

Title of the Thesis

**AN EVALUATION OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT AND EMPOWERMENT
PROGRAMMES: A STUDY WITH REFERENCE TO SELECTED INDUSTRIAL
UNITS IN KARNATAKA STATE**

ABSTRACT

Key words: Employee involvement, employee empowerment, organisational culture, job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, works stress.

The central purpose of this study was to evaluate employee involvement and empowerment programmes and practices in selected industrial units in Karnataka, along with the identification of key antecedents and outcomes of corporate employee involvement and empowerment practices. This research study is coordinated into two parts: quantitative empirical survey of 287 industrial units (during June 2004 to December 2004) and qualitative empirical diagnostic evaluation by eliciting 361 employees' (managers and non-managers perception of employee involvement and empowerment practices) at eleven case study organisations in Karnataka during August 2005 to December 2005).

For the purpose of this study employee involvement is defined as “a participative process to use the entire capacity of workers, designed to encourage employee commitment to organisational success” (Cotton, 1993). Thomas and Velthouse (1990) argued that empowerment is multifaceted and that its essence cannot be captured by a single concept. They defined empowerment more broadly as increased intrinsic task motivation manifested in a set of four cognitions reflecting an individual's orientation to his or her work role: meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact.

Being an under-researched area, the preset study answered the following for research questions:

R. Q – 1: What are the key trends in and status of corporate employee involvement and empowerment programmes and practices in Karnataka?

R. Q – 2: What are the major facilitators of and key barriers to the successful implementation of corporate employee involvement and empowerment programmes?

R. Q – 3: How do managers and non-managers perceive the process and outcomes of employee involvement and empowerment programmes in organisations?

R. Q – 4: What are the key antecedents (determinants) and outcomes of the perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment programmes?

The above research questions have been split into the following six research objectives:

1. To examine and report on the key trends in and status of corporate employee involvement and empowerment programmes and practices in Karnataka;
2. To identify and discuss key facilitators of and barriers to the successful implementation of employee involvement and empowerment programmes;
3. To measure and assess the employees' perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment practices;
4. To analyse and discuss the nature of relationships between the organisational contextual factors (antecedents) such as organisational culture and high involvement work system **and** the perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment practices;
5. To understand and discuss the nature of relationships between the perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment practices **and** perceived levels of job satisfaction, job involvement, organisational commitment, and work stress; and
6. To raise major implications for human resource development research and practice, based on the findings of this study.

The results and discussions have been presented in seven chapters. The major findings of present research include the following:

§ Multinational enterprises appear to adopt more systematic and professional approaches for successfully implementing their employee involvement and

empowerment programmes than the private and public sector units covered by this study.

- § The three most important facilitators generating necessary conditions for the successful implementation of employee involvement and empowerment programmes in any organisation include: (1) support by top management (2) support by middle management, and (3) support by first-line supervisors. Hence, the whole-hearted managerial support, involvement and commitment act as preconditions for effective and efficient implementation of employee involvement and empowerment programmes in organisations.
- § In essence, “short-termism”(myopic vision) in performance expectations tends to be one of the key perceived barriers for the smooth implementation of employee involvement and empowerment programmes in Karnataka.
- § Managers and non-managers significantly differed in their perceptions of the key elements of organisational culture.
- § Most of the managers reported high degree of job satisfaction and job involvement, but low degree of organisation commitment. Besides this trend, they also perceived high degree of the presence of high involvement work system and work stress. In a sharp contrast, most of the non-managers experienced low degree of job satisfaction, job involvement, presence of high involvement work system and work stress, but high degree of organisational commitment.
- § There existed positive correlation between organisation culture **and** the perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment. Similarly, high involvement work system **and** the perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment practices were positively correlated.
- § Perceptions of employee involvement and empowerment revealed significant positive correlations with the perceived levels of job satisfaction, job involvement and organisational commitment, but negatively correlated with the perceived levels of work stress.