

Exploring the Antecedents of Support for Employee Participation

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore the effects of employee satisfaction with human resource practices, organizational commitment and union instrumentality on support for diverse forms of employee participation in Taiwan's privatizing firms. Based on a survey of 1,344 employees at three Taiwan's state-owned enterprises in 1998, we found that (1) employee satisfaction with human resource practices was positively related to employees' support for consultative participation and negatively associated with support for advanced representational participation and employee ownership; (2) organizational commitment was negatively related to employees' support for advanced representational participation; and (3) union instrumentality was positively associated with employees' support for consultative, conventional representational, and substantive participation.

Keywords: employee participation, human resource practices satisfaction, organizational commitment, union instrumentality

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1. Introduction

Since the mid-1980s, Taiwan's industrial relations (IR) have undergone unprecedented changes under challenges from political democratization, industrial restructuring and privatization of state-owned enterprises (SOEs) (Chen, Ko and Lawler, 2003; Hsü, 1992; Kleingartner and Peng, 1991). Among these challenges, privatization has profound impacts on the developments of industrial democracy (usually termed employee participation in management, cf., Poole, Lansbury, & Wailes, 2001) in Taiwan.

Starting from 1989, Taiwan's government initiated privatization programs with an attempt to improve economic efficiency and competitiveness of SOEs. Despite this effort to privatize government-run enterprises, the government has encountered enormous difficulties in the processes of privatization. Until April 2005, 32 SOEs had been privatized via selling assets and stocks to general public, private financial conglomerates and a small share to employees. 17 SOEs had closed their businesses. Up to date, 17 SOEs are still scheduled to be privatized (Council for Economic Planning and Development, 2005). The actual implementation of privatization in Taiwan has taken much longer than the government anticipated due to the need for modifications of the legislative framework, difficulty in enterprise valuation, inadequate capital market conditions, labor opposition to privatization, and the public fear of concentration of the ownership of stocks in few hands (Chiu 1998). Among these factors, labor opposition to privatization has played an important role in impeding the smooth process of privatization. The major action taken by organized labor was the vehement protest against the privatization of Chung-Hua Telecom Company, the major state-run telecommunications firm in Taiwan, in 1996. One of the primary pursuits was the call for the implementation of 'industrial democracy' in this privatizing company, taking the form of workers' representation on the board of directors. This event not only encouraged unions in other SOEs to emulate the efforts of their Telecom's counterpart, but also aroused hot debates regarding the

concept of industrial democracy among the state, labor, capital and academics (Han, 2004; Han & Chiu, 2000).

Obviously, various IR parties had quite different views on types of industrial democracy suitable in Taiwan's context. Some government officials, employers, and scholars advocated employer-led type of employee participation (e.g., quality circles, suggestion systems) or traditional participation schemes (e.g., unions and collective bargaining, labor-management committees) as ideal types of industrial democracy, while some progressive labor activists preferred German or European system of employee participation (e.g., works councils, workers' representation on the board). Nevertheless, the preferences of workers at these government-owned enterprises for types of participation were still less understood by academics and practitioners.

Additionally, existing studies of employee participation focus mostly on the effects of employee participation on organizational outcomes (e.g., productivity, firm performance, turnover rate) and/or individual employee's attitudes and behaviors (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment, support for organizational change) (e.g., Bakan, Suseno, Pinnington, & Money, 2004; Buchko, 1992; Cotton, Vollrath, Froggatt, Lengnick-Hall, & Jennings, 1988; Florkowski & Schuster, 1992; Locke & Schweiger, 1979; Long, 1978; Miller & Monge, 1986; Mizrahi, 2002; Schwochau, Delaney, Jarley, & Fiorito, 1997; Wagner, 1994; Wagner & Gooding, 1987; Zwick, 2004). Up to date, very few systematic studies have examined the factors affecting the support for different types of employee participation (e.g., Cabrera, Ortega, & Cabrera, 2003; Shadur, Kienzle, & Rodwell, 1999). As suggested by Glew, O'Leary-Kelly, Griffin, and Van Fleet (1995), future research on the antecedents of employee participation should expanded individual differences factors such as both managers' and employees' orientations to participation schemes, and employees' readiness or intention to participate. To answer their calls, this study fills up the research gap by exploring the factors (namely employees' satisfaction with human resource (HR) practices, organizational commitment, and union instrumentality) related to various employee participations schemes. The present study may contribute to management

practices and academic research by providing useful implications for the effective designing of employee participation. Adopting a multivariate explanatory approach (Poole, Lansbury, & Wailes, 2001), we take a contingent view on this issue, arguing that support for types of employee participation depends on employees' attitudes towards HR practices, organizational commitment and the instrumentality of their unions in privatizing enterprises. Specifically, when employees feel positively about HR practices and more committed to the organization, they tend to support employer-led and/or traditional types of employee participation. However, if employees are dissatisfied with HR practices and less committed to the organization, they are more likely to opt for advanced representational (German) types of employee participation. Moreover, we argue that since union is a democratic institution, employees' perceived union instrumentality shall be related positively with all forms of employee participation.

The paper is organized as below. The next section proposes our analytical framework and hypotheses. Then we explain the methodology employed in this study. The research findings from the statistical analyses follow. Discussion and concluding remarks are made in the last section.

2. Analytical Framework and Hypotheses

Prior research in the area of employee participation focuses primarily on its effects on employees' attitudes (e.g., job satisfaction, organizational commitment) and firm performance (e.g., Bakan et al. 2004; Buchko, 1992; Cotton et al., 1988; Miller & Monge, 1986; Wagner, 1994; Wagner & Gooding, 1987). To date, relatively few studies investigated the antecedents of support for employee participation (e.g., Florkowski, 1989; Shadur et al., 1999). Florkowski (1989) found that employee perceptions of pay equity, performance reward contingencies and influence on decision making were the factors affecting employees' support for profit sharing. Similarly, in a study of 269 employees of an information technology company, Shadur et al. (1999) concluded that supportive climate and

organizational commitment were positively associated with three types of employee involvement (i.e., participation in decision making, teamwork, and communication). Though their study has demonstrated the relationship between organizational climate and employee participation, Shadur et al. (1999) did not include a wide variety of employee participation schemes which may have contradictory characteristics, such as employer-led vs. union-led (negotiated), direct vs. indirect participation, and efficiency vs. interests representation focus. Therefore, these diverse participation schemes may have different antecedents. The present study intends to extend Shadur et al.'s study by examining the factors related to diverse employee participation schemes. Furthermore, as for the level of analysis, Shadur et al. (1999) claimed to examine organizational climate that is the shared perceptions of formal and informal organizational policies, practices, and procedures. In fact, the questions soliciting the information on the perceptions of employee involvement in their study tend to be individual-level. Thus, we suggest that individual-level study should employ the notion of psychological climate to investigate its linkage to employees' behavioral intentions or responses concerning employee participation. To sum up, our study may contribute to the existing literature on the antecedents of employee participation in that we focus on the factors related to employees' intention to support for different forms of employee participation.

2.1 Forms and characteristics of employee participation schemes

In a broad sense, employee participation can be defined as the process employees are involved, directly or indirectly, in their organization's decisions making or have a financial stake within their organization. The former is concerned about employees' control rights in a company's or workplace decisions. While the latter can be regarded as employees' return rights to share a company's ownership or profits (Ben-Ner & Jones, 1995; Poole, 1986; Poole et al., 2001). Despite the above definition, numerous scholars have alleged that employee participation is not an unidimensional construct, it can be defined in many different ways according to sources of

formation (initiators), scope and level of participation, duration of participation as well as the channels and contents of participation (e.g., Black & Grefersen, 1997; Cotton et al., 1988; Dachler & Wilpert, 1978; Locke & Schweiger, 1979). For example, according to sources of formation, employee participation can be categorized into three types: mandatory employee participation, negotiated employee participation, and employer-led (or management-led) employee participation (Turner 1993). Mandatory employee participation is initiated by the state and supported by legal institutions that render employee representatives rights to information, consultation and codetermination, such as works councils in Germany (Rogers and Streeck, 1995) or labor-management conference in Taiwan. Negotiated employee participation (or union-based participation) is normally formed by negotiations and compromises achieved between employers and employee representatives (e.g., trade unions) without forces of legal institutions; such as collective bargaining. Employer-led employee participation is primarily set up for efficiency purposes in terms of enhancing productivity, adaptability and firm performance, such as quality circles and suggestion box (Poole et al., 2001).

Moreover, in terms of channels of employee participation, two categories are commonly proposed by scholars: direct and indirect forms (e.g., Morgan & Zeffane, 2003; Poole et al., 2001). Direct participation gives decision rights to employees themselves and indirect (representation) participation entails employee decision rights through some form of employee representation (e.g., trade unions, labor-management committee, and works councils).

In a typology of employee participation in decision making, Levine and Tyson (1990) describe participatory arrangements according to several attributes, including the form of participation (direct vs. indirect), the extent of employee influence over decisions (high-level vs. low-level), and the content of decisions (work-related or strategic). Specifically, they categorize three broad types of employee participation in decision making: consultative participation, representative participation, and substantive participation in workplace decisions. In consultative participation, employees are provided opportunities to make suggestions but final

decisions are still retained in the hand of management. This type of participation is usually limited to participation in the domain of direct work-related issues, such as personnel or work organization. Strategic and business issues such as investment plans or profit allocation are not included. Well-known examples can be represented by quality circles prevalent in the early 1980s. Representative participation is typically indirect participatory programs in which employees are not directly involved in decision making. The participation is often delegated from employees to their representatives to participate in joint governance structures, such as joint labor-management committees and works councils. Although representative participatory programs may encompass a wider range of issues (e.g., investment policy, technological changes, etc.), they are purely advisory and their influence is limited. Substantive participation in work and workplace decisions is direct participation with a high degree of employee influence, such as self-managing work teams, although the content of decisions may not differ from that of consultative participation (Knudsen 1995).

Though Levine and Tyson (1990) provide a broad typology of employee participation, their typology only includes employee participation in decision making and excludes employee financial participation (e.g., employee ownership and profit sharing). Furthermore, as Poole et al. (2001) and Poutsman and Huijgen (1999) pointed out, indirect (representation) participation may take diverse forms (e.g., collective bargaining, labor-management committees, works councils, employee representation on the broad, and arbitration system) in the industrial relations system of different countries. For example, in U.K., collective bargaining has been the most prevalent form of representational employee participation, while works councils have emerged as a new type of participation because of the 1994 European Union directive (Heery, 1997). Therefore, examining the context of the development of employee participation in Taiwan, it is necessary to further classify representational employee participation into two categories. The first is the conventional type stipulated and supported by the state and the legislature, including trade union representation, collective bargaining, and labor-management conference. The second type is the advanced representational employee

participation promoted by labor activists of the privatized and privatizing government-owned enterprises, including employee representation on the company board. This type also includes German system of works councils.

To sum up, based on and further extending Levine and Tyson's (1990) typology, we classify five different forms of employee participation, namely consultative participation, conventional representational participation, advanced representational participation, substantive participation, and financial participation. Table 1 illustrates an overview of the types, sources of formation, channels and focus associated with diverse employee participation schemes used in this study.

Table 1. Type, Source of formation, Channel, and Focus of Diverse Employee Participation

Type of Participation	Source of Formation	Channel	Major Focus	Examples
1. <i>Consultative</i>				
Suggestion systems	Employer-led	Direct	Efficiency	Toyota's suggestion systems and QCs
Quality circles	Employer-led	Direct	Efficiency	
2. <i>Conventional Representational</i>				
Unions	Negotiated	Indirect	Interests	U.S. industrial relations systems
Collective bargaining	Negotiated	Indirect	Interests	
Labor-management committees	Employer-led/negotiated	Indirect	Interests	
3. <i>Advanced Representational</i>				
Board representation	Mandatory/negotiated	Indirect	Interests	German and Swedish codetermination
Works councils	Mandatory	Indirect	Interests	
4. <i>Substantive</i>				
Work teams	Employer-led	Direct	Both	Saturn's work teams
5. <i>Financial</i>				
Profit sharing	Employer-led	Direct	Efficiency	Taiwan's profit sharing Israeli workers' cooperatives
Employee ownership	Negotiated	Direct	Both	

2.2 Relationship between HR practices satisfaction and employee participation

Psychological climate refers to individual experiential-based perceptions of organizational circumstances, including structures, processes and events (Schneider, 1990, 2000). These perceptions may lead to certain work attitudes (McShane & Von Glinow, 2005). Attitudes refer to beliefs, feelings and behavioral intentions caused by individual's perceptions of organizational processes (Cook & Rousseau, 1988). Eisenberger et al. (1986) found that employees developed their perceptions of organizational processes according to their experiences of organizational practices. Among them, HR practices are the most important factors affecting employees' psychological climate (Allen et al., 2003; Bowen & Ostroff, 2004; Delaney & Huselid, 1996). According to social exchange theory and the principle of reciprocity (e.g., Blau, 1964), employees will react positively to organizational changes or display positive discretionary (or extra-role) behaviors, such as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) when they perceive organizational support and caring through an organization's HR practices (Settoon, Bennett, & Liden, 1996; Whitener, 2001). On the other hand, when employees are dissatisfied with HR practices, they tend to display negative attitudes and behaviors and/or less likely to engage in extra-role behaviors (e.g., OCB) (Allen et al., 2003).

Moreover, prior research on OCB has demonstrated that participation (or voice) is an important dimension of OCB (e.g., Van Dyne, Graham, & Dienesch, 1994; Van Dyne & LePine, 1998). As Brandes, Dharwadkar, and Wheatley (2004) suggested, support for employee participation is more of a discretionary nature since it requires employees to devote time and personal resources beyond in-role job demands. Rusbult, Farrell, Rogers, and Mainous (1988) also showed that high satisfaction leads to voice (or participation). In a study to validate OCB construct, Van Dyne et al. (1994) found that job satisfaction was positively related to three forms of participation, namely social, advocacy, and functional participation.

Based on social exchange theory and the above research evidence, we

argue that employees' HR practices satisfaction may affect their support for employee participation. To further our argument, as research based on social exchange theory suggests, employees' positive attitudes (e.g., organizational commitment) and behaviors (e.g., OCB) derive from their perceptions of organizational support or their employer's commitment to them (e.g., Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997). Research also demonstrates that employees regard HR practices as organization actions which indicate the organization's commitment to them (Settoon et al., 1996; Wayne et al., 1997; Whitener, 1997, 2001). To reciprocate for the organization's commitment to them, employees would tend to support organizational policies and practices and behave actively to enhance organizational efficiency. Following this rationale, if employees are satisfied with organizational HR practices, they will tend to support for employee participation schemes which are likely to be initiated by the employer or those schemes which may enhance organizational efficiency.

Furthermore, as shown in the overview of the classification of employee participation schemes in Table 1, we may further classify the five forms of participation schemes into two categories. The first category includes consultative and substantive employee participation schemes, which are employer-led and direct form of participation. The second category includes conventional and advanced representational participation, which are negotiated and indirect form of participation. As to the classification of financial participation, it is of a mixed nature because various types of financial participation cannot be all classified into either group. Profit sharing can be classified into the first category and employee ownership can be categorized as the second group. Following the above logic and classification, we argue that when an employee is more satisfied with HRM practices, he/she may be more willing to support consultative and/or substantive participation to enhance efficiency of the firm and more acceptable of profit sharing scheme currently adopted by the organization. On the other hand, the employee may be less willing to support for traditional representational, advanced representational, and employee ownership participation schemes since these are not supported by the employer. Thus, we hypothesize that,

Hypothesis 1a: Employees' satisfaction with HR practices will be positively associated with their support for consultative employee participation.

Hypothesis 1b: Employees' satisfaction with HR practices will be negatively associated with their support for conventional representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 1c: Employees' satisfaction with HRM practices will be negatively associated with their support for advanced representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 1d: Employees' satisfaction with HRM practices will be positively associated with their support for substantive employee participation.

Hypothesis 1e: Employees' satisfaction with HRM practices will be positively associated with their support for profit sharing.

Hypothesis 1f: Employees' satisfaction with HRM practices will be negatively associated with their support for employee ownership.

2.3 Relationship between organizational commitment and employee participation

Organizational commitment can be defined as the intensity of the involvement in and the identification of an employee with a particular organization (Mowday, Steers, & Porter, 1979). As Mowday, Porter, and Steers (1982) asserted, a committed employee tends to accept organizational values, make efforts to achieve organizational goals, and desire to maintain organizational membership. Research has shown that Mowday et al.'s (1979, 1982) conceptualization of organizational commitment has mainly assessed the affective dimension of organizational commitment. To broaden the construct domain of organizational commitment, Allen and Meyer (1990, 1996) and Meyer and Allen (1991)

proposed a three-dimension view of organizational commitment, including affective, normative, and continuance commitment. Affective commitment is the identification, involvement and emotional attachment an employee links to his/her organization. Normative commitment refers to an employee's commitment to the organization because of his/her sense of obligation to the organization. Continuance commitment is an employee's commitment to the organization derived from his/her assessment of the possible costs of leaving it.

Despite the argument for the multidimensionality of organizational commitment construct, up to date, academics haven't reached consensus in the dimensionality of organizational commitment (e.g., Dunham, Grube, & Castaneda, 1994; Mathieu & Zajac, 1990; McGee & Ford, 1987; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001). For example, McGee and Ford (1987) and Dunham et al. (1994) provided evidence to show that continuance commitment should be divided into two subdimensions of personal sacrifice and lack of alternatives. On the contrary, in a longitudinal study, Mayer and Schoorman (1992) suggested that affective and continuance commitment are overlapping concepts and affective commitment can predict more in performance outcomes (e.g., satisfaction and OCB) than continuance commitment.

As to the relationship between organizational commitment and employee participation, past research has consistently demonstrated that affective commitment has stronger positive relationship with OCB (including participation) than normative and continuance commitment (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1996; Dunham et al. 1994; Meyer, Allen, & Smith, 1993; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Shadur et al. 1999). For example, in a review of organizational commitment literature, Dunham et al. (1994) concluded that affective commitment and participatory management are positively associated. Similarly, Shadur et al. (1999) found that affective organizational commitment may lead to employee participation in decision making. In a general model of commitment, Meyer and Herscovitch (2001) also demonstrated that affective commitment would have stronger effect on employees' discretionary behavior (including participation) than normative commitment.

Based on the above research evidence, we argue that when an employee is highly committed to his/her organization, he/she will develop a sense of identification with the organizational goals and have a feeling of loyalty for the organization. The committed employee would perceive the value and importance of integrating individual and organizational goals (Ivancevich & Matteson 1996), therefore he/she will be more willing to participate to improve firm efficiency and to accept the firm's existing policies and practices, such as quality circles, suggestion systems (consultative participation), work teams (substantive participation), or profit sharing. On the other hand, the committed employee is less likely to endorse adversarial participation schemes (e.g., advanced representation participation and employee ownership) against the firm's norms. Thus, we hypothesize that,

Hypothesis 2a: Employees' organizational commitment will be positively associated with their support for consultative employee participation.

Hypothesis 2b: Employees' organizational commitment will be negatively associated with their support for conventional representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 2c: Employees' organizational commitment will be negatively associated with their support for advanced representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 2d: Employees' organizational commitment will be positively associated with their support for substantive employee participation.

Hypothesis 2e: Employees' organizational commitment will be positively associated with their support for profit sharing.

Hypothesis 2f: Employees' organizational commitment will be negatively associated with their support for employee ownership.

2.4 Relationship between union instrumentality and employee participation

Union instrumentality is employees' perceptions of their union's ability to gain their desired outcomes, including traditional (e.g., job security, wages and benefits) and non-traditional working conditions (e.g., job satisfaction and maintenance of professional standards) (e.g., DeCotiis & LeLouarn, 1981; Gordon, Barling, & Tetrick, 1995; Gordon, Philpot, Burt, Thompson, & Spiller, 1980; McHugh & Bodah, 2002). Specifically, union instrumentality represents a calculative or economic exchange relationship between union members and their union (Gordon et al., 1980; Newton & Shore, 1992).

Numerous research has demonstrated that union instrumentality is positively associated with union commitment (including union loyalty, responsibility to union, willingness to work for the union, and a belief in unionism) (e.g., Bamberger, Kluger, & Suchard, 1999; Hoell, 2004; Newton & Shore, 1992; Sinclair & Tetrick, 1995; Tan & Aryee, 2002; Tetrick, 1995) and union certification voting (e.g., DeCottiis & LeLouarn, 1981; Heneman & Sandver, 1983; Premack & Hunter, 1988). Nonetheless, up to date, the linkage between union instrumentality and support for employee participation hasn't been explored. As suggested by Newton and Shore (1992), union instrumentality may have positive relationship with union-related attitudes, behavior intention, and behaviors. Therefore, union instrumentality may influence employees' attitudes toward union-sponsored or union-supported employee participation schemes.

Furthermore, consistent with Freeman and Medoff's (1984) view, we propose that since union is a democratic institution, which is more likely to support for various types of participation. Therefore, if an employee feels that the union can function as an effective mechanism to protect or secure his/her rights and benefits at the workplace, the employee may be more likely to show his/her interest in existing employee participation schemes such as union representation, quality circles and suggestion systems. In addition, the employee will be more willing to trust union representatives

and endorse the union policy towards advanced participation such as codetermination since the employee may believe that the union can protect him/her even in the case of employer retaliation. Based on the above, union instrumentality is positively related to all types of employee participation. Thus, we hypothesize that,

Hypothesis 3a: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for consultative employee participation.

Hypothesis 3b: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for conventional representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 3c: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for advanced representational employee participation.

Hypothesis 3d: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for substantive employee participation.

Hypothesis 3e: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for profit sharing.

Hypothesis 3f: Employees' union instrumentality will be positively associated with their support for employee ownership.

3. Method

3.1 Sample and procedures

Our data were drawn from a large-scale questionnaire survey of employees at three Taiwan's SOEs, including Chung-Hwa Telecom Company, Taiwan Power Company, and China Petroleum Company. Through the assistance from the trade unions of the three SOEs, 4,900

questionnaires were mailed to employees of these companies to solicit information concerning their attitudes towards organizational policies and practices in the summer of 1998. Five months later, 1,344 useable questionnaires (696 from Telecomm, 330 from Petroleum, and 318 from Power) were returned in pre-stamped envelopes provided by the first author and the response rate was 27.42%. Though our sample is not randomly selected initially, the large size of the sample may attenuate the problems associated with non-random sampling.

Among the respondents, 79.5% were male, 92.5% were married, and 41% were union officers. On the average, they were 43.9 years old, had 13.9 years of formal education (approximately college degree), and 19.7 years of organizational tenure.

3.2 Measures

Dependent variables. To measure support for employee participation schemes, we used 10 items to ask whether employees support for each participation scheme. The 10 schemes were then classified into six distinctive types of employee participation: (1) consultative participation (including quality circles/suggestion systems); (2) conventional representational participation (including union representation, collective bargaining and labor-management committees); (3) advanced representational participation (including works councils and employee representation on the board of directors); (4) substantive participation (including self-managed work teams); (5) financial participation - profit sharing; and (6) financial participation - employee ownership (2 items). Support was coded as "1" and not support was coded as "0" for each item.

HR practices satisfaction. This variable measures employee satisfaction with 18 HR practices. Response ranged from "1" to "5" to represent "very unsatisfied" to "very satisfied," respectively. Past research suggests that HR practices are multi-dimensional, thus we performed exploratory (principle components) factor analysis with varimax extraction on the 18 HR practices items. Results showed that four factors after

rotation and explained 61.68% of the variance. The four factors were named career ladders, labor relations, training and development, and compensation. The results of the factor analysis were shown in Table 2. The Cronbach's α s for the above four factors were .87, .79, .74, and .78, respectively. These four factors were used in the subsequent analysis of HR practices.

Table 2. Results of Factor Analysis on Human Resource Practice Satisfaction

Factors and Items	Factor Loadings			
	1	2	3	4
Career Ladders				
1. Personnel assignment	.760			
2. Personnel recruitment	.712			
3. Job transfer	.701			
4. Internal promotion	.691			
5. Performance appraisal	.552			
6. Work rules	.415			
7. Job security	.401			
Labor Relations				
1. Suggestion system		.735		
2. Labor-management conference		.726		
3. Grievance procedure		.717		
4. Written employment contract		.650		
5. Quality circle		.460		
Training and Development				
1. Training unrelated to current job			.755	
2. On-the-job training			.664	
3. Team-work training			.625	
4. Job rotation			.586	
Compensation				
1. Pay system				.864
2. Benefits				.815
Eigenvalue	7.634	1.374	1.082	1.011
Percentage of variance explained	42.411	7.635	6.011	5.618

Organizational commitment. The variable measures the extent of employee identification with organizational values, commitment to work, loyalty and propensity to leave. The measurement was adapted from the 15 items developed by Mowday, Steers, and Porter (1979). Response ranged from "1" to "5" to represent "very disagree" to "very agree," respectively. The Cronbach's α for this measure was .83.

Union instrumentality. Union instrumentality refers to the degree of an employee's belief in union's ability to secure his/her desired outcomes. We developed two items to measure the effectiveness of union to protect their rights. Response ranged from "1" to "5" to represent "very disagree" to "very agree," respectively. The Cronbach's α for this measure was .79.

Control variables. Gender, year of schooling, organizational tenure, union officer status, company dummies, and operational performance were included in this study as control variables since these variables may have effects on the support for various participation schemes as past research has suggested (e.g., Katzell, 1979; Lawler, 1987; Marchington, Wilkinson, Ackers, & Goodman, 1994; Miller & Prichard, 1992; Verman & McKersie, 1987). For example, Miller and Prichard (1992) found that younger and better educated employees are more likely to participate in employee involvement schemes, such as quality circles and suggestion box. Marchington et al. (1994) also concluded that employees' attitudes toward participation depend on their recent and expected firm performance.

4. Results

Table 3 shows the means, standard deviations, and intercorrelations of the variables included in this study. As shown, among the four HR practices satisfaction, career ladders satisfaction was positively correlated with consultative participation ($r=.09$, $p<.01$) and negatively correlated with advanced representational, substantive participation, and employee ownership ($r=-.10$, $-.09$, and $-.09$, all $p<.01$). Labor relations satisfaction was positively related to consultative ($r=.18$, $p<.01$) and conventional

representational participation ($r = .08, p < .05$). Compensation satisfaction correlated negatively to advanced representational participation and employee ownership ($r = -.09$ and $-.09$, all $p < .05$). As to the relationship between organizational commitment and various employee participation schemes, there were positive relationships between organizational commitment and consultative ($r = .10, p < .01$), conventional representational participation ($r = .07, p < .05$), and profit sharing ($r = .08, p < .01$). Organizational commitment was correlated negatively with advanced representational participation ($r = -.09, p < .01$). Moreover, union instrumentality was positively correlated to five participation schemes, namely, consultative ($r = .19, p < .01$), traditional representational ($r = .16, p < .01$), advanced representational participation ($r = .11, p < .01$), profit sharing ($r = .09, p < .01$), and employee ownership ($r = .08, p < .05$).

To test the hypotheses in this study, logistic regression and hierarchical ordinary least square (OLS) regression analyses were employed to estimate the effects of explanatory variables on dependent variables (c.f., Luchak, 2003). Logistic regression was employed to test those hypotheses with binary-coded dependent variables, namely consultative, substantive participation, and profit sharing. Hierarchical OLS regression analyses were performed to test hypotheses with conventional representational, advanced representational participation, and employee ownership, controlled for gender, years of schooling, organizational tenure, union officer status, firm performance and company dummies in the first step and included HR practices satisfaction, organizational commitment, and union instrumentality in the second step of regression equation. Table 4 presents the logistic and OLS regression results of our analyses. Hypotheses 1 posited the relationships between HR practices satisfaction and the six forms of employee participation. Results showed that labor relations satisfaction was positively associated with the support for consultative participation ($\beta = .70, p < .0001$). Career ladders satisfaction was negatively associated with the support for advanced representational participation ($\beta = -.14, p < .05$). Compensation satisfaction also had negative relationship with the support for employee ownership ($\beta = -.12, p < .05$). The relationships between other HR practices satisfaction and various participation schemes did not reach a significant level. Therefore,

Table 3. Means, Standard Deviations and Correlations^a

Variables ^b	Mean	s.d.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
1. Consultative Participation	.81	.39																		
2. Conventional Representational Participation	2.95	.26	.16**																	
3. Advanced Representational Participation	1.51	.60	.15**	.09*																
4. Substantive Participation	.86	.35	.11**	.13**	.24**															
5. Profit Sharing	.98	.15	.03	.18**	-.04	.03														
6. Employee Ownership	1.54	.62	.07	.11**	.04	.34**	.06													
7. Career Ladders	2.46	.74	.09**	.04	-.10**	-.09**	.03	-.09**												
8. Labor Relations	2.52	.78	.18**	.08*	-.05	-.04	.02	-.04	.70**											
9. Training and Development	2.25	.94	.06	.04	-.06	-.04	.04	-.05	.64**	.56**										
10. Compensation	3.27	.76	.03	.04	-.09*	-.04	.03	-.09*	.51**	.43**	.33**									
11. Organizational Commitment	3.47	.50	.10**	.07*	-.09**	.00	.08**	-.02	.45**	.36**	.31**	.36**								
12. Union Instrumentality	3.32	.93	.19**	.16**	.06	.11**	.09**	.08*	.16**	.25**	.17**	.18**	.25**							
13. Gender	.79	.40	-.06	-.00	.05	-.08*	-.02	-.03	.10**	.10**	.14**	-.04	.05	.04						
14. Years of Schooling	13.86	1.75	-.06	-.03	-.06	-.08*	-.04	-.07	-.00	-.02	-.05	.07*	-.21**	-.17**	-.02					
15. Organizational Tenure	19.72	7.88	-.09**	-.03	-.04	-.06	.02	-.01	.13**	.10**	.15**	.07*	.20**	.01	.03	-.29**				
16. Union Officer Status	.41	.49	.13**	.06	.04	.06	.08*	.09*	-.01	.05	-.01	.05	.13**	.20**	.11**	-.08**	.04			
17. Firm Performance	2.99	1.02	.16**	.05	.00	.01	.06	.03	.40**	.36**	.28**	.25**	.36**	.22**	.02	-.07*	.11**	.07*		
18. Company Dummy 1 (Petro.)	.25	.43	.15**	.10**	.06	.10**	.09**	.18**	-.04	.09**	-.01	.03	.08**	.14**	.16**	-.16**	.03	.32**	.09*	
19. Company Dummy 2 (Power)	.24	.43	-.13**	.05	-.06	-.15**	.02	-.16**	.14**	.04	.05	.03	.07*	-.22**	.19**	.04	.17**	-.13**	.02	-.32**

^a $p < 0.05^*$ $p < 0.01^{**}$ ^b Gender, 1 = male, 0 = female; Seniority = years of work in the enterprise; Years of Schooling, elementary school = 6 years, junior high school = 9 years, senior high school = 12 years, college = 14 years, undergraduate = 16 years, graduate = 18 years; Union Officer Status, 1 = union officer, 0 = non-union officer; Company Dummy 1 (Petroleum), 1 = petroleum, 0 = else; Company Dummy 2 (Power), 1 = power, 0 = else.

H1a, H1c, and H1f gained partial support and H1b, H1d, and H1e were not supported.

Hypotheses 2 predicted the relationships between organizational commitment and the support for various employee participation schemes. As shown in Table 4, organizational commitment only affected negatively the support for advanced representational participation ($\beta = -.11$, $p < .05$) and did not have significant relationship with the support for other five employee participation schemes. Therefore, only H2c was supported, H2a, H2b, H2d, H2e, and H2f did not gain support.

Hypotheses 3 specified the relationships between union instrumentality and employee participation schemes. As shown in Table 4, union instrumentality had significant positive relationship with the support for consultative participation ($\beta = .31$, $p < .001$), conventional representational participation ($\beta = .16$, $p < .001$), and substantive participation ($\beta = .30$, $p < .05$). Union instrumentality did not have significant relationship with the support for advanced representational participation, and two forms of financial participation, namely profit sharing and employee ownership. Therefore, H3a, H3b, and H3d were supported while H3c, H3e, and H3f were not supported.

Table 4. Logistic and OLS Regression Results of Support for Employee Participation^a

	(1) Consultative Participation	(2) Conventional Representational Participation	(3) Advanced Representational Participation	(4) Substantive Participation	(5) Profit Sharing	(6) Employee Ownership
<i>Independent Variables</i>						
Career Ladders	-.21	-.07	-.14*	-.21	.02	-.02
Labor Relations	.70***	.03	.05	.02	-.99	-.04
Training and Development	-.11	.06	.02	-.10	.71	-.02
Compensation	-.26	.00	-.06	-.23	.17	-.12*
Organizational Commitment	.29	.05	-.11*	.14	.14	.01
Union Instrumentality	.31**	.16***	.08	.30*	.47	.02
<i>Control Variables</i>						
Gender	-.57	-.07	.09	-.85	-1.25	-.08*
Years of Schooling	-.05	.03	-.05	-.10	.01	-.02
Organizational Tenure	-.04**	-.08*	-.02	-.03	-.02	.02
Union Officer Status	.35	.01	.01	.08	1.34	.02
Operational Performance	.26*	-.01	.07	.08	.15	.08
Company (Petroleum)	.60	.14**	-.02	.63	7.73	.18***
Company (Power)	.01	.17***	-.01	-.27	1.42	-.10*
Constant	.33			4.11**	2.11	
Cox and Snell R ²	.112			.060	.035	
Log Likelihood	-616.879			-553.976	-127.911	
Chi-Square	83.528***			43.379***	25.634*	
R ²		.064	.043			.088
Adjusted R ²		.046	.021			.070
Change in R ²		.030**	.030**			.019*
F		3.579***	1.975*			4.774***
Df		(13,679)	(13,575)			(13,641)
Durbin-Watson		1.869	1.880			2.037

^a Unstandardized regression coefficients, values of Cox and Snell R², log likelihood and Chi-square of logistic regression results are shown in the columns of consultative, substantive participation, and profit sharing. Standardized regression coefficients, values of R², Adjusted R², change in R², and F statistic of the OLS regression results in step 2 are shown in the columns of conventional representational, advanced representational participation, and employee ownership.

We use VIF values to examine the possible multicollinearity among independent variables, especially four HR practices satisfaction variables, the results showed that the VIF values of all independent variables were less than 3, without exceeding the maximum of 10. Thus, the data were not centered before analysis.

* p<.05 · ** p<.01 · *** p<.001

5. Discussion

The aim of this study is to explore the factors related to employees' support for various employee participation schemes to extend prior research on the antecedents of employee participation (e.g., Cabrera et al., 1003; Shadur et al., 1999). The results of this study concluded that support for diverse employee participation schemes is contingent on employees' HR practices satisfaction, organizational commitment, and union instrumentality, consistent with the contingent view of employee participation proposed by Poole et al. (2001). The research findings also extend the existing research on the relationship between employee satisfaction and participation in two ways. First, most of the prior research has concluded that satisfaction has positive relationship with participation (e.g., Bakan et al. 2004; Buchko, 1992; Cotton et al., 1988; Miller & Monge, 1986; Rusbult et al., 1988; Van Dyne et al., 1994; Wagner, 1994; Wagner & Gooding, 1987) whereas the present study found that satisfaction may affect employees' support for participation positively or negatively, depending on the nature of the participation scheme. Specifically, the results showed that HR practices (especially labor relations) satisfaction was positively associated with consultative participation, while negatively associated with advanced representational participation and employee ownership. This implies that employees of SOEs who are satisfied with current labor relations are more likely to contribute their ideas to enhance organizational performance via participating in quality circles and/or providing suggestions. Additionally, employees who are less satisfied with career ladders are more likely to endorse employee participation such as works councils, employee representation on the board, and employee ownership because this type of employee participation may entail strong interest conflicts between the IR parties and difficulties in implementation. This finding is consistent with prior research conducted by London (1993) and Howard and Foster (1999), illuminating that employees are not likely to participate unless the security of their career life is promised by the organization.

Second, most prior research has focused on the effect of participation on satisfaction (e.g., Bakan et al. 2004; Buchko, 1992; Cotton et al., 1988; Miller & Monge, 1986; Wagner, 1994; Wagner & Gooding, 1987), while neglecting the fact that the relationship between the participation and satisfaction may be reversed as the doubts put forward by Miller and Monge (1986). The present study fills this research gap by demonstrating that satisfaction may also lead to support for participation.

Concerning the relationship between organizational commitment and employees' support for participation, our results demonstrated that organizational commitment was negatively associated with employees' support for advanced representational participation. This implies employees who are more committed to the organization are less likely to support the adoption of advance representational participation. Since more committed employees have a high degree of identification with the organization, thus reducing their intentions to engage in distributive conflicts oftentimes manifested in advanced representational employee participation. Inconsistent with the results of previous studies (e.g., Allen & Meyer, 1996; Dunham et al. 1994; Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001; Shadur et al., 1999), this study did not find a positive relationship between organizational commitment and the support for the other forms of employee participation. Two plausible reasons may account for this inconsistency. First, the insignificant effect of organizational commitment on the support for employee participation might result from multicollinearity between organizational commitment and the four HR practice satisfaction variables ($r = .31$ to $.45$, all $p < .01$). Thus, the explanatory power of organizational commitment might be attenuated by HR practices satisfaction. This can be further demonstrated from the significant positive relationships between the bivariate correlations between organizational commitment and three forms of employee participation – consultative, conventional representational participation, and profit sharing as shown in Table 3. Second, research results may vary in different samples. The research results derive from Western samples may not apply to that of Taiwan's case.

As to the relationship between union instrumentality and the support

for employee participation, the results of this study suggest that union instrumentality merely affected employees' support for consultative, conventional representational, and substantive participation and did not influence advanced representational and two forms of financial participation, namely profit sharing and employee ownership. It may be due to the fact that employees at these SOEs took much more moderate stances in promoting the concept of industrial democracy than their counterparts in some Western countries such as former West Germany. To understand this phenomenon, we need to focus on the large institutional environments within which Taiwan's industrial relations are embedded. Hostile capital oppositions, conservative political climate towards advanced forms of industrial democracy, lack of societal democratic ideological tradition, and weaknesses of union influence at the societal level all contribute to the moderate position of Taiwan labor (Han and Chiu, 2000).

The implications of our study to IR parties are as follows. In recent years, the issue of privatization of SOEs and the associated possible forms of industrial democracy, such as employee representation on the board has become one of the major events in Taiwan's IR arena. It has aroused heated debates among IR parties. Therefore, employees' attitudes toward various types of participation need to be explored. This study may further the understanding of the factors related to employees' support for diverse forms of employee participation and provide IR parties with implications for enhancing employees' attitudes toward the organization and the unions to gain employees' support for various employee participation schemes. For example, managers may adopt good labor relations practices to facilitate employees' support for quality circles and suggestion system. Trade union activists may consolidate the instrumentality of union members toward the unions to gain members' support for union representation and collective bargaining.

There are several limitations of the present study. First, this study used a cross-sectional survey to investigate the factors related to the support for various employee participation schemes. With this research design, the causal directions of the studied variables cannot be

unambiguously determined. For example, as prior research suggested, it may be that participation leads to satisfaction and organizational commitment (e.g., Bakan et al. 2004; Buchko, 1992; Cotton et al., 1988; Miller & Monge, 1986; Wagner, 1994; Wagner & Gooding, 1987), not in the opposite direction. Future research may employ a longitudinal design to further clarify the causal relationship among the variables. Second, beyond the control variables, the independent variables had only accounted for small amount of variances (0.8% to 4.0%) in various participation schemes in this study. This may be due to the small variation in some of the dependent variables, for example, the variance of profit sharing is only .15. Moreover, the listwise deletion method used in the regression analyses may results in sacrifice of a significant amount of data and consequently lose of power. Furthermore, it is likely that other important variables which may account for employees' support for participation were not included in the present study. Future research may investigate other important factors, such as organizational climate, leadership style, employees' values or managers' behaviors. Finally, this study only investigated employees in three SOEs, the results of this study may not be generalized to employees' attitudes toward participation in private sectors.

In sum, this study contributes to the literature by empirically exploring the factors related to the support for various forms of employee participation. Specifically, we found that employees with higher HR practice satisfaction tend to support for consultative participation. Employees who are less satisfied with career ladders and less committed to their organization are more likely to support for advanced representational participation. Though union instrumentality had significant impacts on the support for consultative, conventional representational, and substantive employee participation, it had insignificant effects on employee's support for advanced representational and financial participation. Looking into the future, efficiency and equity will be two major goals pursued by the IR parties. Diverse forms of employee participation can play complementary roles in fulfilling these two objectives. We suggest that the IR parties take a 'contingent perspective' in designing effective employee participation schemes at the workplace, simultaneously integrating both efficiency and equity.

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員工參與支持因素之探討

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摘 要

本文研究的目的是在於探討台灣公營企業員工對組織人管實務的滿意程度，組織承諾以及工會效能三者對其支持不同類型員工參與制度的影響。根據三家大型公營企業員工的問卷調查資料分析，本研究主要發現包括：(1)員工對人管實務的滿意程度與其對諮商性參與制度的支持呈正相關，但與其對先進型代議性參與以及員工擁有制度呈負相關；(2)員工的組織承諾與其對先進型代議性參與制度的支持呈負相關；以及(3)工會效能與員工對諮商性參與，傳統型代議性參與，以及實質性參與制度的支持呈正相關。

關鍵詞：員工參與、人管實務的滿意度、組織承諾、工會效能

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