SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Workers Participation in Management has become a necessary instrument to avoid conflict between labour and management in any industrial undertaking. It has become an essential element of the labour policy of the government particularly in the present globalize era where the firms are competing with each other for their survival and the decision-making is very tedious and complex in any organisation.

Conflict is inevitable in labour-management relations but with cooperation based upon ideology, it is possible to develop constructive industrial relations to increase production, productivity and managerial efficiency in an organisation.

Employees' participation has become a major political, social and economic issue in many countries. Yugoslavia, West Germany, United Kingdom, United States, Sweden, France, Belgium, Denmark, Norway have already experimented with it, though it has got different forms in different countries depending upon the needs of the country. Even many developing countries have experimented with the implementation of participative scheme. The surveys which are already conducted in Bangladesh, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal have shown very encouraging results to adopt a participative culture.

In United Kingdom, workers participation was born and grew up with industrialization. In this country, the concept of workers' participation got impetus through effective and meaningful joint consultation. In West Germany after the Second World War, the demand for co-determination came from the trade unions which agitated for giving a legal backing to Workers Participation in Management.
In USA, collective bargaining plays an important role but the trade unions in that country are not interested in formal participation in management. Self-Management of Yugoslavia is an essential element of socialistic transformation.

Based on social, economic and political considerations these participative systems emerged in different forms. Sweden and France followed the method of Joint Consultation, and Norway and West Germany adopted joint decision making. In Scandinavian countries participation was in the form of Joint Committees on statutory basis and in some of the capitalist countries, it was formed on voluntary basis. In India this concept was adopted as an integral part of labour policy. It was viewed primarily as an instrument to increase production, productivity and organizational efficiency.

Economists contributed to this principle on labour management collaboration to increase production and productivity, waste elimination, reducing absenteeism, prevention of accidents through safety, improving communication and maintaining healthy industrial relations.

India being a mixed economy where Public Sector has been playing an important and dominant role has changed after the reforms period. Its role and responsibilities has been reduced and the thrust is focussed towards privatization. In this context, the significance of Workers Participation in Management has increased to safeguard the interests of the labour both in public and private sectors against any type of exploitation. Any kind of foreign model of participatory culture may not be suitable to Indian conditions, because the socio-economic characteristics of India are quite distinct from advanced countries.
India being a democratic country, workers urge for a say in the management of industries. As a developing country, the rate of literacy is gradually rising and the workers are not fully equipped with business acumen to participate effectively in decisions making process at all level of industry. In order to raise the living standard of workers, the production and productivity needs to be improved. This is possible only with their cooperation and involvement in the participative culture.

Keeping all these above factors in view, the scheme of Workers Participation in Management was introduced in India through Works Committee, Joint Management Council and later-on Shop and Plant Joint Councils. Joint Management Councils have not been a resounding success-means partially successful due to the inconsistent attitude of both management and labour.

The ratio and number of the management and workers representatives varied from unit to unit. Although the representatives of workers and management recognize the need for the joint participative forums, significant differences are observed with regard to structure of these forums.

The study reveals that the management is in favour of voluntary participation whereas the workers want statutory backing to Workers Participation in Management. Participation can be formal or informal. There are three major forms of formal participation. One is joint consultation form where management takes the decision but workers representatives are permitted to listen. Second is the joint management which has been functioning in many enterprises including in SAIL. This type of participation was functioning in Rourkela Steel Plant and now it is revealed from the study that the joint management forums are almost non-existent in recent times. Third form is the workers control, where the final authority rest with the
elected representatives of the workforce. These representatives make policy and suggest the management to carry out the recommendations. However, this form of participative culture is not possible to incorporate in Indian conditions due to lack of cooperation from the management, Employer's Association, government and indifferent attitude of the workers representatives.

Informal approaches to participation include employee share holding, job enrichment and enlargement, Quality Circles, humanization of works etc. It is revealed from this study that the Quality Circles have been introduced in SAIL as well as in Rourkela Steel Plant.

The study of existing system of participative management in selected countries as discussed in Chapter-I revealed that in most of the countries, through legislations or other forms are given to promote the participative culture.

In India, effort have been made to experiment with various forms of participation like statutory works committees, voluntary participation, Joint Management Councils, Workers representation in the board of Director level in SAIL. However study revealed that, it has got limited success in promoting effective working of these participative forums. The scheme of 1983 and 1991 are already being introduced in the public sector undertakings to test its success.

Although there is constant effort on the part of the government and the management of PSU to introduce different forms of participation, it has not been fully successful due to exogenous and endogenous factors. However, the government has maintained its commitment to the principles of codetermination particularly in PSU.
Chapter-II presents the review of a selected number of work of the vast literature available. The review has been attempted to introduce the concept of WPM (Workers participation in Management). Some studies have been reviewed to deal with various forms of participation. A number of studies have been highlighted to study the experiences of developed countries and developing countries. Some studies have similarly been reviewed to present findings of empirical work studying the impact of WPM on production & productivity and to examine the causes of failures of workers participation.

Chapter-III presents the data base and methodology used for the present study on aspects of WPM in Rourkela Steel Plant located in Rourkela city in the district of Sundargarh in Orissa. The study has utilized secondary data to examine the development profile of Sundargarh district where the study area is located. The study also utilizes data relating to the Rourkela Steel Plant from their publications. Attempt has been made to collect primary data regarding responses of workers and executives on various aspects of WPM through a questionnaire method. Structured questionnaires were canvassed among workers and executives. The sample design consisted of selection of 200 workers following a method of Stratified random sampling to select a broad cross section of workers representing different levels of income, scale of pay, caste etc. Similarly it consisted of 100 executives representing different pay scales, education and experience.

Chapter-IV presents an analysis of socio-economic profile of the district under study where the Rourkela Steel Plant is located. The district located in Western Orissa has a high proportion of tribal population and witnessed the establishment of the Rourkela Steel Plant in the early 50's. As per the Orissa Human Development Report, 2004; the value of HDI during 2001 for Sundargarh district turns out to be 0.436 which is lower than the
state HDI value of 0.579, Sundargarh district occupies 26th rank in terms of HDI ranking. The value of GDI (Gender Development Index) for Sundargarh district is 0.422 which is much less compared to State GDI value (0.546). Sundargarh district occupies 25th rank with low range of GDI value. The value of RHI (Reproductive Health Index) for Sundargarh district is 0.629, which is higher than the State RHI value (0.549). The district occupies 3rd rank of RHI value. However in terms of indicators of development, one notices relatively higher level of development of industrial, infrastructural, macro economic development, though the nature of development is not consistent in case of human resource development and development of weakest sections. The district records a very low and poor agricultural performance and lack of development of agricultural sector.

Chapter-V deals with the socio-economic profile of Rourkela City where the HSL is located. Rourkela, the modern steel city which is situated in 22° 12'N and 84° 53'E is on the Howrah-Mumbai section of the South Eastern Railway and is about 413 Kms, from Howrah the railway headquarters in the state of Kolkata. It is 107 Kms east of Sundargarh, the district headquarters town. Rourkela is the second biggest city in Orissa. Rourkela standard Urban Area (RSUA) is formed embracing three urban components viz: Rourkela Steel Township (Municipality), Rourkela Civil Township (Municipality) and Jalda areas. The rural components have 40 villages. According to census report, the total area of Rourkela Standard Urban Area (RSUA) is 221.08 Sq.Kms. out of which 139.04 Sq.Kms, belong to the rural components of the Standard Urban Area. The total population of Rourkela Steel Township in 1961 was 90,287 which went up to 2,14,521 in 1981. However, as per the census Report 2001, the total population of Rourkela Standard Urban Area was 4,84,292 in comparison to 3,64,918 in 1981.
The establishment of the Steel Plant at Rourkela gave a strong boost to the rapid industrialization not only in and around Rourkela but also in the whole district of Sundargarh. There are also many large, medium and number of smalls scale and ancillary industries in and around Rourkela. These industries are supplying various engineering spares and consumables. They are being encouraged by way of technical guidance, material assistance and preference in order placement.

The main raw materials required for the production of iron and steel in an integrated Steel Plant are Iron Ore, Coal, Manganese ore, Limestone, dolomite, quartzite, fluorspar, bauxite, Ferro-alloys and refectory materials like magnetite, fire clay etc.

Rourkela Steel Plant caters to a varied and wide spectrum of consumers. There is hardly any industry which does not utilize its product directly or indirectly.

The main products of Rourkela are flat products like plates HR sheets coils, CR sheets/ coils, Galvanized sheets, tin, plates, Electrical sheets and pipes.

It is observed that production of Saleable Steel has increased from 30165 tonnes in 1961 to 1942144 tonnes in 2006-07, a significant increase to the tune of 65 times.

The growth in output in the entire period was 2.8 percent per annum. The maximum growth in output took place in 1961-1970. After that the period 1970-80 experienced a growth rate of 6.99 and 1980-90 a growth rate of 1.92 percent per annum. The growth rate became negative in 1990-2000. Perhaps this is the reason why the RSP started implementation of turn
around strategy in 2001. The strategy has proved to be successful as the growth rate went up to 5.68 percent per annum.

The trend in employment in Rourkela Steel Plant for the period 2000-2007 indicates a decline in the number of executives from 2504 in 2000 to 2179 in 2008. A greater rate of decline is noticed in case of non-executives which declined from 25664 in 2000 to 18926 in 2008. One also notices a decline in the total employment from 28301 in 2000 to 21105 in 2008.

The profit/loss earned by RSP over the span 1961-2006 indicates that the Cumulative loss has almost increased continuously though remaining at a low level until 1974-75. The Plant witnessed Cumulative Profit during the period 1975-76 to 1995-96 excepting one point 1983-84. The cumulative loss again crept in and rose continuously till 2005-06. However, the performance in different years indicate that there has been profit by the plant continuously from 1973-74 to 1980-81 and again from 1984-85 to 1994-95. The plant incurred heavy losses during the period 1995-96 to 2002-03. Thereafter there has been again a reversal and a net profit during 2003-04 to 2005-06.

The labour productivity of Rourkela Steel Plant for the period 1994-95 to 2007-08 reveals that the labour productivity remained stable during the period 1994-95 to 1999-00 and witnessed a continuous rise thereafter from 2000-01 till 2007-08, which coincides with the trend of declining employment of labour force, supposedly related to the introduction of Turn Around Strategy.

The output elasticity of the fixed input are consistently negative except the period 1991-2006, which are also statistically not significant. This shows that output growth is mainly driven by the variable inputs. In the post liberalization phase i.e 1991-2006, out-put elasticity of variable inputs was
0.902 which was more than the period 1976-91. This shows that, per unit growth in output of variable inputs contributed around 90 percent to growth. Period 1991-99 is the post globalization period with no ‘turn around strategy’. Here, output elasticity of the variable inputs was 1.086; means for unit increase in output contribution of variable inputs was more than 100 percent as the output elasticity of fixed input was negative. Perhaps this is the reason why the management of RSP started to implement the ‘turn around strategy’ to give a positive return to capital used. The strategy was such that the number of workers started declining after 1999. As a result, output per unit of worker started increasing - a trend what the management describe as an increase in productivity of workers. The period 2000-06 is the period of ‘turn around strategy’. Here, the management was successful in reducing the negative value of output elasticity of fixed inputs by employing more capital and less labor and the strategy has resulted in reduction of output elasticity of variable inputs. If this trend continues the RSP will be fully converted into complete automated factory with a few workers in future.

Chapter-VI throws light on the origin of the system of ‘Bipartism in Steel Authority of India Ltd. (SAIL). It deals with the working of existing participatory machinery in various areas of Steel Plants under SAIL and Rourkela Steel Plant. Presently, workers’ participation in the steel industry is mostly a joint consultation system and partly decision making in matters concerning wages, working conditions, production, productivity, incentives and such other important issues in the joint forums.

At present in SAIL there are five levels of functioning of the system of workers’ participation ie., (i) National Level, (ii) Corporate level, (iii) Plant level, (iv) Zonal level and (v) Shop-floor level. Each plant of SAIL, has a large number of joint committees. Levels of participation are shown for ready reference.
The workers participation in management has assumed key importance in the development of industrial democracy by way of introducing shared concern for production and productivity in different organizations of our country today. Beginning with the statutory Works Committee as per the Factory Act, 1948 and rules framed by the State Government, Rourkela Steel Plant has over a decade established sound joint consultative machineries. The history of joint participative forums in Rourkela Steel Plant goes back to early 1960s when the first canteen managing committees and first Works Committees were constituted in 1961 and 1962 respectively. Rourkela Steel Plant has come a long way since then. By the year 1991 one hundred one Joint Committees covering the Steel Plant, Fertilizer Plant, the township and captive mines were functioning.

The various joint Management Committees are Production Committees, Grievance Committees, Safety Committees Works Committees, Canteen Management Committees and Plant Level Committees. Presently, no Joint Management Committees are functioning except a Central Consultative Committee which comprises of the representatives of all the registered Trade Unions. The recognised union RSS (INTUC) is not participating in the committee meetings as it believes that as per the statutory provision, all the collective bargaining process is done with recognised union. So, the RSS has not been participating in the Central Consultative Committee meeting since 2003 in protest against management decision to involve the representatives of non-recognised unions (All the registered trade unions). In other words, WPM has been deteriorating in recent times in RSP and has taken a back seat. The focus has been shifted to Workers Communication instead of Workers Participation and also from Human Resource Management to Human Resource Development particularly after the turn around strategies of 2000-2001. These findings are very much clear from opinion survey of both workers and executives that WPM has taken a back seat in RSP at the moment. The Joint
Management Committees have not been functioning at the time of the field work of the present study. Some of the trade union leaders also feel that workers participation in RSP is deteriorating day by day.

Earlier, Rourkela Steel Plant had Joint Committees to discuss about the matters relating to welfare measures, safety, production, productivity and employees grievances.

During 1990 and in late 1990s in post economic reforms period these committees were functioning and continuing up to 2003. These Joint Committees were providing opportunities to about 600 members and representatives, each representing workmen and management to sit together to discuss and decide across the table regarding the administration and welfare measures, redressing employees grievances and improving production, productivity and quality etc.. During these periods a number of legal agreements were signed between the managements and the recognised Union.

During 2003-08, the focus was also shifted from workers participation to Workers Communication. To achieve this, a Mass Contact Programme was started where the workers got the chance directly to interact with MD 'Executive Director, and with other executives to ventilate their day today problems. The management also promised to take necessary steps in a month to solve their problems. This process was continuing till the survey of this study was made. The Mass Contact Programme was giving the workers an opportunity in every week to put forth their grievances and assurances were given to solve their problems. Although this strategy of the management was administrative in nature, nevertheless it was supported by the workers as they felt they were participating directly in this communication programme.
There is no doubt that this administrative measure can not be compared with WPM as it is not statutory. Apart from this, the leaders of the Recognized Union RSS feel that, it is a strategy on the part of the management to keep RSS out of mainstream of participation and to misguide the workers so that the leaders of RSS will be isolated.

During the field work of this study made in 2008, it was revealed by management personnel of Rourkela Steel Plant that WPM almost lost its past glory. Though, some of the statutory joint management committees were functioning in pen and paper, practically the committees were not functioning except Central Consultative Committee since 2003. The recognized union RSS term as recognized union had already expired in 2006. The General Secretary of the recognised union of RSS revealed that, their union representatives were not participating in the meeting of Central Consultative Committee because, the management was inviting members of all other registered trade unions which they believe was in contravention to the statutory provision.

The Joint management committees which were functioning earlier did not exist today. Rather a Safety Zone was framed comprising of eight departments to look into the safety aspect of workers when they were on work. Apart from this, the Town Welfare Committee was existing but without any meetings in a month.

Quality circle and Shop Improvement Groups (SPG) are both informal participative culture which prevail in Rourkela Steel Plant in addition to the formal system of participative management. Quality Circle is a problem solving technique originated in advanced countries and mostly used in America and Japan's industrial units. However, Rourkela Steel Plant did not lag behind on this front and introduced this format of participatory culture to solve the problems of the employees relating to their day to day
work. Under this format each worker is asked to identify the problem he faces in the work and asked to suggest measures and to implement it, so that the problem is solved. This technique is very effective as attention is given to individual employee as it consists of a small group. It has positive effect on productivity of the employees. However this form of participation is not according to the statutory rules.

The Shop Improvement Groups (SIG) is a small group of employees who are engaged in one place of work. These voluntary groups take specific problems from their work area and suggest ways and means of improvement. The coverage of SIG studies are methods/system improvement of safety, productivity, quality and yield, cost reduction communication and environment betterment. The size of the group is a maximum of six members which may include one or two officers at the junior managerial level. All the members are closely associated with a particular work. In The Rourkela Steel Plant, after its introduction in 1983, 35 such groups (SIG) were formed in various departments within six months which made significant contributions towards improvement of process and quality.

However, this informal way of participation was neither statutory nor had any bearing on formal way of participatory culture in Rourkela Steel Plant.

It can be concluded from above discussions that Rourkela Steel Plant was pioneer in participative culture, no longer exist today; rather the focus has been shifted from Workers Participation to Workers Communication and from Human Resource Management to Human Resource Development.

Chapter-VII presents the results of Opinion Survey of Workers relating to various aspects of Workers Participation in Management. The study shows that a substantial percentage of the workers have reasonable
understanding of the concept and functioning of Workers Participation in Management in Rourkela Steel Plant. It can also be said that at present the joint management committees are non-existent particularly after the turn around strategy of management in 2001-02. However, an apex level committee known as Central Consultative Committee comprising of representatives of all the registered trade unions is functioning without the participation of the dominant and recognized union RSS (INTUC). In the view of RSS, the Central Consultative Committee does not have any statutory provisions. This committee meets once in a month to discuss the various problems of the workers.

Workers feel that the trade unions are affiliated to different political parties. They also acknowledge that inter-union rivalry and multiplicity of unions have adverse effects on the participative culture. In fact, the workers want to remain loyal both to the union and the management. Ultimately this has adverse impact both on industrial relations, thereby on production and productivity.

It is also found from the study that the workers in general are happy and satisfied with their immediate superiors and co-workers which is important for a good industrial climate in an organisation. However, almost 48% of the workers are not satisfied with the way the management handles their grievances. The workers have faith in the philosophy and work culture of Rourkela Steel Plant.

It is revealed from the study that almost 65% of workers are the members of the recognised trade union (presently), the Rourkela Shramik Sangh (RSS) which is affiliated to INTUC. 61% of the workers feel that the leadership of the union comes from within the union but 38% of the workers believe that the leadership of RSS is coming from outside. Almost 70% of the respondents believe that RSS is a strong and dominant union and it is
affiliated to Congress Party. 32% of the workers feel that RSS is a strong and dominant union because of its strong leadership and organisational capacity.

Almost 51% of workers opine that good relationship is prevailing between their union and the management of Rourkela Steel Plant which is reasonably an encouraging sign on industrial relations front as it has got multiplier effects on other aspects of the organization. A very small percentage of workers (21%) believe that the workers are aware of labour laws to some extent. It can be said that majority of the respondents have lack of knowledge about the labour laws.

From this study it is very clear that cent percent of the workers understand the Workers Participation in Management means both formal and informal consultation of the workers with the management pertaining to their work. They also believe that Workers Participation in Management means sharing information with the management.

The data reveals from opinion survey shows that almost 94% of workers know about participative culture. 41% workers believe that the participation is not enough and they want to be involved more in the decisions making with the management. Almost 97% of the workers feel that Workers Participation in Management should be made a right for the interest of the workers and the organisation.

The data reveals that 86.5% workers aware of the functioning of the Central Consultative Committee which is a non-statutory one where representatives of all the trade unions are participating in the discussions except the recognized union (RSS). 63% of the workers feel that Safety Zone been created to safeguard the interest of the workers and to develop safety strategy to prevent or to minimize the number of industrial accidents. 29% of the workers have the feeling that the welfare committee exist to take care of
welfare matters. It can be concluded that 71% of the workers are not satisfied or aware of the functions of this committee.

It is interesting to note that 55% of the workers want to be the members of the committees to participate in joint management committees as they are aware of the functions of these committees. It is interesting to note that 85% of workers under the study are of the opinion that the Joint Management Committees are effective.

The data reveals that 82% of the workers favour secret ballot election to Joint Management Committees. It implies, they want more democracy in participative management.

The present study further revealed that 43.5% of the workers received information about the proceedings and outcomes of the committees meeting through discussions with co-workers and 20.5% workers through circular.

From the empirical study it is clear that only 15% of the workers are satisfied with the functioning of the Joint Committees which implies 85% of the workers are dissatisfied with it.

From the present study, it is seen that 96.5% of the workers acknowledge the functions, performance and productiveness of the Joint Management Committees (JMC) to increase productions and productivity, and effective to improve communication. 60.5% workers believe that the Joint Committees is also effective to improve the Industrial Relation scenario in Rourkela Steel plant. 88% workers are of the view that the JMC were doing useful work to prevent accidents by taking safety measures.
From the opinion survey of the study it is found that 68% of the workers prefer shop floor level participation than plant level or Board of Director level. 95.6% of workers believe in consultative participation to take part in JMC as union representatives. 12.5% of the respondents think that the management of Rourkela Steel Plant has encouraged the workers to take part in JMC.

It is further revealed that 61% of the workers are satisfied about the decisions taken by the management in general but almost 40% are not happy with the implementation part. 70% of the workers prefer that their representatives to the JMC should be chosen through election which shows that these workers want more freedom and transparency of the JMC.

It is further revealed that 81% workers feels the significant difference between the pre-liberalization and post-liberalization periods with regard to participation culture. Almost 68% of them feel that the role of the labour in industry has been challenging after the reforms period due to stiff competitions.

From the study it is evident that cent percent of the workers are aware of the Mass Contact Programme (MCP) which is basically a communication meeting of the workers and the management to discuss the various grievances of the workers relating to their work, working conditions etc. This is an administrative measure by the management to enable workers to participate directly with the management relating to their problems. The Managing Director/ Executive Director of Rourkela Steel plant give necessary assurances to solve the problems of the workers in the Mass Contact Programme. This programme is conducted in every Wednesday of the week where the workers get the opportunity to put forth their grievances to the top management.
But the leaders of the trade unions feel that this is a strategy on the part of the management to isolate the leaders from the mainstream of participation. The study also revealed that a low percentage of workers know that the Mass Contact Programme (MCP) is not an alternative or substitute to Workers Participation in Management (WPM) which basically open the door for legal agreement pertaining to the problems of the workers and the organisation to maintain a healthy industrial climate. This agreement between the representatives of the recognized union and the management is a process of collective bargaining between the two parties to settle the issues of the workers.

The opinion survey reveals that 73% of the respondents are satisfied with the functioning of the Mass Contact Programme to a reasonable extent as it is giving the workers a chance to participate directly with the top management. About 94% of the workers believe that MCP has positive impact in improving the communication and productivity of the workers. The study also found that no workers are infavour of privatization of Rourkela Steel Plant. It means they feel more secure in Public Sector Company. It is also clear from the study that 57% workers feel that there should be more freedom and transparency in the Joint Management Council of the participative forum.

The Opinion Survey of Executives are presented in Chapter-VIII. It can be said that all the executives under the study are infavour of participation and 57% of them have the feeling that Workers Participation in Management (WPM) should be done at all levels. However, 27% feel that it should be done at shop floor level. The data in the opinion survey shows that the Joint Management Committees are not functioning except central Consultative Committees which is agreed by 98% of the executives under the study.
Most of the executives expressed non-existence of various committees such as Production committees, Safety committees, Grievance committees, works committees, welfare committees, though they indicated the existence of Central Consultative Committees. They also strongly opined on the consultative role of the workers participation. A dominant majority of the executives expressed good performance of the participation and negative impact of inter-union rivalry on WPM. However, most of the executives did not believe on the positive association between effectiveness of participation and the education & training of the workers.

Regarding the impact of WPM the executives strongly believed the positive effect of WPM on production & productivity, waste minimization, accident reduction, cost reduction, minimization of absenteeism, reduction of environmental pollution and above all improvement of industrial relations. The executives also have a very positive assessment on the impact of participation.

The response of executives on the Impact of modernization on demand for labour, quality & competitiveness have important revelations. Most of the executives believed that there is no significant decline in the demand for labour due to modernization. They also unanimously indicated positive impact of WPM on modernization, quality & competitiveness. Most of the executives however do not believe in a significant rise in the capital-output ratio due to modernization in Rourkela Steel Plant. Most of the executives are not in favour of the WPM in strategic area mainly because the workers have lack of knowledge and a few believed that in the strategic area secrecy needs to be maintained.

Regarding the impact of LPG on WPM most of the executives do not visualize any strong impact of LPG, though a dominant majority believes change in attitudes of workers, improvement of skill of workers and
environmental pollution reduction. Most of the executives however believed in the change in WPM after LPG and that LPG has offered challenges for both the workers and the executives.

On the issue of alternative participation techniques such as Quality Circle most of the executives do not strongly recommend it as an alternative to WPM. However they strongly opine in the constitution of broad based committees in stead of representation of the recognized union only. They also strongly indicate the relevance of WPM in the context of Public enterprises. The study shows that 88% of the executives feel that the Joint Management Committees should be constituted in such a way that the representatives of it belongs to all the registered trade unions instead of recognized union only. In other words it should be a broad based committee to make the participation more transparent. However, it can not be possible as it is against the statutory norms because the legal agreement through collective bargaining process is usually made between the representatives of recognised union and the management representatives. Only 16% of the executives think that workers participation in management is more effective in private enterprises than in Public sector Undertaking. It implies majority of the executives believe that the participative culture is better in PSUs than in private enterprises.

This study confirms that in organisations where multi-trade unions exist, the scope for effective participation is less and where militant unions exist, there will be a setback for smooth running of the participatory forums. It is also clear from the study that the contract labour has no scope for participation in these forums. So participation is meaningful only in respect of permanent workers.

One of the main reasons attributed for the failure of the system of participation is the attitudinal differences between the parties and the
perception of the parties towards joint forums. Mutual trust and confidence are lacking between the parties. Both the management and workers representatives take rigid postures with a tendency to outwit each other. Favourable attitude of the union and management tends towards smooth functioning of the participative forums.

The major factor that contributes towards the success of participation is the acceptability of the appropriate structure to all parties involved in the Joint Management Councils. These parties although recognise the need for these forums, significant differences are observed with regard to the structure of these forums.

The managerial cadre feels that the participation should be on the basis of felt need and this should not be thrust upon them by compulsion. The union office bearers are not accountable to the results here as such accountability rests on them.

It is evident form the study that both the parties are in favour of participative forums. Improvement of human relations needs these forums to develop continuous dialogue on an institutional basis. Further in socialist democracy, labour is the partner in the common task of development and they can not participate effectively unless they are mentally and intellectually equipped for it.

Public Sector enterprise like SAIL being the model employers should set an example in this direction and not altogether leave participation to the voluntarism of the management. At the same time bringing legislation much against the desire of the managerial officials in this regard may also not yield the desired results. In India in the prevailing conditions total participation at all levels with statutory backing in all the areas of decisions making is not possible.
The findings of the study indicate that Rourkela Steel Plant was a role model for others in participative culture during 1992-93 to 2001 does no longer exist today. From the opinion survey of the workers, it is crystal clear that the participatory culture in Rourkela Steel Plant has been deteriorating in recent times which are evident from the non-existent of the participative forums.

In recent times the focus has been shifted from workers participation to workers communication and from Human Resource Management to Human Resource Development which are the two important segments of the turn around strategy of 2001.

The findings of the study indicate that participation may yield more fruitful results if some structural changes are effected in this system. Too many committees with overlapping functions lead towards unsuccessful functioning as the matters discussed and decided in one committee are often reopened in other committees. This situation resulted in waste of precious time and energy of the involved parties that ultimately created disinterest at these forums.

The finding of this study shows that the informal way of participation such as Quality Circle in Rourkela Steel Plant is very effective although it is confined to selected departments. The study indicates that the Mass Contact Programme (MCP) which is held in every Wednesdays since 2001 where about 500 workers spread over to different departments take part to directly put forth their grievances to the management. Suggestion was also invited from workers to identify the problems relating to their work and to narrow down the communication gap between workers and the management. From the opinion survey it is very clear that workers support the Mass Contact Programme as they feel they are directly participating with the management including Managing Director. Executive Director has positive impact on the
attitude of the workers and also helping to improve the communication. In this programme, the management highlights its plans, target and achievement.

The leaders of the recognised union however viewed the Mass Contact Programme as a strategy on the part of the management to isolate them and to deviate from participative culture.

Many executives said that the participative forums meeting was not happening due to unruly and militant attitude of the representatives of recognised union. So, from 2003 onwards RSS is not participating in participative culture as the management of the Rourkela Steel Plant has set up a broad based committee known as Central Consultative Committee to involve the representatives of all the registered trade unions. However, the RSS feels that it is complete violation of the norms. Therefore, the recognised union RSS is not attending the Central Consultative Committee meeting in protest against this strategy of the management.

Meanwhile the term of recognized union RSS has already been expired in 2006 as revealed by the representatives of the union. By the time the field study was on, the check up system for verification of membership was going on which is inconsistent with the trade union Act 1926.

In Rourkela Steel Plant, because of a long tradition of strong unionism many employees could not even think of their own ability to participate effectively and consequently take the help of their union representatives in decision making.

On the question of more participation, it is revealed that the respondents desire to participate more than what was available before. With reference to the knowledge of familiarity with the functioning of the various
participatory forums, some workers revealed that they are unfamiliar with the concept. However, the executive of Rourkela Steel Plant who were interviewed feel that there are practical difficulties and obstacles to implement the decisions taken in the joint committees.

Many executives believe that if participation carried to Board of Director level from shopfloor level, it may undermine the basic principles of ownership and free enterprise and it will weak the competitive ability of the individual and the financial and economic structure of business.

The study acknowledges that the Joint Management Committees were functioning before in Rourkela steel Plant level. The trade union leader's and the representatives of the workers feel that more power should be given to the Committees to make them purposeful. Here more power means the authority to implement the decisions or recommendations of the committees.

Contrary to primitive and classical thinking that participation will restrict and may dilute the power of the union is found to be wrong as union has shown active involvement in participative culture in Rourkela Steel Plant earlier as it is clear from the performance of different committees.

SUGGESTION/ OBSERVATION

Despite constant effort and commitment from the government the country has not been succeeded to maintain healthy industrial relation which is perquisite for socio-economic progress of the country in the utility of the participatory forums. The middle level managers usually deal with the workers working in shop-floor level, and the attitudes of these managers towards participation are crucial for its success.
It is important that the participative culture in Rourkela Steel plant should resume at the earliest to regain the confidence of the workers and their representatives and to create a healthy industrial relation which have direct bearing on other factors in an organisation. There should be a monitoring cell headed by a senior level manager empowered to get regular progress reports on the functioning of the joint forums and to make it mandatory implementation of the committees.

The effort of the management of Rourkela Steel Plant to improve the communication skill of the workers through Mass Contact Programme (MCP) and the strategy of the authority to develop the manpower through human resource development programmes will have positive impact on the attitudes, morale and skill of the employees. All these functions will definitely have positive impact on the participative culture of Rourkela Steel plant in the years to come although participative culture has been deteriorated in recent times.

The number of joint committees may be reduced but the number of areas of activities of the committees may be increased to reduce the duplicacy of effort.

The success of Workers Participation in Management will depend on the degree of autonomy and participation that the managers and supervisors themselves enjoy. The managers at junior or middle level suffers from a sense of alienation as they are ignored in formulating major policies, although, the responsibilities for implementing these policies are equally placed on them.

In view of this, it is difficult to see as to how they will look upon the scheme of Workers Participation in Management when they themselves are not involved in it.
The mass use of computer technology has lead to emergence of small production units, the expansion of the services sector and the availability of better educated and highly skilled workers in labour market. This outcome may lead to bipolarization in labour relation with the traditional sector on the one side and a high tech on the other, reflecting differences in the structure of occupations and skills.

The industrial relations in the traditional sector have been continuing along the established participation. In the high tech sector the trend would be towards the personalized relationship normally found in small enterprises or with sector professionalized staff.

The management, trade unions and the employees have to adapt to the new situation to promote workers participation in high tech industrial sphere where there are conflict and co-operation of various types of interests. With proper planning it may, not be difficult to create a new culture of ‘Participation’ fully equipped to face the situation to be created by such conflicting interest in future.

It is required to give wide publicity to the scheme of Workers Participation in Management through radio, television and other mass media to make the workers, managers and employers familiar with the basic principles and objectives of the scheme of Workers Participation in Management and assistance should be provided by the official’s machinery to the organization to operate the scheme. Whether worker is an asset or liability depends on its utilisation by the management. The scheme of Workers Participation in Management may take an organisation to move from an isolated position to mainstream role and from a conflict mind-set to a development orientation. Unless, a combined effort at all level is made, the participation cannot be a success.
ROLE OF THE GOVERNMENT

The government has a very important and crucial role to play to make the scheme of Workers Participation in Management effective and successful.

Firstly, it is the responsibility of the government to frame a National Wage Policy particularly for Public sector Enterprise. Presently different Public Sector Undertakings (PSU) follow their own wage structure and this has adverse effect on others PSUs. If a national consensus can be emerged to develop a national wage policy and related issues for all the PSU such as labour policy then it will have positive impact on the skill, attitude, efficiency and morale of the employees which will ultimately have positive impact on the participative culture.

Secondly, government should establish, training institutes to teach the benefits of participative scheme to both the employees and the management.

Thirdly, it is essential to identify the factors which are hindrances to the progress of the participative culture and try to remove these through regular assessment. Through Research and Development (R & D), the factors which are obstacles to the implementation of the participative scheme can be analysed and appropriate action can be taken. The research may suggest the kind of training that may be required to enable the managers, trade unions representatives and the workers to operate a system of workers participation effectively.

Fourthly, there should be proper coordination between Central Government, State Labour Directorate, representatives of trade unions and the management representatives to make the scheme of participative culture
meaningful, effective and successful in Steel Authority of India (SAIL) in general and Rourkela Steel Plant (RSP) in particular.

ROLE OF THE TRADE UNIONS

Multiplicity and politicization of trade unions is biggest hurdle to the success of participation. Any change in political climate has consequences on style and functioning of trade unions. Politicization leads to external leadership to trade unions which affect multiplicity of unions and ultimately affects industrial relations.

Therefore, a new trade union movement should evolve which is free from political influences. Such a movement can come from workers and not from political parties. Such a movement will make the trade unions accountable and help to make the business more transparent.

THOUGHT FOR FUTURE

Establishment of a Public enterprise in the context of a backward economy having severe market imperfections, conventionally had two major expected consequences, development of the local economy through forward and backward linkages and the second most important is the activation of the labour market. Both have implications in terms of transfer of labour away from agriculture and engagement in industrial and other non-agricultural activities. Looking from the perspective of the district’s economy, the impact of Rourkela Steel Plant was visible as reflected in the various indicators development though the processes of development could not become stable. The lack of stability of the processes are reflected through relatively a backward agriculture, tribal production systems and lower growth of human development. The labour market consequently develops further imperfections because of swelling of unskilled unorganised labour mostly engaged as contract labour. With modernization drive which is basically
labour saving there is even constriction of organized labour. In the absence of lack of development of rest of the local economy, particularly large unemployed/ underemployed tribal economy the resolutions of the interest of labour may lead to conflicting interests of resource owners and process of resource utilization and labour. This may again have cascading effects on organized labour in the methods of protection of its own interests. The Public enterprise can have stable systems of production only if it gets actively associated in the development of the local economy and creating scope for utilization of the under/unemployed labour force in the face of the modernization. There should be proper strengthening of the periphery development programmes of the Rourkela Steel Plant. The organized labour on their side must take cognizance of the problems and prospects of development of the unorganized contract labour on the one hand and the development of the local economy on the other. It is in this context it is necessary that participative culture should be revived at the earliest in Rourkela Steel plant to strengthen the industrial relations. Participative culture accompanied with Mass Contact Programme can be effective to achieve its goals and objectives.