CHAPTER VII

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS
AND CONCLUSION

7.1 SUMMARY

Informal groups are not only active when there is production – quality problems to be solved; they are active continuously. They provide for the progressive development of the intelligence and creativity of each individual and for gaining recognition and prestige through the success achieved by the group. Informal groups improve quality because group of employees in informal groups suggest methods to improve quality and prevent defects and thus all of them become more quality conscious. The philosophy of informal groups concept is to involve the employees in the decision making process. This results in improved employee morale as well as increased productivity and reduced scrap. In-short, informal groups thus help to promote more job satisfaction since people are aware that their ideas will be considered by the management.

In general, it has been found that the number of informal groups in Ashok Leyland has been increasing every year. In the year 2004 – 05, 190 informal groups and in the year 2005 – 06 increased to 267 circles. In the year 2006 – 07, 427 informal groups and in the year 2007 – 08 enhanced to 550 circles and keeps increasing on year after year.

Informal groups is a group activity, practiced at regular intervals, which focuses on quality practices. By quality practice, it is meant teamwork, two - way communication between top and bottom cadres, use of scientific methods for analysis, continuous problem-solving, humanitarian approach, continuous up-gradation of work related knowledge and
recognition for good work. Informal groups philosophy incorporates various factors like, improve communication flow, develop individual skill, maintain harmony at work place, create problem solving capability, improve self-esteem of members, reduce errors on job and increase productivity. Strategic tools for total quality management fall into two broad categories. They are tools for quality planning and tools for continuous improvement.

In this present study the questionnaire was framed into six sections and collected the data consists of demographic information, members’ perception about informal groups, Workers participation in management, work performance by the members, motivational factors which influence the members of informal groups and the overall effectiveness of informal groups. Apart from the above mentioned sections, techniques of informal groups which are adopted in identifying the problems in the organization and the factors influenced the employees to become a informal groups member were also included.

The results emanated from the analysis of the data collected from 500 informal groups members of Ashok Leyland Limited. The above analysis were aimed at fulfilling the following objectives: (a) to find out the overall effectiveness of informal groups participation among the employees in Ashok Leyland Limited; (b) to find out the levels of workers participation in management and the motivational factors influenced on the members of the informal groups; (c) to find out the members support in implementing of final informal groups solutions for the organization development; (d) to find out the job satisfaction level and the evaluation methods of informal groups’ projects; (e) to find out the tangible and intangible benefits to the members of informal groups and the performance level of employees in their working environment; (f) to find out the factors that influenced the employees to
become members of informal groups and (g) to identify the techniques of informal groups which are useful in identifying the problem to be solved.

Various statistical techniques were used to analyze the surveyed data for the study. Firstly, internal consistency of the scale items measuring members perceptions about informal groups framed by variables with Likert’s 5 point scale range from strongly agree to strongly disagree were used. Factor analysis, the principal component method is applied and the 14 variables are deduced into four predominant factors. The four predominant factors were organizational development, evaluation method, employee involvement and profit earnings. Like-wise the subsequent sections were grouped into the predominant factors work commitment, workers management interactions, work culture, workers efficiency, safety, punctuality, functional freedom, flexible performance, job involvement, hierarchical relationship, knowledge management and organizational reward and analysis was carried out.

Above mentioned factors are named based on extraction method (Principal component analysis) and rotation method (Varimax with Kaiser Normalization). The factors are named and the average scores for the respective variables are segregated. These derived factors are compared mean wise to identify their dominance in the informal groups under various circumstances.

Based on the various derived factors the following statistical techniques were applied. t- test, cluster analysis, discriminate analysis, correlation, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and frequency distribution.

7.2 MAJOR FINDINGS

1. The employees of Ashok Leyland Limited revealed that their informal groups are doing important work and they would recommend to friends to join a circle.
2. The members of the informal groups have enhanced their communication level with their superiors and subordinates. There is also a change in the interpersonal relationship with their work group better than the past.

3. Informal groups members have made worthwhile contribution to the Ashok Leyland Limited.

4. Job evaluation provided a systematic basis for determining the relative worth of jobs within the organization. The circle members are very much satisfied with the evaluation method of informal groups projects.

5. Adequate facilities are provided to the informal groups presentations.

6. Being the member of informal groups, their job involvement is higher than the past.

7. The higher profit earnings to the organization is derived from informal groups efforts, as per the perception of respondents.

8. The informal groups and its members in Ashok Leyland Limited optimistically perceived the goals of informal groups.

9. The powerful motivation is exerted as the consequences of informal groups, by dragging the employees towards sustained and unstinted involvement in raising the organizational efficiency and profitability.

10. The employees of Ashok Leyland perceived that the work commitment is the primary aim of employees in the informal groups.
11. The enlightened motivation of the informal group members are also influenced by on workers-management interactions.

12. Most of the employees in the informal groups are very much satisfied with the work culture that prevailed among the circle members.

13. Workers efficiency is derived through knowledge, skills and abilities of informal groups members as revealed by the respondents.

14. The employees are ready to accept safety instructions and precautionary measures initiated by the company

15. The employees in the informal groups are highly, duty-conscious for the accomplishment of their work in a stipulated time. The members also realized the effectiveness of punctuality at work.

16. The informal group members of the Ashok Leyland Limited have perceived that, they have functional freedom in their work delegation.

17. The members also identified their flexible performance of their job to accomplish the objectives of the organization.

18. The informal groups members of the Ashok Leyland Limited have perceived that, the main aim of improvement is through job involvement.

19. The members have also identified that jobs are more interesting to the members of informal groups compared to the non – members.
20. The members perceived that the informal groups is not concerned with individual worker but with team-work.

21. Most of the respondents opined that the membership in informal groups improve a person’s attitude towards life.

22. The members have identified their hierarchical relationships to perform their job and to accomplish the objectives of the organization.

23. Through the membership informal groups they perceived that, of knowledge management is proved in the work environment.

24. The members also realized the effectiveness of organizational reward.

25. The mean values of organizational development, evaluation method and employee involvement are greater than 3, which is significant but for profit earnings the mean value is less than 3, which is not significant.

26. The workers participation in management play the prominent role in all the informal groups.

27. Predominance of factors on workers performance identified that the punctuality is directly correlated to informal groups working followed by work culture, safety, and punctuality and workers efficiency.

28. Motivational factors identified that the flexible performance is directly correlated to informal groups working followed by functional freedom.
29. Job involvement is directly correlated to informal groups working followed by hierarchical relationships, organizational reward and knowledge management.

30. Classification of employees based on their general notions about informal groups functioning show that, cluster 1 comprises 4.6% of employees with weak perceptions about employees’ involvement. This group is known as non-committed cluster.

31. The second group of employees comprises 48% with weaknesses in organizational development and profit earnings. This group is known as independent cluster.

32. The third group of employees are weak in their notions about profit earnings but moderate in organizational development, employees involvement and evaluation method. They are called ambitious cluster comprising 47.4% of employees.

33. The cluster analysis revealed that there are three groups of employees in Ashok Leyland Limited among them a vast majority (95.4%) of employees express an optimistic notions about informal groups and their effectiveness in contributing to organizational development.

34. It is found that cluster one comprises 15.2% of employees with weak perceptions about work culture. This group is known as unethical cluster.

35. The second group of employees comprises 26% with sound work culture and effective workers- management interactions. This cluster is known as self esteem cluster.
36. The third group of employees is precise in their work culture and also had very good interactions with the management. They are called influential cluster comprising 58.8% of the members.

37. Cluster analysis reveals that, the workers performance were grouped into three types of clusters namely committed cluster (56.4%), meticulous cluster (18.2%) and efficient cluster (25.4%).

38. It is found that, good majority (81.8%) of employees' express optimistic notions about informal groups and their effectiveness, in contributing to organizational success.

39. Classification of motivational factors were grouped into three clusters, namely restricted cluster (23.8%), introvert cluster (28.8%) and dynamic cluster (47.4%).

40. The effectiveness factors were grouped into three clusters, namely mechanical participants (23.2%), mutually exclusive cluster (30%) and saturated cluster (46.8%).

41. Discrimination of employees based on their general perceptions shows that, employee involvement and work commitment is an essential factor of informal groups for the organizational development.

42. Discrimination function generated the following order of importance of factors among the Ashok Leyland employees with respective correlation coefficient. Punctuality, safety, work culture and workers efficiency. This shows that, the punctuality and safety are an essential primary function of informal groups which lend to organisational development.

43. It is found that, the first discriminate function generated with respective correlation coefficient, namely functional freedom
and flexible performance. Functional freedom is an essential factor of informal groups for the development of the organization.

44. Classification of employees based on their effectiveness is grouped as, organizational reward, knowledge management, job involvement and hierarchical relationships. Organizational reward and knowledge management are the essential primary function of informal groups. Job involvement and hierarchical relationships are shown as the secondary functional importance by the informal groups.

45. It is found that majority of members were associated for less than 3 years with informal groups and 38.6% members are associated with the circles for more than 3 years.

46. Maximum number of employees associated with informal groups are in the age group of 41 – 50 years (47.4%), followed by employees in 31 – 40 years (33%).

47. It is noted that most of the employees in the informal groups have technical diploma qualification (69.4%) and rest of the employees hold qualifications such as under graduate degree, post graduate degree and school education.

48. Out of 500 respondents 381(76.2%) are married and 119 (23.8%) are unmarried. Among the married persons majority of them have two children (79.3%)

49. It is found that the size of the family of respondents was between 3 – 5 and level of income between Rs. 20,000 – 30,000 (52%) for maximum number of employees in informal groups.
50. Most of the employees have a service length of 10 – 15 years (53.4%) and their incentive earnings in the company are less than Rs. 2000 (55.4%)

51. It was found from the study, that various techniques are adopted by the members. Among them brain storming method is playing a vital role among the circle members in solving their work related problems and other popular methods are histogram and pareto diagram.

52. The factors which influenced the employees to become a informal groups member are ranked and based on the application of t - test .It shows that the mean values of all factors are greater than ‘3’ which is significant.

53. The mean values of informal groups meetings such as time schedule, job satisfaction, informal group recommendations, facilitator involvement, co-operation of informal groups at work and problems of informal group meetings are greater than ‘3’ significant.

54. It was found that 77.4% of the circle members are accepted in taking part in external competition and 22.6% of the circle members have not taken part in external competition.

55. Majority of the respondents (78%) needed a change in the schedule of informal group meetings according to their convenience. Only 22% of the respondents expressed that there is no need to change the existing system of time scheduling.

56. Diagnosis of informal groups ‘presentations’ was useful for next informal groups meeting. About 70% of the respondents stated that it is very useful for next informal groups presentations.
57. Correlations among the factors of informal groups perceptions show that organizational development established a relationship with between evaluation method, employee involvement and profit earnings. This implies that there is a positive relationship between organizational development and the other factors of informal groups perceptions.

58. Relationship with the factors of workers participation was studied and it was a revelation that work commitment has no relationship with workers- management interactions.

59. Relationship with the factors of work performance implies that work culture has no relationship with workers efficiency and safety. But it is established a positive relationship with punctuality.

60. Relationship with the factors of motivation, namely functional freedom has established a positive relationship with flexible performance. It reveals that functional freedom and flexible performance are the two important motivational factors among the employees of Ashok Leyland Limited.

61. Relationship with the factors of effectiveness revealed that, there is no relationship between job involvement and organizational reward. There is a positive relation between hierarchical relationship with knowledge management and job involvement. But there is no relation between hierarchical relationship and organizational reward.

62. Influence of number of years of membership in the informal groups did not have significant relationship with the factors affecting informal groups. The senior as well as junior members of informal groups expressed almost same opinion about their
participation, performance, motivation and effectiveness of informal groups.

63. Influence of age on the various factors of informal groups perception reveals that the senior level employees’ involvement in informal groups have high perceptions than the junior level employees. Regarding the work commitment factor, the employees of Ashok Leyland Limited in the age group of 41 – 50 and >50 are more involved than the other age group members. In the safety point of view, the employees < 30 years are more cautious than the higher age group.

64. Influence of education on the various factors of informal groups perception shows that the employees with higher educational qualification like graduation and post-graduation possess high perceptions about organizational development where as, the employees in Ashok Leyland Limited with I.T.I. or school level education have a moderate perception about organizational development.

65. Influence of marital status on the various factors of informal groups perceptions to showed that both the married as well as unmarried members of informal groups possess almost same opinion about their participation, performance, motivation and effectiveness of informal groups.

66. Influence of the factors affecting informal groups shows that the members having two or three children possess high perceptions about the knowledge management in the organization.

67. The members having a family size, which has between 3 -5, have perceived moderate perceptions about job involvement. Regarding the organizational reward the members having lower
family size are very much satisfied with their felicitation and recognition by the management.

68. Income level of the members also influences on factors of informal groups perception members in the income group of ` Rs.20,000 to Rs.25,000 have perceived that they are very much satisfied with work culture where as members, in the range of income group ` Rs.15,000 to Rs.20,000 have moderate perception about work culture.

69. Among the employees who receive incentives in the range of ` Rs.1,000 – Rs.2,000 has higher level perceptions than who receive incentives more than ` Rs.2,000.

70. Length of service and effectiveness of informal groups perception shows that the employees with less number of years of experience had moderate perception about safety. Regarding job involvement factor, the experienced employees have more involvement than less experienced employees.

7.3 SUGGESTIONS

The following suggestions emanate from the findings of the study. The emergence of informal groups needs accelerated the innovative capabilities of the employees in the form of new products and service qualities, which could increase the competitive space providing to policies to augment career growth through informal groups participations. Since the objective of HRD in manufacturing industries aims that strengthening employees retention, a separate program may be conducted among the employees to motivate them to develop their potentiality more by realizing their strength and responsibility.
The HRD practices and informal group participations encompass the various developmental activities like performance assessment, potential appraisal, training and development and career planning.

The company should also incorporate new mechanisms like stress management, fun at work, touch ponds, competency mapping and retention strategies.

The informal group is indispensable in the manufacturing industry, because it emerged in the form of innovative competition and organizational dynamics. So the Ashok Leyland Limited must adopt technological developments and upgradation to meet the wide competition and also to increase the organizational efficiency.

The employees of Ashok Leyland Limited should be educated to the transformational practices and equipping themselves for the present organizational environment.

They must be ready enough to imbibe the qualities to materialize the policy enforcement of their organization.

The learning programs in manufacturing industries are the indispensable tool to upgrade the employees through the informal groups. So Ashok Leyland Limited may invest more funds on informal group improvement, workers participation and learning programs both theoretically and practically.

A major percentage of employees are yet to be motivated to learn their role in reaching the organizational goals. The management should facilitate for conducting meetings
periodically to the convenience, all the members of the informal groups

- Informal groups members should be encouraged to have the meetings during the working hours and all possible help should be rendered to conduct the meetings effectively.

- Taxing the members by asking them to have the meetings after working hours or making them spend from their pockets to meet the incidental expenses will discourage them and ultimately they will start blaming the informal groups philosophy.

- The relationship between work culture and workers management interactions does not have the positive relationship. So the management should create the positive environment among these two factors.

- The members of informal groups are not awarded properly according to their effective performance in their job. So steps should be taken for that.

- Informal groups is very important to each and every company and service organizations. Management should recognize the employees to satisfy them fully and not partly.

- More training is needed for all the employees on the use of informal group tools. Rewards and recognition should be improved periodically.

- Management should give more prizes to attract and motivate the workers. Most of the respondents stated that hard work will make the employees success. Hence 100% participation of the
association in an organization can lead the organization to the global standard.

- Monthly competition among the informal groups should be conducted by the management.

- Letter of appreciation from the top management to informal groups members are sent to their residence for participating informal groups presentations. Portal display of the informal groups members’ photos in Ashok Leyland Limited is required.

- The informal groups members’ participation level has to be enhanced. The circle members should avoid ego, if they do so, their involvement in their job will change. The members suggested that informal groups movement to improve our nation at the global level. As per the observation made among the circle members, certain circles made adequate profit but the overall mean value is less than 3. So the management should concentrate on were they are lacking and has to identify the needs of the particular circle.

- Around 4.6% of the employees are grouped into non-committed cluster, so the other circle members should convert them into committed cluster with various motivational factors. Unethical clusters also to be converted into ethical cluster with sound work culture.

- Less experienced employees have less job involvement than the experienced employees, so the co-members of experienced employees should motivate them.

- According to the researcher observation during the several presentations of informal groups, all the members were not
given due importance in presenting the particular project. They should give equal importance to the members in presenting the particular project. Then alone, they can improve their knowledge, communication skills, presentation skills etc.

- According to oral conversation with the members, the awards were presented only to the limited circles and rest of the circle members are presented with the participation award.

7.4 SCOPE FOR FURTHER STUDY

Informal groups would also be set up in Non – Manufacturing areas such as out sourcing, human resources activities, vendor development, engineering and design and also for hospitality service industry. Informal groups are not limited to manufacturing firms alone. They are applicable for variety of organisations where there is scope for group based solution of work related problems. Informal groups are relevant for factories, firms, schools, hospitals, universities, research institutes, banks, insurance companies, hotels, Government offices etc. Hence separate study could be undertaken in these areas.

7.5 CONCLUSION

From the results of the study, it can be concluded that informal groups have shown that their company is a good place to work and very much satisfied with their job. Existing informal groups are doing important work to the company and they also recommend to their friends to join a circle. Likewise, the company circles were enhanced to higher groups and the profit earnings of the company was satisfactory. So the management is encouraging the circle members in providing infrastructure facilities for conducting meetings, discussions, presentations etc.
Factors which influenced on workers perceptions are Organizational Development (OD), Evaluation Method (EM), Employee Involvement (EI) and Profit Earnings (PE) which played a vital role among the informal groups members of the Ashok Leyland Limited. Work Commitment (WC) and Workers Management Interactions (WMI) facilitated to obtain favorable results to the company. Regarding the workers performance, the organization Work Culture (WCE), Workers Efficiency (WE), Safety (SAF) and Punctuality are the factors which influenced them. Motivational factors among the employees are Functional Freedom (FF) and Flexible Performance (FP) which influenced on the workers performance to do well on done their job. The overall effectiveness of the employees showed, Job Involvement (JI), Hierarchical Relationship (HR), Knowledge management (KM) and Organizational Reward (ORD) as the important factors to accomplish the goals of the organization.

Most of the mechanism in operation is voluntary in character and work related issues are mainly taken-up through suggestion schemes. Informal groups and small group activity, while interest related issues are taken-up through collective bargaining system. Consultative mechanisms thrive in areas where management is willing to share power. Centralized system does not nurture workers participation. Top management commitment is also an essential ingredient for participative climate. In order to motivate labour in a greater effort and nourish the productivity culture, the management – labour relations has improve further. Commitment and empowerment feed on each other. Only committed employees can be aware of what is happening in the company.

The findings of the study indicate that informal groups perception has led to the organizational development exhibited through various factors. A similar find of informal group functioning will enhance any organization’s effectiveness.