Dore, R. (1973) *British Factory- Japanese Factory*. London: George Allen and Unwin.
- Drago, R. and Wooden, M. (1991) The Determinants of Participatory Management. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 29(2): 177-204.

- Draper, N.R. and Smith, H. (1981) *Applied regression analysis*. 2nd Edition. New York: Wiley.
- Dunn, S. Richardson, R. and Dewe, P. (1990) The impact of employee share ownership on workers attitudes: longitudinal case study. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 1: 1-17
- Dutka, S. and Frankel, L.R. (1993) Measurement errors in organizational survey. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 36(4): 470-484.
- Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, R. and Lowe, A. (1993) *Management research*. London: Sage.
- Eden, C., Jones, S., and Sims, D. (1983), *Messing about in problems*. Oxford: Pergamon
- Edwards, P.K. (1987) *Managing the factory*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Eisenberger, R., Fasalo, P., and Davis-LaMastro, V. (1990) Perceived organization support and employee diligence, commitment and innovation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(10): 51-59.
- Elias, P. and Main, B. (1982) *Women's Working Lives, Evidence from the National Training Survey*. (Coventry, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick).
- Emery, F.E. and Trist, E.L. (1965) The causal texture of organizational environments. *Human Relations*, 18: 21-32.
- England, G.W. and Negandhi, A.R. (1979) National contexts and technology as determinants of employees' perceptions. In England, G.W. and Negandhi, A.R. and Wilpert, B. (ed.) *Organizational functioning in a cross-cultural perspective*. Kent, OH: Kent University Press. pp58-65.
- Estrin S., Grout P., Wadhvani S., (1987) Profit Sharing and Employee Share and Employee Share Ownership. *Economic Policy*, 4:14-62.
- Etzioni, A.A. (1961) *A comparative analysis of complex organisations*. New York: The Free Press.
- Fagenson, E.A. (1986) Women's work orientation: Something old, something new. *Group and Organization Studies*, 11(1): 75-100.
- Ferris, G.R. and Wagner, J.A. (1985) Quality circles in the United States: A conceptual reevaluation. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 21: 155-167.
- Festinger, L.A. (1957) *A Theory of Cognitive Dissonance*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press.

- Fieldberg, R. and Glen, E. (1979) Male and female: Job versus gender models in the sociology of work. *Social Problems*, 26(5): 24-45.
- Fielding, N. (1995) Ethnography. In Gilbert, N. (ed.) *Researching Social Life*. London: Sage. pp154-71.
- Fink, A. (1995) *How to analyse Survey Data*. London: Sage publications.
- Flick, U. (2002) *An introduction to qualitative research (2nd Edn)*. London: Sage
- Fogarty, M. and White, M. (1988) *Share schemes: As workers see them*. London: Policy Studies Institute.
- Fombrun, C. J., Tichy, N.M., and Decanna, M.A. (ed.) (1984). *Strategic Human Resource Management*. New York and Chichester: Wiley.
- Fontaine, G. (1989), *Managing international assignments: The strategy for success*, NJ: Prentice-Hall
- Fox, A. (1974) *Beyond Contract*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Fox, A. (1985). *Man Mismanagement (2nd ed.)*. London: Hutchinson.
- Frankfort - Nachmias, C., and Nachmias, D. (1996) *Research Methods in the Social Sciences*. 5th. Edition. London: St Martin's Press, Inc.
- Frazer, V.C.M. and Dale, B.G. (1986) *Quality Circle failure: An update*. Occasional Paper No. 8501, Manchester: School of Management, UMIST.
- Freeman, R.B. and Kleiner, M.M. (2003) Who benefit most for EI: Firms or workers?. *American Economic Journal*, 90 (2): 220-233.
- French, L. and Rosentein, J. (1984) Employee ownership, work attitudes, and power relationships. *Academy of Management Journal*, 27: 861-869.
- French, L. (1987) Employee perspective on stock ownership: financial investment or mechanism of control? *Academy of Management Review*, 12 (3): 427-435.
- Friedman, A. (1997) *Industry and Labor: Class Struggle at work monopoly. capitalism*. London: Macmillan.
- Gabor, A. (1994) Cracking the glass ceiling in R&D. *Research Technology Management*, 37(5): 14-20.
- Gaertner, K.N and Nollen, S.D. (1989) Career experiences, perceptions of employment practices, and psychological commitment to the organization. *Human Relations*, 42(11): 975-991.
- Gale, A.W. (1992) The construction industry's male culture must feminize if conflict is to be reduced: the role of education as a gatekeeper to a male construction industry. In

- Fenn, P. and Gameson, R. (ed.) *Construction Conflict: Management and Resolution*. London: EN. Spon. pp.416-27.
- Gale, A.W. (1994a) *Women in construction: an investigation into some aspects of image and knowledge as determinants of the under-representation of women in construction management in the British construction industry*. Phd thesis. University of Bath.
- Gale, A.W. (1994b) Women in construction. In Langford, D.A., Fellows, R.F., Hancock, M. and Gale, A.W. (ed.) *Human Resources Management in construction*. London: Longman Higher Education. pp 61-75.
- Gale, A.W. and Cartwright, S. (1995) Women in project management: entry into male domain. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 16(2): 3-8.
- Garsombke, D.J., and Garsombke, T.W. (1993) *Malaysia in Peterson, R.B. (ed) Managers and National culture: A global perspectives*. Westport, Connecticut: Quorum Books.pp104-115.
- Geber, C. (1986) Quality circles: the second generation. *Training*, 5:54-61
- Gerth, H., and Mills, C. (1991) *From Max Weber: Essays in sociology*. London: Routledge.
- Goldthorpe, J., Lockwood, D., Bechofer, F., and Platt, J. (1968) *The affluent worker: Industrial attitudes and behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Gordon, D.M. (1972) *Theories of poverty and unemployment*. Lexington, Mass: D.C Heath.
- Gowdy, M. (1988) The application of quality work life research to human service management. *Administrative in social work*, 11(3-4): 161-174.
- Greenbaum, T. L. (1998) *The handbook for focus group research (2nd ed)*. CA :Sage.
- Greenberg, E.S. (1975) The consequences of participation: A classification of the theoretical literature. *Social Science Quarterly*, 56: 191-209.
- Griffin, C. (1982) *The good, the bad and the ugly*. University of Birmingham, U.K.
- Griffin, R.W. (1988) Consequences of quality circles in an industrial setting: A longitudinal assessment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 31: 338-358.
- Guest, D.E. (1986) Worker participation and personnel policy in the UK: some case studies. *International Labour Review*, 125(6): 406-27.
- Guest, D.E. (1987) Human resources and management and industrial relations. *Journal of Management Studies*, 24(5): 503-21

- Guest, D.E. (1989) Human resource management: Its implication for industrial relations and trade unions. In Storey (ed), *New perspectives on human resource management*. London: Routledge.pp246-258.
- Guest, D. (1992) Employee commitment and control. In J. Hartley and G. Stephenson (ed.) *Employment relations: The psychology and influence and control at work*. Oxford: Blackwell.pp67-78.
- Guest, D.E. and Peccei, R. (1994) The nature and causes of effective human resource management. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 32(2): 219-41.
- Guest, D (1995) Human Resources Management, Trade Union and Industrial Relation's. In J. Storey (ed). *Human Resource Management: A critical text*, London: Routledge.pp86-90.
- Guest, D (2000) Piece by Piece. *People Management*, 7:45-58.
- Guest, D.E. (2001) Industrial relations and human resource management. In J. Storey (ed.) *Human Resource Management: A Critical Text* (2nd edn) London: Thompson Learning. Pp 96-113
- Gutek, B.A., Nakamura, C.Y. and Nieva, V.F. (1981) The interdependence of work and family roles. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 2: 1-16.
- Guzzo, R.A. and Waters, J.A. (1982) The expression of effect and performance of decision-making group. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 7(1): 67-74.
- Hackett, R.D., Bycio, P, and Hausdorf, P.A.(1994) Further assessment of Meyer and Allen's (1991) Three component model organizational commitment. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79(1): 15-23.
- Hair, J.F., Andersom, R. E., Tatham, R.L., and Black, W.C. (1995) *Multivariate Data Analysis* (4th ed.) Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Hakim, C. (1979) *Occupational Segregation*. Research Paper 44. Department of Employment, London.
- Hakim, C. (1991) Grateful Slaves and Self-made Women: Fact and Fantasy in Women's Work Orientations. *European Sociological Review*, 7(2): 101-21.
- Hakim, C. (1995) Five feminist myths about women's employment. *British Journal of Sociology*, 46(3).
- Hakim, C. (1996). *Key issues in women's work. Female heterogeneity and the polarization of women employment*. London: Athlone Press Ltd.
- Hammer, T.H. and Stern, R.N. (1980) Employee ownership implications for the organizational distribution of power. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23: 78-100.

- Hammer, T., Landau, J. and Stern, R. (1981) Absenteeism when workers have a voice: the case of employee ownership. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 62: 319-327.
- Hammer, T.H., Stern, R.N. and Gordon, M.A. (1982) Workers ownership and attitudes towards participation. In Lindenfeld, F. and Rothschild-Whitt, J. (ed.) *Workplace democracy and social change*. Boston: Sargent. pp66-77.
- Hare-Mustin, R.T. and Marecek, J. (1988) The Meaning of Difference: Gender Theory, Postmodernism and Psychology. *American Psychologist*, 43(6): 455-64.
- Harding, S. (1986) *The science question in feminism*. Ithaca, NY & London: Cornell University Press.
- Harley, B., Hyman, J. and Thompson, P. (2005), The Paradoxes of Participation. In Harley, B., Hyman, J. and Thompson, P. (ed.) *Participation and Democracy at Work: Essays in Honour of Harvie Ramsay*. London: Palgrave Macmillan. pp.1-19
- Harrison, R. (1972) How to describe your organization. *Harvard Business Review*, 51 (5): pp.119-28.
- Harrison, T. (1983) Participative decision making as social process of constructing reality. A paper presented at *Speech Communication association Meeting*. Washington D.C.
- Hartley, J. (1989) *Job insecurity and industrial relations*. Mimeo. Birkbeck Colleg. Department of Occupational Psychology.
- Hassan, A. (1996) *A study of quality circles in two selected ministries in the public sectors*. Thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of Ma in public administration. University of Malaya. Kuala Lumpur.
- Hearn, J. (1994) The Organization(s) of Violence: Men, Gender Relations, Organizations and Violence. *Human Relations*, 47(6): 731-54.
- Hecksher, C. (1995) The failure of participatory management. *Across the Board*, November/December: pp.16-21.
- Heller, F., Pusic, E., Strauss, G. and Wilpert, B. (1998) *Organizational Participation*. Oxford : Oxford University Press.
- Heller, M. (1990) Triangulation algorithms for adaptive terrain modeling. In *Proceedings of the 4th International Symposium of Spatial Data Handling*, p163-74.
- Henry, G.T. (1990). *Practical sampling*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Herriot, P. (1992) *The Career Management Challenge: Balancing Individual and Organisational Needs*. London: Sage.

- Hill, S. (1991) Why quality circles failed but total quality management might succeed. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 29 (4): 514-568.
- Hill, S. and Wilkinson, A. (1995) In search of TQM. *Employee Relations*, 17 (3): 8-23.
- Hing, A.Y. (1986) Women and work in West Malaysia. In Hing, A.Y. (ed.) *Women in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Pelanduk Publications.
- Hoel, B. (1982) Contemporary clothing sweatshops: Asian female labour and collective organisation. In West, J. (ed.) *Women, work and the labour market*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. pp64-78.
- Hofstede, G. (1980) Motivation, leadership, and organizations: Do American theories apply abroad? *Organizational Dynamics*, (6): pp.42-63.
- Hofstede, G. (1981) Culture and organizations. *International Studies on Management and Organizations*, 10(4): 15-41.
- Hofstede, G. (1983) The cultural relativity of organizational practices and theories. *Journal of International Business Studies*, (Fall): pp.75-89.
- Hofstede, G. (1986) cultural differences in teaching and learning. *International Journal of Intercultural Relation*, 10: 301-320.
- Hofstede, G. (1991), *Culture and Organizations: Software of the mind*. London: McGraw-Hill.
- Hofstede, G.H. (2001) *Cultures consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions and organizations across nations*. (2nd Ed.) CA: Sage.
- Hosseini, J.C. and Armacost, R.L. (1993) Gathering sensitive data in organizations. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 36(4): 443-471.
- Hrebiniak, L.G. and Alutto, JA. (1972) Personal and Role –Related Factors in the Development and Organizational Commitment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 17: 555-72.
- Huczynski, A. (1993) Explaining the succession of management fads. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 4: 443-463.
- Hunt, J.W. (1981) Applying American behavioral science: Some cross cultural implications. *Organizational Dynamics*, 10(1): 55-62.
- Huse, E.F. and Cummings, T.G. (1985) *Organizational development and change* (3rd ed.). St. Paul, Minnesota: West Publishing.
- Huselid's, M (1995) The impact of Human Resources Management Practice on turnover, Production and Corporate Financial Performances. *Academy of management Journal*, 38: 635-72.

- Hutchins, D. (1985) *Quality circle handbook*. London: Pitman.
- Hutchings, K. (2000) Class and gender influences on employment practices in Thailand: an examination of equity policy and practice. *Women in Management Review*, 15(8): 398
- Hyman, J. and Mason, R. (1995) *Managing Employee Involvement and Participation*. London : Sage.
- Idris, N. and Mohd, R. (2003) *Kepentingan keseimbangan gender dalam konteks ekonomi global: Kejian kes di Asian (The importance of balancing gender in global economic context: Asian case study)*. Proceeding of international seminar, sustainable economic, business and social development in era of globalization. Bangi Malaysia.
- Imai, M. (1986) *Koizen (Ky'zen): The key to Japan's competitive success*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Income Data Service (IDS) 1990: *Profit sharing and share options*. Study no. 457, May, London: IDS.
- Industrial Relations Service (IRS) 1993: Employee involvement: The current state of play. *IRS Employment Trends*, No. 545: 3-11.
- Ishikawa, K. (1980) *QC circle Koryo: General Principles of the QC circle*. Tokyo: JUSE.
- Ishikawa, K. (1985) *What is total quality control?* Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice- Hall.
- Ismail, R. and Mohd, Nor, Z. (2003) *Gender wage differential in Malaysian manufacturing sector*. Proceeding of international seminar, sustainable economic, business and social development in era of globalization. Bangi Malaysia.
- Ismail, Z. (1990) *Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment : A Quasi – Experiment in a field setting*. PhD Dissertation, Kent State University, Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Service.
- Jaeger, A.M.(1986) Organizational development and national culture: Where's the fit? *Academy of Management Review*, 11(1): 178-190.
- Jain, H.C. (1980) *Worker participation: Success and problems*. New York: Praeger.
- Jaros, S.J., Jarmier, J.M., Koehler, J.W., and Sincich, T. (1993) Effects of continuance, affective and moral commitment on the withdrawal process: An evaluation of eight structural equation models. *Academy of Management Journal*, 36(5): 951-995.
- Jelinek, M., Smircich, L. and Hirsch, P. (1983) Introduction: a coat of many colours. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 28: 331-8.
- Johnston, G.P., and Snizek, W.E. (1991) Combining head and heart in complex organization: A test of Etzioni's dual compliance structure hypothesis. *Human Relations*, 44(12): 1255-1272.

- Jomo, K.S. (1986) *Development policies and income inequality in Peninsula Malaysia*. Institute of Advance Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
- Jomo, K.S. and Tan P.K. (1985) Not the better half: Malaysian women and development planning. In Heyzer, N. (ed.) *Missing women: Development planning in Asia and the Pacific*. Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Center. Pp55-70.
- Jones, Derek C. and Kato, Takao (2005) The Effects of Employee Involvement on Firm Performance: Evidence from an Econometric Case Study. *William Davidson Institute Working Paper*, 612.
- Juran, J.M. (1964) *Managerial Breakthrough*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Kabeer, N. (1999). Resources, agency . achievements: Reflection on measurement of women empowerment. *Development and Change*. 30; 3-15.
- Kahnweller, W.M. and Thompson, M.A. (2000) Level of Desired, Actual and Perceived Control of Employee Involvement in Decision-making: An Empirical Investigation. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 14(3): 224-34.
- Kalleberg, A.L. (1977) Work values and job rewards: A theory and job satisfaction. *American Sociological Review*, 42: 124-143.
- Kamal, B. (1988) *Orgnizational culture: Organizational adaptability and change-a study of Petronas*. Unpublished PhD thesis. University of Southern California.
- Kanter, R.M. (1968) Commitment and social organization: A study of commitment in Utopian communities. *American Sociological Review*, 33: 499-517.
- Kanter, R.M. (1977) *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic Books.
- Karasek, R. (1979) Job demands, job decision latitude and mental strain: Implications for job design. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 24: 285-308.
- Karim, N.S. and Don, F.H. (1975) System analysis of higher education for women in Southeast Asia: Focus on its relevance to their present and expected roles. Seminar Workshop on *Role of Women in Development: Implications for Higher Education in Southeast Asia*. Association of Southeast Asian Institutes of Higher Learning. Manila.
- Kaur, M., (1994) Women in education in Malaysia implication for planning and. In Ariffin, J. *Readings on Woman and Development Dynamic*, KL: University Malaya.
- Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.A. and Gobeille, K.R.(1983) Industrial relations performance, economic performance and QWL programs: An interplant analysis. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 37(1): 3-17.
- Katz, H.C., Kochan, T.A. and Weber, M.R. (1985) Assessing the effects of industrial relations system and efforts to improve the quality of working life on organizational effectiveness. *Academy of Management Journal*, 28(3): 509-526.

- Keesing, R. (1974) Theories of culture. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 3: 73-97.
- Keller, R.T. (1984) The role of performance and absenteeism in the prediction of turnover. *Academy of Management Journal*, 27: 176-183.
- Kelly, J. and Kelly, C. (1991) "Them and us": Social psychology and the new industrial relations. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 29 (1): 25-48.
- Kerfoot, D. and Knights, D. (1995) Empowering the 'qualityworker'?: The seduction and contradiction of the total quality phenomenon. In Wilkinson, A and Wimplott, H. (eds) *Making Quality Critical: New Perspectives on Organizational Change*. London: Routledge. pp. 219-39.
- Kerlinger, F.N. (1964) *Foundations of behavioral research. Educational and psychological inquiry*. New York University.
- Kerlinger, F. N., and Pedhazur, E. J. (1973) *Multiple regression in behavioral research*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.
- Khoo, S., E. and Pirie, P. (1984) Female rural to urban migration in Peninsular Malaysia. In Fawcett, J.T., Khoo, S.E. and Smith, P.C. (eds.) *Women in Cities of Asia: Migration and Urban Adaptation*. Boulder: Westview Press.
- Kidron, A., (1978) Work Values and organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 21: 239-247.
- Kieser, A. (1997) Rhetoric and myth in management fashion. *Organisation*, 4(1): 49-74.
- Kim, J. and Kohout, F.J. (1975) Multiple regression analysis. In Nie, H.L. et al. (ed.) *Statistical package for the social sciences*. (2nd ed.) New York: Mc Graw-Hill. pp90-104.
- Kitzinger, J. and Farquhar, C. (1999) The analytical potential of sensitive moments in focus group discussions. In Barbour, R.S., Kitzinger, J. (ed.) *Developing focus groups research: Politics, theory and practice*. London: Sage. pp89-99.
- Klein, J.A. (1984) Why supervisors resist employee involvement. *Harvard Business Review*, September-October:87-96.
- Klein, K.J. and Rosen, C. (1986) Employee Stock Ownership in the United States. In Stern, R.N. and McCarthy, S. (ed.) *The organizational practice of democracy*. New York: Wiley. pp.387-406.
- Klein, K.J. (1987) Employee stock ownership and employee attitudes: a test of three models. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72: 319-332.
- Kluckhohn, C. (1951) The study of culture. In Learner, D. and Lasswell, H.D. (eds) *The policy sciences*. Stamford, California: Stamford University Press. pp.86-101.

- Kochan, T.A., Katz, H.C. and Mower, N.R. (1984) *Worker participation and American Unions*. Kalamazoo: Mich.: UpJohn Institute.
- Kochan, T, Katz, H., and McKersie, R. (1985) *The transformation of American industrial relations*. New York: Basic Books Inc.
- Kochan, T.A., Katz, H.C. and McKersie, R.B. (1986) *The transformation of American industrial relations*. New York: Basic Books.
- Kotter, J. (1990). *A Force for Change*. New York: Free Press.
- Krishna, (1982) *Women and developmental planning*. Kuala Lumpur: Asian and Pacific Development Center.
- Krueger, R. A. (1988) *Focus Groups: A practical guide for applied research*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.
- Kruse, D.L. (1984) *Employee ownership and employee attitudes: Two case studies*. Norwood, PA: Norwood Editions.
- Kuvas, B. (2003) Employee ownership and affective organizational commitment: Employees' perception of fairness and their preferences for company shares over cash. *Scandinavian Journal Management*, 19: 193-212.
- Lashley, C. (1997) *Empowering Service Excellence: Beyond the Quick Fix*. London: Cassell.
- Lashley, C. (1998) Matching the management of human resources to service operations. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 10(1): 24-33.
- Lashley, C. and McGoldrick, J. (1994) The limits of empowerment. *Empowerment in Organasation*, 2(3): 25-38.
- Lawler, E. (1971) *Pay and organizational effectiveness: A psychological view*. New York: McGraw.
- Lawler, E.E. and Mohrman, S.A. (1985) Quality circle after the fad. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(1): 65-71.
- Lawler, E.E. (1986) *High involvement management, Participative strategies for improving organizational performance*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Lawler, E.E. and Mohrman, S.A. (1987) Quality circles: After the honeymoon. *Organizational Dynamics*, 15(4): 42-54.
- Lawler, E.E. and Mohrman, S.A. (1989) Quality circles after the fad. *Harvard Business Reviews*, 63 (1): 65-71.
- Lawler, E.J. (1992) Affective attachment to nested groups, a choice-process theory. *American Sociological Review*, 57: 327-39.

- Leana, C.R. (1987) Power relinquishment versus power sharing: Theoretical clarification and empirical comparison of delegation and participation. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72: 228-233.
- Leana, C.R., Ahlbrandt, R.S and Murrell, A.J. (1992) The effects of employee programs on unionized workers' attitudes, perceptions, and preferences in decision-making. *Academy of Management Journal*, 35(4): 861-873.
- Ledford, G., Lawler, E. and Mohrman, S. (1988) The quality circle and its variations. In Campbell, J., Campbell, R. and associates (eds.) *Productivity in Organizations*. San Francisco: Josey-Bass. pp.225-295.
- Ledford, G.E. and Lawler, E.E. (1994) Research on employee participation: Beating a dead horse. *Academy of management review*, 19(4): 633-644.
- Ledwith, S. and Colgan, F. (1996) *Women in Management: Challenging Gender Politics*. London: Macmillan.
- Lee, C. and Schuler, R.S. (1982) A constructive replication and extension of a role expectancy perception model of participation decision making. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 55: 109-118.
- Lee, R.M. (1993) *Doing research on sensitive topics*. London: Sage.
- Lee, S.M. (1971) An Empirical Analysis of Organisational Identification. *Academy of Management Journal*, 14: 213-226.
- Legge, K. (1994) Managing culture: fact or fiction? In Sisson, K. (ed.) *Personnel Management*. Oxford: Blackwell. pp204-224.
- Legge, K. (1995) *Human Resource Management*. London: Macmillan Business.
- Legge, K. (2001) Silver Bullet or spent round? Assessing the meaning of the 'high commitment'/performance relationship. In J. Storey (ed.) *Human Resource Management*. London: Thomson-Learning. pp. 21-36.
- Lewin, K. (1948) *Resolving social conflicts*. New York: Harper.
- Lewin, K. (1968) *The conceptual representation and the measurement of psychological forces*. Durham, N.C: Duke University Press.
- Lewis, S. and Cooper, C.L. (1987) Stress in two earner couples and stage in the life circle. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 60: 289-303.
- Lie, M. and Lund, R. (1994) *Renegotiating local values: working women and foreign industry in Malaysia*. Richmond: Cuzon Press.
- Likert, R. (1961), *New Patterns of Management, International Student Edition*, Tokyo: McGraw-Hill.

- Likert, R. L. (1961) *The human organizations*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Lillrank, P. and Kano, N. (1989) *Continuous improvement: Quality control circles in Japanese industry*. Ann Arbor, Mich.: Center of Japanese Studies, University of Michigan. Hill.
- Lincoln, J. and Kallerberg, A. (1985) Work organization and workforce commitment: A study of plants and employees in the U.S and Japan, *American Sociological Review*, 50: 738-760.
- Lincoln, J. and Kallerberg, A. (1990) *Culture, control and commitment: a study of work organisation and work attitudes in the United States and Japan*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Linstead, S. (2000) Comment: gender blindness or gender suppression? A comment on Fiona Wilson's research note. *Organization Studies*, 1: 297-304.
- Lischeron, J.A. and Wall, T.D. (1975) Employee participation: An experimental field study. *Human Relations*, 28: 863-884.
- Liverpool, P.R. (1990) Employee participation in decision making: The perception of members and non-members of quality circle. *Journal of Business and Psychology*, 4: 411-422.
- Livingston D. T. and Henry J. B. (1980). The Effect of Employee Stock Ownership Plans on Corporate Profit. *Journal of Risk and Insurance*, 47: 491-505.
- Locke, E.A. and Schweiger, D.M. (1979) Participation in decision-making: One look. In Staw, B.M. (ed.) *Research in organizational behavior: An annual series of analytical essays and critical reviews*. Greenwich: CT: JAI Press. 265-339.
- Locke, E.A. and Schweiger, D.M. (1990). Participation in decision making: One more look. In Kanter, R.M. (1977) *Men and women of the corporation*. New York: Basic Books.L.L. pp 44-57.
- Long, R.J. (1978a) The effect of employee ownership on organizational identification, employee job attitudes, and organizational performance: a tentative framework and empirical findings. *Human Relations*, 31: 29-48.
- Long, R.J. (1978b) The relative effects of share ownership vs. control on job attitudes in an employee-owned company. *Human Relations*, 31(1): 753-63.
- Long, R.J. (1979) Desires for and patterns of worker participation in decision -making after conversion to employee ownership. *Academy of Managerial Journal*, 22: 611-617.
- Long, R.J. (1980) Job attitudes and organizational performance under employee ownership. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23: 726-737.

- Long, R.J. (1981) The effects of formal employee participation in ownership and decision making on perceived and desired patterns of organisational influence: A longitudinal study. *Human Relations*, 34: 847-876.
- Long, R.J. (1982) Worker ownership and job attitudes: a field study. *Industrial Relations*, 21: 196-215.
- Lorence, J. (1987) A test of gender and job models of sex differences in job involvement, *Social Forces*, 66: 121-143.
- Low Pay Unit. (1983) *Who needs the wages councils?* Pamphlet No. 24, Low Pay Unit, London.
- Mahathir, M. (1991) *Vision 2020*. KL: Government Printers.
- Maimunah Ismail (2003) Men and women engineers in a large industrial organization: Interpretation of career progression based on subjective-career experience. *Women in Management Review*, 18(1/2): 60.
- Malaysia, *Economic Report* (2001) Ministry of Finance. Kuala Lumpur: Pencetakan Nasional Malaysia Bhd.
- Manderson, L. (1980) *Women, politics and change. The kaum ibu UMNO, Malaysia, 1945-1972*. Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.
- Mansor, N. (1991) The development process and women's participation in the government sector: A macro level analysis of trends and implications, 1958-1987, paper presented as the colloquium on: *Women and development in Malaysia: Implications for planning and population dynamics*. Kuala Lumpur: University Malaya.
- Manz, C. and Sims, H.P. Jr (1987) Leading workers to lead themselves: the external leadership of self-managing work teams. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 32(1): 106-29.
- March, J. and Simon, H. (1958) *Organizations*. New York: Wiley.
- Marchington, M. Goodman, J., Wilkinson, A. and Ackers, P. (1992) New developments in employee involvement. *Employment Department Research Paper No.2*.
- Marchington, M., Wilkinson, A., Ackers, P. and Goodman, J. (1994) Understanding the meaning of participation view from the workplace. *Human Relations*, 47(8): 867-894.
- Marchington, M. (1995) Fairy Tales and Magic Wands: New Employment Practices in Perspective. *Employee Relations*, 17(1): 51-66.
- Marchington, M., Wilkinson, A., Ackers, P. and Dundon, T. (2001) *Management Choice and Employee Voice* (London: CIPD).
- Markey, R., Hodgkinson A. and Kowalczyk, J. (2002) Gender, Part-time Employment and Employee Participation in Australian Workplaces. *Employee Relation*, 24(2):47-58.

- Markey, R. and Monat, J. (ed.) (1997) *Innovation and Employee Participation Through Works Councils. International Case Studies*. Averbury, Aldershot.
- Marks, M.L., Mirvis, P.H., Hackett, E.J. and Grady, J.F., Jr. (1986) Employee participation in a quality circle program: Impact on quality of work life, productivity, and absenteeism. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71: 61-69.
- Marsh, R.M. (1992) The difference between participation and power in Japanese factories. *Industrial and Labor Relation Review*, 45(2): 250-257
- Marsh, T.R. and McAllister, D.E. (1981) ESOP tables: A survey of companies with employee stock ownership plans. *The Journal of Corporation Law*, 6: 551-623.
- Martin, J. and Roberts, C. (1984) *Women and Employment : A Lifetime Perspective*. London: HMSO.
- Marvin, S. and Bryans, P. (1999) Gender on the agenda in management education?. *Women in Management Review*, 14(3): 99-104.
- Maslow, A. H. (1966) *Psychology of Science*. London: Harper.
- Mathews, J. (1989) *Tools of change: New Technology and the Democratisation of Work*. Sydney: Pluto Press.
- Mathieu, J.E. and Zajac, D.M. (1990) A review and meta-analysis of antecedents correlates and consequences of organizational commitment. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(2): 171-194.
- Matterson, M.T., and Ivencevich, J.M. (1988) Health promotion at work. *International review of industrial and organizational Psychology*. 24:259-265
- Maurer, A.; Oszustowicz, B. and Stock, R. (1994) Gender Attitudes toward work. *International Journal for the Advancement of Counseling*, 17: 34-46.
- McFarlin, D. B. and Sweeney, P. D. (1992) Distributive and procedural justice as predictors of satisfaction with personal and organizational outcomes. *Academy of Management Journal*, 35: 626-637.
- McGee, G.W. and Ford, R.C. (1987) Tow (or More?) dimensions of organizational commitment: Reexamination of the affective and continuance commitment scales. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 72: 638-643.
- McGregor, D. (1960) *The human side of the enterprise*. New York: McGraw Hill.
- McHugh, P.P, Gershenfeld, J.C. and Bridge, D.L. (2004) Examining structure and process in ESOP firms. *Personnel Review*, 34(3): 277-293.
- Meehan, E. (1985) *Women's right at work: Campaigns and policy in Britain and United sates*. London: McMillan.

- Meyer, G.W. and Stott, R.G. (1985) Quality circles: Panacea or Pandora's box? *Organizational Dynamics*, 13(4): 34-50.
- Meyer, J.P. and Allen, N.J. (1984) Testing the side-bet theory of organizational commitment: some methodological considerations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 69: 372-378
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J., and Gellatly, I. (1990) Affective and continuance commitment to the organizational: Evaluation of measures and analysis of concurrent and time-lagged relations. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 75(6): 710-720.
- Meyer, J. P., Allen, N. J. (1991) A three-component conceptualisation of organizational commitment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 1(1): 61-89.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1984) *Qualitative data analysis*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications Inc.
- Millard, N. and Stevens, M (1986) *British workplace Industrial Relations Survey, 1980-84 (WIRS2)*. Andershot: Gower.
- Millard, T. Stevens, M., Smart, D and Hawkers, W.R. (1992) *Workplace Industrial Relation in Transition, The ED/ESRC/PSI/ACAS Survey S*. Aldershot: Dartmouth.
- Miller, R.W. and Prichard, F.N. (1992) Factors associated with workers inclination to participate in an employee involvement program. *Group and Organization Management*, 17(4): 414-430.
- Mills, A. (1995) *Reading organizational theory*. Toronto: Garamond.
- Mitchel, T.R. (1985) An evaluation of the validity of correlational research conducted in organisation. *Academy of Management Review*. 10: 192-205.
- Mitchell, E.S. (1986) Multiple triangulation: a methodology for nursing science. *Advances in Nursing Science*, 8(3): 18-26.
- Mohamad, M. (1991) Malaysia: The way forward. In *Wawasan 2020*. Kuala Lumpur: Biro Tatanegara, Jabatan Perdana Menteri.
- Mohrman, S.A., Ledford, G.E., Lawler, E.E. and Mohrman, A.M.(1986) Quality of worklife and employee involvement. In Cooper, C.L. and Robertson (ed.) *International review of industrial and organizational psychology*. Chichester, U.K: John Wiley.
- Mohrman, S. and Lawler, E. (1988) *Participative management behavior and organizational change*. Centre for Effective Organizations: Graduate School of Business Administration, University of Southern California. In Phd.

- Mohrman, A.M., Resnick-West, S.M. and Lawler, E.E. (1989) *Designing performance appraisal systems: Aligning appraisals and organizational realities*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Morgan, D. (1988) *Focus groups as qualitative research*. London: Sage.
- Morgan, D.L. and Krueger, R.A. (1993) When to use focus group and why. In Morgan, D.L. (ed.) *Successful focus groups. Advancing the state of art*. London: Sage. pp.3 – 19.
- Morgan, D. and Krueger, R. (1997) *The focus group kit*. Volumes 1-6. London: Sage.
- Morisson, A.M. and Von Glinow, M.A. (1990) Women and Minorities in Management. *American Psychologist*, 45(20): 200-207
- Morris, J.H., and Steers, R.M (1980) Structural influences on organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 24: 512-526.
- Morrow, P.C. (1983) Concept redundancy in organizational research: The case of work commitment. *Academy of Management Review*, 8(3): 486-500.
- Morrow, P.C., and McElroy, J.C. (1986) On assessing measures of work commitment. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*, 7: 139-145.
- Moser, C.A. and Kalton, G. (1996) *Survey methods in social investigation*. Aldershot, Hunts: Dartmouth.
- Mosher, F.C. (1982) *Democracy and public service*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Mottaz, C.J, (1989) An analysis of the relationship between attitudinal and behavioral commitment. *The sociology quarterly*, 30(1): 143-158.
- Mowday, R.T. (1979) The measurement of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 14(2): 224-247.
- Mowday, R.T., Porter, L.W. and Steers, R.M. (1982) *Employee-organization linkages: The psychology of commitment, absenteeism, and turnover*. New York: Academic Press.
- Mueller, C.W., Wallace, J.E., and Price, J.L. (1992) Employee commitment: Resolving some issues. *Work and Occupation*, 9(3): 211-236.
- Munchus, G. (1983) Employer-employee based quality circles in Japan: Human resource policy implications for American firms. *Academy of Management Review*, 8: 255-261.
- Murakami, T. (1997) The Autonomy of teams in Car Industry: A cross-national comparison. *Work employment and society II*, 4: 749-98.
- Murdoch, J. and Pratt, A. (1993) Rural studies: modernism, postmodernism and the post-rural. *Journal of Rural Studies*, 9: :411-28.

- Nelson J.M. (ed.) (1990) *Feminist research methods: Exemplary readings in the social science*. Boulder, CU: Westview.
- Newman, W.L. (2003) *Social research method: Qualitative and quantitative approaches*, 5th ed. Boston: Allan and Bacon.
- Ng, C.S. and Thambiah, S. (2000) Woman and work in the information age: Leveling the playing field in Malaysia?. In Ismail, M dan Ahmad, Aminah (eds.) *Woman and Work: Challenges in Industrialising Nation*. KL: Asean Academic Press.
- Nicholson, P. (1996) *Gender, Power and Organization: A Psychological Approach*. London: Routledge.
- Nik Rashid, I. (1977) *Work value system of Malaysian Managers: An exploratory study*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Kentucky. Ann Arbor: UMI Dissertation Service.
- Norusis, M.J. (1990) *SPSS introductory statistics student guide*. Chicago: SPSS Inc.
- Norusis, M.J. (1992) *SPSS for Windows: Professional Statistics*, Chicago: SPSS Inc.
- Novarra, V. (1980) *Women's work: Men's work: The ambivalence of equality*. London: Marian Bayers Ltd.
- Nunnally, J.C. (1968) *Psychometric Theory*. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Nunnally, J.C. (1978) *Psychometric Theory*. 2nd Edition. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ongkili, J.P. (1980). Wanita and pembangunan [Women and development]. *Mastika*, 40 (1): :38-44.
- O'Reilly, C.A. and Chatman, J. (1986) Organizational commitment and psychological attachment: The effects of compliance, identification and internalization on prosocial behaviour. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71: :492-499.
- Ouchi, W. (1981a). *Theory Z: Hoe American Comapanies Can meet Japanese Challenge*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Padini, D. and Idris, N. (2003) *Pembangunan dan dampak social terhadap gender di Malaysia. Dalam penilian dampak social. (Development and its social impact on gender in Malaysia. An evaluation on social impact.)* Kuala Lumpur: Utusan Publication and distributions Sdn. Bhd.
- Parasuraman, R. (1986) Vigilance monitoring, and search. In Boff, K.R., Kaufman, L. and Thomas, J.P.(eds) *Handbooks of human performance. Vol2. Cognitive Processes and performance*. Chichester: Wiley. pp 89-101.
- Parnell, J.A. and Bell, E.D. (1994) The PPDM scale: a measure of managerial propensity for participative management. *Administration and Society*, 25: :518-30.

- Payne, R. (1987) Organization as psychological environment. In Warr, P. (ed.) *Psychology at Work*. Harmondsworth: Penguin. pp.291-314.
- Pedhazur, E.J. (1982) *Multiple regression in behavioural research*. New York: CBS College Publishing.
- Pendleton, A., Wilson, N. and Wright, M. (1998) The perceptions and effects of share ownership: empirical evidence from employee buyouts. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 36: :99-124.
- Pendleton, A. (2005). Employee Share Ownership, Employment Relationships and Corporate Governance. In Harley, B., Hyman, J. and Thompson, P. (ed.) *Participation and Democracy at Work: Essays in Honour of Harvie Ramsay*. Palgrave Macmillan, London, pp.75-93
- Perrow, C. (1973) Demystifying organizations. In Rosemary, C., Saari, K. and Hasenfeld (ed.) *The management of human services*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Peterson, R.B. and Tracy, L. (1988) Lessons form labor-management cooperation. *California Management Review*, 31: 40-53.
- Phillips and Taylor (1980) Sex and skill: Note towards a feminist economics. *Feminist Review*, 3: 84-90.
- Platt, J. (1981) Evidence and proof in documentary research. *Sociological Review*, 29:31-66.
- Poelmans, S. and Sahibzada, K. (2004). A multi-level model for studying the context and impact of work-family policies and culture in organizations. *Human Resource Management Review*, 14: 409-431.
- Pollert, A. (1981) *Girls, wives, factory lives*. London: McMillan.
- Poole, M. (1989) *The origins of economic democracy: Profit-sharing and employee-shareholding schemes*. London: Routledge.
- Poole, M. and Jenkins, G. (1990) *The impact of economic democracy: Profit sharing and employee shareholding schemes*. London: Routledge.
- Popper, M. and Lipshitz, R. (1992) Ask not what your country can do for you. The normative basis of organizational commitment. *Journal of Vocational Behaviour*, 41(1) :1-12.
- Porter, M. (1974) Organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover among psychiatric technicians. *Journal of Applied Psychology*. 59: 603-609.
- Powell, G.N. (1988) *Women and men in management*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

- Powell, W. W. (1990) Neither market nor hierarchy: Network forms of organization. In Staw, B. M. and Cummings, L. L. (eds.) *Research in Organisational Behaviour*, 12, pp.295-326.
- Pryce, V. and Nicholson, C. (1988) The problems and performance of employee ownership firm's. *Employment Gazette*, June:346-350
- Pun, K.F., Chin, K.S., Gill, R. (2001) Determinants of employee involvement practices in manufacturing enterprises. *Total quality management*, 12(1): 1-15
- Purcell, K., Hogarth, K and Simm, C. (1999) *Whose Flexibility?* London, Joseph Rowntree Foundation.
- Ramachandran, P. and Bharadwaj, G. (1980) *Notes on enhancing women's participation and development*. Bangkok: Sage
- Ramsay, H. (1977) Cycle of control: Worker participation in sociological and historical perspective. *Sociology*, 11(3): 481-506.
- Ramsay, H. (1982) *Participation for whom? A critical analysis of worker participation in theory and practice*. PhD thesis, University of Durham.
- Ramsay, H., Hyman, J.J., Baddon, L, Hunter, L. and Leopold, J. (1990). Options for workers: Owner or employee? In Jenkins, G. and Poole, M. (eds.) *New Forms of Ownership*. London: Routledge. pp.183-203.
- Ramsay, H. (1991) Reinventing the Wheel? A review of the development and performance of employee involvement. *Human Resource Management Journal* , 1(4): 1-21.
- Ramsay, H. (1996). *Managing Sceptically: a Critique of Organizational Fashion*. In Clegg, S.R. and Dunkerley, D.(1980) *Organization, class and control*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul. London: Sage.
- Ramsay, H. and Scholarios, D. (1996). Women and workplace democracy - an attitude problem? Paper presented at the 14th *International Labour Process Conference*, Aston University.
- Ramsay, H., Scholarios, D and Harley, B (2000) Employee and High Performance Work Systems: Testing Inside the Black Box. *British Journal of Industrial Relation*, 38(4): 501-31.
- Ramsay, H. and Scholarios, D. (2005) Organizational participation and women: An attitude problem? In Harley, B., Hyman, J. and Thompson, P. (ed.) *Participation and Democracy at Work: Essays in Honour of Harvie Ramsay*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp.113-145.
- Randall, D.M. and Cote, J. (1991) Interrelationships of work commitment constructs. *Work and Occupations*, 18(2) : 194-211.

- Razali, M.Z. (1993) Building commitment in Malaysia public service: Some conceptual issues and considerations. *In issues in Management and Business*. Bangi Selangor: Faculty of Business Management, National University of Malaysia.
- Reichers, A. (1985) A review and reconceptualization of organizational commitment. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(3): 465-476.
- Rhode, S.R. and Steers, R.M. (1980) Conventional vs. worker owned organizations. *Human Relations*, 34: 1031-1035
- Rhode, S.R. and Steers, R.M. (1981) Conventional vs. worker-owned organizations. *Human Relations*, 34: 1013-1035.
- Richardson, R. and Nejad, A. (1986) Employee share ownership in the UK- an evaluation. *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 24 (2): 233-250.
- Roberts, I. and Wilkinson, A. (1991) Participation and purpose: Boilermakers to Bankers. *Critical perspectives on accounting*, pp.385-413.
- Robson, M. (1984) *Quality circles in action*. Aldershot: Gower
- Roffey, Bet (2002) Beyond culture – centric and gendered models of management: Perspective on Filipino business leadership. *Women in Management Review*, 17(8): 65-77.
- Rohani,.H (1988) The development process and women's labour force participation on : a macro level analysis of pattern and trends of 1957-1987, paper presented as the colloquium on: *Women and development in Malaysia: Implications for planning and population dynamics* Kuala Lumpur: University Malaya.
- Rose, M. (1994) *Skill and Samuel Smiles*. London: Sage.
- Rosen, C.M. and Klein, K.J. (1983) Job-creating performance of employee owed firms. *Monthly Labor Review*, 106: 15-19.
- Rosen, C.M., Klein, K.J. and Young, K.M. (1986) *Employee Ownership in America*. Lexington, Mass.: Lexington Books.
- Rousseau, D.M. (1995) Psychological contract issues in compensation. In S.L. Rynes, and B. Gerhart (eds) *Compensation in Organizations: Current Research and Practice*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. pp. 273-310.
- Rousseau, D.M. and Wade-Benzoni, K.A. (1995) Changing individual-organizational attachments: a two-way street. In Howard, A. (ed.) *The Changing Nature of Work*. San Fransisco: Jossey-Bass. pp90-111.
- Rubery, J., Fagan, C. and Grimshaw, D. (1993) *Wage determination and sex segregation in employment in the European community- summary, equal pay, 36 years*

- later- In search of excellence, Brussels, Belgian presidency of the European community.* London:Sage.
- Rudestam, K. E. and Newton, R.R. (1992) *Surviving your Dissertation.* London: Sage.
- Ruffner, E.R. and Etkin, L.P. (1987) When a circle is not a circle. *SAM Advance Management Journal.* 3: 9-15.
- Russell, R., Hochner, M., and Perry, S.E. (1979) Participation, influence, and worker ownership. *Industrial Relations*, 18(3): 330-341.
- Rust, J. and Golombok, S. (1989) *Modern psychometrics: The science of psychological assessment.* London : Routledge.
- Sagie, A. (1997) A leader direction and employee participation in decision making: contradictory or compatible practices. *Applied Psychology*, 46(4): 387-416.
- Salancik, G. (1977) Commitment and the control of organizational behavior and belief. In Shaw, B.M. and Salancik, G.R. (ed.) *New Directions of organizational behavior.* Chicago: St Claire Press.pp60-78.
- Sapiro, V. (1986) *Women in American Society.* Paolo Alto, CA: Mayfield Publishing.
- Sasaki, N. and Hutchins, D. (1984) *The Japan approach to product quality. Its applicably to the West.* New York: Pergamon.
- Sasaki, N. (1987) Growing importance of QC circles. *Societas Qaulitatis*, 1 (1): 9-15
- Sashkin, M. (1976) Changing towards participative management approaches: A model and methods. *Academy of Management Review*, 1: 75-86.
- Sashkin, M. (1982) *A manager's guide to participative management approaches.* New York: AMA Membership Publication Division.
- Sashkin, M. (1984) Participative management is an ethical imperative. *Organizational Dynamics*, 9: 5-22.
- Sautar, G. N. and Savery, L. K. (1991) Who should decide? Key areas for participation. *Leadership and Organisation Development Journal*, 12 (5): 39-46
- Savery, L. K. (1994) The influence of the perceived styles of leadership of a group of workers on their attitudes to work. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 15 (4): 12-18.
- Schein, E.H. (1985) *Organization Culture and Leadership: A Dynamic View.* San Francisco: Jossey Bass.
- Schregle, J. (1970) Forms of participative management. *Industrial Relations*, 9: 117-122.

- Schuler, R.S. (1980) A role expectancy model of participation in decision making. *Academy of Management Journal*, 23(2): 331-340.
- Schuster, M.H. (1985) Models of cooperation and change in union settings. *Industrial Relations*, 24: 382-394.
- Sekaran, U. (1984) *Research methods for managers: A skill building approach*. New York: Wiley.
- Sewel, G. (1998) The discipline of Teams: The Control of Team-Based Industrial Work through Electronic and Peer Surveillance. *Administrative science Quarterly*, 5:98-113.
- Shamsul Bariah, K.A (1988) Stratification and occupational segregation in the Peninsula Malaysian labour force: A case of gender-oriented development planning; paper presented at the colloquium on women and development in Malaysia: Implication for planning and population dynamic, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur.
- Shapiro, G. (2000) Employee involvement: Opening the diversity Pandora's Box? *Personnel Review*, 29(3): 304-323.
- Shea, G. (1986) Quality circles: The danger of bottled change. *Sloan Management Review*, 27(3): 33-46.
- Sheldon, M.E. (1971) Investments and involvements as mechanism producing commitment to the organizational. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 16: 143-150.
- Shelton, K. (1991) People Power. *Executive Excellence*, 12: 7-8.
- Silverman, D. (1970) *The theory of organizations*. London: Heinemann.
- Sisson, K (ed.) (1994). *Personnel Management* (2nd ed.). Oxford: Blackwell.
- Snape, E., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M. and Redman, T. (1995) Managing human resources for TQM: Possibilities and pitfalls. *Employment Relations*, 17 (3): 42-51
- Sommers, B. and Sommers, R. (1991) *A practical guide to behavioral research*. Oxford: University Press.
- Starkey, K. and Mckinlay, A. (1993) *Strategy and the human Resource*, Oxford:Blackwell.
- Stavroulakis, D. (1995) *Women in employment*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Staw,B.M., and Salancik, G. R. (ed.). (1977). *New Directions in Organizational Behaviour*. Chicago:St.Claire Press.
- Steers, R. (1977) Antecedents and outcomes of organizational commitment. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, 22: 46-56.

- Stewart, D.W., and Shamdasani, P.N. (1990) *Focus groups: Theory and practice*. London: Sage.
- Stewart, J. (1982) Changing and social composition of occupations in organizations. *Research in the Sociology of Organizations*, 1: 301-29.
- Stohl, C., and Cheney, G. (2001). Participatory process/paradoxical practices. *Management Communications Quarterly*, 14(3): 349-407.
- Storey, J (1992) *Development in Management of Human Resources: An Analytical Review*, Oxford: Blackwell,.
- Strauss, B. (1987) *Qualitative Analysis fir Social Scientists*. Cambridge University Press.
- Strauss. G. and Rosenstein, K. (1970) Workers' participation: A critical review. *Industrial Relations*, 9: 197-214.
- Strauss, G. (1982) Workers' participation in management, An international perspective. In Cummings, L.L. and Staw, B.M. (eds.) *Research in organizational behavior*. Vol. 4. Greenwich: CT: JAI Press. pp.173-265.
- Strauss, G (1998) An overview in Heller, F, Pusie, E, Strauss, G and Wilport B, *Organisational Participation: Myth and reality*, Oxford: New York.
- Swales, S. (2002) Organizational commitment: a critique of the construct and measures. *International Journal of Management Review*, 4(2): 155-78.
- Swales, Stephen (2004) Commitment to change; Profiles of commitment and in-role performance. *Personnel Review*, 33(2): 187-204.
- Tabachnick, B.G. and Fidell, L.S.(1989) *Using multivariate statistics*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Tainio, R. and Santalainen, T. (1984) Some evidence for cultural relativity of organizational development programs. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science*, 20(2): 96-111.
- Tannenbaum, A.S. (1983) Employee owned companies. In Cummings, L.L.and Staw, B. (ed.) *Research in Organizational Behavior*. Vol. 5.Greenwich, CT: JAI Press.
- Tannenbaum, A.S., Cook, H. and Lohmann, J. (1984) A research report: *The relationship of employee ownership to the technological adaptiveness and performance of companies*. Ann Arbor, MI: survey research center, Institute for Survey Research, University of Michigan.
- Taylor, F.W. (1911) *The principles of scientific management*. New York: Harper and Row.

- Thompson, P. and McHugh, D. (2002) *Work Organisations*. London: Palgrave Macmillan
- Tjosvold, D. (1986) *Working together to get things done: Managing for organizational productivity*. Lexington, M.A.: Lexington.
- Tjosvold, D. (1987) Participation: A close look at its dynamics. *Journal of Management*, 13: 739-750.
- Townsend, P.L. and Gebhardt, J.E. (1989) A new challenge: Total service quality. *Journal for Quality and Participation*, 12(1): 56-7.
- Trethewey, A. (1997). Organizational culture. In Byers, P.Y (ed.) *Organizational Communication: Theory and Behavior*. Boston: Allyn & Bacon. Pp77-90.
- Triandis, H.C. (1980) Reflections of trends in cross-cultural research. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 11: 35-58.
- Tsiganou, H.A. (1991) *Workers' participative schemes: The experience of capitalist and plan – based societies*. New York: Greenwood Press.
- Tyson, S., & Fell, A. (1986) *Evaluating the Personnel Function*. London: Hutchinson.
- Unger, R. (1990) Dual Natures or Learned Behavior: The Challenge to Feminist *Psychology*, 2(1): 98-115
- Van Maanen, J. (1982) *Varieties of qualitative research*. Beverly Hills: Sage.
- Vroom, V.H. (1964) *Work and Motivation*. John Wiley and Son
- Vroom, V.H. (1997) Loose-tight leadership: what is the question? *Applied Psychology*, 46 (4): 422-7.
- Vroom, V. H. and Jago, A. G. (1988) *The new leadership: Managing participation in organizations*. Englewood Cliffs, N.J: Prentice-Hall.
- Wagner, J.A (1994) Participations effects on performance and satisfaction: A reconsideration of research evidence. *Academy of Management Review*, 19(2): 312-330.
- Wajcman, J. (1998) *Managing like a man: women and men in corporate management*. Oxford: Polity and Blackwell.
- Walker, P. and Bower, A. (1982) Sex discrimination and job evaluation. In Bowey, A. (ed.) *Handbook of salary and wage systems*. (2nd ed.) Aldershot: Gower Publishing Co. pp58-69.
- Wall, T.D., Kemp, N.J., Jackson, P.R., and Clegg, C.W. (1986) Outcomes of autonomous workgroups: A long-term field experiment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 29: 280-304.

- Walton, R. (1985) From control to commitment in the workplace. *Harvard Business Review*, 63(2): 77-85.
- Warr, P., Cook, J. and Wall, T. (1979) Scales for the measurement of some work attitudes and aspects of psychological well-being. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 52: 129-148
- Watanabe, S. (1991) The Japanese quality control circle: Why it works. *International Labour Review*, 130: 57-81.
- Watson, T. (1986) *Management, Organization and Employment Strategy: New York Direction in Theory and Practice*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.
- Wazir, J.K. (1982) *The development of Malay female leadership in Peninsular Malaysia*. Penang: Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- Weber, M. (1968) *Economy and Society*. New York: Bedminster.
- Webb, E.J., Campbell, D.T., Schwartz, R.D., Sechrest, L. and Grove, J.B. (1981) *Nonreactive measures in the social sciences*. (2nd. edn.) Boston: Houghton Mifflin.
- Weiner, Y. (1982) Commitment in organization: A normative view. *Academy of Management Review*, 7 (3): 418-428.
- Welsh, Mary Jeanne (1992) The construction of Gender: Some Insight from Feminist Psychology. *Accounting and Auditing Journal*, 5 (3): 120-132
- West, J. (1982) New technology and women's office work. In West, J. (ed.) *Women, work and the labour market*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul. pp112-125.
- Westwood, S. (1984) *All day everyday: factory and family in making of women's lives*. London: Pluto Press.
- Wilkinson, A. (1998) Empowerment, theory and practice. *Personnel Review*, 27 (1): 40-6
- Wilson, F.M. (1995) *Organizational behaviour and gender*. London: McGraw-Hill
- Woford, S. (2004) *Women in gender studies*. CA: Sage.
- Wolff, B., Knodel, J. and Sittitai, W. (1993) Focus groups and surveys as complementary research methods. In Morgan, D.L. (ed.) *Successful focus groups. Advancing the state of art*. London : Sage. pp.118- 129.
- Womack, J., Jones, D and Roos D (1990) *The Machine that changes the world*. New York: Thacmillan.
- Wood, R.C. Hull, F., and Azumi, K. (1983) Evaluating quality circles: The American application. *California Management Review*, 26(1): 37-53.

Wood, S.J. (1988) Between Fordism and Flexibility? The US car industry. In Hymann, R. and Streeck, W. (ed.) *New technology and industrial relations*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Wuthnow, R., Hunter, J., Bergesen, A., and Kuzwell, E. (1984) *Cultural analysis: The work of Peter, L., Berger, Mary Douglas, Mitchel Foucault, and Jurgen Habermas*. Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Yager, E. (1980) Quality Circles: A tool for the 80's. *Training and Development Journal*, August: 60-62.

Yahya, S.R. (1991) Patterns and trends of labor force participation of women, Paper submitted to HAWA under the *Women and Development* project. Kuala Lumpur.

Yin, R.K. (1994) *Case study research design: Design and methods, Applied Social Research Methods Series, 5*. London: Sage.

Zahra, S.A. (1984) Antecedent and consequences of organizational commitment: An Integrative Approach. *Akron Business and Economic Review*, 15(3): 26-32.

Zaleznik, A. (1989) *The managerial mystique*. New York: Harper and Row.

Zamanou, S. and Glaser, S. R. (1994) Moving Toward Participation and Involvement: Managing and Measuring Organizational Culture. *Journal of Group and Organizational Management*, 3: 119-132.

Zelditch, M (1994) Some methodological problems of field studies. In Burgess, R.G. (ed.) *Field Research: A source book and field manual*. London: Routledge. pp99-118.

Appendix I

Letters of permission for research (in Malay)

APPENDICES I

Human Resource Department
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 Richmond Street
Glasgow G1 1XP
Tel: 0141- 5524400
Fax: 0141- 5523581
E-mail: n.aminudin@strath.ac.uk

Alamat Malaysia:
558 Padang Benggali
Telok Air Tawar
13050 Butterworth
Tel: 04-3512606

Pengurus,
Telekom Malaysia Bhd.,
Wisma Telekom,
Jalan Pantai Baru,
59200 Kuala Lumpur.

November 12, 1996

Tuan,

Kajian attitude pekerja keatas skem penyertaan pekerja, dalam konteks Malaysia.

Adalah dimaklumkan bahawa saya adalah seorang tenaga pengajar dari Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia yang kini sedang mengikuti program PhD secara penyelidikan di Department of Human Resource Management; University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

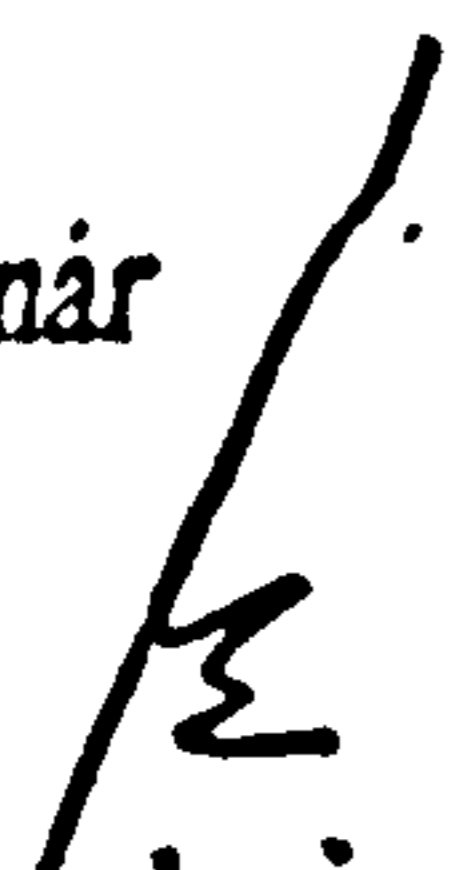
Untuk menyempurnakan tesis saya yang bertajuk, "Attitude to Employee Involvement Methods", saya perlu menjalankan kajian luar. Kajian tersebut akan di jalankan di Malaysia dan saya bertujuan memelih organisasi tuan untuk tujuan tersebut. Saya telah pun menghantar surat pada 7 August bertujuan meminta kelulusan dari pihak tuan untuk membolehkan saya menjalankan penyelidikan ini diorganisasi tuan. Pada surat tersebut disebut yang saya bercadang menjalankan penyelidikan pada bulan Oktober, 1996 tetapi tarikh untuk menjalankan penyelidikan tersebut telah dipinda ke penghujung bulan November 1996. Saya akan pulang ke Malaysia pada 23 November 1996, dan bercadang berjumpa dengan pihak tuan pada beberapa hari selepas itu.

Saya amat berharap agar pihak tuan dapat memberi kelulusan untuk penyelidikan tersebut. Saya perlukan jawapan yang secepat yang mungkin, harap pihak tuan dapat gunakan fax no. ini : fax # 0141-5523581 (Department of Human Resource Management).

Bersama ini saya kepilkan deraf soal-selidik. Saya bercadang untuk menjalankan penyelidikan ini pada pertengahan bulan Oktober 1996 hingga bulan Januari 1997. Adalah diharap pihak puan dapat memberi keizinnan untuk membolehkan saya menjalankan penyelidikan ini di organisasi puan. Kerjasama dan sokongan pihak puan amat saya harapkan dan saya dahulukan dengan ucapan terima kasih. Sekian.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA

Yang benar



(NORSIAH AMINUDIN)

Department of Human Resource Management
University of Strathclyde

Human Resource Department
University of Strathclyde
Graham Hills Building
50 Richmond Street
Glasgow G1 1XP
Tel: 0141- 5524400
Fax: 0141-5523581
E-mail: n.aminudin@strath.ac.uk

Alamat Malaysia:
558 Padang Benggali
Telok Air Tawar
13050 Butterworth
Tel: 04-3512606

Puan Saadiah Baharudin,
Pengurus Kanan Hal Ehwal Corporate,
Tenaga Nasional Berhad,
Head Office,
No: 129, Jalan Bangsar,
50732, Kuala Lumpur

August 23, 1996

Puan,

Kajian attitude pekerja keatas skem penglibatan pekerja, dalam konteks Malaysia.

Adalah dimaklumkan bahawa saya adalah seorang tenaga pengajar dari Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia yang kini sedang mengikuti program PhD secara penyelidikan di Department of Human Resource Management, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

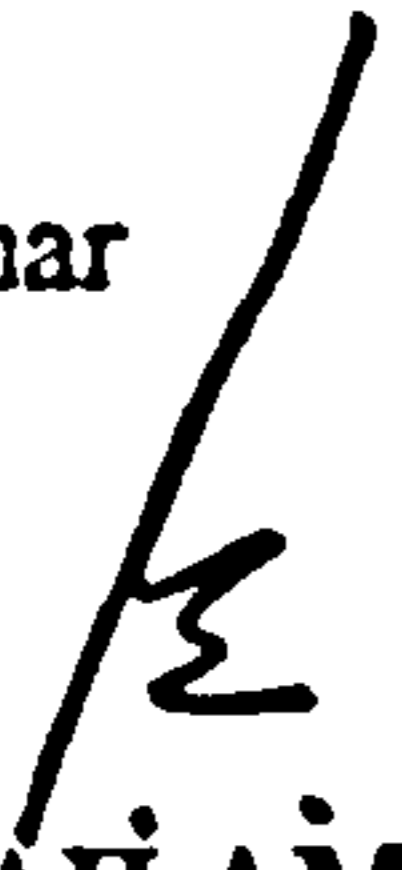
Pada masa ini saya sedang dalam peringkat menjalankan kajian luar bagi menyempurnakan tesis saya. Secara umum tesis saya bertajuk, "Attitude to Employee Involvement Methods". Tujuan tesis ini untuk mendapatkan pengetahuan mendalam tentang pelbagai sikap pekerja terhadap beberapa skem penyertaan pekerja. Secara umum, kajian ini akan melihat faktor-faktor pekerja yang berlainan terutamanya dari segi jantina, secara amnya dari segi umur, taraf pengajian, bangsa budaya dan latar belakang. Pada masa yang sama skem penyertaan pekerja yang akan dikaji adalah seperti 'quality circle', 'share ownership' dan 'team briefing'.

Sehubungan dengan ini saya perlu memilih sebuah organisasi di Malaysia sebagai satu kes-stud yang mana saya akan mengedarkan soal selidik kepada pekerja di organisasi tersebut dan saya juga akan menemubual beberapa pegawai-pegawai organisasi yang terlibat dengan skem penyertaan pekerja. Dalam rangka memilih organisasi yang sesuai saya juga perlu pastikan yang organisasi berkenaan mempunyai beberapa cawangan di beberapa negeri di Malaysia untuk mengkaji latar belakang dari segi tempat/daerah yang berbeza. Pada hemat saya organisasi puan adalah diantara beberapa organisasi yang amat sesuai dengan tajuk dan tujuan penyelidikan saya. Segala maklumat yang akan saya perolehi daripada organisasi puan adalah sulit dan semata-mata untuk tujuan penyelidikan saya sahaja.

Bersama ini saya kepilkan deraf soal-selidik. Saya bercadang untuk menjalankan penyelidikan ini pada pertengahan bulan Oktober 1996 hingga bulan Januari 1997. Adalah diharap pihak puan dapat memberi keizinnan untuk membolehkan saya menjalankan penyelidikan ini di organisasi puan. Kerjasama dan sokongan pihak puan amat saya harapkan dan saya dahulukan dengan ucapan terima kasih. Sekian.

BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA

Yang benar



(NORSIAH AMINUDIN)

**Department of Human Resource Management
University of Strathclyde**

Tan Sri Dato' Mohd Noordin Hassan,
Naib Presiden,
Pengurusan Sumber Tenaga Manusia,
Petronas,
Menara Daya Bumi

19 Disember, 1996

Kajian attitude pekerja keatas skem penglibatan pekerja, dalam konteks Malaysia.

Adalah dimaklumkan bahawa saya adalah seorang tenaga pengajar dari Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia yang kini sedang mengikuti program PhD secara penyelidikan di Department of Human Resource Management, University of Strathclyde, Glasgow.

Pada masa ini saya sedang dalam peringkat menjalankan kajian luar bagi menyempurnakan tesis saya. Secara umum tesis saya bertajuk, "Attitude to Employee Involvement Methods". Tujuan tesis ini untuk mendapatkan pengetahuan mendalam tentang pelbagai sikap pekerja terhadap beberapa skem penyertaan pekerja. Secara umum, kajian ini akan melihat faktor-faktor pekerja yang berlainan terutamanya dari segi jantina, secara amnya dari segi umur, taraf pengajian, bangsa, budaya dan latar belakang. Pada masa yang sama skem penyertaan pekerja yang akan dikaji adalah seperti 'quality circle', beberapa bentuk 'share' dan 'employee communication' program.

Sehubungan dengan ini saya perlu memilih dua buah organisasi di Malaysia yang mana saya akan mengedarkan soal selidik kepada pekerja organisasi tersebut dan saya juga akan menemubual beberapa pekerja dan pegawai-pegawai organisasi yang terlibat dengan skem penyertaan pekerja dan juga menemubual isu 'gender'. Dalam rangka memilih organisasi yang sesuai saya juga perlu pastikan yang organisasi berkenaan mempunyai pekerja yang ramai dan mempunyai beberapa cawangan di beberapa negeri di Malaysia untuk mengkaji latar belakang dari segi tempat/daerah yang berbeza. Pada hemat saya organisasi tuan adalah diantara beberapa organisasi yang amat sesuai dengan tajuk dan tujuan penyelidikan saya. Segala maklumat yang akan saya perolehi daripada organisasi tuan adalah sulit dan semata-mata untuk tujuan penyelidikan saya sahaja.

Saya bercadang untuk menjalankan penyelidikan ini pada bulan Disember 1996 hingga bulan Februari 1997. Adalah diharap pihak tuan dapat memberi keizinnan untuk membolehkan saya menjalankan penyelidikan ini di organisasi tuan. Kerjasama dan sokongan pihak tuan amat saya harapkan dan saya dahulukan dengan ucapan terima kasih. Sekian.


BERKHIDMAT UNTUK NEGARA

Yang benar

(Norsiah Aminudin)

Appendix II

Questionnaire

APPENDICES II

20 November, 1996

Employee involvement scheme questionnaire

PART I

This section of the questionnaire asks about employee involvement schemes in your organisation (i.e. QUALITY CIRCLES & FINANCIAL SCHEMES)

Please answer what you think about each of them *even if you are not participating.*

A. Quality Circle

A.1. PLEASE GIVE YOUR OPINION ON THESE STATEMENTS ABOUT QUALITY CIRCLES. For each of the following claims, *please circle the number that shows best what you think:-*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. QCs make people more conscious of quality	1	2	3	4	5
2. QCs help to build up a greater team spirit	1	2	3	4	5
3. As a group, employees have more power to make important changes to the way things are done	1	2	3	4	5
4. QCs increase work load for their members	1	2	3	4	5
5. Management never listen to the suggestions by QC.	1	2	3	4	5
6. QCs give employees a chance to contribute ideas	1	2	3	4	5
7. QCs help make work more meaningful	1	2	3	4	5
8. QCs lead to a greater sense of responsibility for the outcomes of work	1	2	3	4	5
9. QC is just a talking shop which does nothing	1	2	3	4	5
10. QCs lead to gaining recognition from management	1	2	3	4	5
11. QCs results in greater knowledge for the employees	1	2	3	4	5
12. QCs promote better communication between employees and management	1	2	3	4	5
13. QCs reduce feelings of a distance between management and employees	1	2	3	4	5
14. QC gives employees a chance to participate in management decisions relevant to them	1	2	3	4	5
15. QC is scheme is merely a tool of management	1	2	3	4	5

A.2. Are you a QC member?

yes/no

A.3. Did you join the scheme voluntarily?

yes/no

If you are a QC member proceed with question A.6 onward (page 3).

If you are not a QC member please answer the following questions

FOR NON-MEMBERS ONLY

A.4. PLEASE GIVE YOUR REASONS FOR NOT JOINING THE QC SCHEME

Please circle the number that shows your reasons:-

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I don't like to work in a team	1	2	3	4	5
2. I don't want extra responsibilities	1	2	3	4	5
3. I can't attend meetings outside normal working hours	1	2	3	4	5
4. I don't normally have much to contribute	1	2	3	4	5
5. I don't get extra pay for the extra time and work	1	2	3	4	5
6. I haven't had the time yet to join	1	2	3	4	5
7. It doesn't actually do anything useful	1	2	3	4	5
8. It is just another management fad, it won't last	1	2	3	4	5
9. The manager is not open to employee suggestion	1	2	3	4	5
10. I don't have confidence in my section when it comes to getting the job done.	1	2	3	4	5
11. I am not interested in communicating with management	1	2	3	4	5
12. It would take too much work	1	2	3	4	5
13. I don't want to participate in management decisions	1	2	3	4	5
14. I feel managers should do all the decisions	1	2	3	4	5
15. Only men are listened to in the QC	1	2	3	4	5
16. Only women are listened to in the QC	1	2	3	4	5
17. Please state if you have any other reason(s) not listed above _____					

A.5. Are you likely to join the QC soon?

Yes, definitely Probably Possibly No

NON-MEMBERS PLEASE GO TO QUESTION Q.B.1 ONWARDS (page 5)

FOR QC MEMBERS ONLY

Some questions to you may seem repeated but there is a reason for doing so.

A.6. IF YOU ARE IN THE QC SCHEME, PLEASE GIVE YOUR REASONS FOR JOINING *Please circle the number that shows your reasons:-*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Strongly Agree	Strongly Agree
1. As a group, I feel I have the power to change regular things around here	1	2	3	4	5
2. As an employee at this company, I get a chance to participate in management decisions relevant to me.	1	2	3	4	5
3. I wish to do something extra for the company	1	2	3	4	5
4. I can contribute my own ideas	1	2	3	4	5
5. I dislike managers taking all decisions	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel a duty to serve the programme	1	2	3	4	5
7. I can't sit back if by pushing I can achieve something	1	2	3	4	5
8. A chance to get something done	1	2	3	4	5
9. My manager is open to employees suggestions	1	2	3	4	5
10. I can count on my supervisor as a circle leader	1	2	3	4	5
11. I have confidence in my section when it comes to getting the job done.	1	2	3	4	5
12. It makes my work more meaningful	1	2	3	4	5
13. I gain more knowledge	1	2	3	4	5
14. It makes me feel a greater sense of personal responsibility	1	2	3	4	5
15. I can communicate with management	1	2	3	4	5
16. It makes me feel less distance to management	1	2	3	4	5
17. I like the idea of getting a chance to compete, among the other QC teams	1	2	3	4	5
18. Please state if you have any reason(s) not listed above _____					

A.7. What type of QC group are you in?

Please TICK where applicable

All female group, All male group Mixed group

A.8. What group you would prefer to be at:

- All female group
- All male group
- Mixed group
- Does not make any difference

A.9. If your answer to Q.A8 is 'does not make any difference', please explain your answer:

A.10. Do you have a female group leader in your QC team?

- Yes
- No (please proceed to Q.22)

A.11. How do you feel about having a female group leader ?

- I think it is better than a male group leader
- No different
- I think it is worse than a male group leader

A.12. If it is a mixed group, how do the male members respond to the female leaders?

Please TICK where applicable

- Cooperating
- No difference
- Challenging
- Not cooperating

A.13. If it is a mixed group, who dominates the meeting?

- Male members
- Female Members
- No domination by any particular group

A.14. If it is a mixed group, which of the following best describe how you feel ?

Please tick one answer only

- I don't like to speak, just leave it to the men
- I don't like to speak, just leave to the women
- It doesn't make any difference
- I feel frustrated because my ideas are not taken seriously
- I find difficulty in expressing myself in the meetings

Financial Scheme

Please give your opinion on these statements regarding FINANCIAL PARTICIPATION* SCHEMES in your organisation (these include PROFIT SHARING, ELSOS & ESOS).

B.1 For each of the following claims, *please circle the number that describes best what you think:-*

	Strongly Disagree		Neither Agree Nor Disagree		Strongly Agree
	1	2	3	4	5
1. They are very difficult to understand	1	2	3	4	5
2. They make employees feel more a part of the company	1	2	3	4	5
3. They help to build up a greater team spirit	1	2	3	4	5
4. It makes people more careful in their work	1	2	3	4	5
5. It reduces feelings of 'them and us' between management and employees	1	2	3	4	5
6. The plan ties you down to the company, and makes leaving more difficult	1	2	3	4	5
7. It makes people work harder	1	2	3	4	5
8. It gives those who join something for nothing	1	2	3	4	5
9. It gets the employees involved in management decision making	1	2	3	4	5
10. It increases employee job satisfaction	1	2	3	4	5
11. It promotes better communication between employees and management	1	2	3	4	5
12. It gets the employees to feel committed to the company	1	2	3	4	5
13. The scheme is merely a tool of management	1	2	3	4	5

(* to update to a more specific scheme - after the findings from preliminary interview with the organisations in Malaysia)

B.2. THESE ARE QUESTIONS REGARDING THE SHARE PLAN*

Please circle the number that shows best what you think:-

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
14. No matter how hard you work you can't affect the Company share price	1	2	3	4	5
15. If the Company does badly the Plan puts employees' savings at risk	1	2	3	4	5
16. It's hard to keep up the monthly payment	1	2	3	4	5
17. It's right for employees to own part of their company	1	2	3	4	5
18. The plan causes a loss of morale among those people who don't join	1	2	3	4	5

B.3. Do you follow movements in the company share* price closely? yes/no

B.4. Please write down what you think the share* price is today. _____

B.5. Have you joined the share* plan yes/no/undecided

If you are a share* scheme member proceed with question B.9. (page 7)

If you are not a share* scheme member please answer the following questions

FOR NON-MEMBERS ONLY

B.6. PLEASE GIVE YOUR REASONS FOR NOT JOINING THE FINANCIAL SCHEME

Please circle the number that shows reasons:-

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I plan to leave the company soon	1	2	3	4	5
2. I will be in the retirement plan soon	1	2	3	4	5
3. I have other financial commitments	1	2	3	4	5
4. I don't think it is a good choice for saving	1	2	3	4	5
5. I don't understand how it works	1	2	3	4	5
6. I prefer to invest outside the company	1	2	3	4	5

7. I am not interested in getting involved in the company's activities	1	2	3	4	5
8. I am not interested in communicating with the management	1	2	3	4	5
9. I haven't got round to joining yet	1	2	3	4	5
10. I don't want to get involved in management decision making	1	2	3	4	5
11. Only men are encouraged to join	1	2	3	4	5
12. Only women are encouraged to join	1	2	3	4	5
13. Please state if you have any other reason(s) not listed above _____					

B.7 Are you likely to join the scheme soon?

yes/no/undecided

B.8. Please explain your answer:

NON-MEMBERS PLEASE GO TO Q.C.1 (page 8)

FOR MEMBERS ONLY

Some questions to you may seem repeated but there is a reason for doing so.

B.9. PLEASE GIVE YOUR REASONS FOR JOINING THE FINANCIAL SCHEME

Please circle the number that shows your reasons:-

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. I think, it is an investment with favourable conditions	1	2	3	4	5
2. I think, it is a safe, long term saving	1	2	3	4	5
3. I think, it is something for nothing	1	2	3	4	5
4. I want to invest in the Company	1	2	3	4	5
5. I want to achieve an ownership stake in the company	1	2	3	4	5
6. I want to feel part of the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
7. I want to be more involved in management decision making which affects me and my work	1	2	3	4	5
8. I want to have more information on the company's financial activities	1	2	3	4	5
9. It is a way for me to show commitment to the company	1	2	3	4	5

10. It is a way for me to help the company	1	2	3	4	5
11. It is too good an opportunity for me to be missed	1	2	3	4	5
12. It makes my work more challenging	1	2	3	4	5
13. It will help to achieve better communication between us and management	1	2	3	4	5
14. It will reduce feelings a distance between management and us	1	2	3	4	5
15. Please state if you have any reason(s) not listed above	_____				

B.10. What do you feel about participation in Financial Scheme generally?

Please circle the number that shows best what you think:-

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
1. The share* out is unfair	1	2	3	4	5
2. Male employees tend to get a bigger share than female employees	1	2	3	4	5

C. The Organisation

C.1. CONSIDER THE ORGANISATION IN WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED. PLEASE PROVIDE SOME GENERAL INFORMATION ON WHAT YOU FEEL ABOUT IT ; *please circle the number that shows best what you feel:*

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Strongly Agree	Agree
1. The Company looks after its employees well	1	2	3	4	5
2. The Company has a good reputation as an employer	1	2	3	4	5
3. The Company pays well	1	2	3	4	5
4. Leaving this organisation now would foregoing co-worker friendships, which in another organisation may take years to regain	1	2	3	4	5
5. I am proud to be in my current job	1	2	3	4	5
6. I feel a sense of moral obligation to remain in my current job	1	2	3	4	5
7. Too much in my life would be disrupted if I were to change my current job	1	2	3	4	5
8. Even if I got an offer for a better job elsewhere, I would feel it would not be right to leave					

this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
9. I would be happy to spend the rest of my career with this organisation	1	2	3	4	5
10. I am willing to expend extra effort on my job whenever the need arises	1	2	3	4	5

C.2. CONSIDER THE JOB IN WHICH YOU ARE CURRENTLY EMPLOYED (eg YOUR DEPARTMENT). PLEASE PROVIDE SOME BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON WHAT YOU FEEL ;

Please circle the number that shows best what you feel:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
11. Morale is generally good	1	2	3	4	5
12. The physical work conditions are good	1	2	3	4	5
13. I am always clear about what is expected of me in my job	1	2	3	4	5
14. The company keeps the employees well informed regarding happenings in the company	1	2	3	4	5
15. I am satisfied with the amount of responsibility I am given	1	2	3	4	5
16. I am satisfied with my opportunities to use my abilities	1	2	3	4	5
17. I feel listened to when I make suggestions about the way things should be done	1	2	3	4	5
18. I am satisfied with the recognition I get for my efforts	1	2	3	4	5
19. My supervisor is normally very helpful	1	2	3	4	5
20. I am not satisfied with my opportunities for promotion	1	2	3	4	5
21. I do not get useful feedback about how well I am performing	1	2	3	4	5
22. There's too much change with too little thought	1	2	3	4	5
23. Management are too authoritarian	1	2	3	4	5
24. There is a strong feeling of "them and us"	1	2	3	4	5
25. Whether I do my job well or badly makes little difference to the overall performance of my department or location	1	2	3	4	5
26. My job is not secure with this company	1	2	3	4	5

C.3. IN THIS SECTION, PLEASE COMPARE MORE DIRECTLY YOUR VIEWS ON THE COMPANY IN GENERAL AND YOUR PLACE OF WORK IN PARTICULAR (eg, your section/ your department)

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
24. Management is very efficient:					
a) in the Company as a whole	1	2	3	4	5
b) in my particular place of work	1	2	3	4	5
25. Management usually keeps the best interests of employees in mind when making decisions:					
a) concerning the company as a whole	1	2	3	4	5
b) concerning my particular place of work	1	2	3	4	5
26. I feel loyalty:					
a) to the company as a whole	1	2	3	4	5
b) to my particular place of work	1	2	3	4	5

C.4. PLEASE RANK THE TOP THREE TYPES OF COMMUNICATION METHODS USED IN THE COMPANY IN ORDER OF EFFECTIVENESS

(e.g.: company newsletter etc.) *

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Please explain why you choose number one as being the most effective method of communication:

PART II

D. PERSONAL INFORMATION

Some information about you would be helpful in making comparisons with the responses of others from other organisations. This data is strictly confidential, and will be used solely for the purpose of this research. Please fill in the blanks, and where appropriate, tick the brackets which pertain to you:

1. Your gender

Male Female

2. Your age:

25 years and below 26 - 35 years

36- 45 years 46 - 54 years

55 and above

3. Marital status :

Single Separated Divorced Widowed Married

4. What is your ethnic background?

Malay Chinese Indian Other

5. Your highest level of formal education:

Primary education Secondary education (equivalent to SPM)

Vocational education Higher secondary education (equivalent to STPM)

Diploma Degree

Other, please specify: _____

6. What is your job title in this organisation; _____

7. Your length of service with the present organisation

2 years and below 3 - 5 years

5 - 7 years 7 - 10 years

10 years and above

8. What is your monthly salary;

- Under RM300 RM300 < RM500
- RM500 < RM1000 RM1000 < RM1500
- RM1500 < RM2000 RM2500 < RM3000
- RM3500 and above

9. Number of dependents living with you: []

10. Please give particulars about your children

No	Age	Living with you now?	Are they at work or still in education		
			Work	College	School
1.		Yes/No			
2.		Yes/No			
3.		Yes/No			
4.		Yes/No			
5.		Yes/No			

11. Here is a list of things that people usually think are important as their work priorities, people you think should be offered the job first when there is a vacancy

Please RANK ORDER THE THREE (1 = your first choice, 2 = your second choice, and 3 = your third choice).

(Please write the numbers 1 to 3, in the boxes provided)

- Enjoyable work Good promotion prospects
- Good social life Friendly workmates
- Lots of time with the family Employment security
- Really good wage To be respected
- Make social contribution by the work you do
- Others, please state if you have any reason(s) not listed above _____

E. GENDER

Some information regarding gender would be helpful to understand attitude in relation to the other issues in the study.

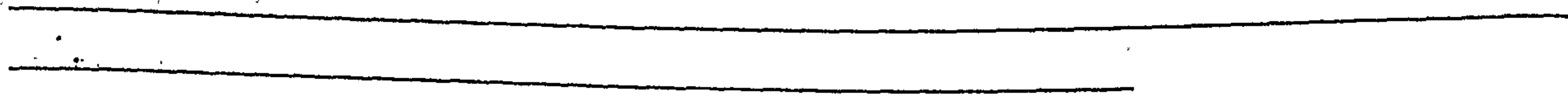
E.1. Here is a list of people in different marital situations. People you think should be offered the job first when there is a vacancy.

Please RANK ORDER THE THREE (1 = your first choice, 2 = your second choice, and 3 = your third choice).

(Please write the numbers 1, 2 & 3 in the boxes provided)

- A single man
- A married man whose wife is working
- A married women whose husband is not working
- A married man whose wife is not working
- A single woman
- A married woman whose husband is working

Please state your reason for chosing number one:



E.2. If my father/ my husband/ wife, or one of us won the lottery or inherited enough to take the place of my pay, I would.....

Please TICK ONE answer only

- Stay at home gladly
- Continue at my present job
- Work only part-time
- Look for more interesting work (even with less pay)
- Go back to study/take up a course
- Do volunteer work
- Pursue my hobbies

E.3. How long do you think women should work?

Please TICK ONE answer only

- As long as they want
- Until retirement
- Only if someone else could look after the children
- Only if they have no young children
- Work only out of necessity
- Single women should be the only women to work
- Women should not work

E.4. The following are some statements made about women. Please state your opinion regarding them please circle the number that shows best what you feel

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree Nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
1. Women are not as committed to a career as men are	1	2	3	4	5
2. Women only work to supplement the family income, not because they are committed to their career	1	2	3	4	5
3. Promotion decisions between male and female candidates, it should rest on ability alone	1	2	3	4	5
4. Women workers generally show little loyalty to their company	1	2	3	4	5
5. Women workers lack assertiveness when it comes to communicative competencies	1	2	3	4	5
**6. Women workers don't participate in most issues	1	2	3	4	5

THIS SECTION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE IS MEANT FOR WOMEN ONLY

F.1 What are your reason(s) for working?

Please RANK ORDER THE THREE (1 = your first choice, 2 = your second choice, and 3 = your third choice) your reason(s) for working.

(Please write the numbers 1, 2 & 3 in the boxes provided)

- Working is the normal thing to do
- Want to be independent
- The family needs money to get along
- To make use of my specific educational background
- To develop my career
- To make a social contribution through the work I do
- To avoid boredom, to have something to do
- To have a better standard of living

F.2 Do you feel that the management is biased against women

- Strongly disagree Disagree No View Agree Strongly Agree

F3. Please explain your answer:

Appendix III

Breakdown of the interviewees

APPENDIX III: BREAKDOWN OF THE INTERVIEWEES

Appendix IIIa: Company 1

Company 1								
Organizational Levels	Top Management		Senior Management		Middle Management		Junior Management	
Gender	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of respondents	1	0	3	2	5	1	0	1
Age	<45		1	1	3			1
	46-54	1		1		1		
	55			1	1			
Years of Tenure	<10	1		1		1		
	10-20			1	1	4	1	
	>20			1	1			
Level of education	Post-Graduate	1		1				
	Degree			1	2	5	1	1
	Diploma			1				
Marital status	Married	1		3	1	5		
	Single Parents							
	Single				1		1	1
Number of Dependents	0				1		0	1
	<3	1		1	1	3		
	3-5			2		2		
	6-8							
	9-12							

Appendix IIIb: Company 2

Company 2								
Organizational Levels	Top Management		Senior Management		Middle Management		Junior Management	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Gender								
Number of respondents	1	1	3	0	5	2	0	0
Age	<45				2			
	46-54	1	1	2		3	2	
	55			1				
Years of Tenure	<10					2		
	10-20			2		3	1	
	>20	1	1	1			1	
Level of education	Post-Graduate							
	Degree	1	1	2		5	2	
	Diploma			1				
Marital status	Married	1	1	3		5	2	
	Single Parents							
	Single							
Number of Dependents	0							
	<3	1	1			2	1	
	3-5			3		3	1	
	6-8							
	9-12							

Appendix IIIId: Focus Groups

Focus Groups							
		Company 1		Company 2		Company 3	
Gender		Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
Number of respondents		6	7	9	4	3	10
Age	<45	4	4	6	2	3	6
	46-54	2	3	3	2		4
	55						
Years of Tenure	<10	1	3	2	2	3	5
	10-20	5	4	7	2		5
	>20						
Level of education	Diploma	2		2		1	
	O level	3	6	6	3	2	8
	GCE	1	1	1	1		2
Marital status	Married	5	5	7	3		7
	Single Parents		1	1			1
	Single	1	1	1	1		2
Number of Dependents	0	1	1	1	1		2
	<3	2	1				1
	3-5	3	4	7	2	3	5
	6-8		1	1	1		2
	9-12						

APPENDIX IV: INTERVIEW/FOCUS GROUP QUESTIONS

A. Management interview questions:

1. "What are your comments about the employee involvement in your organization?"
2. "What is the reason /objective of introducing EI/QC/ESOS?"
3. "What do you think of the EI implementation on your company (QC/ESOS)?"
4. "As a manager how do you manage your time, daily work & QC?"
5. "How does QC training conducted by your company?"
6. "What is the reason workers participate in QC?"
7. "What is your reason to work?"
8. "How do you balance between work and home? Do you have a problem?"
9. "Will you ever stop working if you have more than enough money, say you win a lottery?"
10. "Do find women are different at work, or similar?"
11. "If women are different, why do you think they are different?"
12. "How do you feel towards a woman as your boss?"
13. "What do you think of woman generally?"
14. "Do you think there is any discrimination of women here?"

B. Focus Groups questions:

1. "What do you think is the reason/objective of management introducing EI/QC/ESOS?"
2. "What do you think of QC/what is your experience in QC?"
3. "What is the reason you participate in QC?"
4. "Have you attended QC training?"
5. "What do you think of ESOS?"
6. "Does the feeling of being unfairly treated regarding the scheme affect your daily work or commitment towards the organization?"
7. "How do you view the management at your workplace?"
8. "What is your reason to work?"
9. "How do you balance between work and home? Do you have a problem?"
10. "Will you ever stop working if you have more than enough money, say you win a lottery?"
11. "Do you find women are different at work, or similar?"
12. "If women are different, why do you think they are different?"
13. "How do you feel towards a woman as your boss?"
14. "As a woman do you find any difference at work?"
15. "What do you think of woman generally?"
16. "Do you think women is being discriminated here?"