Information on the EPOC (Employee Participation in Organisational Changes) Survey

GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS

- Is a representative Survey that covers workplaces (all sectors, with the exception of agriculture) in ten EU countries: Denmark, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, UK.
- Respondents were workplace (establishment) general managers and are asked to answer the questions for their establishment.
- The survey was carried out in 1996.
- For the larger countries (Fr, Ger, It, Sp, UK) the gross sample was 5,000 workplaces: for the medium sized countries (Den, Neth, Sw) 2,500 and for the smaller (Irl, Port) 1,000.
- The gross sample of workplaces is representative of social and economic conditions, i.e. differed for ten countries according to population size, number of employees in industry and services.
- Only workplaces with more than 20 employees (for smaller and medium sized countries) and more than 50 employees (big countries) are considered.
- From the gross sample of 33,427 questionnaires, 5,786 (our number of observation) has been returned.
- The overall response rate was almost 18 per cent – with a range between 9 per cent (Spain) and 39 percent (Ireland).
- Sample distortions: there are sector and size weight to reflect the original research universe, as well as country weight that accounts for the number of employees represented in the data set for each country and the overall size of the workplace in that country.

CONTENT:

- The main focus is on direct participation on the workplace, i.e. the search for more democracy in the workplace and an improvement of working conditions as a consequence of the new industrial system based on the existence of practices like Human Resource Management, Total Quality Management, lean production, flexible organisation.
- The main subject of the questions is the largest occupational groups.
- Generally, there is a fixed grid of answer to a single questions (qualitative data).
- 70 variables.
QUESTIONS:

1. The workplaces activities and labour forces: (12 questions)
   - Sectors (15 categories)
   - Status of workplace (independent, owned..)
   - Ownership (private/ public)
   - Profit/ nonprofit sector
   - Collective labour agreement (yes for all, yes, no)
   - Competition (four levels)
   - Development of compet (5 categories)
   - Strategic initiatives (introduction in last three years of innovative practices: 15 categories of organisational change/ flexibility considered)
   - Factors of success (price, quality, ecc)
   - Proportion of labour cost (4 categories)
   - Number of employees (ten categories: 1-4, 5-9, 10-14, etc...)

2. Questions about the largest occupational group (12 questions)
   - Occupational categories (10 categories, non-manegerial)
   - Number of employees (ten categories)
   - Number of woman (ten categories)
   - Change in the composition (part-time, temporary contracts)
   - Wage components (pay for skill, pay for product, bonus, pay for output, pay for team output...)
   - Profit sharing and share ownership
   - Number of union members (15 categories)
   - Multitasking (1 different task... 5 single task)
   - Skill requirement (1 high qualification... 5 little qualification required)
   - Training requirements (1 high... 5 low)

3. The practice of direct partecipation (43 questions)
   - Group consultation/ delegation
   - Frequency, issues employees involved, motives of group delegation
   - Group decision making/ individual decision making
   - Type of delegations
   - Most important forms of direct participations
   - Involvment of employee representatives
   - Effects of direct participations

4. General opinion of managers on direct participation (3 questions)