

Determining the Relationship between Employee Participation and Union Membership

H. M. Linde¹ and J. C. Visagie²

*School of Human Resource Sciences, Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences
North-West University, Private Bag X6001 Potchefstroom 2520 South Africa
Fax: (+27)18 299 1393, ¹<herman.linde@nwu.ac>, ²<jan.visagie@nwu.ac.za>*

KEYWORDS Trade Union. Employee Participation. Relationship. Co-management. Self-management

ABSTRACT This study examined the relationship between employee participation and union membership. The researchers are of the opinion that employee participation will have a negative effect on union membership and therefore do not favour employee participation programs. In providing insight into the relationship between employee participation and union membership, attention was paid to the following: union membership percentage within the organisation; the relationship between biographical information and employees joining a union; as well as the relationship between themes of employee participation and employees joining a union. The six themes of employee participation used in this paper were identified in a previous study by the authors, who studied the opinions and perceptions of employees and managers' opinions of these themes, which were originally identified through its literature research. The study adopted a quantitative research design using a self-developed group administration questionnaire. The results found that 87.1 percent of the respondents did not belong to a union. In terms of statistical significance, it was decided to set the value at a 95 percent confidence interval ($p < 0.05$). There was a significant relationship between race and employees joining a union with a p-value of 0.068. There was also a statistically significant relationship between themes of employee participation and employees joining a union with co-management (.016) and self-management (.004). The results also found that from the 87.1 percent participants who did not belong to a union, it was indicated that they do not belong to a union because it does not interest them.