

EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND WORK TEAM EFFECTIVENESS: BIOGRAPHICAL INFLUENCES

Melissa Mahabeer*, Patsy Govender**

Abstract

This aim of this study was to determine the biographical influences on employee involvement and work team effectiveness. Data for the study was collected using a questionnaire and analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. A sample of 150 employees was drawn using the stratified random sampling. Significant differences were found with the participative decision-making sub-dimension of employee involvement and length in service. Significant differences were found with both participative decision-making and job satisfaction, and gender. No significant differences surfaced with work team effectiveness and the biographical profiles. The literature review is followed by the results of the study. The study provides a guide for organizations to rethink and find ways to reach a solution building work environment.

Keywords: Employee Involvement, Work Team Effectiveness, Biographical Variables, Productivity, Organizational Results

* School of Management, Information Technology & Governance, University of KwaZulu Natal (Westville campus), Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Africa

** School of Management, Information Technology & Governance, University of KwaZulu Natal (Westville campus), Private Bag X54001, Durban 4000, South Africa

Tel.: +27 31 2607335

E-mail: govenderpa@ukzn.ac.za

Introduction

Employees are the most important organizational assets and their positive attitudes and valuable contributions cannot be under-rated in any organization. Therefore, they need to be empowered, motivated and satisfied with their jobs. Their knowledge, skills and abilities impact on long-term success in organizations, and they are integral part of processes, including team work. The impact of work teams cannot be achieved through the efforts of a single employee. Some organizations rely heavily on teamwork for sales, profits, productivity and services. Hence, effective work teams require a skills-set of interpersonal and adaptive capabilities (Bagraim, Cunningham, Potgieter & Viedge, 2007). Team effectiveness contributes to organizational effectiveness. Understanding the key roles of effective work teams stem from the rampant tendency for contemporary organizations to restructure, re-invent and downsize, creating new roles, which lean towards a team-oriented approach. Teamwork in organizations require proper guidance and support to enhance team unit cohesiveness. High-involvement team practices can instigate proactive attitudes which enhances performance, including quality and effectiveness which ultimately leads to overall organizational goals.

Literature Review

For organizations to be continuously productive and successful, they need to be proactive and revise their approaches. A strategic move is to involve employees for effectiveness, performance and productivity, amongst others. Employee involvement at all organizational levels is the tool in building a culture of effective teamwork, hence contributing to growth and productivity. Employee involvement encompasses, for example, empowerment, participative decision-making, employee commitment, job satisfaction and motivation.

Employee Empowerment

With employee involvement employees are empowered for participation in managerial decision-making and improvement activities relevant to their levels (Apostolo, 2000). Sun, Hui, Tam and Frick (2000) opine that employees are in the closest proximity to the problem or opportunity are in the prime positions to make decisions. According to Richardson and Vandenberg (2005), Edward Lawler, an organizational effectiveness scholar identified four interconnected principles for establishing high-involvement work systems. These principles include power, information, knowledge and rewards. Employees must perceive high levels of all four

attributes for optimal employee involvement (Bowen & Ostroff, 2004). Power without knowledge, information and rewards may lead to poor decision-making. Information and knowledge without power leads to individuals feeling aggravated because they are unable to use their capabilities fully. Rewards for organizational performance without power, knowledge and information can lead to aggravation and decreased motivation. Information, knowledge and power without rewards for organizational performance are detrimental because there will be no leverage or incentive to ensure that employees exercise their individual resources that will contribute to organizational effectiveness (Riordan, Vandenberg & Richardson, 2005). Also, an organizational climate can be viewed in conjunction with the four principles of employee involvement, namely, participative decision-making (power), information sharing (information), training (knowledge), and performance-based rewards (rewards) (Richardson & Vandenberg, 2005).

“Employees who perceive a climate of employee involvement should engage in the knowledgeable and informed application of creativity and relevant perspectives in their day-to-day work activities” (Riordan, Vandenberg & Richardson, 2005: 474). In this climate of employee involvement employees possess skills, experience and knowledge which can be used for added organizational benefits. Human relations theorists opine that involvement-oriented work environments influence the attitudes of employees (Loo & Thorpe, 2002). These theorists suggest that the climate of employee involvement improves when it is directly associated to an overall improved working environment, where employees will respond with positive emotions. When the human relations of an organization are aligned with the four principles (power, information, knowledge and rewards), employee involvement may be at an optimum level. According to the human relations perspective employee morale and goal is high as it depends on the climate of employee involvement (Loo & Thorpe, 2002).

According to Cox, Zagelmeyer and Marchington (2006), the first indicator of embeddedness in employee involvement is ‘breadth’, which can be measured by the number of employee involvement practices. This means that a combination of employee practices is beneficial as employing fewer lack reinforcement. In emphasising a culture of importance towards the ‘breadth’ of employee involvement, it fosters a network of embeddedness where multiple practices are dependent on each other for their successful operation. Kessler’s (2004) view is that the greater the ‘breadth’ of employee involvement practices, the more employees will feel committed along with increased levels of job satisfaction. Cox et al. (2006) highlight the second dimension as the ‘depth’ of employee involvement practice embeddedness which is an indicator of how

embedded any single employee involvement practice is. This can be measured by the frequency of meetings and employee contributions, such as the regularity and thoroughness with which practices are applied. This can have a significant impact on the embeddedness of employee involvement practices (Cox et al., 2006).

The forms of employee involvement can range from ‘direct’ to ‘indirect’. Direct employee involvement practices require individual participation, as in problem-solving groups or team-briefings. Indirect employee involvement practices are also known as representative participation, for example in workplace committees. The degree of influence attached to each technique also varies significantly (Duch, Waitzman & Amaral, 2010). Batt (2004) emphasizes the importance of the type, quality and combinations of employee involvement practices in evaluating its impact, and found that employees operate differently depending on whether they are used individually (direct) or in combination (indirect). Factors promoting employee involvement practices include design, incentive practices, flexibility, training opportunities and direct sharing.

Job enrichment, a motivational tool (Hackman, Oldham, Jansen & Purdy, 2002) too has direct ties to employees jobs (Niehoff, Moorman, Blakely & Fuller, 2001). Through job enrichment, managers signal support to their employees. Job enrichment enhances the growth and strength of the employee (Ross, 2004). With job enrichment, employees are able to use a variety of skills, and it identifies with a task. In a study, conducted by Bae and Lawler (2000), job enrichment was promoted with high-involvement management where employees are seen as a source of competitive advantage. The authors emphasize that this can be done by combining resource-based and high-involvement theories, amongst others.

The involvement of employees in decisions encourages them to freely express their views and they perceive their opinions as valuable contributions. Leana, Locke and Schweiger (2000) describe participation in work decisions as long-term, direct and formal. In 11 of the 15 studies conducted, Leana et al. (2000), found increases in productivity and performance because of employee participation in work decisions. Although the studies yielded high percentages of positive effects on increased organizational performance, it also highlighted the fact that employees do not have a strong influence over pay practices.

Work team effectiveness

Global competition dictates that organizations take a team-based approach to their strategy. Understanding the key roles of effective work teams stem from the rampant tendency for contemporary organizations to restructure, re-invent and downsize, creating new roles, which lean towards a team-oriented approach.

Work team effectiveness is a complex dynamic phenomenon, which can only be achieved through the variables which influence its context (Salas et al., 2004; Cohen & Bailey 1999). An organizational environment with a culture of teamwork require proper guidance and support for team unit cohesiveness to be evident. High-involvement team practices can instigate proactive attitudes, performance, including quality and effectiveness which impacts organizational goals. According to Kozłowski and Ilgen (2006), the emergence of a contemporary perspective over the last decade of work team effectiveness revolves around the organizational context of the team, where work team effectiveness is an outcome of the organizational framework which impact on team dynamics. Work team effectiveness is influenced by team dynamics, the interrelationships involved and the manner in which teams function in the wider organizational context. Wu, Wang and Tsai (2010), describe teams in organizational contexts, and the effectiveness of these teams cannot be analysed within a vacuum, but as part of a larger economic, strategic and technological arena. The authors define work team effectiveness as groups that are goal-oriented, group performance can be evaluated and it can be influenced by internal and external factors.

LaFasto and Larson (2001) developed a model of Work Team Effectiveness, which is the product of an investigation carried out from 600 teams in various industries. They base their model of work team effectiveness around five dynamics and when it is aligned with the organizational goals, then the culture is conducive to achieving those goals. The key according to this model is selecting the right people for team composition, thereafter building on their five dynamics of effective teamwork, namely, organizational environment, team leadership, team problem-solving, team relationships and team members.

According to the Hackman Model, for work team effectiveness to be at optimum levels, certain conditions must be met (Hackman, 2002) which are expressed in the suggestion that it is not only a team by name. It is also a 'real' active, working team; the team understands its direction and work as a cohesive unit; the structure of the organization is one which facilitates teamwork; the organizational context supports the operation of the team and there is a vast pool of expert coaches available for mentoring. Hackman (2002) suggests further that there are five essential conditions for work team effectiveness, namely:

- A 'real' team has four features: a task, defined boundaries, autonomy and stability.
- The goals of the team are clear and challenging, focusing on the results rather than the means to achieving them.
- An effective structure refers to whether the norms of the organization elevate or impede teamwork.

- A supportive organizational framework refers to whether the team has access to sufficient resources, information, rewards and support members to accomplish their tasks.
- Valuable coaching refers to the availability of an expert coach for guidance and support. This improves coordination and collaboration leading toward emerging opportunities.

The Lencioni Model suggests that all teams possess the potential to be dysfunctional and to improve the functioning of a team. It is important to understand the level and type of dysfunction, thereafter work team effectiveness may be improved. According to Lencioni (2005), the five potential dysfunctions of a team are absence of trust; fear of conflict; lack of commitment; avoidance of accountability and inattention to results. Also, some team conflict is necessary or it becomes difficult for team members to commit to decisions.

Kozłowski and Ilgen (2006) suggest three dimensions of team effectiveness, namely team performance, team viability and team process improvement:

- Team Performance: refers to the extent to which team members produce outputs according to the standards of the organization. Team performance is established through measures such as quality, quantity and working within an allocated budget (Ulrich & Brockbank, 2005). It is the function of the human resource manager to determine whether there are gaps in an individual's performance, and training and skills development programmes can be instituted. Mei (2008) argues that the knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) of the team need to be continuously improved through team training interventions in order to cultivate an organizational climate where teams learn by virtue of doing.
- Team Viability: refers to the extent to which members of the team are able to continue to work together in the future. Team viability becomes a component of team self-managing behaviours as it represents the team members' ability to deal with difficulties which impede their social stability. A viable team is able to sustain effective levels of performance over time (Kozłowski & Bell, 2003).
- Team Process Improvement: refers to the ability of team members to refine current processes and engineer innovative solutions to optimise task outcomes (Hinds & Mortensen, 2005). Although this dimension of team effectiveness is often over-looked, it forms part of an important component of team effectiveness as it possesses the ability to be leveraged as a competitive advantage within the organization. De Dreu (2007) suggests that team process improvement fosters a sense of encouragement where members are able to distinguish performance gaps and set improvement gaps for themselves, ultimately

leading to a more complete and comprehensive understanding of tasks (Bushe & Coetzer, 2007).

Woods & Coutts (2001) describe the barriers to effective communication and teamwork at the team level as the lack of a clear stated and measurable purpose, the lack of training in interdisciplinary collaboration, role and leadership ambiguity, a too large or too small team, a team not composed of appropriate professionals, and a lack of appropriate mechanisms for timely exchange of information.

Objectives of the study

- To determine the influence of biographical variables (age, gender, race, length of service and position in company) on employee involvement
- To determine the influence of biographical variables (age, gender, race, length of service and position in company) on work team effectiveness.
- To determine the extent to which the sub-dimensions of employee involvement (empowerment, participative decision-making, employee commitment, job satisfaction, motivation) and the sub-dimensions of work team effectiveness (communication, team members' skills, performance objectives, innovation, teams output) is influenced by the key dimensions of the study.

Methodology

Respondents

The population comprised of all employees in a large construction company in Kwa-Zulu Natal, South Africa. The sample of 150 subjects (managers, supervisors and employees) was drawn using a stratified random sampling technique to ensure proportionate representation from the strata of the designated groups of interest. In terms of the composition, 23.3% of the sample consisted of managers, 29.3% were supervisors and 47.4 % were employees. Of the total sample, 50.7% were male and 49.3% were female. In terms of age, 18.0% were under 25 years, 30.7% were 25-34 years, 24.0% were

34-44 years and 27.3% were 45 years and above. In terms of race groups, 38.0% were Indian, 20.0% were Black, 20.7% were Coloured and 21.3% were White. Furthermore, 60.7% were 0.5 years in the organization, 24.0% were 6-10 years, 6.7% were 11-15 years, 5.3% were 16-20 years, and lastly 3.3% were 21 years and over in this company.

Measuring Instrument

Data was collected using a self-developed questionnaire consisting of two sections. Section A relates to the biographical data, which was measured using a nominal scale with pre-coded option categories. Section B comprised of 50 items relating to employee involvement and work team effectiveness, and was measured using a 5-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (1), disagree (2), neither agree/nor disagree (3), agree (4) to strongly agree (5).

Measures

The reliability of the questionnaire was determined using Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha. The overall alpha coefficient was 0.611 for employee involvement reflecting internal consistency and reliability; and also 0.611 for work team effectiveness, thereby reflecting internal consistency and reliability.

Statistical analysis

Descriptive statistics, using percentages, mean analyses and standard deviations were utilized to determine biographical influences on employee involvement and work team effectiveness. Inferential statistics included analysis of variance, Scheffe's test, t-test and reliability.

Results

Employees were required to respond to the items assessing employee involvement and work team effectiveness using the 5 point Likert scale, which were analysed using descriptive statistics (Table 1).

Table 1. Descriptive statistics of employee involvement and work team effectiveness

Dimension	Mean	95 % Confidence Interval		Variance	Std. Dev.	Minimum	Maximum
		Lower Bound	Upper Bound				
Employee Involvement							
Empowerment	4.5275	4.4681	4.5869	0.135	0.3670	3.60	5.00
Participative Decision-making	4.4685	4.4109	4.5260	0.126	0.3555	3.20	5.00
Employee Commitment	4.4899	4.4279	4.5519	0.147	0.3830	3.60	5.00
Job Satisfaction	3.8980	3.8480	3.9480	0.095	0.3090	3.40	5.00
Motivation	3.8805	3.8354	3.9257	0.078	0.2790	3.20	5.00
Work Team Effectiveness							
Communication	4.5293	4.4678	4.5909	0.146	0.3182	3.20	5.00
Team Member Skills	4.5227	4.4643	4.5810	0.131	0.3618	3.80	5.00
Performance Objectives	4.4373	4.3800	4.4947	0.126	0.3555	3.60	5.00
Innovation	4.5093	4.4475	4.5712	0.147	0.3833	3.60	5.00
Teams Output	4.5987	4.5376	4.6597	0.143	0.3783	3.80	5.00

Table 1 indicates that the dimensions of employee involvement in this organization are occurring at varying degrees. Based on mean analyses the attainment of the dimensions of employee involvement are as follows in descending order:

- Empowerment (Mean = 4.5275)
- Employee Commitment (Mean = 4.4899)
- Participative Decision-making (Mean = 4.4685)
- Job Satisfaction (Mean = 3.8980)
- Motivation (Mean = 3.8805)

The results indicate that for each of the dimensions there is room for improvement, as evidenced when the mean score value is compared against a maximum attainable score of 5. The analysis of the employee involvement sub-variables as indicated in Table 5.1 reflects that improvement is needed in terms of motivation and job satisfaction. However, very little improvement is needed with empowerment, participative decision-making and employee commitment, hence employees in this organization feel empowered in their jobs.

Table 1 indicates that the dimensions of work team effectiveness in this organization are also accomplished at varying degrees. Based on mean analyses the attainment of the dimensions of work team effectiveness are as follows in descending order:

- Teams output (Mean = 4.5987)
- Communication (Mean = 4.5293)
- Team members' skills (Mean = 4.5227)
- Innovation (Mean = 4.5093)
- Performance objectives (Mean = 4.4373).

The results indicate that for each of the dimensions there is room for improvement as evidenced when the mean score value is compared against a maximum attainable score of 5. This implies that the sub-dimension of the teams output require the least amount of improvement as opposed to performance objectives, which require a greater room for level of room for enhancement in this organization. Hence, the teams' output in this organization is fairly high as very little improvement is required.

In the study, employee commitment correlates significantly but inversely with communication. According to Colquitt et al. (2009) employee commitment must be guided by managers through positive reinforcement, observation and goal orientation. Colquitt et al. (2009) emphasises the importance of learning as a contributing factor to employee commitment, where job knowledge is

associated with increases in emotional attachment to the company (Colquitt et al., 2009). Hegar (2012) claims that managers who help employees cope with both their work demands and family responsibilities lead to higher levels of commitment to the organization. According to Robbins, Judge, Odendaal and Roodt (2009) communication is the control, motivation, emotional expression and information. This includes tools for manipulating workforce attitudes and behaviours within the wider social and political context (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004), and also where ideas and information are exchanged (Youssef & Luthans, 2007). With an inverse relationship there could be possible barriers to communication such as a disagreement on leadership styles or structures, power and gender differences, physical surroundings, language variations and cultural diversity.

Respondents in this study indicate that motivation correlates significantly but inversely with team members' skills. According to Robbins et al. (2009) the main tool for motivation reflects on job design, through the job characteristics model which proposes that any job can be described in terms of five core job dimensions, namely skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback. Nelson and Cooper (2007) assert that job rotation, job enlargement and job enrichment must be used in order to increase motivation levels, with creative solutions as alternative work arrangements (flexitime, job sharing and telecommuting). The skills of team members are influenced by multiple factors and cannot be analysed within a vacuum. Team members' skills are constantly being renewed through a cross-pollination of ideas through team interaction (Robbins et al., 2009). The variety of skills an individual has shows how knowledge is processed and learnt, including the translation of knowledge into meaningful skills (Buchanan & Huczynski, 2004).

Also, motivation correlates significantly but inversely with team member skills. Hence, the level of motivation does not have a direct influence on the degree of team members' skills. Self-motivation is improvement too where individuals seek to upgrade their own skills for positive team contributions.

Hypothesis 1.

There is a significant difference in the level of employee involvement of employees varying in biographical profiles (age, gender, race, length of service and position in company), respectively (Table 2 and Table 3).

Table 2. Analysis of variance: Difference in employee involvement based on biographical profiles

Biographical Variables	Empowerment		Participative Decision-making		Employee Commitment		Job Satisfaction		Motivation	
	F	P	F	p	f	p	F	p	F	P
Age	1.84	0.14	0.92	0.43	0.30	0.82	1.99	0.12	1.02	0.39
Race	0.43	0.73	1.16	0.33	1.49	0.22	0.13	0.94	0.36	0.78
Length in Service	2.32	0.06	2.80	0.30*	0.90	0.46	0.17	0.95	0.70	0.59
Position in Company	2.05	0.13	1.73	0.17	0.07	0.94	0.70	0.50	0.87	0.42

Table 2 indicates that there is a significant difference in the participative decision-making dimensions of employee involvement amongst employees varying in length of service at the 5% level

of significance. In order to determine exactly where differences lie, the Post Hoc Scheffe's Test was conducted (Table 3).

Table 3. Post Hoc Scheffe's Test: Employee Involvement

Sub-dimension of Employee Involvement	Length in Service	Mean	Standard Deviation
Participative Decision-making	0-5 years	4.4571	0.34549
	6-10 years	4.5056	0.33290
	11-15 years	4.3000	0.32998
	16-20 years	4.7500	0.20702
	21 years and over	4.2000	0.64807

Table 3 indicates that employees who were 16-20 years in the organization, followed by 6-10 years were involved as a result of participative decision-making. The employees who were 21 years and over were the least involved in participative decision-

making, negligibly following those who were 11-15 years and 0-5 years in this company.

The other biographical variables (age, race and position in company) did not influence empowerment, employee commitment, job satisfaction and motivation, respectively.

Table 4. t-test: Dimensions and sub-dimensions of Employee Involvement and Gender

Dimensions and Sub-dimensions of Employee Involvement	Equal Variances Assumed		
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	T	Df	p
Empowerment	0.630	148	0.530
Participative Decision Making	2.054	148	0.42*
Employee Commitment	0.215	148	0.830
Job Satisfaction	-2.145	148	0.34*
Motivation	0.422	147	0.673

*p<0.05

Table 4 indicates that there is a significant difference in the participative decision-making and job satisfaction sub-dimensions of employee involvement amongst employees varying in gender at

the 5% level of significance. In order to determine exactly where these differences lie, the Post Hoc Scheffe's Test was conducted (Table 5).

Table 5. Post Hoc Scheffe's Test: Gender

Sub-dimensions of Employee Involvement	Gender	Mean	Standard Deviation
Participative Decision-making	Male	4.5237	0.37376
	Female	4.4054	0.32934
Job Satisfaction	Male	3.8447	0.28019
	Female	3.9514	0.32740

Table 5 indicates that male employees were more involved in terms of participative decision-making than female employees. Probably, men involve themselves more with decision-making, whereas women may lean toward other areas, such as mentoring, coaching and administrative functions. Thus, this organisation can improve participative decision-making with female employees by involving more females into critical decision-making processes. The gender of employees does not influence any of the other remaining sub-dimensions of employee involvement (empowerment, employee commitment and motivation), respectively.

On the contrary, females were more involved in terms of job satisfaction than their male counterparts

in this organization. Females may compare themselves with home executives and feel satisfied with their employment, regardless of any hindrance in their work environment. Organisations can improve job satisfaction with male employees with training, conference attendance and workshops.

Hence, Hypothesis 1 may be partially accepted.

Hypothesis 2

There is a significant difference in the level of work team effectiveness of employees varying in biographical profiles (age, gender, race, length of service and position in company), respectively (Table 6 and Table 7).

Table 6. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA): Differences in work team effectiveness based on biographical profiles

Biographical Variables	Communication		Team Member Skills		Performance Objectives		Innovation		Teams Output	
	F	P	F	p	f	p	F	p	F	p
Age	0.282	0.838	1.125	0.341	1.200	0.312	0.798	0.497	0.378	0.769
Race	1.760	0.157	0.601	0.615	1.398	0.246	0.898	0.444	2.570	0.057
Length of Service	0.682	0.606	0.726	0.575	2.038	0.092	0.188	0.945	1.885	0.116
Position in Company	0.320	0.727	0.144	0.866	2.308	0.103	0.135	0.874	1.332	0.267

Table 6 indicates that no biographical variables influence work team effectiveness (communication,

the skills of team members, performance objectives, innovation and the output of teams).

Table 7. t-test: Dimensions and sub-dimensions of work team effectiveness and gender

Dimensions and Sub-dimensions of Employee Involvement	Equal Variances assumed		
	t-test for Equality of Means		
	T	Df	p
Communication	0.757	148	0.450
Team Member Skills	-0.686	148	0.494
Performance Objectives	-0.751	148	0.454
Innovation	0.719	148	0.473
Teams Output	-1.782	148	0.077

Table 7 indicates that all the biographical variables (age, gender, race, length in service and position in the company) did not impact the sub-dimensions of work team effectiveness

(communication, the skills of team members, performance objectives, innovation and the output of teams), respectively.

Hence, Hypothesis 2 may not be accepted.

Table 8. Reliability: Employee Empowerment

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
0.611

Table 8 indicates that items in the employee involvement questionnaire have internal consistency and is reliable.

Table 9. Reliability: Work Team Effectiveness

Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha
0.611

Table 9 indicates that items in the work team effectiveness questionnaire have internal consistency and is also reliable.

Interpretation and Recommendations

The demographics of the sample were analysed. Among the 150 participants, 76 (50.7%) were male and 74 (49.3%) were female; and 57 (38%) were Indian, followed by 32 (21.3%) White employees, 31 (20.7%) Coloured and lastly 30 (20%) were Black employees.

The respondents to the study indicate that there is a significant difference in the participative decision-making and length in service. The respondents to this study indicate that employees who were 16-20 years followed by 6-10 years in this organization were involved as a result of participative decision-making. The employees who were 21 years and over were the least involved in participative decision-making, negligibly following those who were 11-15 years and 0-5 years in the organization. With other studies and with 250 employees in a telecommunications company in Iran, employees who were 11-30 years in the organization were most involved in participative decision-making (Emamgholizadeh, Matin & Razav, 2011).

There is a significant difference in the participative decision-making and job satisfaction sub-dimension of employee involvement amongst employees varying in gender. Male employees are more involved in terms of participative decision-making than female employees. On the contrary, female employees were more involved than male employees in terms of job satisfaction. The difference in employee involvement of males and females according to a 2011 research study conducted with employee involvement programmes in a Malaysian I.T. company, female employees were satisfied more with their jobs due to their attitudes toward their work and the organization, and their motivation to improve their position within the company (Aminudin, 2011). The other biographical variables (age, race, position in company) did not influence empowerment, employee commitment, job satisfaction and motivation, respectively.

The biographical variables (age, gender, race, length in service or position in company) does not have an influence on work team effectiveness.

However, other researchers have found correlations. For example, De Dreu (2010) deduced that from 32 organizational teams the most innovative individuals were at the average age of 25.4 years old. In a study conducted by Tsjvold, Poon and Yu (2005), it was found that employees who were with the organization for 15 years or longer felt that the skills of team members was a valuable contributing factor to the overall success of the team.

Computations regarding t-tests were done to determine differences with male and female employees. Of interesting, there were significant differences with employee involvement, and no significant differences emerged with work team effectiveness.

Conclusion

The study examined the intercorrelations between the sub-variables of the key dimensions of employee involvement and work team effectiveness which was followed by investigating the biographical influences on the key dimensions of the study. However, for each of the dimension there was room for improvement. It was found that employee commitment correlates significantly but inversely with communication at the 5% level of significance. Likewise, motivation correlates significantly but inversely with team member skills.

Also, there is a significant difference in the participative decision-making sub-dimension of employee involvement amongst employees varying in length in service at the 5% level of significance. Likewise, there was a significant difference in the participative decision-making and job satisfaction sub-dimension of employee involvement amongst employees varying in gender at the 5% level of significance. The biographical variables did not impact on the sub-dimensions of work team effectiveness. Furthermore, items in the employee involvement questionnaire and in the work team effectiveness questionnaire have internal consistency and is reliable.

Recommendations for future research

With a larger sample, significant findings may surface with the remaining biographical influences on employee involvement and work team effectiveness. For profound knowledge in this field surveys can be conducted at other construction companies or comparisons can be made with two companies.

References

- Aminudin, N. (2011). Gender and Employee Involvement in Malaysia. *Journal of Pengurusan*. 32(1), 73-82.
- Apostolou, A. (2000). Employee Involvement. *Technical University of Crete*. 84(3), 437-444.
- Bae, J. & Lawler, J.J. (2000). Organizational and HRM Strategies in Korea: Impact on Firm Performance in an Emerging Economy. *Academy of Management Journal*. 43 (3), 502-507.
- Batt, R. (2004). Who Benefits from Teams? Comparing Workers, Supervisors and Managers. *Industrial Relations Journal*. 43(1), 183-211.
- Borill, C., West, M., Shapiro, D. & Rees, A. (2000). Team Working and Effectiveness. *Journal of Management*. 6(8), 364-371.
- Bowen, D. & Ostroff, C. (2004). Understanding HRM-Firm Performance Linkages: The Role of the Strength of the HRM System. *Mendeley Journals*. 29(2), 203-221.
- Buchanan, D. & Huczynski, A. (2004). *Organizational Behaviour – An Introduction*. United Kingdom: Prentice Hall.
- Bushe, G. R. & Coetzer, G.H. (2007). Group Development and Team Effectiveness. *The Journal of Applied Behavioural Science*. 43(2), 184-212.
- Cohen, S.G. & Bailey, D.E. (1999). What Makes Teams Work: Group Effectiveness Research from the Shop Floor to the Executive Suite. *Journal of Management*. 23(3), 239-290.
- Colquitt, J.A., Lepine, J.A. & Wesson, M.J. (2009). *Organizational Behaviour: Improving Performance and Commitment in the Workplace*. United States of America: McGraw Hill Publishers.
- Cox, A., Zagelmeyer, S. & Marchington, M. (2006). Embedding Employee Involvement and Participation at Work. *Human Resource Management Journal*. 16(3), 250-267.
- De Dreu, C. (2007). Evidence for a Curvilinear Relationship Between Task Conflict and Innovation in Teams. *Journal of Management*. 32(1), 83-107.
- De Dreu, C.K.W. (2010). Team Innovation and Team Effectiveness. *Journal of Organizational Psychology*. 11(3), 285-298.
- Duch, J., Waitzman, J.S. & Amaral, L.A.N. (2010). Quantifying the Performance of Individual Players in a Team Activity. *Plos One Journals*. 5(6), 1-7.
- Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. & Jackson, P.R. (2005). *Management Research*. United States of America: Sage.
- Emamgholizadeh, S., Matin, H.Z. & Razav, H.R. (2011). Is Participative Decision-Making related to Employee Empowerment?. *African Journal of Business Management*. 5(9), 3504-3510.
- Gilson, L.L., Mathieu, J.E., Shalley, C.E. & Ruddy, T.M. (2005). Creativity and Standardisation: Complementary or Conflicting Drivers of Team Effectiveness. *Journal of Management*. 48(1), 521-531.
- Hackman, J., Oldham, G., Jansen, R. & Purdy, K. (2002). Motivation Through the Design of Work. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*. 16(1), 250-279.
- Hinds, P.J. & Mortensen, M. (2005). Understanding Conflict in Geographically Distributed Teams: The Moderating Effects of Shared Identity, Shared Context and Spontaneous Communication. *Organization Science*. 16(3), 290-307.
- Kessler, I. (2004). Employee Perspectives on Communication and Consultation, *International Journal of human resource management*. 2 (15), 512-532.
- Kozlowski, S.W.J & Ilgen, D.R. (2006). Enhancing the Effectiveness of Work Groups and Teams. *Michigan State University*. 7(3), 77-123.
- Kozlowski, S.W.J. & Bell, B.S. (2003). Work Groups and Teams in Organizations. *Handbook of Psychology*. 12(1), 333-375.
- LaFasto, F., & Larson, C. (2001). *When Teams Work Best: 6000 Team Members and Leaders Tell What It Takes To Succeed*. California: Sage.
- Leana, C.R., Locke, E.A. & Schweiger, D.M. (2000). *Fact and Fiction in Analyzing Research on Participative Decision-Making*, *The Academy of Management Review*. 15(1), 137-146.
- Lencioni, P. (2005). *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team: A Leadership Fable*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Loo, R. & Thorpe, K. (2002). Using Reflective Learning Journals to Improve Individual and Team Performance, Team Performance Management. *An International Journal*. 8(6), 134-139.
- Mei, L. (2008). Research on How Training Influences Administrative Staff Job Involvement and Organizational Commitment. *Journal of Human Resource and Adult Learning*. 4(2), 115-121.
- Niehoff, B.P., Moorman, R.H., Blakely, G. & Fuller, J. (2001). The Influence of Empowerment and Job Enrichment on Employee Loyalty in a Downsizing Environment. *Group & Organization Management*. 26 (1), 93-113.
- Ozaralli, N. (2003). Leadership and Organizational Development. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*. 24(6), 335-344.
- Quagraine, T.L. (2010). Employee Involvement as an Effective Management Tool In Decision-Making. *Unpublished Dissertation*. 1-85.
- Richardson, H.A. & Vandenberg, R.J. (2005). Integrating Managerial Perceptions and Transformational Leadership into a Work-Unit Level Model of Employee Involvement. *Journal of Organizational Behaviour*. 7 (26), 561-589.
- Riordan, C.M., Vandenberg, R.J. & Richardson, H.A. (2005). Employee Involvement Climate and Organizational Effectiveness. *Wiley Interscience*. 21 (4), 48-56.
- Robbins, S.P., Judge, T.A., Odendaal, A & Roodt, G. (2009). *Organizational Behaviour – Global and Southern African Perspective*. Cape Town: Pearson Education Limited.
- Ross, J.E. (2004). *Total Quality Management, Text, Cases and Readings*. London: Kogan Page.
- Salas, E, Stagle, K.C & Burke, C.S. (2004). 25 Years of Team Effectiveness in Organizations. *International*

- Review of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. 19 (1), 47-91.
36. Sun, H., Hui, I.K. & Tam, A.Y.K. (2000). Employee Involvement and Quality Management. *The TQM Magazine*. 12(5), 350-354.
37. Tata, J. & Prasad, S. (2004). Team Self-Management, Organizational Structure and Judgements of Team Effectiveness. *Journal of Management Issues*. 5(2), 248-265.
38. Tekleab, A.G., Quigley, N.R. & Tesluk, P.E. (2009). A Longitudinal Study of Team Conflict, Conflict Management, Cohesion and Team Effectiveness. *Sage Journals*. 34(4), 1-37.
39. Tjosvold, D., Poon, M. & Yu. Z. (2005). Team Effectiveness in China. *Sage Journals*. 58(3), 341-367.
40. Ulrich, D. & Brockbank, W. (2005). *The HR Value Proposition*. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.
41. Wu, C., Wang, P. & Tsai, L. (2010). The Effect of Organizational Culture on Team Interaction and Team Effectiveness: Team Leadership as a Medium. *The Journal of International Management Studies*. 5(2), 190-198.
42. Youssef, C.M. & Luthans, F. (2007). Positive Organizational Behaviour in the Workplace. *Management Department Publications*. 10 (7), 770-785.