

Workplace Democracy, Well-Being and Political Participation

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Contents

Introduction.....	10
Chapter 1: Workplace democracy, well-being and political participation: A literature review	14
Conceptualizing workplace democracy	15
An overview of the social networks approach.....	17
Workplace democracy and well-being.....	21
Increased autonomy	21
Economic security	29
Job satisfaction.....	32
Workplace democracy and Political Participation	34
Civic Skills	35
Political Efficacy	39
Concluding remarks and expectations.....	45
Chapter 2: Methodology	50
Mixed-methods, case studies and the social networks approach.....	50
Study design.....	54
Case study selection.....	54
The study firm	56
Governance	56
Membership of the co-op	57
Firm context: the UK cycling retail industry.....	58
Firm context: the UK worker co-operative sector	58
Stage 1: Direct observation and piloting.....	59
Stage 2: Survey research	60
Social networks study design	60

Administering the survey	61
Quantitative data analysis techniques	62
Survey response	63
Stage 3: in-depth interviews	64
Interview design	64
Participant selection	66
Conducting interviews	66
Qualitative data analysis	66
Ethical Issues	68
Chapter 3: The dynamics of workplace democracy: internal structure and external context	70
A social capital approach to power at work	72
The structure of influence over work-life	76
The determinants of feelings of influence at work.....	88
Modelling Results.....	95
Discussion.....	98
The dynamics of workplace democracy: internal structure and external context.....	99
The characteristics of influential workers.....	99
Expertise and differences in influence.....	100
Other personal resources	113
Network interactions and information flows.....	116
Staff concerns and feelings of influence	121
Propinquity, tie formation, and the co-operative ethos.....	126
Junior managers and expectations	137
Conclusions	138
Chapter 4: Political identity, 'New Participants', and workplace democracy: The Pateman thesis revisited	141
The workplace as a site of political learning.....	141

Politics as lived experience	144
Political and civic participation and political attitudes among co-op workers	147
New Participants, Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens.....	162
The Pateman Thesis revisited	178
Work as political lived experience	183
Management capture, democratic degeneration and exclusion from decision-making .	190
Conclusions	195
Chapter 5: Political identity, expectations and well-being	197
Effort-reward imbalance, expectations, and workplace social capital	199
Modelling Results.....	207
Discussion.....	209
Co-operation and the ‘humanization’ of work	219
Conclusions	221
Conclusions and future directions	225
Future research directions	228
Bibliography.....	232

List of tables

Table 2.1: Multiple linear regression model of the predictors of survey response	63
Table 3.1: Correlations between issue network structures and an ideal core-periphery structure	81
Table 3.2: Pearson correlations between indegree centrality scores over four types of issues..	83
Table 3.3: Pearson correlations between social resources scores over four types of issues.....	85
Table 3.4: Results of multiple linear regression modelling of predictors of sense of influence at work.....	96
Table 3.5: Advice network density by branch/department.....	130
Table 4.1: Civic participation acts by number and percentage of respondents	147
Table 4.2: Civic participation acts by age group	147
Table 4.3: civic organization type by number and percentage of staff affiliated with that organization type	148
Table 4.4: Affiliations with four most popular civic organization types by age group	150
Table 4.5: Political participation acts undertaken in the last 12 months.....	151
Table 4.6: Types of political participation act undertaken in the previous 12 months	153
Table 4.7: Participation in types of political act by age group	154
Table 4.8: Participation in types of political act by highest educational qualification.....	154
Table 4.9: Political attitudes among co-op workers.....	157
Table 4.10: Political attitudes by education, age group and occupational group.....	159
Table 4.11: Multiple linear regression analysis of predictors of new participant behaviour	167
Table 4.12: Multiple linear regression model of predictors of satisfaction with influence at work	180
Table 4.13: Multiple linear regression model of predictors of New Participant score.....	181
Table 5.1: Multiple linear regression modelling of predictors of work rewards	207

List of figures

Figure 3.1: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the day-to-day running of their branch or department, coloured by branch/department	77
Figure 3.2: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the day-to-day running of the firm as a whole/how things are done in the firm as a whole, coloured by branch/department.....	78
Figure 3.3: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the firm's future direction, its mission, or its long-term goals, coloured by branch/department.....	78
Figure 3.4: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the staff pay or benefits across the firm as a whole, coloured by branch/department	79
Figure 3.5: Histogram of indegree centrality in the branch/department issues network.....	82
Figure 3.6: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something at work, sized by instrumental influence and coloured by management grade.	84
Figure 4.1: Histogram showing the distribution of New Participant Score	166
Figure 4.2: Plot of New Participant score as a function of age	168
Figure 4.3: Plot of New Participant score as a function of age	183
Figure 5.1: Plot of the interaction effect of external political efficacy and New Participant score on work rewards	208
Figure 5.2: Plot of work rewards as a function of age	209

Abstract

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A democratic workplace is one where workers as a body have the right to determine the internal organization and future direction of the firm. Worker co-operatives are a type of democratic firm. In a worker co-operative employees are joint-owners of the firm and participate democratically in workplace governance. Much has been written about the supposed benefits of worker co-operatives for workers and for society. One thread of this research, originating with Carole Pateman's theoretical work (Pateman 1970), argues that worker co-operatives act as sites of political learning for workers. By participating democratically in workplace decisions, individuals are thought to learn the skills and psychological dispositions needed to participate in political democracy. A second thread argues that co-operatives will improve worker well-being. Democratic governance will give workers control over work organization, increasing autonomy in their daily lives, and leading to an increase in non-material work rewards such as job satisfaction. Worker ownership will equalize the material rewards from work and improve job security.

These arguments are premised on the idea that democratic governance structures and worker ownership will lead to widespread, effective worker participation in decision-making and the equalization of power at work. However, insufficient attention is given to the contextual factors beyond formal governance and ownership structures that shape the internal dynamics of workplace democracy. I conduct an in-depth, mixed-methods case study of a worker co-operative with 158 employees in the UK cycling retail industry. Using survey research, social network analysis, in-depth interviews and direct observation, I show how individual differences, firm-level contextual factors such as the social composition of the organization, and macro-level factors such as economic and cultural context, lead to unequal participation opportunities and different outcomes for different groups of workers within the firm.

My research leads to three conclusions. First, the outcomes of workplace democracy for workers are highly context-dependent. They will differ across groups of workers within co-operatives, across different democratic firms, and across cultures. Second, the relationship between workplace democracy and political participation is more complex than the Pateman thesis suggests. It is contingent on the political identities of workers, which are themselves shaped by wider political economic context. Political identity affects both participation behaviour at work, and how workplace experience shapes political views. Third, the subjective well-being outcomes of workplace democracy depend on workers' expectations about work. Expectations are shaped by the same forces that mould political identity. Workplace democracy raises expectations for certain groups of workers, leading to well-being harms when expectations are not met. Overall, the benefits of workplace democracy for workers and for society are overstated. In the UK context, co-ops are unlikely to realize the benefits attributed to them without large-scale public policy interventions.

DECLARATION

I declare that no portion of the work referred to in the thesis has been submitted in support of an application for another degree or qualification of this or any other university or other institute of learning.

Signed

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Introduction

A democratic firm is 'one where workers have an effective right to participate in the collective governance of the organization and determine, by themselves or in conjunction with others, its internal regulation and future direction' (Breen 2015, p.471). This definition covers a wide range of possible organizational forms. Worker co-operatives are one kind of democratic firm with a long history. They are the focus of this thesis. Worker co-operatives are collectively-owned and democratically-managed by their employees. They have perhaps always been seen as a panacea for social and economic ills. In his 1848 *Principles of Political Economy*, John Stuart Mill predicted a growth in worker co-operatives that would lead to

a moral revolution in society...the healing of the standing feud between capital and labour; the transformation of human life, from a conflict of classes struggling for opposite interests, to a friendly rivalry in pursuit of a good common to all; the elevation of the dignity of labour, a new sense of security and independence in the labouring class, and the conversion of each human being's daily occupation into a school of the social sympathies and the practical intelligence (Mill 2004, p.722).

Academic and public interest in worker co-ops seems to be cyclical, and often peaks following economic recessions and other historic events that call into question dominant economic and business models. In the 1970s worker co-operatives were seen as a possible solution to ongoing industrial disputes between organized labour on the one side, and management and government on the other (e.g. Oakeshott 1978). Margaret Beckett MP, who was partly responsible for looking into industrial democracy for the second Harold Wilson government, discussed the difficulties she faced in that role when I interviewed her about worker co-ops:

I think it's a very good idea for people to start exploring these ideas again, and thinking about them in what is a different industrial climate. It might well be that there are new ways that can be found, and it seems to me that that is an admirable thing. Part of what bedevilled those conversations back in the 70s is that we had some appallingly bad management in British companies, and a perception - which people like us disputed - that there was always something terribly wrong with British trade unions and the workforce. Whereas we would have argued, and did argue, that the problem was just sheer bad

management, and when you have bad management, you get a bad response...so you know, these things can change.

The fall of the USSR led to interest in co-operation as an alternative economic model that could improve upon free market liberalism and state socialism (Ellerman 1990). The progressive potential of co-operation has long been advocated by market and reformist socialists (e.g. Wright 1979), although support for workplace democracy is not the preserve of the left-wing theorists (Lucas 1976).

The aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis again piqued interest in worker co-ops as an alternative business model. Former Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg, referencing the venerable British retail co-op, called for a 'John Lewis economy' as a way to 'responsible capitalism' (Mason 2012). The Coalition Government pledged to promote co-operatives as part of their 'Big Society' initiative (Wilson & MacLean 2012, p.531). The United Nations named 2012 the 'Year of the Co-operative', with co-operation seen as a way to 'building a better world' (Wilson & MacLean 2012, p.532). 'Co-operative Councils' were touted as a model for public service delivery as local authorities creaked under the pressures of austerity (Bibby 2013). Worker co-operatives seem to appeal to politicians of all hues, perhaps because they promise some of the collective goods provided by the welfare state, without the need for a welfare state (<http://www.conservativecoops.com/content/about-us>).

However, worker co-operatives are not always well understood by policymakers or the public, and public debate about their value rarely goes beyond the rhetorical. When I interviewed him in 2011, former senior Liberal Democrat Chris Huhne expressed support for worker co-ops based on anecdote rather than systematic empirical evidence:

I think it's a very good idea to have an economy where you have a genuine range of different types of ownership. I think there are a lot of benefits to this. There's a lot of anecdotal evidence that people who work for a company they partially own, and perhaps in particular people who work for a company that's not owned by someone else, are more committed. And that may be particularly useful in service industries. So the obvious example is the John Lewis Partnership. Because actually a smiling staff member is such an important part of the experience...so particularly in service industries, I think it gives advantages.

What's more, academic research into co-operatives is fragmented and is scattered across a range of topics rather than clustered around particular issues (Simon 2013), and much existing research is decades old.

There is a long history of theoretical and empirical research into worker co-operatives and their benefits for workers and for society. One key thread of this research, originating with Carole Pateman's theoretical work (Pateman 1970), argues that worker co-operatives act as sites of political learning for workers. Through participating democratically in workplace governance, workers learn the skills and attitudes needed to participate effectively in political democracy and play an active role in civil society. A second key thread argues that co-operatives will improve worker well-being through worker ownership and democratic governance. Democratic governance will give workers control over work organization, increasing autonomy in their daily lives, and leading to an increase in non-material work rewards such as job satisfaction. Worker ownership will equalize the material rewards from work and improve job security. Both arguments are important to contemporary interest in workplace democracy. The first because political and civic engagement have been thought to be important for the protection of democracy and the creation of social capital and collective goods (Putnam 1995; Wilson & MacLean 2012). The second because poor job quality and wealth inequality have been recognized as public health and public policy issues (Marmot 2004; Wilkinson & Pickett 2010; Angrave & Charlwood 2015; Brown et al. 2007).

My research tests these two theories of the benefits of workplace democracy in an in-depth, mixed methods case study of a worker co-operative in the UK bicycle retail sector. I find that the outcomes of workplace democracy for workers are highly context-dependent. They are contingent on individual factors, firm-level context, and wider political, economic and cultural context. I argue that outcomes for workers will therefore differ across groups of workers within co-operatives, and across different democratic firms. The relationship between workplace democracy and political participation is more complex than the Pateman thesis suggests, and is contingent on the political identities of workers, which are themselves shaped by wider political economic context. The well-being outcomes of workplace democracy depend on workers' expectations about work. Expectations are shaped by the same forces that mould political identity. I conclude that the theorized benefits of workplace democracy are hubristic, and that there is not a single co-operative model that will benefit workers regardless of context. In short, worker co-operatives are not a panacea.

My thesis makes a number of contributions to the literature. First, it brings theories and methodological approaches from a number of disciplines, including political science, philosophy, sociology and organizational behaviour, to bear on the study of the relationship between politics and the workplace. Second, it applies the social networks approach (Borgatti et al. 2013; Hennig et al. 2012) to the study of worker co-operatives, which has not been done before. The social networks approach provides evidence on how an individual's location in networks of interpersonal

relationships affects the individual's outcomes. It allows me to illuminate the shaping effects of workplace democracy on workplace interpersonal relationships, and the causal role of interpersonal relationships in determining well-being and political outcomes for workers. Third, I critique the literature on well-being and workplace democracy, which relies on the simplistic premise that changes in governance and ownership structures in individual firms will be enough to bring about substantial well-being benefits for workers, regardless of other contextual factors. Fourth, I update the Pateman thesis on the effects of workplace democracy on political behaviour. Pateman's thesis has inspired numerous empirical studies designed to test it (Greenberg 1981; Greenberg et al. 1996; Maxwell-Elden 1981; Jian & Jeffres 2008; Adman 2008). However, none of this work substantially questions her basic premises. Drawing on the work of Bang (Bang & Sørensen 1999; Bang 2009) and Marsh (Marsh et al. 2007; Li & Marsh 2008; McCaffrie & Marsh 2013) on political participation, I critique the theoretical foundations of the Pateman thesis, and use empirical data from my study firm to show that the effects of workplace democracy on workers' political attitudes depend on the interaction of individual identity, workplace experience, and wider political experiences. Fifth, I present a detailed case study of an interesting sector of the UK economy. The retail industry is commonly in the public eye because of its importance to the UK economy (Select Committee for Business Innovation and Skills 2014), and its association with poor quality jobs (Williams & Connell 2010; Besen-Cassino 2013). Cycling retail is particularly interesting because of the links between cycling and Green politics. Finally, I collect a rich original dataset that includes survey data, social network data, direct observation data and data from in-depth qualitative interviews.

Chapter 1: Workplace democracy, well-being and political participation: A literature review

There is a long history of theoretical literature that argues for the benefits of workplace democracy. It has been suggested that workplace democracy will improve job quality in individual workplaces and across the economy. Some have argued that workplace democracy will bring about changes in the political attitudes and behaviour of individuals that are good for both the individual and for society. The following discussion will bring out two themes of the literature on the benefits of workplace democracy. The first relates to well-being. Research from diverse fields including sociology, political science, philosophy and epidemiology suggests features of the democratic work environment will improve workers' well-being. The second theme relates to political participation. Democratic workplaces have been seen as sites of political learning which foster a 'democratic character' among workers, making individuals more capable of and inclined towards political participation, with beneficial consequences for political democracy.

Theories of the benefits of workplace democracy often seem idealistic. They rely on the assumption that changing ownership and governance structures within individual firms is sufficient to bring about widespread benefits for workers. However, they underspecify the causal mechanisms by which benefits are supposed to come about. Insufficient attention is given to the way individual differences, micro-level contextual factors such as the social composition of the organization, and macro-level factors such as economic and cultural context, affect the possibility of workplace democracy and lead to different outcomes for different groups of workers. A key contribution of my research is the argument that interpersonal factors are central to the outcomes of workplace democracy. The social networks literature relates outcomes at the individual level to the nature and structure of individuals' interpersonal relationships. A source of the well-being and participation outcomes of workplace democracy may be workplace interpersonal relationships that are different from those associated with the conventional, hierarchical, shareholder-owned and manager-driven firm. Thus the social networks approach also provides a way to contextualize the effects of workplace democracy.

In this chapter I review arguments for the benefits of workplace democracy and point out where they underspecify causal mechanisms and ignore the role of context. I pay special attention to how the social networks approach can help fill these gaps. In doing so I demonstrate that benefits of workplace democracy will likely differ across individuals, groups and firms. Finally I outline some

expectations on how workplace democracy will be related to well-being and political participation, which inform the original research detailed in remainder of the thesis.

Before reviewing the theoretical benefits of workplace democracy, I outline what workplace democracy means, and describe the social networks approach which is central to my research.

Conceptualizing workplace democracy

Breen defines a democratic firm broadly as 'one where workers have an effective right to participate in the collective governance of the organization and determine, by themselves or in conjunction with others, its internal regulation and future direction' (Breen 2015, p.471). There is no single model of workplace democracy, and no easy distinction between democratic and undemocratic firms. This is partly because there is no easy definition of democracy, or of what it means for a system to be democratic. Democracy is a contested concept (Birch 1993). It is also because there is such variation in the way firms are organized. As Breen's definition implies, worker participation in firm decision-making is crucial to workplace democracy, but there are a plethora of ways employees can participate in the running of firms. The meaning of participation can be ambiguous (Ben Ner et al. 1996, pp.210–212), and there is wide variation in the nature of employee participation across firms and across countries (Ben Ner et al. 1996, p.212). As Ghai points out

Workers' participation can cover a wide field, ranging from representation on the governing boards and management committees to playing an active role in the administration of training and human resource development programmes. Workers are often also represented on occupational safety and health committees. In some Scandinavian countries, trade unions have responsibility for administering social welfare and unemployment funds.

There is a wide variety of mechanisms for ensuring worker participation in enterprise functioning. Germany is famous for its works councils that play an important role in ensuring worker representation in a wide range of functions. Workers' participation also occurs in other countries (Finland, France, Italy, Norway) but seldom achieves the authority and power bestowed on works councils in Germany (Ghai 2003, p.134).

Worker co-operatives are forms of democratic firm that display worker ownership and some form of democratic governance. Broadly, worker co-operatives are firms which provide workers with voting

rights over certain decisions, profit or residual rights, and net asset rights (Ellerman 1990, p.96). Even among worker co-operatives variation in organizational and participatory structures is great. In her in-depth study of the Mondragon Co-operatives of the Basque region of Spain, Kasmir found that co-operatives are not so much a distinct business form as 'part of a continuum of business styles' (Kasmir 1996, p.125). In the UK worker co-operatives vary in practice from radical workers associations, through to organisations with only the vaguest connection to organizational democracy (Cathcart 2014, p.3).

Common to conceptualizations of employee participation is a distinction between the kinds of decisions workers are involved in, and the amount of input they have into those decisions. In her seminal theoretical work, Pateman identifies three 'levels' of participation (Pateman 1970, pp.68–71). First, pseudo-participation, where techniques are used to persuade employees to accept decisions that have *already* been made by management. Second, partial participation, where the worker does not have equal power to decide the outcome of decisions but can only influence them. Third, full participation, where each individual worker has equal power to determine the outcome of decisions. She also distinguishes between worker control over decisions that affect the nature of their daily work tasks and environment (such as how much discretion they have in the performance of their work tasks), and worker control over decisions about the running of the whole firm (such as decisions on investment, strategy etc.). Pateman refers to this as the difference between participation in 'low-level' and 'high-level' management (Pateman 1970, p.70). She argues that true workplace democracy at work requires full participation in both high and low-level management. Adman draws on Pateman's conceptualization to distinguish three areas of decision-making in which workers may participate (Adman 2008, p.116). The first area is 'job autonomy', the level of control the individual has over his or her job. The second is 'face-to-face' participation, which deals with influence over and participation in collective decisions within one's immediate workgroup or sector within the workplace. These decisions could be about the employee's own job, but are independent of whether the employee has any freedom when performing their work tasks. The third is participation in enterprise-level decision-making. Knudsen et al. distinguish between the depth and scope of participation (Knudsen et al. 2011, p.384). Depth may vary from the reception of information from management, to consultation and joint talks and negotiations, to self-determination. Scope stretches from operational matters (related to the job/task), through tactical matters (related to work organization, technology and pay systems, etc.), to strategic issues (related to company missions and goals, investment, and de-investment). For Knudsen et al., employee participation is about the participation and influence of employees in decision-making throughout the company (Busck et al. 2010, p.287).

Theories of the benefits of workplace democracy are premised on widespread and effective employee participation as a means to equalize power over workplace decisions. However, in

practice it is not clear what is meant by the equalization of power over decisions. Research over the past half century has shown how social psychological processes determine influence within groups (e.g. Asch 1955; Freeman 1972; Festinger 2007; Friedkin 2011), suggesting that inequalities of influence are an enduring feature of human collectives. This makes the equation of democratic governance structures with equal power over decisions look facile. The equalization of power is best seen as a relative rather than absolute concept, and so the outcomes of workplace democracy are best assessed in comparison to alternatives. This requires the contextualization of workplace democracy. At the lowest level, attention should be given to the micro-level interpersonal and social psychological processes that shape outcomes of workplace democracy. The social networks approach provides the tools to do this.

A terminological distinction needs to be made between 'workplace democracy' and 'economic democracy'. Workplace democracy refers to democracy at the level of the firm, which is the goal of worker co-operatives. Economic democracy refers to democracy at the level of the economy. It has been used to refer to a market economy containing many worker-owned democratic firms, but may also be used in relation to other democratic institutions and political economic models, such as trade unions, works councils, corporatism, or state socialism. The aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis increased interest in co-operative models as a solution to a variety of public policy problems (Cathcart 2013b). Therefore, in this context I will use the term workplace democracy in relation to worker co-ops, and the term economic democracy as it has been used by the theorists under discussion to refer to a market economy made up of many worker co-ops.

Before I review theoretical arguments for the benefits of workplace democracy I will provide an overview of the social networks approach, which is an important way to understand the effects of workplace social context on individual outcomes.

An overview of the social networks approach

Social network analysis is about the relationships between individuals. The recent boom in network-focused research in social science is 'part of a general shift beginning in second half of 20th century, away from individualist, essentialist and atomistic explanations and towards more relational, contextual and systemic understandings' (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.991). Network analysis

looks at individual and at collective actors (e.g. companies) not as 'social islands', which are characterised mainly by a number of specific features, but as agents who interact with

other players and are influenced by these patterns of interaction (Hennig et al. 2012, p.28).

The network approach to social science moves beyond collecting and analyzing data about independent actors and their attributes, to look at the way in which actors are related (ibid.). Relevant actors can be persons; or collectives such as teams, organizations, institutions, and nation states. Network analysis becomes social network analysis when it is about the relationships between people.

The social networks approach provides understanding of how actors' relationships affect their outcomes. The basic units of network analysis are 'dyads'. A dyad consists of a pair of actors. A relationship between two actors is known as a 'tie'. The most basic question concerning a tie between two actors is whether or not it exists (Hennig et al. 2012, p.29). More complex questions look at the intensity of a relationship, for example, the frequency of interaction between two actors. Ties can be 'directed' or 'undirected'. An example of a directed tie is the advice relationship between two people. Advice relationships involve inequality between actors, for example, of knowledge, status, or experience. So the fact that one person seeks advice from another tells us important things about those two people and about the nature of their relationship. Actor *a* seeks advice from actor *b*, so the advice tie is directed from actor *a* to actor *b*, but not vice versa. Ties may also be reciprocated. Reciprocated ties are mutually directed ties between a dyad. For example, two people might only be considered friends if both consider the other as a friend. Undirected ties are used when a relationship must logically be reciprocated, such as in kinship relations and trading relations (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.12).

The networks approach conceptualizes relationships in a way that allows the formulation and testing of theories about the link between relationships and outcomes. Borgatti et al. provide a taxonomy of types of ties that have been studied in social network analysis (Borgatti et al. 2013, pp.4–5). They divide ties into two groups, 'relational states' and 'relational events'. Relational states are continuously persistent relationships between actors, such as being someone's brother or friend. They are not necessarily permanent, but while they do exist, they exist continuously over time. Relational events are discrete events that involve two actors. Relational events sometimes recur and can be counted up, for example, the number of phone calls *a* made to *b* last week. Recurring relational events can be evidence of an underlying relational state, for example, we might assume that frequent telephone calls between actors indicate friendship. Recurring events may also be antecedents of relational states, such as when frequent meetings lead to friendship.

Hypotheses about networks can be formulated and tested at the dyadic level (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1001). For example, it might be predicted that colleagues who are friends are also likely to

go to one another for advice. Dyadic data can also be aggregated to higher levels. When dyadic data is aggregated to the actor level, it gives a picture of an actor's relationships. Indeed, most actor-level properties in network research are aggregations of dyad-level measurements, such as the sum of an actor's ties (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.2). Actor-level hypotheses can then be formulated and tested, such as the hypothesis that actors with more friends at work will have higher job satisfaction. Actor-level data can be aggregated to allow the testing of hypotheses about an entire network. An example of a network-level hypothesis is that well-connected networks tend to diffuse information faster (ibid.). Mixed-level hypotheses can also be formulated (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1001). In network theory, network constructs can act as either dependent or explanatory variables in hypotheses. In treating network constructs as explanatory, the network is seen as a context in which an actor's relationships has contextual effects on actions (Carpenter et al. 2012, p.1329). Scholars focus on recognizing the outcomes of networks for actors and explaining the underlying mechanisms of these network outcomes (Carpenter et al. 2012, p.1330). In treating network constructs as dependent, the particular features of the network itself and how and why they are determined are the phenomena to be explained (ibid.).

Studying social networks as dependent variables usually involves two steps: the description of the patterns of social relationships; and the explanation of differences in these patterns at the level of actors or groups of actors (Hennig et al. 2012, p.37). Borgatti et al. classify mechanisms explaining social network formation into two basic groups. Opportunity-based mechanisms are where the presence of one tie sets the opportunity for another type of tie to form (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.10). For example, work ties may lead to friendship ties. Preference-based mechanisms locate the source of ties in individual preferences for a particular relational state (ibid.). For example, homophily is the principle that contact between similar people occurs at a higher rate than among dissimilar people (McPherson et al. 2001, p.416), because people prefer to form relationships with people who are similar to themselves in salient respects.

Where network constructs are treated as explanatory, 'most network theorizing is based on a view of ties as conduits through which things flow - material goods, ideas, instructions, diseases and so on' (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.7). It is different flows of goods, resources or intangibles, in conjunction with different network structures, which lead to different outcomes for network members. Mechanisms specify the way in which certain kinds of flows in conjunction with network structures lead to certain kinds of outcomes. With this view in mind, Borgatti et al. categorise social network studies into two main kinds: social capital studies and diffusion/social influence studies. Each category of studies explains certain kinds of outcome, and has its own associated mechanisms based on flows and network structure.

Social capital studies explain outcomes that consist of some sort of achievement, benefit, or performance, either for individuals or the whole network (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.8). Thus social capital explanations reflect the instrumental utility and beneficial consequences of a social network to its participants (Carpenter et al. 2012, p.1332). In social capital studies, achievement is the function of social ties and the resources that flow through them; and the structure of the network and the position of nodes within it are crucial factors in predicting outcomes (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.8). Social capital theories include a more or less tacit assumption that actors are active agents who exploit the network position they find themselves in (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1002). Carried to the extreme, this becomes something like the rational utility-maximizing assumption found in neoclassical economics, with purposeful agents embedded in networks constantly trying to wrest control for themselves, seek advantage, and block others from taking control (Nohria & Eccles 1992, p.7; 13; Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1002). Less extreme models of the agent in network theory include the view that everyday practical considerations shape actions of actors, such as their bounded rationality or institutionally guided cognitive orientations; or models based on the work of Hannah Arendt and Amartya Sen, which posit that an individual's goals stem from her sense of identity, and are influenced by others with whom the individual shares an identity (Nohria & Eccles 1992, p.14).

Borgatti & Foster contrast the 'instrumental, individual-oriented aspect of social capital work' with the 'environmental determinism that is found in much diffusion and social influence research' (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1002). The latter explains observed similarity of actors in outcomes such as the acquisition of practices and behaviours (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.8). Through interactions, actors affect each other and come to hold similar views or become aware of similar bits of information. The 'flows' in these case are likely to be intangibles, such as social cues or information. Explanations for similarities may be at the level of the dyad, through direct influence between two actors. They can also be at the actor level. For example, *a* and *b* might be similar not because they influenced one another, but because a third actor is tied to both of them and influenced them both. They may also be at the network level. Borgatti et al. give the example of an office, where actors who are highly 'central' in the work-flow network (that is, actors who are often being contacted and asked to do things by others) cringe when the telephone rings, while 'peripheral' actors (who are not often contacted) enjoy being contacted. It is because some actors are highly central that their reactions are similar to one another, but different to those on the periphery. The point is that actors are shaped by their social environments, hence actors with similar environments will have similar outcomes (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.9). Similarities in social environments can be identified by network constructs. For example, measures of network centrality can identify who receives the most inflows of job tasks in a work-flow network (e.g. Brass 1984). Structural equivalence

measures the extent to which individuals have the same patterns of social relationships to others indicating that they play similar social 'roles', leading to similar outcomes (Burt 1987, p.1291).

Although Borgatti & Foster (2003) see social influence mechanisms as deterministic, network explanations of influence can in fact incorporate both social deterministic and individual choice perspectives. For example, an individual might choose to adopt a particular political viewpoint in response to political information that 'flows' through her social network during discussions with those around her. On the other hand, adopting a particular view might be more of a social psychological process involving less conscious responses to social cues from others with whom an individual has salient relationships (e.g. Asch 1955). Which view is applicable in different circumstances is a matter for empirical confirmation, as is the usefulness of any kind of rational maximizer assumption. Such confirmation may not be possible with cross-sectional research, or with social network data alone. Longitudinal data analysis methods such as stochastic actor-oriented models (SAOMs) can be used to distinguish between choice-based and social deterministic phenomena (Agneessens & Wittek 2008), but qualitative methods are necessary to add context to social network data and uncover causal mechanisms (Bellotti 2015, p.3). So it can be seen that the social network approach is useful for explaining contextual effects on individual outcomes, but 'complete' explanations of those outcomes will require recourse to non-network approaches as well.

In my study I use the social networks approach in conjunction with qualitative methods to add much-needed context to theories of the benefits of workplace democracy, and uncover some of the mechanisms by which workplace democracy affects outcomes for workers. Having summarized the social networks approach I turn now to arguments for the benefits of workplace democracy.

Workplace democracy and well-being

The well-being literature suggests worker co-operatives will benefit workers by increasing autonomy in their daily work lives, increasing economic security, and increasing job satisfaction. I begin with arguments about autonomy.

Increased autonomy

Political theory arguments for workplace democracy have criticised the employment contract in capitalist society because it involves the surrender by the individual of her capacity for self-determination (Breen 2015, p.472). At the heart of this critique lie arguments about autonomy (Breen 2015, pp.472–474). Archer argues for economic democracy from 'moral' commitments to liberty and equality (Archer 1995, p.12). Commitment to individual liberty means promoting the

capacity for individuals to choose courses of action freely (Archer 1995, pp.18–22), and commitment to equality means each individual must have the maximum freedom that is compatible with an equal freedom for all others (Archer 1995, p.23). He argues that collective choices should be made so as to maximise individual freedom. Because the actions that result from the collective decisions of an association will affect various individuals, the only way that these individuals' freedom can be maximised is to ensure that the choices of the association are in accordance with the choices of individuals it affects (Archer 1995, p.26). Thus all individuals whose ability to make choices and act on them is affected by the decisions of an association should share control over the process by which those decisions are made (Archer 1995, p.27). This is the basis for workplace democracy. Theories like Archer's can be traced to Rousseau, and his attempts to reconcile liberty with equality (Dahl 1985, p.94). These arguments, which locate freedom in the harmonization of individual and collective choices, are rendered problematic by research into social choice theories. For example, Arrow's Impossibility Theorem and Condorcet's Paradox speak to the difficulties of aggregating individual preferences into coherent and non-arbitrary collective preferences (List et al. 2013, p.80). An alternative approach is to find acceptable procedures for reaching democratic consensus, and in this vein deliberative democracy has been advanced as a solution to problems with social choice theories (List et al. 2013). However, deliberative democracy is subject to criticisms based on the way systematic disadvantages in skills and material resources mean some groups are less equipped to deliberate than others (Sanders 1997, p.349); and social psychological processes related to cultural prejudice mean some groups are taken less seriously than others even when they have the resources to deliberate (Sanders 1997, p.353). The conundrum draws attention to the difference between arguments for workplace democracy that try to meet ideal theoretical standards of liberty or equality, and those that contextualize outcomes, see them as relative, and contrast them with alternatives. While equal power over decisions is idealistic and even incoherent, the effects of workplace democracy on worker autonomy compared with alternative economic governance structures is an important subject for inquiry (Breen 2015, p.474). It requires paying attention to how contextual factors shape the outcomes of workplace democracy for different groups of workers.

For other theorists, workplace democracy is not only a means of reconciling abstract theoretical principles, but is justified in terms of the practical benefits for individuals of autonomy at work (Pateman 1970, p.23; Knudsen et al. 2011; Breen 2015, pp.471–472). In practice, workplace democracy has often been motivated by an 'ideological commitment to autonomy and self-determination coupled with a sense of opposition to hierarchical authority systems and the inequality that accompanies them' (Rothschild & Russell 1986, p.310). This ideology is particularly prevalent in New Social Movements (Carter 2003, p.2). The increase in immediate freedoms in the

form of control over day-to-day work processes resulting from the reduction of hierarchy is perhaps a less ambitious goal than the harmonization of collective choices aimed at by political theorists.

Recent research has theorised the benefits of autonomy, including autonomy at work, for physical and psychological health. In his *Whitehall Studies*, Marmot found a gradient in the well-being outcomes of British Civil Servants from the top to the bottom of the workplace hierarchy. On average, the lower down a worker is in the hierarchy, the worse they are likely to fare in a range of outcomes, including physical and psychological illnesses (Marmot et al. 1991). Marmot draws on the theories of Karasek & Theorell (1981), and Siegrist (2002), to argue that the balance between work demands and control over work, and between work effort and reward for that effort, influences workers' long-term stress levels, which in turn have significant causal impact on health and wellbeing outcomes (Marmot 2004). In these theories autonomy in the workplace, i.e. the possibilities for employees to decide work organization, is beneficial for well-being; while a common feature of harmful aspects of the psychosocial work environment is that they're beyond workers' control. Thus autonomy varies inversely with hierarchy. Hierarchy undermines autonomy in two ways. First, in an 'internal' way, by eroding of self-respect, and undermining individuals' sense of themselves as valued members of society who have the secure standing necessary to conceive and execute an autonomous plan of life (O'Neill 2010, p.399). Second, in an 'external way' via the nature of the social relations that low-status individuals experience, which are marked by their falling under the (more or less arbitrary) authority of others, as opposed to being expressions of their own autonomous decisions (O'Neill 2010, p.400). Other research has found beneficial effects of workplace autonomy on 'internal' and 'external' variables. Maxwell-Elden studies workers in a plant that has been redesigned to incorporate autonomous work groups with non-hierarchical authority structures where workers make important decisions in managing their own work (Maxwell-Elden 1981). He compared the plant with hierarchically organized plants in the same parent company, and found autonomous working was associated with feelings of greater control over life in general, and feelings of greater political potency (Maxwell-Elden 1981, p.49). Karasek found that autonomy at work was associated in increased engagement in more 'active' leisure activities over time amongst a representative sample of Swedish male workers studied between 1968 and 1974 (Karasek 2004).

Autonomy has also been argued to be good for well-being on a societal level. Wilkinson & Pickett find social gradients in a range of societal ills such as mental and physical health problems, obesity, educational performance, teenage pregnancy, violence, and imprisonment. The lower down the social hierarchy a person is the more likely they are to fare badly in all of these areas – and this holds from the top to the bottom of society (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010). What's more, they have found differences not only *within* societies but *between* societies. People living in more

economically unequal societies are more likely to fare worse in all these areas than people in more economically equal societies - although their work has not gone uncriticised (Sage 2013). In the light of the apparently widespread relationship between economic inequality and social problems, Wilkinson & Pickett recommend that instead of piecemeal policy to deal with problems one by one, the focus should be on the society-wide reduction of economic inequality (O'Neill 2010, p.403). They suggest democratic employee ownership of firms as a means to greater economic equality (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010, pp.254–263).

However, O'Neill questions the conceptually confused role that economic inequality plays in Wilkinson and Pickett's account. He notes that

In a number of places, Wilkinson and Pickett seem unsure whether to say that income inequality is fundamental in the explanation of these various social ills, or whether it is a proxy for other considerations (O'Neill 2010, p.403).

He suggests economic inequality is a proxy for hierarchical forms of social relationships that undermine the social status, self-respect and autonomy of those lower down the hierarchy (O'Neill 2010, pp.404–405). Similarly, in his own studies on social status and well-being Marmot finds that when we have other measures of social ranking the power of income to predict health outcomes diminishes (Marmot 2004, p.79). So while Wilkinson and Pickett argue there are a variety of routes to greater economic equality, and that it does not matter which one is pursued (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010, p.245), O'Neill and Marmot argue for a focus on creating particular kinds of equal social relationships to improve well-being:

For people above a threshold of material well-being, another kind of well-being is central. Autonomy – how much control you have over your life – and the opportunities you have for full social engagement and participation are crucial for health, well-being and longevity. It is inequality in these that plays a big part in producing the social gradient in health (Marmot 2004, p.2).

Here Marmot's argument about the health effects of autonomy at work is generalized to society as a whole. His further research finds a gradient in health outcomes that spans the social, as well as the workplace, hierarchy. He finds that most diseases follow the social gradient (Marmot 2004, p.4). Marmot's explanation for these findings is that what characterizes being poor and lower in the social hierarchy is lack of control over life circumstances and lack of opportunity for social participation, leading to chronic stress, which itself leads to greater risk of illness (Marmot 2004, p.31; 76; 82; 106).

As noted, workplace democracy has been valued for its role in reducing workplace hierarchy. Miller notes that the point of co-operatives is not only to avoid the 'depredations of capitalists' and to maximise money income per worker, but to enjoy certain non-monetary benefits including control of the workplace by the producers themselves and a greater range of possibilities in organizing production (Miller 1981, p.321). The concept of employee participation that is central to workplace democracy - the influence of employees in decision-making throughout the firm - is in agreement with, though not identical to, Karasek's narrower concept of control, which is concerned with influence over the performance of daily work tasks (Busck et al. 2010, p.286). Thus the autonomy that has been used as a moral or ideological justification for workplace democracy might also have practical benefits in terms of worker well-being, both at the firm level and at the society level via widespread economic democracy.

This argument is premised on the idea that democratic governance structures and worker ownership will reduce workplace hierarchy, meaning that workplace decisions are less authority-based and more autonomous. According to Pateman, a requirement for workplace democracy is the flattening of workplace hierarchies (Pateman 1970, p.72). A hierarchical organization is one in which some people have higher status than others. Individuals with high status may have more rights than those with lower status, and may have powers to control the actions of lower status individuals. Within firms, those at the top of the hierarchy exercise power over those lower down either directly, through control over their actions, or indirectly, through influence over decisions that affect others in the workplace, such as decisions affecting working conditions. They may exercise power coercively, against the will of subordinates (Lukes 2005, p.21). Or they may co-opt subordinates willingly, using interpersonal skills, reputation or expertise to exert influence or exercise authority (ibid.). Thus higher status individuals have greater powers to organize work life, including the work lives of their subordinates. However, there is a distinction to be made between informal and formal hierarchies. Formal hierarchies are status differences that are set down in the organizational 'rules' of a firm. Formal hierarchies are person-independent (Diefenbach & Sillince 2011, p.1517). An informal hierarchy is one that emerges outside of, or in spite of, explicit organisational rules within a firm. They arise from 'person-dependent social relationships of dominance and subordination which emerge from social interaction and become persistent over time through repeated social processes (especially routine behaviour)' (ibid.). The mechanisms that lead to the emergence of informal hierarchy are located particularly in the realm of social norms and interaction, for example, shared norms and values, and verbal or non-verbal attitudes and behaviours, communication and discourses (ibid.). They are therefore highly person-dependent processes. Thus although formal hierarchies may be flatter in co-ops, harmful informal hierarchies of status may still be present.

Indeed, informal hierarchies have been found to undermine workplace democracy. In some co-ops informal hierarchies emerge based on a division between more skilled and less skilled workers. In the Italian co-ops of the Emilia Romagna it was found that managers and technicians tended to enlarge their sphere of influence at the expense of the authority of the worker council (Schechter 1994, p.140). Recognised 'experts' can exert disproportionate influence over the governance of a firm due to their superior possession, access to, or ability to make use of, knowledge and information relevant to the running of a firm. Kasmir observed such a phenomenon in the Mondragon co-ops, where shop floor workers had rights, but insufficient powers, to participate. Co-operative members lacked expertise required to participate, and were not allowed to hire external expertise to scrutinise and evaluate management proposals (Kasmir 1996, p.137). Workers felt frustrated by their inability to make effective use of information. Kasmir quotes one member: 'They [management] give the members a lot of things to read. Rather than reading it all, members look to someone they agree with politically and ask him what he thinks. Then they have the same opinion as he does' (ibid.) Worker co-operatives may require high investment in human capital in the form of training to enable workers to participate effectively in decision-making. Another example of informal hierarchy comes from research into self-organising teams within the workplace. Ezzamel & Willmott found that 'teams, through peer pressure and behavioural regulation, can coerce their members in ways that are perhaps even more tyrannical than are the forms of control exercised by managers' (Jermier & Michaels 2001, p.1008). Carter has a similar concept to that of informal hierarchy which he calls 'informal control'. He notes there is no guarantee that the processes of informal control in a worker co-operative will reflect the formal structures of control, or that formal participatory structures will ensure active participation by all workers (Carter 2006, p.418). Co-ops may experience democratic degeneration whereby control becomes increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few and a range of capitalistic organizational practices, such as a management hierarchy and division of labour, are adopted (ibid.). Kokkinidis sees representative democracy at work as particularly likely to display oligarchical tendencies (Kokkinidis 2012, pp.326–327). Conversely, formal hierarchies might be challenged and softened by the actions of employees at the bottom of the hierarchy. Hodson notes examples of resistance strategies used by employees against management in order to defend and maximise 'dignity', defined as 'protecting oneself from abuse' and 'having space for one's identity' (Hodson 1996, p.722). Strategies include extreme acts like industrial sabotage, as well as less destructive acts such as the withdrawal of co-operation (ibid.).

Another requirement of workplace democracy according to Pateman is the removal of the fixed distinction between workers and management (Pateman 1970, p.72). Unfixed hierarchies are cases where the employees of a firm are able to decide collectively to invest individuals or groups of

individuals with authority to organise work life, but where the employees as a body are able to revoke this authority should they wish to do so. One firm surveyed for my research provides an example. The body of employees elects a management committee of four employees by majority vote. The management committee serves for fixed terms of two years. The body of employees is able to dismiss the elected management committee if they are unhappy with its performance. However, the right to elect and dismiss management is not the same as the power to do so. Conversely, fixed hierarchies are where powers to organise working life are distributed unevenly among the workforce according to status, and there is no democratic mechanism available for the restructuring of these hierarchies. Fixed hierarchies may change, but through undemocratic means, for example if managers decide to redesign the organization. Whether a hierarchy is fixed or unfixed is dependent on a multitude of factors, and there may be no clear distinction between the two cases in practice.

Thus there is no guarantee that workplace democracy will increase autonomy, because formal hierarchies may be replaced with informal hierarchies consisting of interpersonal relationships of dominance and subordination that constrain autonomy for some workers and increase autonomy for others. The social networks literature evidences how social context affects autonomy. The structure of an individual's social network together with the content of her relationships can help her achieve her goals as well as constrain her actions.

Several theories demonstrate how social relationships confer autonomy by helping individuals achieve their goals or gain an advantage over others. Lin's social resources perspective says social ties can provide resources to individuals, or allow them to take advantage of the resources of others via helping behaviour or principle-agent relationships (Lin 1999a). Lin argues individuals obtain social status by mobilizing and investing resources in exchange for social standings (Lin 1999b, p.467). Some of these resources are accessed via social networks (social resources). He theorises that a combination of human capital (education, experiences), initial positions (parental or prior job statuses), and social ties (e.g. extensity of ties) determine the extent of resources an individual can access through her social networks (Lin 1999b, p.472). Having access to diverse resources in one's social network (for example, being connected to lots of different high status, resourceful individuals, such as doctors, lawyers, politicians, business people etc.) can help individuals mobilize resources in order to attain higher socioeconomic position (Lin 1999b, pp.472–473); for example, when they are job-hunting (Smith et al. 2012). Social resources can also be used to achieve broader goals. For example, a diversity of resources accessible via social networks enables individuals and organizations to pursue civic actions to protect or seek collective goods in their community (Son & Lin 2008).

Another resource-based theory of autonomy is Brass's theory of power in organizations. Brass argues that social network position provides control over others' access to resources, conferring power (Brass 1984; Brass & Burkhardt 1992; Brass & Burkhardt 1993). For example, if actor *a* depends on actor *b* to supply her with particular resources (perhaps information or money), then actor *b* has power over *a* because they can make resource-access conditional or deny it entirely.

Theories of network brokerage – that is, connecting otherwise unconnected individuals or groups – argue network position can allow privileged access to resources, or allow an individual to play special roles in a network, increasing her autonomy. Because opinions and behaviour are more homogeneous within groups than between groups, individuals who act as a 'bridge' connecting two or more otherwise unconnected groups are exposed to more diverse ways of thinking, and can come up with better ideas and ways of doing things as a result. This has been shown to lead to performance advantages at work (Burt 2004). Connecting otherwise unconnected others can give an actor an advantage through playing those individuals off against one another in bargaining situations (Nohria & Eccles 1992, p.6). Liaison roles between otherwise unconnected groups, such as representative roles, gatekeeper roles or co-ordinating roles, confer significant power (Gould & Fernandez 1989), including in political settings (Gould 1989; Fernandez & Gould 1994).

Conversely, being located between many different groups has been shown to constrain autonomy in some contexts by creating conflicting norms, demands and expectations from the different groups that cannot be met simultaneously (Krackhardt 1999). Thus social networks can constrain actions as well as confer autonomy. As another example, being part of a highly interconnected network, where all your contacts have strong relationships with one another, constrains and regulates behaviour, because closely connected actors tend to share behavioural norms, and information about an actor's behaviour diffuses quickly throughout the group meaning transgression of norms is easily policed (Granovetter 1973; Burt 2010, p.11).

In sum, social networks can affect individual autonomy through resource supply, access to others' resources, resource control, playing particular roles between unconnected others, and the social regulation of behaviour. It is likely that individuals within co-operatives will differ in their personal and social resources and network positions, leading to differences in their abilities to achieve goals such as influence workplace decisions. Thus, whether workplace democracy can improve well-being by increasing autonomy is an open empirical question. It will likely not increase autonomy equally for all workers. Further, the social resources possessed by co-operative workers might affect firm success by providing them with resources required for successful business management. This may in turn affect the autonomy the firm can provide to its workers, for example, by allowing higher

wages. A key question for my research is how social context leads to different outcomes for worker in co-operatives.

Economic security

The second well-being benefit of workplace democracy is economic security. Pateman quotes John Stuart Mill, a classical advocate of worker co-operatives, who thought that economic democracy would lead to 'a new sense of security and independence in the labouring class' (Pateman 1970, p.34). Benefits include an increase in the material rewards from work, and improvement in job security. It has been thought that workplace democracy would equalize the material rewards from work by democratizing control over wage distribution. Dahl acknowledges that inequality would still arise between democratic firms and within democratic firms in a competitive economy, but he thinks that inequalities in pay and benefits wouldn't be as great as under corporate capitalism (Dahl 1985, p.105). Furthermore, worker ownership means co-operative workers can share productive surplus between themselves rather than it being distributed to external shareholders, mitigating this source of inequality. The Mondragon co-operatives in the Basque region of Spain have been celebrated for the low pay differentials between their highest and lowest earning workers (Kasmir 1996, p.35), which was restricted to a maximum of 1:3 in 1956 when the cooperatives were first created (Arando et al. 2010, p.30). By 2002 the differential had widened to a maximum of 1:8.9 due to 'market pressures' (ibid.), although this still looks positive given the large and growing pay differentials that exist in Western economies.¹ In the UK context, the pay differential in the John Lewis Partnership is a less impressive 1:75 (Cathcart 2013a, p.615). Most of the smaller, UK-based co-operatives surveyed for my research pay all of their members equally.

Pay equity has obvious benefits in terms of making some workers materially better-off, which may be of particular importance to the low paid. Subjective well-being is generally thought to have positive but diminishing returns to income (Dolan et al. 2008, p.97), while other accounts of well-being, such as capabilities approaches (Sen 1999), objective accounts (Nussbaum 2001), and basic needs approaches (Reader 2006) suggest a minimum threshold level of goods and resources required for individual well-being. Beyond this, research has claimed material equality is good for society (Wilkinson & Pickett 2010), and political theorists have seen equalizing economic resources through workplace democracy as a way of protecting liberal democracy. Dahl sees an economy of democratic, worker-owned firms as a way of solving the 'classical republican problem'; that is, the problem of the convertibility of economic resources into political resources which may threaten to undermine political equality and compromise meaningful democracy (Dahl 1985, pp.68–69).

¹ The Hutton Report on Fair Pay notes that the median pay of FTSE 100 chief executives is 88 times that of median UK pay (Hutton 2011, p.17).

Workplace democracy may improve job security for employees, especially in economic downturns, as worker control allows co-ops to adjust strategic priorities in response to economic conditions. Former Liberal Democrat Cabinet Minister Chris Huhne expressed this view when interviewed in 2011:

...the bigger the element of profit share, the more likely it is in a downturn, the flexibility that companies need to cut their pay bill, effectively comes in the ability of a company to cut the overall remuneration package, rather than a reduction in employment. So an economy which has a lot more worker co-operatives, you *might* expect to be an economy where employment was less volatile, compared with an economy where there's more preponderance of fixed wage contracts, and where the profit effectively goes to shareholders outside the business.

Many participatory enterprises believe one of their most important functions is to maintain employment when economic conditions are bad (Pagano & Rowthorn 1994, p.9). The harms of job insecurity are well-documented. It causes stress, has a negative impact on psychological well-being and increases psychosomatic complaints and physical strains (De Witte 1999, p.171). De Witte finds that job insecurity is one of the more important workplace stressors, significant effects of which remain even after controlling for other stressors such as job demands and low autonomy (De Witte 1999, p.173). Job insecurity has also been found to be as harmful to well-being as short-term unemployment (De Witte 1999, p.174). Thus job protection facilitated by worker control may have important well-being consequences for workers.

Mondragon also provides an example of the effects of workplace democracy on job security. Between the onset of the global economic crisis in 2008 and 2010, employment in the Mondragon firms shrank by 9.3%, which compares favourably with developments in Spain and the Basque country (Arando et al. 2010, p.11). However, Mondragon is a large conglomerate with global revenue of nearly €12 billion (Mondragon Corporation 2016). Thus it has economic might not possessed by smaller co-ops, allowing it to insulate its workforce somewhat against market trends. Indeed, the co-operative sector of the Basque Country, consisting of firms in multiple industries as well as financial institutions, is closer to a co-operative economy than a co-operative firm. But the bankruptcy of the Fagor Electrodomésticos Group shows that even Mondragon is not immune from the effects of economic conditions and market competition (Alperovitz 2013). Some have thought the market would necessarily cause democratic degeneration in co-operatives over time (Miller 1981; Schechter 1994, p.146). The degeneration thesis, which has its origins in Marxist and socialist critiques of co-operatives, says that isolated organisations are unable to resist the wider forces of

capitalism, will eventually adopt the practices of conventional enterprises in order to survive, and that democracy will give way to oligarchy (Cathcart 2013a, p.604). In smaller co-ops, the aim of maintaining employment during economic downturns may exact high costs from workers who must pay themselves less and work harder. Indeed, Carter notes that overworked co-op employees can suffer from burnout (Carter 2006, p.419). Instead of being exploited by owners or management, co-op workers may be exploited by the co-operative firm as an institution, which by the logic of the market must extract surplus value from workers in order to survive (O'Neill 1991).

Job insecurity may be increasing at the societal level. The 'insecure workforce thesis' sees the workforce of developed economies as increasingly insecure, as 'flexible' labour markets transfer economic risk from employers to employees through shortened job tenure and contingent employment and remuneration (Heery & Salmon 2002, p.1). Further, job insecurity may be undermining the positive effects of workplace autonomy. Busck et al. note the growth in past few decades of two phenomena: modern management practices focusing the empowerment and involvement of employees; and a synchronous increase in psychosocial work environment problems evidenced in job satisfaction surveys, increased absenteeism due to stress and other psychological problems, increased numbers of work-related mental disorders, and increased exclusion from the labour market due to psychosocial problems at work (Busck et al. 2010, p.285). They argue that this might lead us to question the demand-control model developed by Karasek & Theorell and utilised by Marmot:

Due to developments in economic structure, management philosophies and forms, organization of work, power relations and additional societal contextual factors, the model has become increasingly insufficient to explain the development showing increased autonomy at work and increased direct participation at the same time as an *increase* in psychosocial strain. The discourse in this way increasingly has come to serve as an ideology to cover up realities (Busck et al. 2010, p.296).

They conclude there is no reason to think autonomy no longer has essential meaning for the quality of the work environment; rather, the features of the workplace environment included in Karasek & Theorell's concept of autonomy are too restricted to counteract a decline in the quality of working life that includes wider political economic and cultural factors (Busck et al. 2010, p.299). We should look beyond this more limited model and ask to what extent are the existing formal or informal forms of participation capable of influencing job demands (Busck et al. 2010, p.300). It may be that fuller forms of control associated with workplace democracy can mitigate or reverse job insecurities associated with changes in the wider socioeconomic and cultural contexts of work. Then again,

given the vulnerability of individual firms to market forces, worker ownership and control might be unable to improve work organization in the face of trends towards low quality jobs.

In sum, while worker ownership and control may lead to material and job security for workers, these outcomes will be shaped by macro-level economic and cultural context, as well as by differences in power stemming from micro-level social context. Therefore, to understand the well-being benefits of workplace democracy attention must be paid to the macro-level context of a firm, as well as micro, firm-level context.

Job satisfaction

Studies of well-being at work often utilize subjective indicators such as self-reported job satisfaction. Pateman argues that greater control associated with workplace democracy should increase job satisfaction (Pateman 1970, pp.57–58). However, the concept of job satisfaction should be treated with caution. There has been a revival of interest in the social sciences in the use of hedonic conception of cardinal utility as a measure of well-being. Classical Utilitarians defined utility as happiness - a mental state which could potentially be measured: 'By happiness is intended pleasure, and the absence of pain; by unhappiness, pain, and the privation of pleasure' (Mill 1863). Layard argues the development of modern research techniques means that happiness 'can now be measured by asking people or by measuring their brains' (Layard 2005, p.6). Use of large-scale surveys incorporating interval scale questions on life satisfaction or job satisfaction to measure the well-being of populations, such as the UK Happiness Survey (Office for National Statistics 2016), is increasingly common. Statistical modelling techniques have been applied to this data to try and determine the how specific elements of individuals' working lives impact on their well-being. Some researchers interpret this data as representing the utility received from work, which is taken to equal well-being at work (Green 2006, p.11). But others doubt that the data adequately capture well-being. Green points out that

Job satisfaction is assessed by workers in part in relation to what they expect from a job. Workers might be conditioned to expect a lot or a little from different jobs. This fact has led doubters to conclude that job satisfaction is not is not a measure of utility (ibid.).

Similarly, in their study of changes in self-reported job satisfaction under the New Labour government, Brown et al. qualify improvements in job satisfaction at the lower end of the income scale with reference to the low benchmark of norms and expectations of those in lower quality jobs (Brown et al. 2007, p.966). Some theorists think job satisfaction is still a useful indicator of trends in well-being when the norms against which satisfaction are measured change only slowly or not at

all (Green 2006, p.11). Further, workers' all-things-considered assessments of job satisfaction cannot capture the subtleties of the relationship between subjective well-being and work-life experience. When studying job satisfaction efforts should be made to contextualize workers' self-reports, to determine where norms and expectations might be influencing their attitudes towards their jobs. It should also be acknowledged that subjective well-being is multidimensional and can be measured on multiple axes, from feeling bad to feeling good, from anxiety to comfort, and from depression to enthusiasm (Warr 2007, p.111). More sophisticated research methodologies, such as the use of diary methods (Bolger et al. 2003), or experience sampling methodology (Dimotakis et al. 2011), can help to understand the relationship between work-life experiences and subjective well-being outcomes.

Expectations themselves are shaped by power processes within and external to a firm. Lukes argues that people's wants and preferences can be shaped without their conscious knowledge by a political system that works against their interests (Lukes 2005, p.38). Expectations, wants and preferences are conceptually related to one another in that they are all formed in response to what an individual perceives as normal, realistic or reasonable. So a key question is how expectations themselves are formed by firm-level and macro-level context.

The social networks literature provides evidence on how social context shapes beliefs, attitudes, norms, wants, and preferences. As described above, social influence studies explain observed similarity in among actors by social influence/contagion processes, where actors receive similar network flows either from being directly connected to one another or from being connected to the same third parties; or have similar experiences through occupying equivalent social environments. Actors who have ties to either the same others, or the same *types* of others, may see themselves as rivals for the same structural position in the network (Kilduff & Oh 2006, p.435). Influence between them may therefore result from perceived competition, as actors put themselves in each other's shoes when forming opinions and deciding on actions (*ibid.*). Such influence is indirect, and based on social comparison processes. Erickson argues that attitudes are transmitted interpersonally when individuals compare themselves with others who are similar in salient respects, and adapt their views accordingly (Erickson 1988, p.101). Social comparison is unlikely to take place between groups with 'asymmetrical' relationships, such as the authority-based relationships between management and labour (Erickson 1988, p.104). However, if asymmetrical relationships are based on esteem 'the subordinate group may take superior as a reference group, or as a group with such prestige that it gives nearly objective validity to attitudes' (Erickson 1988, p.104). In such cases the superior group may exercise definitive power over the wants and preferences of subordinates. Individuals are therefore likely to form expectations about work that align with others they who they respect or see as similar to themselves in salient respects; and

individuals who are directly linked, linked to the same third parties, or experience similar environments are likely to have similar expectations.

If subjective well-being depends on expectations, and expectations vary systematically with context, then the well-being outcomes of workplace democracy will depend on the expectations of workers, and may vary across groups of workers and across firms. Carter argues that unrealistically optimistic expectations can have negative long-term impacts of co-op members' attitudes and behaviour (Carter 2006, p.419). This phenomena manifests itself differently depending on context. For example, in firms that were endowed to workers by philanthropic owners, workers' long-term motivation can suffer if firm governance and strategic direction does not alter as much as hoped (ibid.). In co-ops established because of alternative political ideologies, failure of firms to live up to members' high expectations can lead to stress and disillusionment (ibid.).

Thus understanding social context, and context more broadly, is important to understanding the work-related expectations of different groups within and across firms and how they might mediate the relationship between workplace democracy and well-being.

In summary, workplace democracy is thought to benefit well-being in three ways. First, by increasing worker autonomy in both their daily working lives and in their wider lives. Second, improving economic security through job security and by equalizing material rewards from work. Third, by increasing job satisfaction. However, the causal mechanisms relating workplace democracy to well-being outcomes for workers are more complex than the democratization of firm governance and ownership structures. They depend on personal, interpersonal and contextual factors, and their interactions. The next section will discuss the second theme of the literature on the benefits of workplace democracy – a hypothesized increase in political participation.

Workplace democracy and Political Participation

Another body of literature links democratic participation at workplace with political participation. A key thread of this literature involves the hypothesized transformative effect of workplace democracy on the individual, and its beneficial consequences for society (Carter 2003, p.4; Pateman 1970, pp.22–44). Workplace democracy has been central to theories of what Stokes calls 'developmental democracy'. Developmental democrats hold that extensive individual participation in politics and strong communal bonds are necessary for democracy (ibid.). They are optimistic about the 'improvability' of citizens (Stokes 2002, p.35), and believe that democratic workplace participation can transform workers into better citizens. Dahl notes that 'self-government in

economic enterprises is often advocated as a way of creating 'participatory democracy' and producing changes in human personality and behaviour that, it is said, participation will bring about' (Dahl 1985, p.94). John Stuart Mill predicted a growth in worker cooperatives that would lead to 'the conversation of each human being's daily occupation into a school of the social sympathies and the practical intelligence' (Mill 2004, p.722). Thus workplace democracy is seen as a means to human development via the creation of a 'democratic character' among workers. I will call this the democratic character thesis.

Other ideological justifications have been offered for workplace democracy. Reformist socialists have seen co-operatives as a step towards a socialist economy (Carter 2003, p.2). Theorists influenced by the Marxian-Aristotelian view that skilled work and consciously planned productive activity is central to human flourishing have advocated workplace democracy as a means of enhancing the humanity of workers (Green 2006, p.12). G.D.H. Cole criticized Marxist views on the basis that workers are not the only interest group in the economy, and their interests must be balanced with those of consumers and producers (Wright 1979). Cole thought that true democracy would be realised by 'harmonising the different spheres in which individuals had vital interests, that is, by harmonising conflicting partial wills rather than stifling such interests in the name of the general will' (Schechter 1994, p.116). His theory of Guild Socialism proposed radical democratic institutions for all the important spheres of human social life: production, consumption and politics (Schechter 1994, p.114). In the workplace, he advocated experimentation with a variety of forms of industrial democracy, and thought that a plurality of forms would emerge that were compatible with Guild Socialist society (Schechter 1994, p.115). However, my focus is on the idea of workplace democracy as site for political learning where workers can become better citizens who engage with existing political democratic institutions. This tends to be associated with the liberal political tradition.

The content of the 'democratic character' that workplace democracy is supposed to instil is not described in a single source. Two major themes from the literature link democracy at work to changes in human behaviour and attitudes and to consequent participation in the wider civic and political spheres: the development of civic skills, and an increase in workers' sense of political efficacy. I will discuss each theme in turn.

Civic Skills

Theorists have seen the democratic workplace as a site of political learning, where workers become better citizens by learning the skills to participate in politics:

A well-functioning political democracy, it may be argued, requires an active, informed and involved citizenry. Present-day hierarchical forms of production breed passivity, apathy and ignorance. Enterprise democracy would give workers a more creative role in decision-making, thereby helping to breed the capacity for active citizenship in the society at large (Pagano & Rowthorn 1994, p.2).

Pateman thinks participation at work 'fosters and develops the qualities that the individual needs for public activities' (Pateman 1970, p.34), including the gaining of familiarity with democratic procedures and the learning of political democratic skills (Pateman 1970, p.74). The argument that the skills and attitudes developed through democratic participation in workplace decision-making can help the individual with wider participation parallels the political science literature on the role of the workplace, voluntary organizations and civic groups in promoting political participation (Pateman 1970, p.47; Adman 2008, p.118).

Theories of political participation have seen civic skills as prerequisites for participation. Brady et al. argue that civic skills – 'those communications and organizational capacities that are so essential to political activity' – can be honed in the non-political institutions of adult life such as the workplace, voluntary associations and churches (Brady et al. 1995, p.273). Citizens with good civic skills are those 'who can speak or write well or who are comfortable organizing and taking part in meetings', meaning they are likely to be more effective when they get involved in politics' (ibid.). They find civic skills are strong predictors of political participation. This argument forms part of their civic voluntarism model of political participation. The model cites three factors to explain participation (Brady et al. 1995, p.271). First, possession of relevant resources, which include time, money and civic skills. Second, psychological engagement in politics, including an interest in politics, concern with public issues, the sense that activity makes a difference, and conscious membership of a group with shared political interests. Third, connection to recruitment networks through which citizens are mobilized to participate in politics.

The civic voluntarism model focuses on the role of resources in enabling political participation. Resources possession is often not the result of individual choices, but is socially stratified according to factors that determine socioeconomic status and that are beyond individual control. For example, family background is an important predictor of political participation because families bequeath people the resources they need to participate, particularly via the effect of family socioeconomic status on educational attainment (Verba et al. 2005). The civic voluntarism model can therefore be seen as a structural theory of participation (Pattie et al. 2004, p.145). Opportunities to learn civic skills are also structured by socioeconomic status. Simply being involved in a non-political institution is not sufficient to develop civic skills (Brady et al. 1995, p.281) - opportunities to learn, maintain

and practice civic skills are stratified across organizations (Brady et al. 1995, p.275). For example, workplaces are more stratified by education (that is, more highly educated individuals have more opportunities to practice civic skills) than churches (ibid.). The relative egalitarianism of the latter has been a source of optimism about the ability of churches to promote civic virtue in the US context (Djupe & Gilbert 2006, p.116). The democratic character thesis implies that, by widening participation in organizational decision-making to include all elements of the workforce, workplace democracy will equalize access to opportunities to learn and practice civic skills at work. Thus workers will gain the skills they need to be better citizens.

Djupe & Gilbert criticise comparative research designs in the civic skills literature for treating the group or organization (for example, the individual church, workplace, or civic organization) empirically as a 'black box'; that is, an undifferentiated unit (Djupe & Gilbert 2006, p.117). Such comparative studies are not concerned with the internal dynamics of a group, seeking only to uncover whether citizens are more or less resourceful (in terms of civic skills) as a consequence of their group affiliations (ibid.). They point out 'the fact that a diversity of people practice skills in churches only means that church membership is less demographically stratified in the US than secular group membership or the employed population; it does not necessarily mean that every church member has equal access to practicing skills in a particular church' (Djupe & Gilbert 2006, p.116). In their study of civic skill formation in churches they theorize that civic skills are formed by a process akin to social capital formation – skill development forms as a byproduct of interactions that result from the church's attempt to fulfil other needs and desires (Djupe & Gilbert 2006, p.118). They find that congregational involvement beyond worship does not guarantee skill development (Djupe & Gilbert 2006, p.126). The social composition of the group (i.e. micro-level social context) structures who is able to engage in leadership opportunities (and therefore perhaps develop civic skills), with those most similar to other members having easier access (ibid.). The interaction between the social makeup of the church organization and of the surrounding community (macro-level context) affects participation levels, with churches whose membership demographics are unlike the surrounding community showing greater congregational unity and higher member involvement (ibid.). The implication for the democratic character thesis is that when looking at the outcomes of workplace democracy the organization shouldn't be seen as a 'black box'. Even in relatively egalitarian co-ops, opportunities to participate in decision making and any subsequent benefits for workers won't be equal for everyone. Differences in personal resources, and contextual factors within and outside the organization, will structure who can participate and who is excluded from participation. Key questions are therefore how internal factors, external contextual factors, and the interaction between the two, structure opportunities for participation within co-operatives; and how differences in participation opportunities relate to political outcomes.

Djupe & Gilbert's focus on context shifts attention from correlations between the traits of individuals, such as their organizational affiliations, their self-reported skill-use at work, and their self-reported political participation, to the features of the social environment that regulate and influence individual behaviour and opportunities. McClurg & Young argue that political science must move beyond the assumption of the independence of actors and institutions and begin to account for their interdependence (McClurg & Young 2011, p.39). In recent years the network approach has moved beyond sociological and organizational research and has taken hold in political science. Traditional political science methodologies that focus on the possession of resources miss the role that connections between actors play in motivating political behaviour (McClurg & Young 2011, p.40). Resources make sense only in the context of an actor's web of connections (*ibid.*), because as explained above networks of connections to others help actors access and mobilize resources to achieve goals, and can also constrain the use of resources. The networks approach to political behaviour focuses on how relationships with others affect beliefs, attitudes and actions. A growing empirical literature identifies the roles that social connections play in altering beliefs and behaviour across a variety of political activities (Siegel 2011, p.51). Causal pathways are varied and include direct influence, information transmission, norms of fairness, considerations of reputation, strategic complementarities, resource co-ordination, and safety in numbers (*ibid.*).

An important resource in network studies of political behaviour is information. Social networks are key to modern democracy due to the role of information in democratic politics (Sokhey & Djupe 2011, p.55). The networks literature views political participation as being conditioned on citizens learning about choices and participation procedures (Sokhey & Djupe 2011, p.56). Thus a key thread of the literature focuses on interpersonal political discussion networks (Huckfeldt & Sprague 1995; McClurg 2003). A good example in the organizational context is the finding that 'cross-cutting' political discussion at work (discussion with colleagues whose political views are different to one's own) increases political tolerance by increasing awareness of rationales for others' views (Mutz & Mondak 2006). The causal mechanism here involves access to information outside of an individual's usual experience, which may be more likely to occur at work because individuals often work with people they might not otherwise encounter or choose to associate with. Many studies have found larger, more politicized social networks – which present citizens with 'cheap' information sources – produce higher rates of political involvement (Sokhey & Djupe 2011, p.56). However, despite an established literature there is no consensus on how political discussion influences political behaviour. Ongoing areas of research include the role of individual attributes in moderating political discussion outcomes (Huckfeldt et al. 2014; Huckfeldt et al. 2000; Testa et al. 2014; Gerber et al. 2012; Eveland & Kleinman 2013); the role of discussion partners' attributes in moderating political discussion outcomes (Djupe & Calfano 2011; Newman 2014); whether disagreement in political discussion networks undermines political participation (Klofstad et al.

2013); the effects of network diversity on political behaviour (Quintelier et al. 2012; Erisen & Erisen 2012); the kinds of political information supplied by networks (Sokhey & McClurg 2012); whether political discussion networks are the result of choice or circumstance (Lazer et al. 2010); and structural features of political discussion networks (Song 2015). One problem is that causal mechanisms are not clearly understood, because a tendency towards exclusively quantitative research designs means network studies, like much political science research, suffers from a kind of 'abstracted empiricism' (Kilduff & Oh 2006, p.452). A greater focus on the historical and cultural context of behaviour in networks studies would help address this deficit (Kilduff & Oh 2006, pp.451–452), and this is where qualitative and ethnographical methods are particularly useful.

The social networks approach allows understanding of how the social composition of the democratic workplace structures employees' opportunities to participate in workplace governance and perhaps develop political skills. For example, according to Brass's theory of power in organizations, power comes from control over valuable resources. Location in workplace social networks can tell us about power and dependency relationships at work. Actors who have control over or access to valuable resources such as information may be better able to participate in decisions than those who don't. Personal characteristics such as education, experience or expertise may facilitate access to and control of information. The literature on employee voice has shown that location in workplace social networks affects individuals' levels of workplace engagement (Paukztat et al. 2011; Venkataramani et al. 2016). Employee voice, or speaking up, is an act of communication in which employees point out problems or make suggestions for improvements to other members of their organisations (Paukztat et al. 2011, p.303), and can be seen as an aspect of employee participation. Thus the structure and content of workplace relationships will affect an employees' ability to participate in decisions, and subsequent political outcomes. In the following chapters the social networks approach will be used in conjunction with qualitative methods to examine the mechanisms by which inequalities of influence over workplace decisions is related to political attitudes and behavior among members of a worker co-op.

Political Efficacy

An increase in political efficacy is a key mechanism that links workplace democracy to political participation in Pateman's theory (Pateman 1970, p.53). She argues that participation at work is necessary to foster and develop the psychological qualities (the sense of political efficacy) required for participation at the national level (Pateman 1970, p.50). Thus another aspect of the 'democratic character' is a high sense of political efficacy. The literature on political efficacy as a psychological construct and its relationship to political behaviour is extensive. Political efficacy has been defined

and measured in a number of ways. In her earlier work, following early definitions of the concept, Pateman refers to political efficacy as the 'feeling that individual action does have, or can have, an impact upon the political process' (Pateman 1970, p.46). She argues self-government in the workplace requires the belief that one can be self-governing, and confidence in one's ability to participate effectively, and to control one's life and environment (ibid.). This confidence spills over into the political sphere. Later Pateman expanded this definition to include three dimensions: the evaluative or normative (the belief that political participation is valuable), the psychological (the feeling of personal effectiveness), and the cognitive (knowledge and belief about the operation of the democratic political structure) (Pateman 1971, p.298). On this view workplace democracy leads to political participation not only by instilling self-confidence, but by inculcating norms of civic virtue, and by improving understanding of how politics works.

In the empirical literature, political efficacy was originally measured in the US context and considered a unidimensional concept (Morrell 2003, p.590). Later, theoretical and empirical evidence led to the conclusion that political efficacy consisted of two concepts: internal and external political efficacy (ibid.). Pattie, Seyd & Whiteley develop a measure of political efficacy in the UK context, based on a principle components analysis of Citizen Audit data collected in 2000, where respondents were asked a series questions measuring their attitudes towards the political system (Pattie et al. 2004, p.300). They find three factors which account for 50% of the variation in responses (Pattie et al. 2004, p.48). External political efficacy is concerned with the individual's relationship to the political system in general (Pattie et al. 2004, p.47). It measures the extent to which an individual feels the government takes any notice of his or her personal opinions, responds to majority opinions, and treats individuals fairly. Internal, collective efficacy measures the individual's sense of efficacy if he or she acts together with others. Internal, personal efficacy measures the individual's sense of personal competence and ability. Pattie et al. also draw a distinction between efficacy at the macro and micro levels (Pattie et al. 2004, p.113). Political efficacy at the macro political level concerns action to influence rules, laws and policies. Political efficacy at the micro political level concerns action to influence issues related to the actor's daily life, such as their medical care or their children's schooling.

In light of these distinctions it may seem likely that the educative effect of workplace democracy manifests itself in terms of internal political efficacy, by increasing an individual's confidence to undertake political participation both alone and in conjunction with others (cf. Pateman 1970, p.64). Indeed, using data collected in the Midwestern United States, Jian & Jeffres find that job autonomy is positively related to political participation via internal political efficacy; and decision-involvement at work is directly and positively associated with political participation (Jian & Jeffres 2008). However, their study is cross-sectional making causal direction impossible to determine, and

suffers from the 'black box' design criticized above. If interpersonal and contextual factors exclude some workers from effective participation at work it may harm confidence in their ability to participate and hurt perceptions of the democracy's effectiveness. Regarding external political efficacy, Schweizer argues that we shouldn't expect co-op workers to become more politically efficacious in representative liberal democracies because if workplace democracy were to create participatory attitudes workers would be more likely to regard the impersonal, remote institutions of liberal democracy as meaningless and therefore be less inclined to participate in them (Carter 2006, 422). Again, the democratic character thesis pays insufficient attention to the ways in which the dynamics of workplace democracy and its outcomes for workers are shaped by context.

Other empirical tests of the Pateman thesis have found that context matters. Greenberg tested the Pateman thesis in a mixed-methods comparative study between Plywood Co-ops in the Pacific North West United States and conventional plants in the same industry (Greenberg 1981). He found that the co-ops were populated with skilled blue-collar workers with small-business mentalities, who joined the co-ops for financial rather than political reasons (Greenberg 1981, pp.33–34). The experience of co-operation seemed to have deepened the philosophy of competitive individualism and personal responsibility workers brought with them to their workplace (Greenberg 1981, p.37). Greenberg attributed the origins of these views to American culture rather than co-operative culture (*ibid.*). Further, he found that workers in conventional firms had more egalitarian attitudes and greater faith in the abilities of other members of the working class than co-op workers (Greenberg 1981, p.40). He concluded that the market is a more powerful educative tool than the co-op experience (Greenberg 1981, p.41). In a later study, Greenberg refined his methodology to test how different forms of workplace participation were related to different forms of political participation in the same plywood co-ops (Greenberg et al. 1996). He found positive effects of direct democracy on campaign and community participation, and negative effects of representative participation on all forms of participation (Greenberg et al. 1996, p.316). Effects were mediated by individuals' feelings of personal control/mastery, and depended on whether co-operation is a positive or negative experience. Direct democracy was positively related to mastery in both successful and poorly performing firms, while representative democracy had no effects on mastery in successful firms and negative effects on mastery in struggling firms (Greenberg et al. 1996, pp.320–322). Again, the study used cross-sectional data, making direction of causation impossible to determine. Using data from a nationally representative panel survey of the Swedish population, Adman tested the effects of job autonomy (the level of control an individual has over her job) and face-to-face participation (which measures influence over and participation in collective decisions within an individual's immediate working group or sector within the workplace) on political participation (Adman 2008). He found no significant effects for the population as a whole, nor for low-resource population subgroups, such as women and blue-collar workers (Adman 2008, p.131).

However, he did not test participation in higher-level decisions; and he suggested that tests should be carried out in countries where socioeconomic and political participation inequalities are bigger than in Sweden (Adman 2008, p.133).

These studies indicate that effects of workplace democracy on individual political behaviour and attitudes will depend on internal firm context and external political, economic and cultural context. While the studies identify the importance of context to workplace democracy, they do not examine systematically the way context leads to different outcomes for different groups of workers within firms. They are also hamstrung by a focus on testing the theory that causal direction runs from workplace participation to political participation, so they pay insufficient attention to the possibility that political attitudes and behaviour shape work-related behaviours; or indeed, that causality might be reciprocal.

Henrik Bang's work on political participation leads to the possibility that due to a changed political context in democratic societies, the relationship between workplace democracy and political attitudes is not as straightforward as the Pateman thesis suggests. In his work Bang explains the observation that political participation is decreasing and citizens seem to be increasingly disaffected by politics (Li & Marsh 2008, p.249). His theory was developed in opposition to the arguments of Putnam (1995). Putnam's contention is that over recent decades we have witnessed a 'thinning' of social relations, measured by membership in civil society associations (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.326). For Putnam, the advantage of engagement in civil society is that it creates social capital in the form of social networks, shared norms and trust, which allow individuals to act effectively together to pursue collective goals (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.325). This collective engagement in social concerns also acts as a check on the power of government and ensures that government acts effectively. In Bang's view, Putnam's argument has two flawed premises (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.327). First, Putnam sees the goal of democracy as the creation of what Bang calls 'social community', i.e. shared interests and a collective normative commitment to a particular social order. Second, he sees the state and civil society as occupying two separate spheres, where the 'thick' social relations of civil society create and enforce collective norms and values, with concomitant arbitrary treatment for some; while the state plays a steering role, checking the unfairness of civil society and preventing a Hobbesian war of all against all. In return, civil society puts a check on 'heartless, intrusive government'. On this view lack of civic engagement threatens social cohesion, solidarity, and the shared normative basis of democracy on the one hand, and the effectiveness of government on the other; and the hero of Putnam's story is the civically engaged citizen. Echoing the civic voluntarism model and the views of Developmental Democrats, the value of workplace democracy would be its role in the creation of skilled and engaged citizens.

But according to Bang the problem of late modern democracy is not the 'uncivicness' of individuals, but the 'decoupling' of political authorities from 'laypeople'. In response to the increasing complexity of modern democracies, political authorities are excluding ordinary people from political decision-making (Li & Marsh 2008, pp.249–250). Bang presents an alternative conception of community to Putnam's. Whereas Putnam's social community is oriented towards the common good and the attainment of shared interests, Bang's 'political community' is oriented towards protecting rights and the solving of common concerns in pluralist societies (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.327). Putnam's argument precludes critical reflection on the tendency of the modern state to make 'experts' rather than 'ordinary' citizens central to policy making, problem solving and the authoritative determination of values (ibid.). Bang views late modern democracy as based on the principle of the autonomy of elites (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.329). The civic associations which Putnam sees as collections of ordinary citizens forming and pursuing their collective interests, Bang views as increasingly professionalized organizations populated by 'political sub-elites' who seek to make their voice heard in negotiations with elites in government (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.328). This shift in the make-up of civic organizations reflects a shift from 'government', where state elites respond directly to the demands of a civil society that is relatively homogeneous in terms of values (social community), to 'governance', where networks of governance crossing all established boundaries between levels of government (local, national and international), between public and private and between state and civil society attempt to solve continually shifting policy problems created by issues of pluralism and difference within society (political community) (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.329; Bang 2009, p.122).

Putnam and Putnam see political participation as binary, with citizens either engaged with political institutions or detached from them. Conversely, Bang identifies two 'new' types of political participant whose relationship to the state is not so clear-cut. He argues civic organizations within political community are the realm not of ordinary citizens pursuing collective interests but of 'Expert Citizens', who work with experts within state institutions to solve policy problems on a project basis. They are sometimes former grassroots activists, who are neither ideologically opposed to, nor especially supportive of, the state, but aim to make it an effective partner in addressing the issues with which they are concerned (Li & Marsh 2008, p.250). Expert Citizens have made politics their vocation. They are 'often new professionals, particularly in voluntary organizations, but not within political parties, trade unions or private firms, who feel they can do politics and make and implement policy as well as the old authorities' (ibid.). Expert Citizens are the product of the identity politics of New Social Movements, which work with the state to implement change rather than being in ideological opposition to it in the manner of traditional political or labour activists (Bang 2009, p.123). The problem with this state of affairs is that ordinary people are excluded from democratic decision-making processes (ibid.). So Putnam's conception of strong government and

active civil society is in reality more like the autonomy of elites practicing networked governance across all levels of society, and the marginalization of ordinary citizens who are not engaged in governance except via 'expert' advocates or representatives who profess to speak for them.

Unlike Putnam, Bang does not see ordinary people as completely disengaged from politics and civic participation. Based on his empirical work he identifies another new political participant alongside the Expert Citizen: the Everyday Maker. Everyday Makers are sceptical of the ability of big government to create social harmony and solve the problems of everyday social life which are ever-present and ever changing because of the presence of difference in pluralist society (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.331). They are also suspicious of Expert Citizens because they view them as pursuing their own interests (Li & Marsh 2008, p.251). Everyday Makers are driven to participate at the most local level possible by concrete experiences of government failures committed by formal organizations (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.336). They are not driven by self-interest, but by the everyday concern of empowering themselves in relation to networks and institutions of elite governance (ibid.). Unlike Expert Citizens, who are involved full-time in New Social Movements, Everyday Makers are sporadic participators. They might participate in the governance of their child's school or the arranging of community activities (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.334; 338). Everyday Makers do not possess a clear political ideology and seem to lack a feel for 'big government' (Bang & Sørensen 1999, pp.336–337). Like Expert Citizens, they are neither particularly supportive of nor opposed to the state (Li & Marsh 2008, p.250). Yet they see themselves as politically engaged because they draw a distinction between the 'big' politics of experts and the 'small' politics of everyday life (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.337). They do not want to be experts or politicians; they simply wish to exercise influence over their immediate political and communal lives through localized participation.

The democratic character thesis, like Putnam's theory, assumes 'traditional' political identities which are divided between those who are supportive of or work within existing democratic institutions, and those who disengaged from them. Bang's new forms of participant, Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens, neither place themselves in ideological opposition to the state, nor do they legitimize the state or necessarily participate using state-sponsored channels (Li & Marsh 2008, p.250). It depends on the context, and the particular political project being pursued, whether they work with or against political authorities (Bang 2009, p.122). The key benefit of participation for Everyday Makers is autonomy in their daily lives. On this view workplace democracy might provide value for workers not by teaching them to participate in big politics but by giving them more control over daily life. Thus it is not only good for well-being but is also a political good that is consciously valued by individuals. Given the ideological commitment to self-determination and the rejection of hierarchical bureaucracy characteristic of many New Social Movements (Carter 2003, pp.2–3), co-operative workers may be more likely to be Everyday Makers than workers in conventional firms,

because they value the autonomy that participatory governance gives them in their work lives and have chosen their workplace for that reason. Indeed, in his study of six Scottish worker co-ops Oliver found workers who were typical of members of New Social Movements – young, highly educated, and radical in their social attitudes – who had chosen their workplaces because they offered opportunities for participation and control (Carter 2006, p.417; Oliver 1984, p.41). It also seems unlikely that for Everyday Makers, who are sceptical about big politics, participation at work will increase traditional political participation.

Bang's theory suggests a more complex relationship between worker co-operatives and political participation than the Pateman thesis. Workers who value autonomy might self-select into co-ops. Such workers may be more likely to participate in society in ways that aren't traditional in Pateman's or Putnam's sense, but can nonetheless be seen as political. They may also be more likely to derive benefit from workplace participation than other workers. Whether workplace participation in turn affects political behaviour and attitudes will depend on the political identity of workers, and how they relate to the political system. The relationship between Bang's new political identities and workplace democracy is the subject of Chapter 4.

In summary, two hypothesized effects of democratic participation at work on political attitudes and behaviour have been identified in the literature. These are an increase in civic skills, and an increase in political efficacy, both of which are thought to lead to increased political participation. However, I have argued that, as with well-being outcomes, the relationship between workplace democracy and political outcomes will depend on personal, interpersonal and contextual factors, and their interactions.

Concluding remarks and expectations

Research across a range of disciplines has theorized the benefits of worker co-operatives for worker well-being and political participation. These theories are premised on the argument that democratic governance structures and worker ownership will lead to widespread, effectual worker participation in decision-making and the equalization of power at work. However, these theories have tended to underspecify the causal mechanisms by which the governance and ownership structures of democratic firms will lead to these benefits. They also pay insufficient attention to the micro- and macro-level contextual factors that shape workplace democracy and structure participation opportunities for workers. Outcomes of workplace democracy will not be equal across different groups of workers and between different firms. The social networks approach provides theories and methodologies that can illuminate the links between workplace democracy, the structure of interpersonal relationships at work, and outcomes for workers.

From my literature review I have derived three expectations which I test in an in-depth case study of a worker co-operative.

- 1) Democratic firms should not be seen as black boxes with uniform effects for all their workers. Personal resources, micro-level contextual factors and macro-level contextual factors will interact to shape the dynamics of workplace democracy and determine who can participate effectively in decisions and who is excluded from decision-making

The benefits of workplace democracy are premised on widespread and effectual worker participation in decisions. However, differences in personal resources will lead to differences in individual ability to participate effectively in decision-making. Relevant resources include things like education, expertise, and participation skills. A worker's ability to participate will also depend on firm-level context, of which social context is a key element. Networks of interpersonal relationships can be conceptualized as pipes or conduits through which resources flow. Location in workplace social networks is related to the ability to achieve goals via possession of, control of, and access to valued resources; and is related to constraints on autonomy in the form of social monitoring and the social regulation of behaviour. A worker's social network is structured by micro-level contextual factors which may limit or facilitate opportunities to form relationships and access resources via social ties, such as geography or work-group location. Further, an individual's personal and social resources are determined partly by the wider societal structuration of access to resources and opportunities to participate in society. Finally, macro-level contextual factors also shape the dynamics of workplace democracy. Market forces may limit participation and power equalization in a firm. For example, economic conditions and market competition may make it difficult for firms to invest in human capital to enable workers to participate.

Differences in opportunities to participate will mean the well-being and political participation outcomes of workplace democracy will differ across individuals, groups and firms.

- 2) The well-being outcomes of workplace democracy will depend on individual and contextual factors and their interaction

It has been argued that workplace democracy will increase job satisfaction. However, the relationship between working conditions and subjective well-being depends partly on workers' expectations. Expectations themselves are shaped by power processes within the firm. The social networks literature provides evidence on how social context shapes beliefs, attitudes, norms, wants, and preferences. They are also shaped by macro-level power processes. The well-being

outcomes of workplace democracy will therefore likely vary across groups of workers according to systematic variations in expectations.

Political theorists have justified workplace democracy using philosophical arguments about autonomy. Others have thought it would give workers more concrete control over their day-to-day work organization by reducing workplace hierarchy. Recent research suggests the harms of hierarchy are partly due to unequal, status-based social relationships which undermine feelings of autonomy for those lower down the hierarchy and subject them to the constraining authority of others. On these arguments, the reduction of workplace hierarchy is a key well-being benefit for workers. However, the effects of workplace democracy on worker autonomy will not be uniform for all workers. Micro-level context will affect worker autonomy. Individuals who differ in their personal and social resources will differ in their abilities to achieve goals such as influence workplace decisions. Further, the social resources possessed by co-operative workers might affect a firm's success by providing workers with the resources required for successful business management. This may in turn affect the autonomy the firm can provide to its workers, for example, by making wage increases possible. External contextual pressures such as the trend towards insecure work may counteract the well-being benefits of autonomy in daily work life, and economy-wide trends towards poor quality jobs may limit the ability of co-ops to improve job quality more generally.

Workplace democracy has been suggested as a way to improve economic security for workers by equalizing the material rewards from work and improving job security in economic downturns. However, a firm's ability to perform these functions will be shaped by macro-level context. A firm's size and economic success determines the extent to which it can insulate workers from market trends, and even then market competition and difficult economic conditions can undermine material rewards and job security in co-ops. Research has looked at how co-ops fair in competitive markets and tough economic conditions, but there has been no recent research that focuses on the effect of co-ops on job quality in the UK context. My research fills this gap.

- 3) The Pateman thesis is too simplistic. The relationship between workplace experience and political attitudes and behaviour is likely to depend on individual factors, contextual factors, and their interaction. Co-op workers will likely display characteristics of Bang's Everyday Makers.

Theories of the benefits of workplace democracy imply co-operatives are sites of political learning where workers can learn practical skills and efficacious attitudes which enable and encourage them to participate in political democracy. However, the relationship between workplace democracy and political behaviour is highly context-dependent. Political learning at work is contingent on

opportunity to participate successfully. Participation opportunities depend on personal and contextual factors. If some workers are excluded from participation due to personal and contextual factors this may have harmful effects on their political attitudes and behaviour. Further, the direction of causation may run in reverse. Selection processes may affect who participates at work, and who works for co-ops in the first place. Workers bring attitudes and skills to the workplace that determine whether or not they participate and whether they are able to attain positions of influence, and political attitudes may be relevant here. Individuals inclined to participate outside work may choose jobs that provide participatory opportunities at work.

External political and cultural context is also important to relationship between workplace democracy and political outcomes for workers. Bang argues that late modern democracy is characterised by the networked governance of experts working with authorities across all levels of society, rather than government by political institutions that are separate from civil society. Theories of the workplace as a site of political learning conceptualise civil society and politics as separate spheres in which individuals do or do not participate. But Bang argues the problem of late modern democracy is not the political disaffection of individuals, but the exclusion of ordinary people from participation in governance. He identifies a new type of political participant, the Everyday Maker, who seeks political autonomy in daily life through actions to influence day-to-day issues in their locality. Members of worker co-ops may be more likely to be Everyday Makers who have self-selected into their firms because they value workplace democracy as a source of autonomy in daily life. Everyday makers are not concerned with engagement in big politics, and so workplace democracy may be unlikely to spill over into traditional forms of participation as Pateman suggests. Co-ops may, however, influence the attitudes and behaviour of workers in more subtle ways, and this will depend on their identity which determines their existing orientations towards the political system.

The remainder of the thesis explores how outcomes for workers in co-operatives depend on individual differences, firm-level context, and wider political, economic and cultural context through an in-depth, mixed-methods case study of a worker co-operative in the UK retail sector. In the next chapter I outline my methodology. In Chapter 3 I use a social networks approach to examine the dynamics of workplace democracy. I show how some workers are influential while others are excluded from decision-making, and reveal the individual and contextual factors which cause this disparity. In Chapter 4 I show how the relationship between political behaviour and workplace experience depends on political identity. Some workers in the study firm display characteristics of Bang's new types of political participant. These workers are more likely to feel alienated from the external political system, and to value workplace democracy for political reasons. They are also more likely to be excluded from influence at work, and more likely to feel unhappy about their

exclusion. Influential workers tend to have pragmatic attitudes towards political democracy and workplace democracy. These intersecting patterns of influence and attitudes are a consequence of democratic degeneration in the co-op over time, whereby business-minded workers who are less concerned with the equalization of power at work have come to occupy positions of influence, while more politicized workers have become marginalized. I explore the internal and external factors that have precipitated degeneration. In Chapter 5 I show how well-being outcomes of workplace democracy depend on individual expectations, and how expectations are related to political identity and past experiences at work. Workers who have political identities akin to Bang's new participants have higher expectations of fairness at work, and are less satisfied with their work rewards as a result. Workers with high external political efficacy who are satisfied with the political system are also more satisfied with their work rewards, as they tend to view them pragmatically in relation to the economic difficulties of the firm. Longer-serving workers who experienced the study firm's past successes are hit harder by cuts to pay and benefits caused by difficult economic conditions, because their experience of successful co-operation had raised their expectations of work rewards.

Chapter 2: Methodology

Chapter 1 examined the theoretical arguments for the benefits of workplace democracy for workers. Beneficial outcomes for workers are hypothesized to depend on widespread and effective participation in decision-making. However, it is clear that the literature pays insufficient attention to the way in which micro- and macro-level context shapes decision-making processes within individual firms, and how opportunities to participate in decision-making will not be uniform across different groups of workers. The causal mechanisms by which workplace democracy leads to beneficial outcomes for workers are also not clear. I have argued that important causal mechanisms may lie at the level of the structure and context of workplace interpersonal relationships.

An in-depth, mixed-methods case study is the best way to contextualize workplace democracy and uncover mechanisms by which it affects well-being and political outcomes for workers. I use a combination of direct observation, survey research that incorporates both attribute and social network data, and in-depth qualitative interviews in a detailed case study of a worker co-operative in the UK retail sector.

Mixed-methods, case studies and the social networks approach

Research into the effects of workplace democracy on job quality and workers' political attitudes and behaviour tend to conceptualize the firm as a 'black box'. Workers' political attitudes and behaviours are correlated with either their organizational affiliations (Greenberg et al. 1996) or their subjective evaluations of workplace autonomy/involvement in decisions (Adman 2008; Jian & Jeffres 2008). Studies that look in depth at a particular organizations look at governance structures but do not focus on the personal and contextual factors that facilitate influence by some groups and exclude others from participation (Greenberg 1981; Maxwell-Elden 1981). Much of the existing research is cross-sectional, making the direction of causation impossible to determine, and where research is longitudinal the societal context makes generalization of results to the UK difficult

(Adman 2008). A mixed-methods approach allows the outcomes of workplace democracy to be contextualized, and provides evidence about causal mechanisms and therefore causal direction.

Organizations are essentially a form of social grouping. Social processes are therefore key to the effects of organizations on individual outcomes. Social network analysis allows the formulation and testing of hypotheses about the effect of interpersonal relationships on individual outcomes. However, much social network research faces the same criticism that has been levelled at political science research – that is borne out of an ‘abstracted empiricism’ which aims vainly at law-like generalizations and largely ignores the fact that social phenomena are highly context-dependent (Kilduff & Oh 2006, pp.451–452; Bellotti 2015, p.2). The ontology of cause and effect means that phenomena studied in social scientific research are necessarily viewed as interrelated. Phenomena are interrelated in both a spatial way, as interaction is required for causation, and a temporal way, as what happens in the present is dependent on what happened in the past and will affect what happens in the future (Bellotti 2015, p.2). Therefore causal mechanisms linking phenomena are highly contextual (ibid.). Quantitative social scientific research tends to account for mechanisms using abstracted models that are too general to take into account specific contextual dependencies, or tries to force data collected from multiple contexts into a single statistical model (ibid.). Positivism and post-positivism suggest that when an association is observed regularly it can be generalized to similar events in order to predict outcomes (Bellotti 2015, p.31). In opposition, Bhaskar’s critical realist understanding of social science argues that observed regularities are rarely generalizable because perfect regularities can only occur in closed systems, whereas natural and social systems are open systems (ibid.). In open systems mechanisms interfere with one another in an unpredictable way across different contexts, making prediction difficult (Bellotti 2015, p.32). However, according to the critical realist approach, individuals in open systems develop institutions which evolve and develop alongside agents’ own mental models, and provide stable conditions on which individuals base their behaviour (Bellotti 2015, p.32). This leads to a state of quasi-closure, where ‘demi-regularities’ that are temporary and context-depend can be observed and described (ibid.). Weick discusses this transient causal regularity in the context of organizations:

Organization never actually exists as an identifiable entity. What exists instead is organizing, “an ongoing process of mediation in which the objective world where we live and interact both frames what we do and supplies us with the material for our own reconstruction of it. What we think of as organization is what is left over as a trace or memory of yesterday’s organizing...” (Weick 2005, p.410).

Thus social science does not aim at universal laws but at context-dependent description of events and their underlying causal mechanisms (Bellotti 2015, pp.31–32). Further, social scientific evidence is not ‘discovered’ in the world, but produced by the methodological choices and theory-

laden interpretations of researchers (Kilduff & Oh 2006, p.451). If data are abstracted from cultural and historical context, researchers may be free to impose interpretations that are consistent with theory but discrepant from the social processes under study (ibid.). Although longitudinal research can help with this problem by establishing the temporal order of phenomena and so narrowing the range of plausible causal mechanisms in an observed association, longitudinal data abstracted from context is still subject to misinterpretation.

Bellotti argues that the critical realist philosophy of social science shares many commonalities with the networks approach (Bellotti 2015, p.35). The social network approach adds a layer of formalized contextual description to the study of social phenomena. Unlike traditional statistical modelling which assumes the independence of actors, network analysis acknowledges that actors are interrelated and that these relationships have causal effect on actors' outcomes. Relationships are therefore shorthand for a class of social causal mechanisms. But without adequate contextual description we cannot hope to understand these mechanisms. Thus Bellotti contends that social network studies are always case studies (Bellotti 2015, p.67). They deal with a local condition of causal relations, and any generalization is a working hypothesis which has to be transferred to another context with similar conditions (Bellotti 2015, p.68). Mechanisms that connect cause and effect are illuminated in in-depth qualitative studies of variation across cases (Bellotti 2015, p.68).

Qualitative approaches can easily be combined with quantitative approaches to help fill the gaps around context and mechanisms in network research (Bellotti 2015, p.3). Social network analysis has its origins in ethnography, and recent scholarship has begun to reintroduce the importance of culture into the discipline (Bellotti 2015, p.4). Bellotti argues that

When applied in different contexts, network analysis undoubtedly benefits from the combination of formal and qualitative accounts that enlighten each other and illustrate contextual mechanisms (ibid.).

As argued in Chapter 1, workplace democracy may affect outcomes via its shaping effect on interpersonal relationships, but this process will be highly context dependent. Therefore a mixed-methods approach incorporating quantitative network analysis, and the 'thick description' (Bellotti 2015, p.3) of qualitative interviewing and direct observation will allow me to explore how workplace democracy affects workers' well-being and political behaviour in the contemporary UK context.

Face-to-face interviews are commonly used in social network studies (Bellotti 2015, p.69). Interviews are useful for investigating the socially-dependent nature of actors' identities and the content of their interactions with specific others (ibid.). Qualitative interview data is not without interpretative problems, and does not provide 'objective' evidence about causal mechanisms. The view that knowledge exists as objective facts that have context-independent meaning and can be

elicited from the subject by a properly-designed qualitative interview is characteristic of the positivist outlook which gained currency in social science during the early 20th Century (Hammersley & Atkinson 1995, pp.3–10). Postmodern perspectives lead to the opposite understanding of the qualitative interview as a joint production of an account by interviewer and interviewee through the dynamic interaction between them (Alldred & Gillies 2005, pp.129–131). A novel world-view is created and should be understood as a product of the interview process, not as a transcendently-meaningful, factual account of an objective reality which has been elicited from the interviewee by questioning (ibid.). Seguing between these two perspectives is the critical realist approach, which holds that

Although mechanisms are intransitive, as they cannot be directly observed, qualitative approaches are useful to explore the traces they leave in the scripts that people use to describe actual events. Narrative accounts are claimed to provide an understanding of the subjective perceptions of causal mechanisms, directing the process of research towards plausible explanations: because social reality is pre-interpreted by social actors, theories of social phenomena are necessarily concept-dependent...This does not mean...that social reality is constructed through subjective discourse and that there are as many realities as there are people experiencing situations. What it does mean is that actors can give accounts of the demi-regularities that characterise events, although they may not be fully aware of what is happening or may misinterpret situations, rendering irrelevant the distinction between correct accounts and misguided ones (Bellotti 2015, p.34)

Moreover, in the present context the theories of the benefits of workplace democracy refer to the importance of workers' subjective perceptions of their work environment in determining outcomes, for example, the theory that changes in the psychosocial work environment affect well-being, or that feelings of autonomy influence political attitudes. Thus individuals' narrative accounts offer clues to mechanisms, but may also be the direct products of mechanisms.

Ethnographic observation has an even longer tradition in network research than qualitative interviewing (Bellotti 2015, p.71). One of the main advantages of ethnography and other forms of field observation in network studies is that they can give a more accurate picture of a network of interpersonal relationships than survey or interview-based methods, as the latter are subject to recall bias and other systematic errors (Bellotti 2015, pp.71–73). Their main disadvantage is that they are highly labour-intensive and time-consuming, which often limits the size and scope of a study.

There is a general lack of agreement on criteria by which to evaluate the quality of mixed-methods studies (Bellotti 2015, p.33). However, it is generally agreed that the key aim of mixed-methods research is methodological triangulation in order to increase the validity of interpretations:

Quantitative methods can reveal patterns of general sets of co-occurrences, while interpretative methods can be used to explore why those specific co-occurrences take place in a contingent moment (Bellotti 2015, p.34).

In order to explore the way in which workplace democracy is related to the well-being and political behaviour of workers, I conducted an in-depth case study of a worker co-operative in the UK retail sector. The study proceeded in four stages. First, a direct observation stage, which involved observing meetings, and talking to workers in their workplace and in informal social settings. This informed the design of the second stage of the study, which was a survey that collected data on workers' social networks, political attitudes and behaviour, and well-being. Quantitative analysis of the survey data informed the selection of participants for and the design of in-depth interviews with workers carried out in the third stage of the study. Finally, data from the previous stages was triangulated in order to produce the account of the relationship between workplace democracy, well-being and political participation that is documented in this thesis.

Study design

Case study selection

In recent years the 'John Lewis Model' of worker ownership and control has been proposed as a means to 'responsible capitalism', to improve job quality, and to reduce inequalities in pay and benefits (Mason 2012). Worker co-operatives in the UK occupy a range of industries. Co-operative models have also been proposed as an alternative approach to public service delivery for cash-strapped local authorities operating under austerity (Bibby 2013). However, it has been pointed out in public debate that the co-operative model is not a panacea, and that co-operation is not a ready-made recipe for success (Groom 2012). Understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of the co-operative model in different contexts is limited. This is partly because co-op research is fragmented (Simon 2013). Recent research is scattered across a range of topics and does not form a coherent body of work (ibid.). Further, much co-operative research is carried out in partnership with and is part-funded by co-operatives themselves, meaning subject matter tend to be practical and designed to support the co-operative movement, rather than addressing debates in society and the academic world (ibid.). The aim of my research was to conduct a case study that informed the debate about the benefits of the co-operative model in the contemporary UK context.

Short 'scoping' surveys were sent to a number of UK-based worker co-operatives located using the Co-operatives UK directory of co-ops (<http://www.uk.coop/directory>). The surveys elicited details about when a firm was established; number of employees; area of business; basic employee demographics; firm governance, ownership, and pay distribution; and the respondent's view of the benefits of co-operation for the firm and its employees. 8 firms responded. They were located in a

number of industries and sectors, including graphic design and printing; cycling training; scientific instrument manufacture; grocery retail; cycling retail; a paper merchant; and social care. Firms ranged in size from 13 to 158 employees. The oldest firm was established in 1971 and the most recent in 2009. Governance structures varied from direct democratic structures involving all workers in consensus decision-making to representative structures involving elected managers. 3 firms had flat hourly pay rates for all members. Additionally, some firms had profit-sharing schemes for members, and in one firm members accrued extra benefits depending on years of service. 6 of 8 firms employed hired, non-member labour. Only 2 of those employed non-members on the same contractual terms (excluding ownership and control rights) as members.

The firm selected for the case study is in the bike retail industry. It was selected for four reasons. First, being in the retail industry it is an excellent site to address recent debates about co-operation as a solution to poor job quality in the UK retail sector. The retail sector is known for poor quality jobs, characterised by low pay, contingent contracts, underemployment, and little opportunity for skill development or career progression (Besen-Cassino 2013; Williams & Connell 2010). Second, the firm is the second largest worker co-operative in the UK in terms of employee numbers. Most co-operatives in the UK are small businesses. If worker co-operatives are to present a general solution to poor job quality they must be scalable, so it is important to examine the outcomes of co-operation beyond small firms. Third, the firm was established due to the alternative political ideologies of its founding members, as described by one long-serving member:

Well I think it started as a pretty mad and sort of fairly irresponsible kind of thing, and that we had kind of various- we were all very young. And we had various sort of ideological dreams of slightly different natures...We did have various ideas about how things should be different in the world and we did try to think about them. And one of them was about what pay and work should be like, and we did try sort of job rotations. Everybody did all the jobs, and we did try equal pay, and then we tried to pay according to need. And then- no, we tried paying according to need first, and then we tried equal pay. And then we tried pay according to seniority only. So there was this idea that- that sort of...hierarchies were about power, not efficiency. (Senior manager in the study firm)

The presence of such an ideology makes the firm a good site for exploring issues surrounding the co-operative ethos and the expectations of members, and also means that the co-op has (or at least had) as a motivating ideal the kind of autonomy that has been identified as important to political spill over. Further, it is an ideology associated with New Social Movements and the new political identities described by Bang. In spite of its founding ideology, the study firm is a good site because of a relative lack of self-selection bias in its employee demographics. Employees of co-ops often choose their job because of their political beliefs. However, the Managing Director of the firm

informed me that most employees choose to work there because of an interest in cycling or experience working with bikes, rather than an interest in co-operation. Indeed, in the main survey workers were asked why they chose to work for their firm, and only 32% of respondents cited it being a worker co-operative as a motivating factor. Thus the workforce displays demographic variation that allows the comparison of the effects of workplace democracy across different subgroups within the firm, and may be more politically representative of the general population than other worker co-operatives (this issue is explored in Chapter 4). Compare the view a representative of the grocery retail co-op on the benefits of co-operation for workers:

Many of us are here because it's a co-op. We're not interested in working for a boss, we love the sense of ownership and doing it for ourselves that being part of a co-op brings.
(Co-op Member, Unicorn Grocery)

Finally, the co-op had shop branches that were conveniently located for the observation stage of the study and the piloting of questionnaires.

The study firm

The study firm is a medium-sized worker co-operative in the bike retail industry. At the time of the study it had 158 employees located across 7 branches in 6 different UK cities, as well as a Head Office, and a warehouse/distribution centre.

The structure of the co-operative is as follows.

Governance

The study firm has a representative democratic structure. It is governed through a Board of Directors, made up of three types of Director: elected Employee Directors, Executive Directors, and an external Non-Executive Director. Executive Directors, including the Managing Director are the most senior managers. The Non-Executive Director is appointed by the board to bring outside knowledge and skills to the business and the decision-making process. Employee Directors are elected by all members. Any member can stand as a candidate for Employee Director at an election held at the Annual General Meeting (AGM). Employee Directors serve for fixed terms of 1 year. Elected Employee Directors outnumber Executive Directors on the Board by 5 to 4, and so in theory they always have the decisive vote on decisions.

Information sharing in the firm is extensive. The Board meets on a regular basis and makes decisions relating to the running of the business. After every Board Meeting the Co-operative's Secretary circulates a newsletter which gives members an overview of the issues dealt with by the Board, as well as giving more general background information to the decisions made. Employees

may give feedback and proposals to the Board of Directors via a feedback form attached to the regular Board 'newsletter'. The form is returned to the Secretary or any Director for consideration by the Board. Information about the state of the business is shared with workers at quarterly 'Company Report Meetings'. An online staff forum is used for sharing information, raising issues and solving problems. The firm prides itself on an 'open access management' philosophy. Employees with questions, proposals or concerns are encouraged to approach any Director to discuss them.

Certain decisions affecting the business are put to vote at the AGM or put to member ballot. All members have equal voting rights. Each member has one vote for decisions at the AGM, and for other decisions that are put to ballot throughout the year. Ballots have been held for changes to the membership rules, for instance, reducing the qualification period for co-op membership from 2 years to 1 year, introducing a Share Incentive Plan, and agreeing member bonus payments. At the AGM the Board presents the audited accounts for the previous year and makes a presentation detailing its current plans for the business. There is an opportunity for members to ask questions and comment on the presentation. Auditors, the co-op's Secretary, and the Chairperson are also formally appointed at the AGM. Full members have the right to call a general meeting or a ballot at any time. They also have the right to remove any Director by majority vote, although this has not happened in the firm's history.

In addition to the AGM, an Executive Director and an Employee Director visit each branch once a quarter and each makes a short presentation. The Executive Director gives details of current projects, upcoming events, as well as giving a general picture of how the company is performing. The Employee Director updates the meeting on recent Board decisions. There is an opportunity for issues to be raised and for general interaction between workers and senior management. These Quarterly meetings are informal events - although all staff are encouraged to attend - and are intended to provide a channel for giving information and for getting feedback on many aspects of the business.

Membership of the co-op

Employees are invited to join the Co-op after one year's continuous employment, at which point they can buy a single non-transferable voting share (current price £2.50). Whilst almost all employees become co-op members, they are not obliged to.

At the time of the study 110 of the 158 employees were members. The remaining employees had been employed for less than one year and were not yet eligible for membership. They were employed on standard contracts, and they could not attend the AGM or vote in ballots. They were, however, encouraged to attend and participate in quarterly Company Report Meetings. The firm

makes use of temporary labour to deal with seasonal spikes in demand. Many temporary staff will leave before becoming co-op members.

If the business performs exceptionally well over the short term, for example, over a given quarter, employees receive a pay supplement. If the firm exceeds profit targets set by the Board for a financial year, members are eligible to an equal pro-rata share of an annual cash bonus. Members can acquire shares in the co-operative via the Share Incentive Plan (SIP). Share value is indexed to the value of the company, and members receive an equal number of shares in the business per year of service. On leaving the Co-op, members lose their voting and ownership shares. Shares issued under the SIP are purchased back by the co-op.

The maximum allowable pay differential between the lowest and highest paid worker in the firm is 1:8. At the time of study the pay differential between the lowest paid worker and the Managing Director was 1:5.

Firm context: the UK cycling retail industry

The study was conducted between March 2014 and September 2014. At that time, the UK retail sector had begun to emerge from the prolonged recession that followed the 2008 global financial crisis.

In 2014 the UK retail sector was worth £180 billion (Rhodes 2015, p.4). This represented 11.8% of UK total output and 15.8% of total employment (ibid.). In 2007 the retail sector grew faster than the UK economy as a whole (Rhodes 2015, p.5). Following the 2008 financial crisis, the retail sector declined more quickly and more deeply than the economy as a whole (ibid). As the economy began to recover in 2013, the retail sector grew more quickly than the rest of the economy (ibid.).

In 2014 the UK cycling retail industry had a sales value of £771 million (Harker 2015). 3.6 million bikes were sold in the UK in 2014, representing 18% of the EU market (ibid.). While sales were up from 2013, this was due to a slump that year, and sales of bikes had largely flatlined in UK in the 10 years to 2014 (ibid).

The nature of UK retail is changing as online shopping becomes increasingly popular (Select Committee for Business Innovation and Skills 2014). Online sales grew steadily between 2007 and 2014 (Rhodes 2015, p.7). This is partly due to the growth in online businesses, though high street stores have also branched into online retail (ibid.). The move to online shopping has damaged some high street businesses (Rhodes 2015, p.8)

Firm context: the UK worker co-operative sector

Including employee trusts, there are 304 worker co-ops in the UK in 2016 with a combined turnover of £10.5bn (Co-operatives UK 2016b). Excluding employee trusts there are 287 worker co-ops with a turnover of £229m (ibid.). Of the latter, 56 are in the retail sector (Co-operatives UK 2016a).

Stage 1: Direct observation and piloting

Researchers have used fieldwork methods to inform social network analysis, for example, using ethnographic observation to inform network survey questions (Oliver 2012, p.44). Bernard argues that fieldwork can involve three very different roles: complete participant; participant observer; and complete observer (Bernard 2006, p.347). The ethnographic field researcher occupies the second role, perhaps leaning more toward observer (participating observer) or more toward participant (observing participant) (Borgatti 2015). In my study I undertook fieldwork mainly in the third role, in the form of direct observation. Bernard defines direct observation as 'watching people and recording their behaviour on the spot' to find out what people *actually* do (as opposed to qualitative interviewing which uncovers what people *think* they do) (Bernard 2006, p.413). In order to gain an understanding of decision-making processes in the firm, the types of issues that were discussed, and the way workers participated in decisions, I observed quarterly Company Report Meetings at 5 of the firm's 7 shops. I also had informal chats with workers and managers about their work while wandering around their workplaces. The latter activity took the form of reactive observation (ibid.) because staff and management were aware of both my presence and my purpose. I leaned slightly towards participant observer when I joined workers for social events in the pub following Company Report Meetings, which were opportunities to learn more about workers, their work and their feelings about it. I took detailed field notes during observation and shortly following informal discussions with workers. I also interviewed the firm's Managing Director, the manager of the firm's Manchester branch, and a shop assistant from the Manchester branch with the aim of better understanding decision-making in the firm and the firm's co-operative structure. Interviews were digitally recorded and later transcribed. Through direct observation I found that participation took place mainly via informal communication with managers and representatives, and less often via formal avenues such as meetings and suggestion schemes. I found that workers also commonly discussed issues among themselves.

The observation stage informed the design of the social network measure of influence over decisions and the questionnaire items measuring feelings of influence over workplace decision-making, both of which are detailed in Chapter 3. Workers in the firm often approached one another

informally for help about issues, rather than raise them in formal settings or through formal channels, and so a networks approach based on a social capital perspective is well-suited to measuring influence in the firm (see Chapter 3). Both questions divide issues in the firm into four types, representing four decision-making 'levels': operational; tactical; strategic; and pay and benefits. The network questions collect data about networks of influence over each type of issue, and the influence items collect data about workers' feelings of influence over each type of issue. During observation, interviews and informal chats I collected examples of each type of issue which were used in the question wording to make the questions clearer to respondents.

I piloted the questionnaire with 7 workers from the Manchester branch, and then interviewed them collectively to gain feedback on the questionnaire and check their understanding of the questions. As a result I made a number of changes to the questionnaire. I shortened it in order to increase response rate (Edwards et al. 2002, p.2). I switched from a four point forced-choice Likert scale to a five point Likert scale which allowed workers to express ambivalent responses to some questions. In the network questions I switched from a free recall format, where respondents are asked to write down the names of those they interact with, to a roster format, where respondents are presented with a list of everyone in the organization and asked to tick off the names of those they interact with. Respondents in the pilot were concerned they would not be able to recall everyone they interacted with at work; indeed, recall error is a common problem with free recall designs in network research (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.47). Roster formats mitigate this problem, but in this case resulted in a daunting-looking questionnaire which may have negatively influenced response rates.

Stage 2: Survey research

Social networks study design

There are two approaches to social network research design which are associated with different methodological choices in data collection and analysis. Whole network designs study the set of ties among all pairs of actors in a given set (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.28). The set is specified according to theoretical criteria about the relevant boundaries of the network. For example, a whole network might consist of all pupils in a classroom, all employees in a workplace, or all members of a sports team. In ego network designs, there is a set of focal actors called 'egos' and their ties to others, called 'alters' are assessed, but the alters are not necessarily among the set of egos (ibid.). That is, individuals are asked to name which alters they have particular relationships with, but data about the networks of those alters is not necessarily collected, meaning we gain a picture which is limited to the personal networks of each ego. Whole network designs allow researchers to employ the full

set of network concepts and techniques, which often assume that the entire network is available (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.29). One limitation of whole network designs is that they are not very reliable under missing data. With relational data, a small number of missing actors can make a big difference to the distribution of social ties in the network, affecting the reliability of the data. A response rate of at least 80% is sometimes used as a rule of thumb for reliability, but there is no conclusive evidence on the subject. The impact of missing data on the reliability of network data can vary with the characteristics of the network under study, as well as with the particular network measures being used (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.37). Ego network designs can be less sensitive to missing data, as they focus on the effects of an individual's direct social ties. They are, however, sensitive to response bias or error.

This study attempted to collect data from all workers in the study firm to enable the full range of social network measures to be employed in data analysis. However, a response rate to the network questions of 64.6% (n=102) meant that degree-centrality based ego network measures were used as they have been found to be relatively robust under missing data (Borgatti et al. 2006). Response rate will be discussed further below.

Administering the survey

It has been suggested that mixed-mode surveys combine the strengths of different survey formats, and there is evidence that they can increase response rates (Fan & Yan 2010, p.135). Therefore the survey was administered in two formats to try to maximize response rate. Online surveys were emailed to staff via branch and department managers. Paper surveys were distributed to staff via their branch/department manager.

A number of strategies have been found to relate to survey response rates, including personalization, monetary incentives, questionnaire length, follow-up contact with non-respondents, saying that the sponsor will benefit if participants return questionnaires, and saying that society will benefit if participants return questionnaires (Edwards et al. 2002, p.2; Fan & Yan 2010, p.135). Paper questionnaires were accompanied with a personally addressed letter to the respondent explaining the purpose of the study, that their response would benefit my doctoral research, and that it would benefit research into co-operatives and their benefits for society. The letter was printed on University of Manchester headed paper, and association with the University was made clear in the letter, as it has been found that people are more likely to complete surveys from Universities than from other organizations (Edwards et al. 2002, p.4; Fan & Yan 2010, p.133). Question display has been found to affect response rate to web surveys (Fan & Yan 2010, p.134), and so effort was made to format questions, especially network questions, in an accessible way. A hyperlink to the web survey was emailed to workers via branch/department managers. The same

information contained in the letter that accompanied the paper survey was included in the email, although emails were not personalized. Respondents were offered a non-monetary incentive for completing the survey in the form of a prize draw for a £50 gift voucher. Follow-up contact with non-respondents was made twice – once through branch/department managers and once via an email from the Managing Director. Finally, I travelled to each branch/department of the firm and asked workers to complete questionnaires in person.

Quantitative data analysis techniques

Multiple linear regression models of quantitative survey data were fitted in UCINET 6 using the node level regression routine (Borgatti et al. 2002). This routine calculates p-values for regression coefficients using permutation tests. Classical sampling tests are based on sampling theory and assume that a sample of cases is drawn via a probability sample from a population (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.126). If a sample is not random then cases may not be independent and there may be a problem with autocorrelation of errors. This increases the chance of a Type 1 error (rejecting a true null hypothesis). Classical sampling tests are not suitable when a sample is biased, or for testing whole network hypothesis because network hypotheses are based on the interdependence of cases. The suitability of classical significance tests for ego network hypotheses depends on both the sampling technique used to select cases and whether the ego network measures used can be reasonably thought of as independent across cases. My sample is from a single organization and is not random. Permutation testing allows the calculation of p-values when cases are interdependent. Permutation testing compares the observed correlation between two variables against the distribution of correlations that one could obtain if the two variables were independent of one another (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.127). It does this by randomly assigning the observed values of the dependent variable to cases, and calculating the correlation between independent and dependent variables. This is done many thousands of times to obtain a distribution of correlations when the variables are assigned independently of one another. The original correlation is compared to this distribution to determine the chances of observing a correlation as extreme when the variables are assigned independently of each other. The p-values represent this chance.

Some variables were derived using principle components analysis in SPSS 21 (IBM Corp. 2012). Principle components analysis can be seen as a special case of factor analysis (Jolliffe 2002, p.150), and is used to reduce the dimensionality of a data set consisting of a large number of interrelated variables, while retaining as much as possible of the variation present in the data set (Jolliffe 2002, p.1). It can be seen as a way to reduce variables to factors representing underlying constructs, the meaning of which must be interpreted in relation to theory.

Survey response

Survey response rate was 64.6% (n=102). In order to test whether response was biased towards any subgroup within the firm I obtained limited demographic data on employees from the firm's HR department, and a multiple linear regression was fitted in UCINET 6 with response to the survey as the dependent variable (coded 1 for responded and 0 for did not respond). Note that while a binary dependent variable cannot be regressed using ordinary least squares multiple linear regression, it is legitimate to do so when significance values are calculated using permutation tests, so the p-values for each coefficient are valid and interpretable (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.131). Regression co-efficients are interpreted in the same way as in OLS multiple linear regression, and cannot be converted to odds in the same way as binary logistic regression coefficients (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.132). Age, tenure, branch/department (with the firm's largest branch as the contrast class) and occupational group (with shop sales assistants and Head Office clerical workers as the contrast class) were included as predictors in the model. The modelling results are shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Multiple linear regression model of the predictors of survey response

DV: Responded to survey

	Standardized Beta	P-value
Intercept	0	0
Age	-0.074	0.580
Tenure	-0.022	0.873
Aberdeen	-0.091	0.383
Canonmills	0.040	0.680
Head Office	-0.096	0.466
Leeds	0.170	0.065
Manchester	0.058	0.569
Newcastle	0.049	0.611
Sheffield	0.165	0.080
Warehouse	-0.130	0.256
Manager/ Professional worker	0.328	0.019
Manual worker	-0.089	0.440
R²		0.210
P-value		0.047

The model explains 21% of the variance in response ($p < 0.05$). Being a manager/professional worker ($p < 0.05$) and working in the Sheffield ($p < 0.10$) and Leeds ($p < 0.10$) branches are significant positive predictors of survey response. Thus it should be noted as a limitation of the

study that survey response is biased towards managers and staff in the Leeds and Sheffield branches.

I also compared the mean indegree centrality of respondents with the mean indegree centrality of non-respondents. Indegree centrality is an ego network measure of popularity, importance, influence or power in a network and is used extensively in Chapters 3 to 5. If the mean indegree of respondents is higher than the mean indegree of non-respondents it suggests the important actors in the network have tended to respond. The mean indegree of respondents was 4.1 while for non-respondents it was 2.0, suggesting that more important actors did indeed tend to respond.

Stage 3: in-depth interviews

Interview design

Kvale defines the qualitative interviewing process in seven stages: thematising, designing, interviewing, transcribing, analysing, verifying and reporting (Kvale 1996, p.88). The thematising stage contains two problems. First, arriving at a topic to investigate; and second, conceptualizing this topic in a way that is fruitful for qualitative investigation (ibid.) In order to conceptualize the topic, multiple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses outlined in Chapters 3 to 5, and the modelling results were used in conjunction with theory to define a set of questions to be explored in qualitative interviews. Thus regression modelling was used to 'play' with data and uncover underlying patterns (Bellotti 2015, p.35) which could be integrated with qualitative data in order to test theories of the relationship between workplace democracy and worker outcomes.

Interviews were designed to test hypotheses as well as shed light on causal mechanisms. Kvale distinguishes between a 'hypothesis-testing' and an 'explorative' model of interviewing (Kvale 1996, p.97). The former leads to a more structured interview that aims to test a detailed hypothesis based on existing academic research or theory. The latter is used to introduce a topic, and to find new angles on that topic (Kvale 1996, pp.96–97). The boundary between the two is blurred. My aim was to test existing theories of how workplace democracy relates to worker outcomes, but also to uncover new evidence about the mechanisms linking work, well-being and political behaviour. Narrative accounts can provide an understanding of subjective perceptions of causal mechanisms, and direct the process of research towards plausible explanations (Bellotti 2015, p.34). I therefore focused on collecting narrative data. To allow the interviewee to construct their own account of a topic, interviews must be designed and conducted in a way that does not encourage the interviewee to confirm initial hypotheses (Alldred & Gillies 2005, pp.148–150). Interviews should be

used to explore, not to interrogate (Bernard & Ryan 2010, p.268). Flick argues that narratives allow the researcher to approach the interviewee's experiential world in a more comprehensive way, this world being structured in itself (Flick 2002, p.96). This minimises the interviewer's formative impact on the data.

I used semi-structured interviewing to elicit narratives from interviewees. Semi-structured interviews allow the subject's viewpoints to be expressed in a relatively openly designed interview situation (Flick 2002, p.74). Mason suggests that in semi-structured interviews

The researcher has a number of topics, themes or issues which they wish to cover, or a set of starting points for discussion, or specific stories which they wish the interviewee to tell (Mason 2002, p.64).

I created an interview guide with questions and prompts organized in a thematic fashion. I focused on what Mason calls 'situational questions', which are questions that acknowledge that knowledge is contextual and try and flesh out this context as much as possible by, for example, asking people to talk through specific experiences in their lives rather than asking them what they 'would do' or have 'generally done' under certain circumstances (ibid.).

When designing qualitative interviews thought must be given to what Flick calls 'steering and mediation' (Flick 2002, p.92). This is the task of mediating between the input of the interview guide and the aim of the research on the one hand, and the interviewee's style of presentation on the other. The interviewer must orchestrate an interaction which moves easily and painlessly between topics and questions (Mason 2002, p.73). I used a funnel approach, beginning with general 'grand tour' questions before moving to questions about specifics (Bellotti 2015, p.82). I opened interviews by asking respondents to talk to me about how they felt about their job. The interviewee was not shown the interview guide, and I avoided asking direct questions; rather, I tried to get the respondent on topic and then guided them as infrequently as possible using neutral prompts, such as repeating their exact words and asking them what they meant by them, asking them to expand on them, or asking for concrete examples of what they were referring to (ibid.) This helped minimize my formative impact on the narrative. I took paper notes of the subjects touched upon by the interviewee, which allowed me to prompt them about topics in the interview guide without repetition. All interviews were recorded digitally.

In order to hone these techniques I undertook a pilot interview with a shop assistant from the firm's Manchester branch.

Participant selection

It is complicated to combine interviews with whole network research (Bellotti 2015, p.70). Due to the demands of conducting interviews, many mixed-methods network studies collect qualitative information on only a fraction of the sample covered by the research (ibid.). Usually the best that can be done is to interview a subsample of individuals selected due to the relevance of their attributes or network position to the topic under study (ibid.). Interview participants were selected using purposive sampling based on theoretical criteria, and for convenience. At the end of the survey questionnaire respondents were asked to indicate their willingness to take part in an interview, giving a pool of potential participants. Workers' willingness to participate, as well as logistical difficulties in conducting interviews with workers located across the UK, made it impossible to select a representative sample of workers according to any probability sampling strategy. Rather, I selected interviewees based on two criteria. First, I tried to cover a full range of demographic attributes in the firm, selecting a number of participants from each occupational group, age range, and branch/department of the firm. While this was not based on probability sampling, I aimed to be as representative of worker demographics as possible. Second, I selected participants in order to maximize variance in attributes that were relevant for the testing of the study hypotheses (Bellotti 2015, p.83). So for example, I selected participants who were in the network core and who were on the periphery (see Chapter 3); and participants with high, low and middling levels external political efficacy (see Chapter 4).

Because interview participants are not drawn from a representative sample of workers it cannot be assumed that results are generalizable to the rest of the firm's workers (Bellotti 2015, p.70). This must be acknowledged as a limitation of the data.

Conducting interviews

Interviews were conducted face-to-face at the participants' places of work. In total 35 interviews were conducted totalling 17 hours in length.

Qualitative data analysis

Yin argues that case studies are generalizable to theoretical propositions and not to populations or universes (Easton 2010, p.126). Case studies do not represent a 'sample', and the researcher's goal is to expand upon and generalize theories (analytical generalization) rather than to make statistical generalizations (ibid). For critical realists, this expansion of theory is achieved by identifying the

causal mechanisms at work under particular contingent conditions (ibid.). Critical realists seek the explanation that is most consistent with the data (ibid.). Explanation is developed through a process of retrodution, a 'metaprocess the outcome of which is the identification of mechanisms that explain what caused particular events to occur' (Easton 2010, p.124). Retrodution involves visiting and revisiting the data to continue to ask the question 'why?' until an acceptable explanation is arrived at (ibid.). Thus a critical realist understanding of case study research implies that qualitative data analysis is an iterative process.

Strauss and Corbin argue that analysing qualitative data

...involves interacting with data (analysis) using techniques such as asking questions about the data, making comparisons between data, and so on, and in doing so, deriving concepts to stand for those data, then developing those concepts in terms of their properties and dimensions (Strauss & Corbin 2008, p.66).

Some theorists have argued that qualitative data analysis in its purest form is led by an inductive approach, where patterns, themes and categories of analysis emerge from the data rather than being imposed on them prior to data collection and analysis (Srivastava & Hopwood 2009, p.77). Grounded theory is an example of an approach rooted in such a belief (Bernard & Ryan 2010, pp.265–286). However, Srivastava & Hopwood argue that

...patterns, themes, and categories do not emerge on their own. They are driven by what the inquirer wants to know and how the inquirer interprets what the data are telling her or him according to subscribed theoretical frameworks, subjective perspectives, ontological and epistemological positions, and intuitive field understandings. In short, rather than being an objectivist application of analysis procedures, the process is highly reflexive (Srivastava & Hopwood 2009, p.77).

Further, data is shaped by the subjectivities of study participants, and by the interactions between researcher and participants. Critical realists acknowledge these points by reference to the 'double hermeneutic' - that is, the idea that social research is collected from people as well as from material things (Easton 2010, p.124), and that social science is therefore about achieving the researcher's understanding of the subject's understanding (Marsh et al. 2007, p.25). For Srivastava & Hopwood qualitative data analysis involves 'reflexive iteration' (see Srivastava & Hopwood 2009, pp.77–78). Data is visited and revisited as new questions emerge, new connections are unearthed, and a deeper and more refined understanding of the data is progressively achieved. All the while the

researcher is careful to interrogate the shaping effects on the analysis of her own subjectivity, the subjectivities of participants, and the interplay between the two.

With this understanding in mind I analysed my qualitative interview data iteratively. I read through the interviews in detail and coded the data thematically according to the theories I am testing and the questions raised by my quantitative data analysis. For example, if an interviewee talked about why they hated their job, I organized concepts from that section of their narrative under the category of the determinants of job satisfaction. I made use of qualitative data analysis tools and techniques including asking questions of the data, making comparisons between narratives, and looking at the language used by respondents (Strauss & Corbin 2008, pp.77–85). Using concepts derived from the qualitative data in conjunction with my quantitative models I developed and revised existing theories of the links between workplace democracy, well-being and political participation. I revisited the qualitative data and revised and updated both the coding and my theoretical frameworks iteratively as my understanding of the data developed. Thus theory building and testing continued all the way to the end of my project (Bernard & Ryan 2010, p.271).

Ethical Issues

Social network research presents additional ethical issues compared with other social scientific research. Network research in a workplace setting poses even greater ethical risks.

First, in a network study, anonymity at the data collection stage is not possible (Borgatti & Molina 2003, p.338). A researcher must be able to identify all participants in order to record social relationships between them. Thus the researcher must make clear to the respondent who will see the data and what can reasonably be predicted to happen to the respondent as a result of someone seeing their responses (ibid.).

Second, non-participation by a subject does not necessarily mean that that subject is not included in the study (Borgatti & Molina 2003, p.339). Subjects who do respond may identify a non-respondent as someone whom they have a relationship with. One solution is to remove all non-respondents from the analysis. However, where network measures are sensitive to non-response this can lead to poor quality data (ibid.).

Third, there is an issue relating to the kind of relationships being studied, and the fact that the behaviour of workers is open to scrutiny by management (ibid.). Respondents could face disciplinary repercussions as a result of behavioural information revealed in a study, or may be

treated differently by their colleagues or superiors. For example, I originally intended to collect data on negative, interpersonal conflict ties (Labianca et al. 1998) in the study firm, but decided against this due to ethical considerations and concerns raised by employees during the pilot about the consequences of revealing such information.

Fourth, there is the potential for negative reputational consequences for a firm if information about its performance is published.

Finally, study participants may not fully understand the implications of participation in network research. Most people have experience of completing surveys in a variety of contexts, and the implications of disclosing personal information are increasingly in the public consciousness (Borgatti & Molina 2003, p.341). But most people are unfamiliar with network research, and so they may not be able to imagine how they will feel when details of their social relations and relative importance in interpersonal networks are revealed in the research (ibid.). This is difficult to make clear to respondents prior to data collection.

Ethical issues in network research lead to hazards in both the academic and workplace contexts (Borgatti & Molina 2003, p.342). In the academic context, hazards include non-consent by participants included in a study, and potential negative impacts on participation in future network studies (Borgatti & Molina 2003, pp.342–344). In the workplace context hazards include negative repercussions such as dismissal for study participants, and providing firms with wrong information on which to base decisions if a researcher is acting as a consultant and removes non-respondents from data for ethical reasons (Borgatti & Molina 2003, pp.344–345).

I took numerous steps to address these issues. I made the aims of the research clear to senior management who okayed the study, and assured them that the firm would not be identified explicitly, and that no sensitive information about the firm's business would be published. I made the purpose of the study clear to all respondents, and assured them that data would be anonymized and that no data would be shared with their colleagues or with management. I required all respondents to give written consent to participation in the study. I removed non-respondents from the network data, and focused on degree centrality-based network measures which are relatively insensitive to missing data in order to minimize the impact on data quality. Finally, I stored all qualitative and quantitative data securely on password-protected, encrypted storage devices.

Chapter 3: The dynamics of workplace democracy: internal structure and external context

Workplace democracy has been seen as means of redistributing power over work-life, either for intrinsic moral reasons, or instrumental reasons in order to improve well-being or political outcomes for workers. A prerequisite for this is widespread and effective participation in decisions, which proponents of workplace democracy often assume will come about with changes in governance and ownership structures. In Chapter 1 I argued democratic firms should not be seen as 'black boxes' with uniform effects on their workers. Rather, factors internal and external to the firm shape democratic participation in decision-making. Workers will not have equal abilities or opportunities to participate and exert influence over decisions. Therefore the outcomes of workplace democracy will differ for different groups within the firm. Using attribute data, social network data and interview data from the study firm, this chapter explores how individual differences, firm-level context and external contextual factors affect power-processes in worker co-operatives. I will ask to what extent the redistribution of power over work-life through co-operation is possible for isolated firms in the UK context.

As I argued in Chapter 1, theories of the benefits of workplace democracy are typically premised on widespread and effective participation of employees in workplace decision-making. One strand of the literature documents inequalities of influence and processes of exclusion in worker co-operatives (Carter 2006; Kasmir 1996; Cathcart 2014). However, two issues are largely unaddressed in the empirical literature on the outcomes of workplace democracy. First, how the influence of employees over decision-making is structured, i.e. the attributes of who is influential, what facilitates influence by particular individuals or groups within the firm, and what causes the exclusion of others. Second, how influence and exclusion relates to outcomes of workplace democracy for workers. Individuals' self-reports of influence or level of participation, or the governance structures of a firm that are thought to promote employee participation, are associated with outcome variables, such as employees political attitudes (Greenberg 1981; Maxwell-Elden 1981), political participation behaviour (Greenberg et al. 1996; Adman 2008; Jian & Jeffres 2008), performance (Miller & Monge 2014) or job satisfaction (Wagner 1994). This leaves important questions of the dynamics of power and influence within the participatory work environment and its effect on workers unanswered.

The pertinence of such questions is based on the view of workplace democracy as 'contested terrain' (Cathcart 2013a, p.616) which 'is not an end, or 'amendable to one-shot implementation' but rather a moving target, subject to constant challenge and reinterpretation, which requires vigilance and protection.' (Cathcart 2013a, p.615). Workplace democracy is more than the playing-out of competing interests within democratic governance structures. Competing groups will have different understandings of the purpose and practice of democracy, and will 'seek to constrain and direct it in ways that meet instrumental ends' (ibid.). Democracy as a dynamic, contested process often means some groups gain ascendancy while others are excluded. As Pateman argues, 'the history of citizenship and democracy are commonly conflated. The term "democracy" is all too often used to describe situations where only a section of the population is granted citizenship; the remainder, which may be a majority, are merely subjects' (Pateman 2012, p.14). The literature suggests such a situation is often present in nominally democratic firms, which is why it is important to examine the antecedents of influence in that environment. Arguments for the democratic workplace as a site of political learning ought to acknowledge that access to participatory opportunities and any consequent benefits will not be uniform across workers within a firm. Studies have demonstrated this in other contexts, for example, Djupe & Gilbert's study of the social structuration of participation opportunities in churches (Djupe & Gilbert 2006). As another example, Ray et al. use social network analysis to examine how some individuals form an active and relatively cohesive 'core' within political organizations, while others form a relatively isolated, less cohesive 'periphery'. They find that institutional processes of sponsorship determine who is recruited to the core, and that while personal resourced help to determine who joins a group, they are less important in determining who becomes active (and perhaps therefore influential) within the group (Ray et al. 2003). Therefore the question in this chapter is not of the association between participation and certain outcomes, but of the determinants of who is influential in the study firm and who is excluded from decision-making.

This chapter answers three important questions about influence over and exclusion from decision-making in the co-operative: what are the internal processes that affect workplace democracy; what are the external, contextual factors that shape workplace democracy; and how do the two interact? Social capital theory is used to explain why some individuals in the democratic workplace feel influential and others feel excluded. It is hypothesized that individuals who are central in workplace social networks possess resources that allow them to exercise control over work-life. Social connections to central colleagues give certain workers access to resources which give them a sense of influence over their work-lives. Human capital and contextual factors structure both who is central, and is who is able to form social relationships with central colleagues in order to access influence-relevant resources. Interview data is used to explore the human capital and contextual factors that are relevant to the possession of and access to resources at work. Crucially, micro-level

processes of influence over work-life in democratic firms are shaped and constrained by macro-level contextual factors. These contextual factors limit the possibility of workplace democracy in isolated firms in competitive markets.

A social capital approach to power at work

I develop a measure of power and influence over work-life using social capital theories from the social networks literature. Broadly, social capital is about the value of an individual's social connections to others (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.992). Certain social connections can be valuable because the goodwill available to individuals through those connections leads to the provision of help or access to resources (Kwon & Adler 2014, p.412). As discussed in Chapter 1, social connections help individuals achieve their instrumental goals by providing access to valuable resources, either directly, or via helping behaviour or principal-agent relationships. Differences in social capital lead to differences in the ability to achieve goals, including goals work-related goals.

Two kinds of social capital theory are present in the literature. One claims that it is the structure of an individual's social network – i.e. the pattern of their connections to others - that is important in explaining outcomes. Thus power in organizations can be explained by the pattern of an employee's social relationships. For example, Brass's theory of power states that the power of A over B is defined as the extent to which B is dependent on A; and that power (the inverse of dependency) derives from control of relevant resources (Brass & Burkhardt 1993, p.193). A relevant resource is one that is in demand or in which another actor has a high motivational investment (*ibid.*), such as information. Control by one actor implies that another actor in the social relationship has few alternative sources for acquiring the resource (*ibid.*). Thus structural measures of an actor's centrality in a social network have been used to explain power. 'Betweenness centrality' measures the extent to an actor falls between pairs of other actors on the shortest path connecting them, and represents control of resource flows (Brass 1984). 'Closeness centrality' is the sum of the shortest paths between an actor and each other actor in the network, and represents both likelihood of receiving a resource flow and ability to disseminate flows quickly and widely (Brass 1984). More generally, using a disease contagion metaphor, central individuals are more likely to 'catch' any flow within the network. Burt (1992) attributes performance outcomes in organizations to individuals' bridging structural holes in a network. A structural hole occurs when two groups of relatively highly interconnected individuals have no between-group connections. An individual can take advantage of this situation by acting as a 'bridge' between the groups, giving that individual access to diverse ideas and information and allowing them to play a coordinating role between the two groups. These opportunities are related to power and influence in organizations (Burt 1992; Burt 2004; Burt 2010) and in political settings (Gould 1989; Fernandez & Gould 1994). Again, on Burt's theory it is network structure that is of primary importance in

explanation. Further justification for this view is provided by the argument that tie structure is more important than the content of ties, because multiple resources are usually accessible through the same network ties.

Against this view, a second social capital theory argues it is not so much network structure that matters but the resources that can be accessed via one's network. Lin argues that the value of 'weak ties' (ties that are less emotionally intense and time-consuming) is that an individual can have more of them, increasing the chance of accessing the resources necessary to achieve a given goal (Lin 1999a, p.34). Podolny & Baron also argue that the content of networks matters. They find that the effect of structural holes in an individual's network on workplace promotion is positive for ties that transmit information and resources and negative for ties that transmit identity and expectations (Podolny & Baron 1997, p.689). This evidence suggests that it is not sufficient to focus on network structure alone when explaining individual-level outcomes.

Recent literature acknowledges that network structure, types of resources accessible through the network, individual attributes (both of the focal actor and of the actor's contacts), and contextual factors matter to the creation and use of social capital (Kwon & Adler 2014). Burt's work on neighbour networks claims that for managers, occupying structural holes in the network (i.e. structural position) matters both as a 'forcing function for human capital' (Burt 2010, pp.9–10) and as an opportunity structure for accessing resources. The skills and behavioural dexterity required to bridge structural holes develops an individual's human capital; and the information, ideas and other resources accessible through bridging ties benefits their performance. However, when controlling for human capital the effect of structural holes on performance disappears. Individual attributes determine who is able to occupy bridging positions in the first place and who is able to connect with influential alters to access resources, because influential people are selective in who they form relationships with. Context also matters, as returns to brokerage are negligible for employees in lower job ranks where work is shaped less by themselves than by peer pressure and company process; and for those doing routinized work, for whom the information diversity provided by brokerage is disruptive (Burt 2010, p.26). Further, brokerage behaviour has been found to be incompatible with collectivist elements of Chinese culture (Kwon & Adler 2014, p.416).

Individuals mobilize their resources in order to achieve goals. In explaining the process of social status attainment, Lin argues that individuals mobilize and invest resources for returns in socioeconomic standings (Lin 1999b, pp.467–468). Resources in this context are defined as valued goods in society, which may be more or less consensually determined. Socioeconomic standings refer to valued resources attached to occupied positions in society. Lin classifies these resources into two types: personal resources and social resources. Personal resources are 'possessed by the individual who can use and dispose of them with freedom and without much

concern for compensation'. Social resources 'are resources accessible through one's direct and indirect [social] ties'. These are the focal actor's resources, but unlike personal resources, are contingent of the co-operation of her contacts. They may be used to further her goals, but remain the property of her contacts. From this theory Lin derives two theoretical propositions (Lin 1999b, p.470). First, the 'social resources proposition' says that social resources (the resources accessed in social networks) exert effect on the outcome of an instrumental action (such as attained status). Second, the 'strength of position proposition' says that social resources are in turn affected by the original position of an actor (as represented by parental resources and previous personal and social resources).

Theories of the well-being and participation benefits of workplace democracy are premised on the ability of individuals to exercise control over their work-lives. I therefore use the terms power and influence interchangeably to mean an individual's ability to utilize personal and social resources to get things done at work. On this view, democratic participation is a means to 'getting things done' for groups who would not have power over certain aspects of their work-lives in conventional firms. My definition equates power to power over work-life generally. Power over work-life will include power over others to the extent that getting things done at work (achieving one's work-related goals) has to involve others. This kind of social power has been conceptualized as getting another to do what she would not otherwise do (Lukes 2005, p.16) or as 'an agent's intentional use of causal powers to affect the conduct of other participants in the social relations that connect them together' (Scott 2001, p.1). Some cases of power involve getting someone to do something against their will, either through force, or through the threat of sanctions (coercion) (Lukes 2005, p.36). Lukes defines influence as getting others to do things willingly, through inducement, encouragement, persuasion, authority or manipulation (ibid.). He argues that cases of power always involve (overt or latent) conflicts of interests (Lukes 2005, pp.35–36). Cases of influence may involve conflicts of interests, or they may not - as when actors are acting co-operatively to achieve a goal (Lukes 2005, p.35). Therefore, power can be a form of influence when the subject of power does something willingly, such as in cases of manipulation or the acceptance of authority (ibid.). While Lukes' view informs my discussion of power, I use the terms power and influence to mean an actor's ability to get things done at work using their personal and social resources.

Social capital theory can be applied to the participatory workplace context to explain differences in power and influence (in my sense) between individuals and groups. Ability to get things done at work will be determined by personal resources such as education (which ought to be related to certain skills needed to participate, influence others and take decisions) and formal authority. It will also be determined by access to the resources of others through direct and indirect social network ties, and control of resources resulting from network position. Further, the extent of an individual's social resources will be partly determined by their personal resources, such as personality and

social skills, or the networking opportunities provided by their formal position or job content; as well as by contextual factors which may limit or facilitate access to social resources, such as geographical location or being located in a particular work-based team. Finally, an individual's 'original position', including her attitudes, is determined partly by the wider societal structuration of access to resources and opportunities. This last point is explored more fully in the Chapter 4, which analyses the relationship between political participation and workplace attitudes and behaviour amongst co-op workers.

Data on informal social networks within an organization provide information about the location of resources required to get things done at work. I collected social network data by asking survey respondents who they go to for help if they wish to change or improve something about four aspects of work-life (corresponding to four decision-making 'levels'):

- the day-to-day running of their branch or department (the operational level of decision-making)
- how things are done in the firm as a whole/the day-to-day running of the firm as a whole, e.g. sourcing a new brand (the tactical level of decision-making)
- the firm's future direction, its mission, or its long-term goals, e.g. increasing the firm's borrowing limits or opening a new store (the strategic level of decision-making)
- staff pay or benefits across the firm as a whole, e.g. staff discounts, staff holiday allowance, wages, sick pay, or the number of discounted bikes staff can buy per year.

I specified in the questionnaire that respondents should only indicate who they *actually* go to to affect change, not who they are *supposed* to go to; and that they should only name someone if they would actually approach this person when trying to change things. The act of approaching someone for help in order to change or improve things at work can be seen as an attempt to exercise control over work-life. It is a directed relationship, and indicates something about the tie sender – that they try to influence particular types of issues – and the tie receiver – that they may possess some of the resources needed to make change happen. In each of the four networks, two measures are used to identify the location of resources relevant to affecting change in the organization. Indegree centrality is a count of the number of times a worker is named by others in a network. In this case it represents the number of colleagues who consider a particular individual as 'someone to go to' to affect change or make improvements. It has been found that degree centrality in workplace communication and friendship networks is strongly related to reputational measures of power obtained by asking supervisors to rate employees influence, and by asking non-supervisory employees to nominate who is influential (Brass & Burkhardt 1992, p.211). It is hypothesized that individuals with high indegree are powerful because they possess personal and social resources required to affect change in the organization.

The second network measure is the maximum indegree centrality of ego's alters. This measures the highest indegree centrality score of all individuals that an actor is directly connected to in his or her network. Assuming indegree measures the possession of resources needed to change things at work, the maximum indegree of ego's alters can be seen as a measure of the most influential person an actor is connected to. A higher score means you are directly connected to a more influential person than a lower score. This variable will henceforth be referred to as measuring a respondent's 'social resources', to reflect the hypothesis that it represents the resources a respondent is able to access through her social ties. It can be thought of as a measure of the most influential person a worker goes to for help if they want to change or improve something at work.

Note that an individual's power over work-life may be limited by other actors, but it may also be limited by context more broadly. So while I hypothesize that network centrality is a proxy for the possession of resources required to get things done, central actors may in fact be powerless over some issues for reasons other than lack of personal or social resources. Contextual factors limiting workers' control over their work-lives are explored below. Note also that social capital theory is relatively structuralist in outlook. It focuses on how resources are stratified by social structure. While it makes more or less implicit assumptions about agency, it largely ignores the perspective of actors in an empirical sense. Below I regress subjective measures of influence on social capital measures, and contextualize the modelling results using interview data, to examine how the stratification of resources relates to workers' experiences of influence and exclusion in the study firm. In the Chapter 4 the perspective of actors is explored further to see how stratified access to resources in and out of work leads to class-based 'lived experiences' that shape both political attitudes and attitudes towards work. In the next section I use network data to describe the structure of influence over decisions in the study firm, including levels of staff engagement and the extent to which decision-making is status-driven.

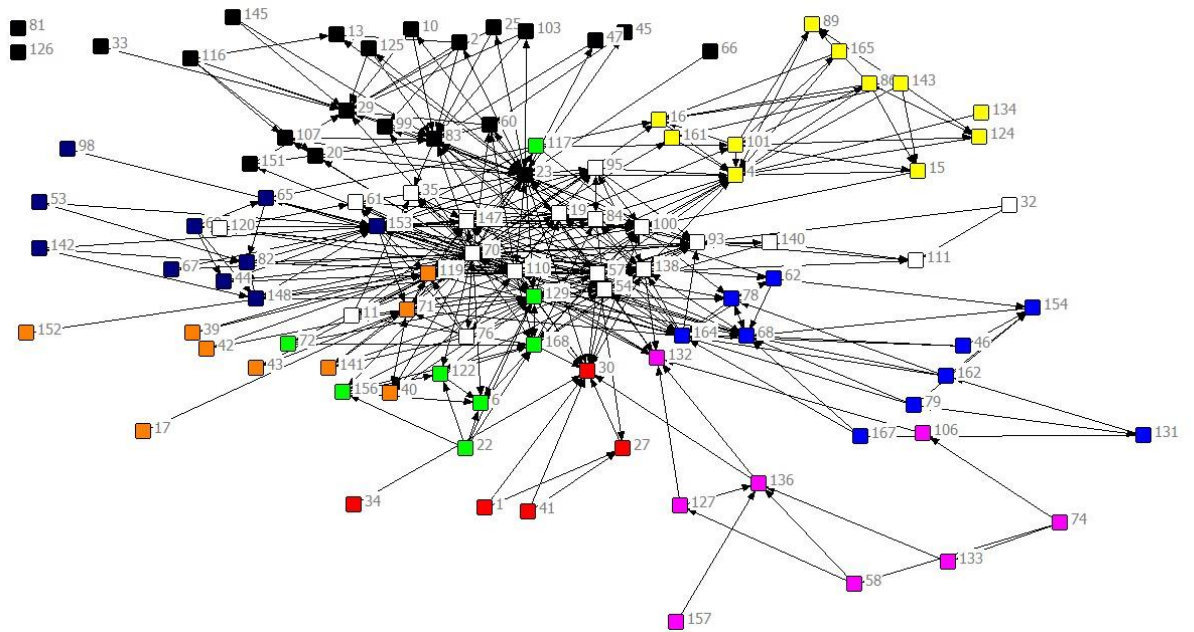
The structure of influence over work-life

Looking at structural features of the networks of who goes to whom to influence different kinds of issues provides evidence about power and participation in the co-op. First, examining diagrams of the four networks gives an impression of the extent and pattern of respondents' engagement at each level of decision-making. In theory workplace democracy should lead to widespread worker engagement at all levels of decision-making. Figures 3.1-3.4 show network diagrams for each of the four types of issues respondents were asked about.² The direction of the arrows shows who

² Note that diagrams are created in Netdraw (Borgatti 2002) using an optimization algorithm that aims to make the graphs aesthetically pleasing while maximizing readability (Borgatti et al. 2013, pp.104–105). One of three layout functions that is optimized is the correspondence between point distance and path distance of the nodes, meaning that if two nodes are closer together they are more closely connected in the network. However, due to aesthetic and readability functions being

goes to whom. Nodes are coloured by the branch/department to which respondents belong. The numbers attached to each node are unique identifiers for each actor.

Figure 3.1: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the day-to-day running of their branch or department, coloured by branch/department



simultaneously optimized the diagrams cannot necessarily be read such that two points being close to one another means they are close to one another in the network.

Figure 3.2: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the day-to-day running of the firm as a whole/how things are done in the firm as a whole, coloured by branch/department

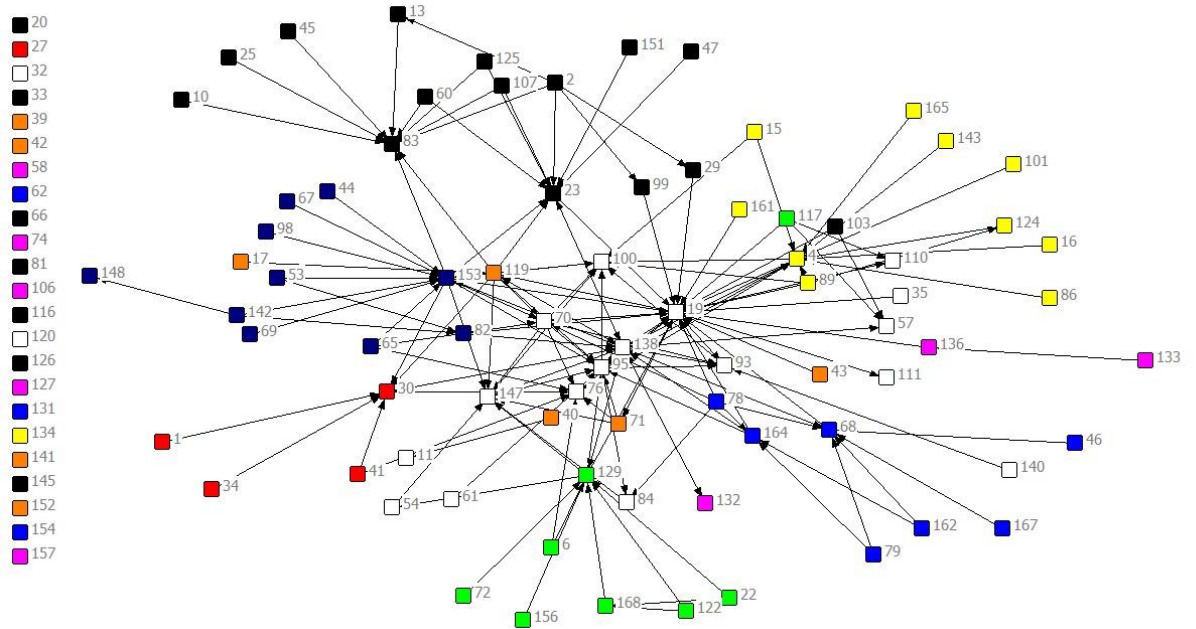


Figure 3.3: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the firm’s future direction, its mission, or its long-term goals, coloured by branch/department

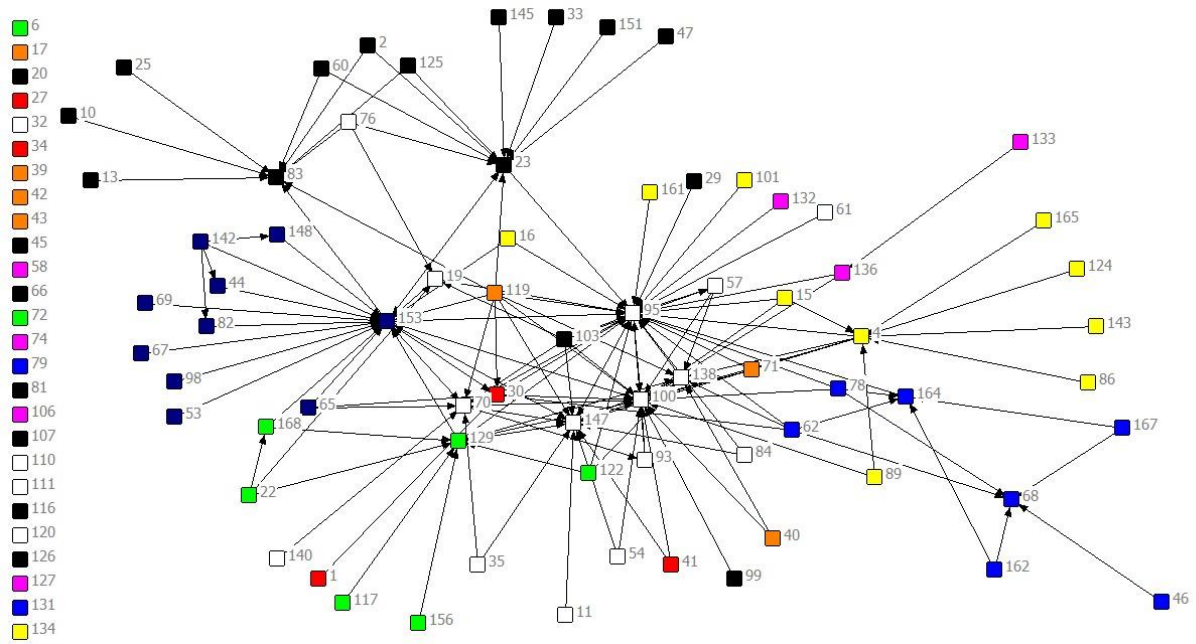
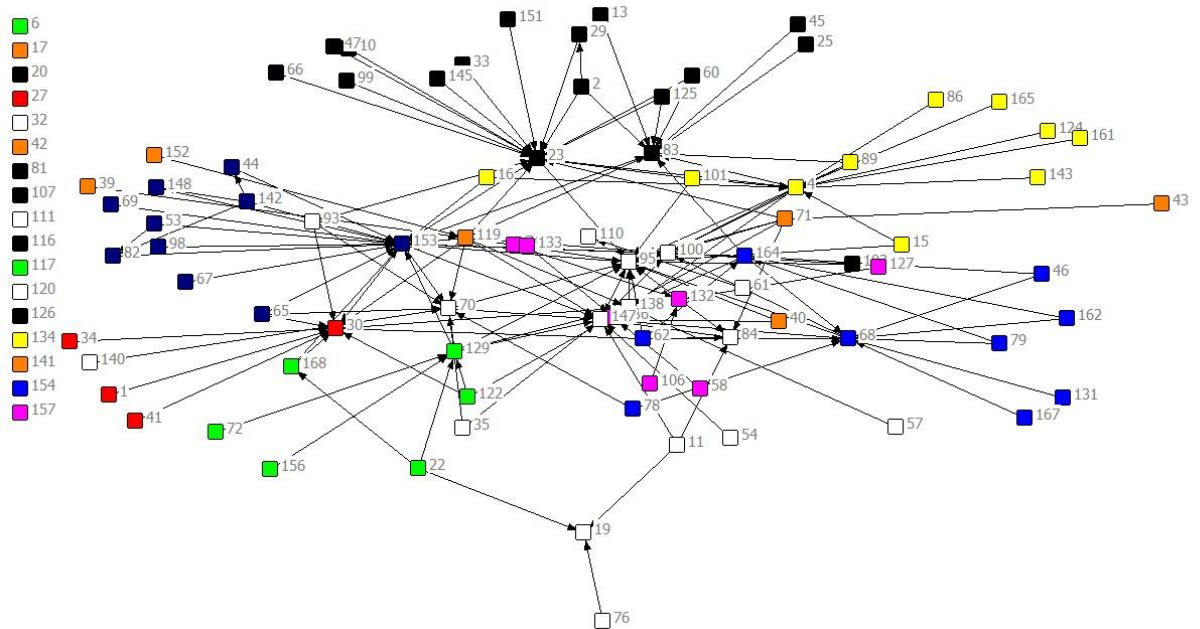


Figure 3.4: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the staff pay or benefits across the firm as a whole, coloured by branch/department



Comparing Figures 3.1-3.4 visually, it can be seen that network density (the number of ties in the network expressed as a proportion of the total number of possible ties) appears higher for operational issues about the day-to-day running of branches/departments (Figure 3.1) than for tactical issues, strategic issues or issues of pay and benefits (Figures 3.2-3.4). In effect, there appear to be more ties in Figure 3.1 than each of Figures 3.2-3.4. This suggests that there is more interaction between staff regarding operational issues than other kinds of issues, and probably reflects the collaborative 'working out' of day-to-day issues between colleagues. The branch/department-level network is also more connected than the other networks, meaning more staff are included in the network, and there are less actors with no ties to any others (represented by the isolated nodes on the left of each diagram). This might indicate that staff are more likely to try to change things about the day-to-day running of their branch or department than about higher-level issues. It at least means that more staff are included in making changes or improvements surrounding day-to-day issues than higher-level issues - the isolated nodes on the left of Figures 3.2-3.4 indicate that some staff aren't involved in making changes to these issues at all. It is worth noting however, that more staff are involved in high-level issues than one might expect in a conventional firm. For example, while there are only five senior managers in the study firm who have executive responsibility for strategic issues, Figure 3.3 illustrates that a high

proportion of staff are part of the network, suggesting many staff would at least consider approaching colleagues to try to change things about firm strategy.

To test if staff are indeed more likely to try to change or improve things regarding operational matters than higher-level matters, outdegree centrality was calculated for each respondent regarding each issue. Outdegree centrality is a count of the number of out-ties an actor has in a network. In this case it represents the number of colleagues a respondent approaches to try to change or improve a certain kind of issue. I then calculated the percentage of respondents with zero outdegree in each network – i.e. the percentage of respondents who don't try to influence a type of issue. 4.9% of respondents did not try to influence operational issues. 28.4% did not try to influence tactical issues. 31.4% did not try to influence strategic issues. 22.5% did not try to influence pay & benefits issues. Thus staff are more likely to try to influence operational and pay issues than tactical or strategic issues. Direct observation of staff meetings and informal discussions with co-op workers corroborated this finding. Workers tended to express concern with issues regarding their immediate job and with pay and benefits more than wider strategic or tactical issues. Such a view is epitomized by one interviewee:

I mean I don't have a burning desire to steer the company in any direction, really, I just want a fair deal for myself and the people that I work with, you know? (Warehouse worker)

Thus the social network data indicates that the extent of worker engagement varies with different types of issue. A higher proportion of respondents try to change or improve day-to-day issues relating to their immediate sector of the workplace, and pay and benefits issues, than high-level issues. While it appears many workers do not try to change high-level issues, engagement is nonetheless more widespread than might be expected in a conventional firm.

Other visible tendencies in the graphs are that many ties appear to lie within branches or departments, especially in the operational issues network (Figure 3.1), and that the density of within-department ties seems to vary between departments. It will be seen below that interaction between staff is 'siloed' into branches and departments, making democracy in the firm as a whole harder; but also that a tendency towards many strong interpersonal relationships (high network density) is related to successful co-operation within individual branches. Where ties do cross department boundaries, they appear to be directed inwards towards nodes in the centre of the diagram, who are often white nodes representing actors from Head Office. Few ties seem to go between branches, suggesting that interaction tends either to take place within branches, or between staff in branches and Head Office staff, rather than between different branches. This suggests a core-periphery structure. In a core-periphery structure actors in the core tend to be well

connected to other core actors, while actors on the periphery tend to be connected to core actors but not to other peripheral actors (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.225). When ties are directed, UCINET allows the calculation of the extent to which a core-periphery is 'status driven', i.e. the extent to which core actors direct ties only among themselves, and peripheral actors direct ties only inwards to the core. In this case this would likely represent a situation where a more powerful, core group of individuals consult with each other over issues, while peripheral actors go only to core actors when they want to change things. The degree to which a network approximates a core-periphery structure is measured by computing the Pearson correlation between the permuted data matrix and an ideal core-periphery structure matrix representing the case where core actors all direct ties to one another but not to peripheral actors, and peripheral actors direct ties to core actors but not to one another (Borgatti & Everett 2000, pp.377–381). Essentially an algorithm is used to repeatedly and randomly assign actors in the network to either the core or the periphery group while maintaining the same tie distribution, and a final assignment is made which maximizes the Pearson correlation between the assigned group structure and the ideal-core periphery structure. The measure ranges from 0 to 1. The measure of status-driven core-periphery structure is a recent addition to UCINET, and so results from the application of the measure to real-world data which could act as a comparator to my dataset do not yet exist. Therefore, for each of my four networks, I simulated 200 random networks with the same number of nodes and network density as my original network using the Erdos-Renyi random graph routine in UCINET. I conducted status-driven core-periphery analysis on the simulated networks to obtain a distribution of core-periphery correlations obtained from randomly generated graphs. I then calculated the mean and 95% confidence interval of the mean for the distribution, which are used as indicators of the probability that correlations as high as those of my data with a status-driven core periphery structure could have been obtained by chance. The status driven core-periphery measures for my networks, mean core-periphery measures for the randomly generated networks, and 95% confidence intervals are reported in Table 3.1.

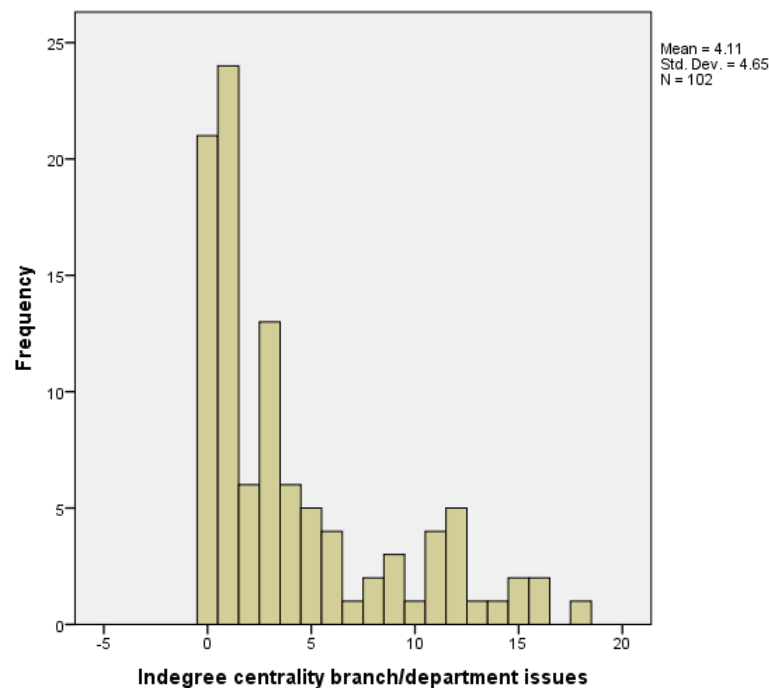
Table 3.1: Correlations between issue network structures and an ideal core-periphery structure

	Correlation with ideal core-periphery structure	Mean correlation of simulated random networks with ideal core-periphery structure	95% confidence interval	
			Lower	Upper
Branch/department issues	0.201	0.086	0.068	0.093
Tactical issues	0.247	0.082	0.070	0.093
Strategic issues	0.316	0.083	0.072	0.093
Pay/benefits issues	0.273	0.082	0.070	0.093

The correlations of my four networks with ideal status-driven core-periphery structures are all considerably stronger than would be expected by chance, indicating that there may well be a powerful, core group of individuals in the co-op who consult with each other over issues, and a periphery of less powerful actors who go only to core actors to affect change. The strategic and pay issues networks display more of a status-driven, core-periphery structure than the branch/department and tactical issues networks, suggesting that the former issues may be more dominated by a core group of decision-makers. Further evidence that control of co-op decisions is dominated by a core of influential workers will be presented below using interview data.

Indegree centrality is a count of the total number of ties an actor receives in a network. In this case it represents the number of colleagues who consider a particular individual as 'someone to go to' to affect change or make improvements, and is hypothesized to represent the possession of personal and social resources required to affect change in the organization. But it can also be thought of as a node-level measure of core-periphery structure. Since core actors tend to receive many ties from other network members and peripheral actors tend to receive few ties, high indegree individuals will likely be in the core of the organization and lower indegree individuals will likely be at the periphery (Borgatti et al. 2013, p.226; Borgatti & Everett 2000, p.378). The distribution of indegree scores among respondents' indicates the relative size of the core compared with the periphery. Figures 3.5 is a histogram of indegree centrality in the branch/department issues network.

Figure 3.5: Histogram of indegree centrality in the branch/department issues network



The histogram is heavily skewed to the right, indicating a smaller core of high indegree actors and a larger periphery of actors with low indegree. This suggests decision-making is dominated by a relatively small group of highly-resourced actors.

In sum, the network data suggests that each level of decision-making in the co-op is dominated by a smaller, core group of influential workers, with a larger group of less influential workers on the periphery. This raises the question of the extent to which the same group of actors is influential over different issues. To discover this, I looked at the extent to which being central over one type of issue is related to being central over other issues. Pearson correlations were calculated between indegree centrality scores for each of the four networks. The Pearson correlation coefficient measures the strength and direction of the linear relationship between the two variables. The correlation coefficient can range from -1 to +1, with -1 indicating a perfect negative correlation, +1 indicating a perfect positive correlation, and 0 indicating no correlation at all (UCLA: Statistical Consulting Group n.d.). A correlation closer to 1 between two networks indicates that centrality score is highly related in the two networks. Results are displayed in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Pearson correlations between indegree centrality scores over four types of issues

	Centrality branch/ department issues	Centrality pay /benefits issues	Centrality strategic issues	Centrality tactical issues
Centrality branch/department issues		0.761	0.601	0.692
Centrality pay/benefits issues	0.761		0.881	0.762
Centrality strategic issues	0.601	0.881		0.712
Centrality tactical issues	0.692	0.762	0.712	

The correlation between centrality in the four networks is strong and positive, especially between centrality in higher-level issues (tactical, strategic and pay). This indicates that the same group of individuals within the firm tends to be seen as people to go to in order to affect change regarding all four types of issues. To test this further, a principal components analysis was carried out using varimax rotation on indegree scores in each of the four networks, leading to the extraction of one factor that accounts for 80.2% of the variance in indegree across the four networks. This indicates centrality the four networks is strongly related to a single underlying construct, which may be being perceived as influential by colleagues. Therefore a continuous variable was created by summing and averaging indegree centrality scores across the four networks for each actor. Assuming that being perceived as seen as someone to go to in order to affect change is related to the possession

of power-relevant resources, it is hypothesized that this variable represents the possession of resources required to get things done within the firm. It will be referred to as 'instrumental influence', reflecting the idea that it measures the possession of resources required for an individual to achieve her instrumental ends. Figure 3.6 is a network diagram showing all four networks overlaid. It therefore shows who actors go to for help when they want to change or improve any type of workplace issue. Actors are sized by instrumental influence score, with larger nodes representing a higher score. Actors are coloured by management grade, with red representing senior managers, yellow representing middle managers, green representing junior managers, and white representing non-management staff.

Figure 3.6: Network diagram showing who workers go to for help when they want to change or improve something at work, sized by instrumental influence and coloured by management grade.

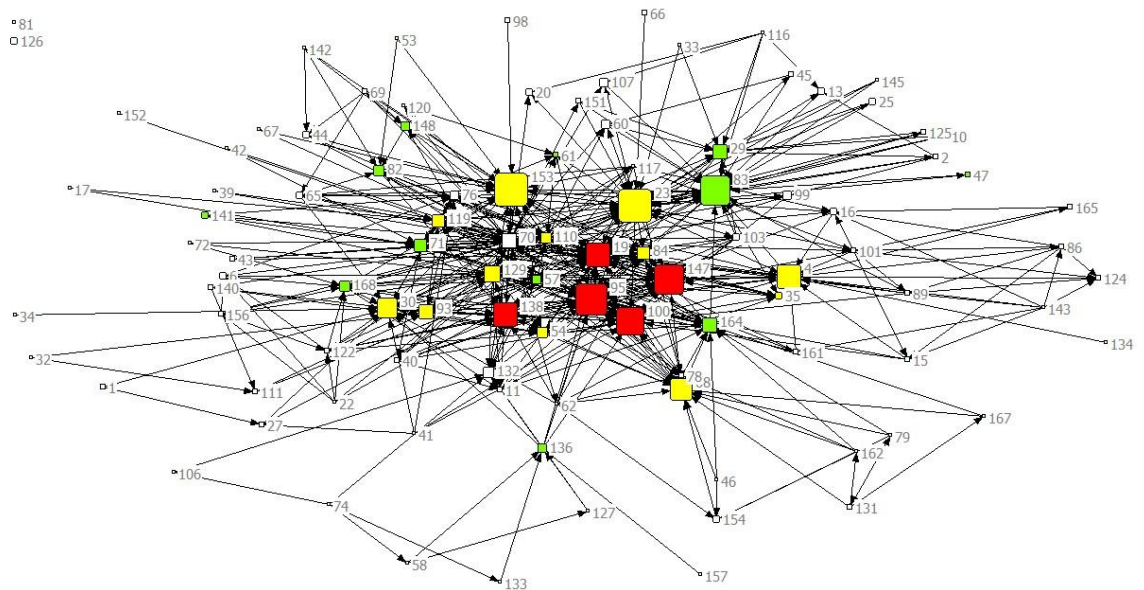


Figure 3.6 illustrates that there is a core group of high indegree individuals who tend to be senior or middle managers (larger actors in the centre of the diagram coloured red or yellow). Thus, position in the formal hierarchy is likely part of the reason these individuals are central in the network. However, there are considerable differences in size between different red and yellow actors, indicating considerable differences in the instrumental influence scores of management staff. Below interview data will be used to describe the sources of these differences in instrumental influence. For now I argue that instrumental influence measures the possession of resources required to influence decision-making in the study firm.

The second network measure that I use to identify the location of resources relevant to affecting change in the organization is social resources, which can be seen as a measure of the most influential person an actor is connected to. A higher score means an actor is directly connected to a more influential person than a lower score. Like indegree centrality, social resources can be measured in each of the four networks. To see if there is a strong relationship between social resources regarding different issues, Pearson correlations were calculated between social resources variables derived from the four networks. The results are shown in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Pearson correlations between social resources scores over four types of issues

	Social resources branch/department issues	Social resources tactical issues	Social resources strategic issues	Social resources pay/benefits issues
Social resources branch/department issues		0.426	0.404	0.516
Social resources tactical issues	0.426		0.594	0.446
Social resources strategic issues	0.404	0.594		0.562
Social resources pay/benefits issues	0.516	0.446	0.562	

Correlations range from .404 to .594, so respondents' social resources across the four networks are not as strongly related as their indegree centrality. Thus while staff who are influential over one type of issue tend also to be influential over other issues, approaching influential colleagues about one type of issue is not so strongly related to approaching influential colleagues about other types of issue. This further supports the idea that staff have particular areas of concern, rather than a desire to influence all aspects of firm governance.

In sum, structural analysis of the four issues networks in the co-op leads to four conclusions. First, staff engagement depends on type of issue, with staff more likely to try to change or improve things about the day-to-day running of their branch/department, or about collective pay & benefits, than about tactical matters or firm strategy. Second, influence over different issues in the firm approximates a status-driven core-periphery structure. Strategic and pay issues approximate a core-periphery structure more closely than operational or tactical issues. Thus networks appear to be characterised by a smaller core of influential actors who interact among themselves to make changes, and a larger periphery of less influential actors who tend to approach core actors when

they want to change things at work. Third, being influential over different kinds of issues is highly correlated, indicating that a similar group of individuals is influential across all issues. Fourth, core actors tend to be middle and senior managers, but there are notable differences in instrumental influence between core actors. This suggests that position in the formal hierarchy is one reason why certain workers are influential, but that other factors also account for influence. The overall impression, despite the co-operative structure of the firm, is of an organization that is status-driven when it comes to making different kinds of decisions, especially higher-level decisions, in that there is clearly a group of individuals towards whom ties tend to be directed when staff want to make changes, and who presumably have to be involved in order to get things done. Thus decision-making in the co-operative appears to be dominated by a core group of influential actors.

Some criticisms of indegree as a measure of power ought to be acknowledged. First, degree centrality may not always be useful as a measure of power because it does not capture the system-wide properties of a network (Brass & Burkhardt 1992, p.194). In a system of representative workplace democracy such as the one under study, where workers attempt to exert influence through representatives, representatives may be named more often (be more indegree central) than senior managers as individuals who people go to for help to affect change, even though senior managers may exert more influence over workplace decision-making. Such a 'gatekeeper' role played by representatives has itself been shown to be related to power, and can be measured by betweenness centrality (White & Borgatti 1994, p.227), Bonacich power centrality (Bonacich 1987) or Gould & Fernandez brokerage measures (Gould & Fernandez 1989). The crux of the criticism of indegree centrality is that for networks which describe the exchange of resources (such as information) centrality measures do not appropriately identify important actors (Oliver 2012), because degree central or 'popular' actors are not the only type of actor that is able to determine how things flow through the network. For example, Borgatti argues indegree centrality cannot identify key players, key players being ones who are maximally connected to all other actors and whose removal would maximally disrupt the flow of resources within the network (ibid.). Further, degree centrality does not accurately identify sets of powerful actors, although Everett's measure of group centrality does address this (Everett & Borgatti 2005). Also, indegree does not reflect how well respondents are able to identify powerful actors (Oliver 2012), which is relevant to the usefulness of indegree centrality as measure of possessed resources in this instance because I rely on the assumption that individuals know who is resourceful. Finally, even if an individual is perceived as being powerful, there is no guarantee he or she actually has the resources to affect change. However, I argue that it is reasonable to expect that through experience individuals will be able to distinguish between those who appear influential and those who actually can implement change. Contextual constraints on the power of central actors to implement change are explored below.

The social resources measure can also be criticized for not taking into account features of the whole network. There are two reasons to think the measure is useful nonetheless. First, the study firm prides itself on an open access management philosophy, and so workers ought to be able to approach influential people directly when they want to change or improve things. Second, Burt has presented evidence to suggest that the benefits of networks to competitive advantage for individuals within firms are local and personal (Burt 2010). Advantage is local because it does not spill over from the networks of well-connected neighbors, but accrues to those who are themselves well-connected. Therefore resources are accessed through direct network connections. Advantage is personal because, as noted above, it depends on an individual's personal characteristics. Well-connected individuals create their own advantage through their superior human capital, as there is no reason for influential people to be connected to individuals who have nothing to offer them in return. Burt's dependent variable is individual performance, which is different to being able to make one's views heard, and his evidence of the advantages of bridging structural holes applies to managers in non-routine jobs. However, it may be that the role of network structure in determining influence at work is a function of an individual's immediate network.

These problems can be addressed by looking at the relationship between degree centrality measures and feelings of influence at work. If indegree centrality measures the possession of resources relevant to getting things done at work then indegree should be positively related to subjective feelings of influence at work. If social resources are related to access to the resources of others in order to get things done, and the possession of personal resources of a particular kind that are useful for exerting influence, then social resources ought to be positively related to feelings of influence. The relationship between degree centrality measures and feelings of influence at work will also be informative of the nature and effectiveness of democracy within the study firm. If central individuals do have a high sense of influence, and those that go to them have a correspondingly high sense of influence, it suggests that interpersonal channels of influence in the organization are functioning, at least for those who are willing or able to use them. As Brass & Burkhardt point out, 'for an organization that prides itself on easy access (an 'open door' policy) a strong correlation between degree measures of centrality and power may provide an indication that the policy is working' (Brass & Burkhardt 1992, p.212). It is also important to point out that degree centrality measures are more robust under missing data than the alternative measures mentioned above (Borgatti et al. 2006), and so are more reliable given the current dataset.

In the next section I look at the relationship between workplace social capital and feelings of influence at work.

The determinants of feelings of influence at work

To examine how differences in social capital and other factors effect workers' subjective feelings of influence at work, I used multiple linear regression modeling in UCINET to test predictors of an individual's sense of influence over work-life. The dependent variable measuring sense of influence over work-life is derived from a principle components analysis of 16 5-point Likert scale items (answers range from strongly disagree to strongly agree). Employees were asked:

- whether they feel their views are taken seriously by colleagues
- whether they feel that in the past their views have made a difference to the way things are done at work
- whether they feel they can make their voice heard at meetings
- and whether they feel they can make their voice heard in other ways,

when they want to change or improve something about the same four aspects of work-life asked about in the social network questions:

- the day-to-day running of their branch or department
- how things are done in the firm as a whole/the day-to-day running of the firm as a whole (e.g. sourcing a new brand)
- the firm's future direction, its mission, or its long-term goals (e.g. increasing the firm's borrowing limits or opening a new store)
- and pay or benefits across the firm as a whole (e.g. staff discounts, staff holiday allowance, wages, sick pay, or the number of discounted bikes staff can buy per year)

The Likert scale items were designed to conceptualize a sense of democratic influence whereby the purpose of democracy is to be able to make one's voice heard effectively, either as an individual or as a group with a particular interest, meaning that one's work-related goals may sometimes come about, but don't always, depending on other competing interests and priorities. On this view respondents ought to feel that democratic debate should be open and transparent, such that when one party's objectives do not come about there are clear reasons and justifications as to why. Questions were asked at four levels to cover the whole range of issues in workplace decision-making. When responses to these questionnaire items were entered into a principal components analysis one component was extracted which explained 48.5% of the variance. All items loaded onto this component. The variable sense of influence at work was constructed by averaging the

value of the 16 items for each respondent. Since all variables loaded onto one component it is hypothesized that the variable measures a respondent's feelings of interpersonal influence at work, and that respondents do not themselves differentiate clearly between the four theoretically-distinct levels of decision-making. It implies that to respondents in the study firm, influence is one concept or 'feeling' that applies across levels of decision-making.

Based on the existing literature sense of influence at work is hypothesized to be related to the following variables that act as proxies for the possession of resources required to influence work-life: formal authority, education, and social class. It is expected to be related to the contextual factor of geographical location within the firm.

Sense of influence at work is also hypothesized to be related to centrality, measuring the possession of resources, and social capital measures, which represent the extent to which individuals are able use social ties to access and mobilize resources for the achievement of goals.

Like Burt's work on structural holes, my conceptualization of influence over work-life as a social capital process may seem to rely on a model of an instrumental, rational actor whose aim is to achieve a defined set of ends and maximize gain (Borgatti & Foster 2003, p.1002). Feelings of influence are presumed to arise from an actor's ability to achieve her ends, and differences in power are associated with differences in ability to achieve ends. This is potentially problematic, because rather than being exogenous to the power process, the determination of an actor's ends (or what they view as being in their own interests) may be a part of it. Power can be exercised in subtle ways, where actors shape the perceptions, cognitions and preferences of others, precluding conflict over interests (Lukes 2005, p.28). Lukes argues that individuals can exercise power whether they intend to consciously or not, and an individual may be the subject of power that makes them behave against their 'real' interests, i.e. interests of which they may not even be conscious (Lukes 2005, p.38). Unconscious action can be thought of as an exercise of power when an actor could have ascertained knowledge of the consequences of their actions (Lukes 2005, p.54). Real interests lie in what actors 'would otherwise do' if they weren't subject to others' power (Lukes 2005, p.43). This can be ascertained by 'observing abnormal times', when 'submission and intellectual subordination are absent or diminished, when the apparatus of power is removed or relaxed' (Lukes 2005, p.50). In the current context, Lukes' view implies that power in the workplace may be exercised by an actor shaping another's ends, or by acting or failing to act, in ways that are against the other's interests. This power may be exercised consciously or unconsciously, and by actors who are internal to the workplace, or external to it. Actors may be individuals, groups or institutions (Lukes 2005, pp.40–41).

Lukes' argument qualifies the current analysis because the ability to achieve one's ends might not be a good proxy for power if the determination of conscious interests, wants, or goals is

endogenous to the power process. This raises the question of the relationship between feelings of influence and power defined in this more subtle way. What Carter (2006) refers to as 'expectations' about influence are shaped by power processes within the workplace and by wider societal power processes. In this chapter evidence from the study firm will help to shed light on the processes by which expectations are determined. In the remaining chapters it will be argued that political identity shapes expectations about, and outcomes of, workplace democracy for individuals. Political identity itself is determined by power processes that reach beyond the workplace. For now it should be acknowledged that the definition of power as the ability to achieve ends is a limited definition of power.

However, the argument that feelings of influence arise from the ability to achieve ends is nonetheless useful because the theoretical literature suggests that subjective perceptions of influence are important to the beneficial outcomes of workplace democracy. For example, individuals may have to feel a sense of influence at work and then seek to exert influence elsewhere (the spillover thesis), and some of the benefits of participation for individuals have been argued to be the result of cognitive and affective processes that are conscious (Miller & Monge 2014). Therefore differences in feelings of influence ought to be related to different outcomes for workers. Thus it is useful to treat subjective influence at work as a dependent variable in this chapter in order to explore contextual and personal antecedents to feelings of influence in the democratic firm.

I now outline in detail the hypotheses to be tested in the regression model.

Hypothesis 1: Individuals higher up the formal hierarchy will have stronger feelings of influence over work-life

It was argued in Chapter 1 that formal hierarchy consists of status differences set down in the organizational rules of a firm. Positions in the formal hierarchy are 'person-independent' and give certain individuals authority to organize work-life. Similarly, McEvily et al. define the difference between formal and informal organization:

Whereas formal organization refers to the fixed set of rules, procedures, and structures for co-ordinating and controlling activities, informal organization consists of the emergent patterns of individual behaviour and interactions among individuals, as well as the norms, values, and beliefs that underlie such behaviours and interactions (McEvily et al. 2014, p.300).

They argue that organizational behaviour and performance are functions of interactions among organizational actors, which are substantially shaped by both formal organization and informal

social structure, and the interplay between the two (McEvily et al. 2014, p.303). The most prevalent approach to addressing the link between the formal organization and informal social structure is to treat the formal organization as a control variable and look at the extent to which the effects of formal structure are spurious to the effects of the informal social network when the effects of formal structure are held constant (McEvily et al. 2014, p.315). This approach will be used here. I expect that formal position in the hierarchy is related to formal authority to organize work life as set down in the rules and customary procedures of the organization, and therefore those individuals higher up the formal workplace hierarchy will have a greater sense of influence over work-life than those lower down. Managers will have a greater sense of influence than non-managers, and more senior managers will have a greater sense of influence than less senior managers.

Hypothesis 2: More educated individuals will have a greater sense of influence than less educated individuals, and higher socioeconomic class individuals will have a greater sense of influence than lower socioeconomic class individuals

Lin defines personal resources as societally-valued resources possessed by the individual, who can use and dispose of them to achieve her ends with freedom and without much concern for compensation (Lin 1999b, pp.467–468). Education is such a resource. It has been shown that levels of education are predictors of both status attainment in the work-related sphere (Lin 1999b), and political participation (Pattie et al. 2004; Verba et al. 2005). Li & Marsh point out that highly educated people tend to have higher levels of information-processing, critical and analytical abilities which are essential for political participation and civic engagement (Li & Marsh 2008, p.267). Level of education is commonly used as a control variable in studies that look at the determinants of employee voice in the workplace (Gao et al. 2011; Cox et al. 2006) on the basis that the more educated have more of the skills required to speak up successfully at work. Thus it is hypothesized that more educated individuals will have a greater sense of influence than less educated individuals because they have more of the personal resources required to participate effectively at work.

Socioeconomic class is also hypothesized to have an effect on sense of influence at work because the resources required for participation are stratified by socioeconomic group (Brady et al. 1995). Following Li & Marsh, class is measured using Goldthorpe's schema comprising the service class (professional and technical workers, administrators and managers), the intermediate class (routine non-manual workers and foreman) and the working class (skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers) (Li & Marsh 2008, p.258). It is hypothesized that service class employees will have a greater sense of influence than intermediate class employees, who in turn will have a greater sense of influence than working class employees.

Hypothesis 3: Centrality and social resources will be positively associated with feelings of influence at work

I have suggested that influence in the participatory workplace environment derives from possession of, or control over, resources that can make the goals of oneself or others come about. This view draws on Brass's theory of power in organizations, and Lin's social resources theory. I derived a measure of instrumental influence based on this view. I argued that individuals with high instrumental influence possess personal and social resources required to affect change in the organization. I therefore predict that instrumental influence will be positively correlated with subjective feelings of influence at work.

I also argued that social resources measures the extent of resources accessible via an individual's social networks which helps her exert control over her work-life. I found that workers seem to be more concerned about some aspects of work-life than others. Given this, I hypothesize that having social resources surrounding issues that seem to most concern staff – the day-to-day running of their workplace, and pay and benefits issues - will be positively related to sense of influence at work.

Hypothesis 4: Employees located closer to the organization's core will have a higher sense of influence than employees located further away

It is hypothesized that geographical location is a contextual factor that helps determine individual sense of influence at work. Geographical distance between groups of employees is related to firm size. Firm size affects the nature of democratic governance structures in co-operatives, with larger firms tending to display representative rather than direct democratic structures due to the latter's impracticality within large groups (Carter 2006, p.417). There is mixed evidence for whether workplace democracy characterised by active workforce participation is possible in larger firms (Carter 2006, pp.417–418; Kokkinidis 2012, p.245). However, larger firms are more likely to have groups of employees who have little possibility for interaction with one another. In the networks literature the term propinquity is commonly used to describe the level of physical and psychological proximity between actors which facilitates interaction. Interpersonal interaction patterns in informal workplace social networks are strongly influenced by organizational structures and their geographic deployment. Thus individuals are more likely to interact if they share organizational foci such as the same business unit, job function, or the work space (McEvily et al. 2014, p.325). This is based on Feld's theory of social foci:

Broadly, formal organizational boundaries generate constrained foci and favour or inhibit the formation of social ties. Social ties which cross formal boundaries are difficult to form

and maintain since they require social actors to overcome status orderings and cognitive categories that constrain an individual's ability to form expansive networks that bridge across silos (McEvily et al. 2014, p.324).

Interpersonal interaction is important for information sharing, which is a key aspect of workplace democracy. Borgatti & Cross find that physical proximity is not a sufficient condition for information-seeking behaviour at work. For an actor to seek information from another they must also have knowledge of the other's area of expertise, and must feel that that person will make themselves available in a timely fashion for active problem-solving (Borgatti & Cross 2003, p.441). While face-to-face interaction is important, Borgatti & Cross argue that other technology-based solutions can be used to enable information-seeking behaviour (ibid.).

It is expected that geographic proximity to the organization's decision-making core (that is, its Head Office), will be positively related to sense of influence at work. There are two possible mechanisms for this. First, being close to Head Office ought to mean more interaction with senior managers, allowing for stronger interpersonal relationships to form between management and staff, leading to more information sharing and joint problem-solving and easing the process of influence. The direct observation stage of the study elicited the view from some staff that the firm's flagship branch, located in the same city as its Head Office, saw senior figures more often. Two branch managers confirmed this perception in their interviews:

...the vast majority of the sales in the business come from the Edinburgh branch, so that's our flagship store. And there's always been this perception of the other branches don't get quite as much attention or as much care. And really, it's not the case. But they get this perception that because they're so far away, we're somehow here down in Manchester less involved in the company somehow. (Branch manager, Manchester branch)

With the Edinburgh store, you're relatively close to the warehouse. Again not in terms of just things that need doing, processes, emails, that come through. But just - probably management and warehouse staff just popping into the Edinburgh store. I guess that happens a lot more often. There's a lot more chat about things than there is down here. We won't get just somebody cycling home from work that works at our warehouse and just popping in like they might do at the Edinburgh store. (Branch manager, Sheffield branch)

A second mechanism by which geographical location could be related to feelings of influence at work is via differences in the strength of the 'co-operative ethos' across the firm. Co-operative ethos consists of the beliefs and values held by employees that motivated the founding and sustain the continued democratic operation of a firm (cf. Carter 2006, p.416). Wider cultural context has been observed to shape ethos within a firm. A factor often cited as responsible for the success of

Mondragon is the long cultural history and high levels of social solidarity among the Basque people, who defined themselves in opposition to the Franco dictatorship and who continue to define themselves in opposition to a Spanish identity (Sperry 1985, pp.352–355). Of the co-ops in Italy's Emilia Romagna, Schechter writes

...the most subtle and imaginative social engineering in the world could not compensate for the foundation of social solidarity and strong sense of community that underpins the co-operative economy and militates against the exploitative and divisive forces of market competition (Schechter 1994, p.145).

Greenberg found skilled blue collar workers in the Plywood Co-ops of the US Pacific North West who displayed a self-sufficient, small business mentality rather than a commitment to socialist ideals, which is undoubtedly related to the American cultural context (Greenberg 1981). They exhibited classical liberal values and support for 'competitive individualism' - that 'each individual is responsible for his or her fate in a potential competition for rewards against others in society, that success in the competition for rewards is justly arrived at through the marketplace, and that those who succeed owe nothing to those who fail in this competition, especially through the intervention of the government.' (Greenberg 1981, 36). Greenberg's findings indicate that successful co-operative culture is not the preserve of the political left. In the UK the ethos of co-operation is often founded on a moral commitment to fairness at work (Ridley-Duff 2009, p.51). An employee of one firm surveyed emphasised beliefs in self-sufficiency, equal responsibility, equal opportunity to participate, and equal reward, and described the sense of solidarity that these create:

Many of us are here because it's a co-op. [We're] not interested in working for a boss, we love the sense of ownership and doing it for ourselves that being part of a co-op brings. For many of us, [the firm's non-hierarchical structure and flat pay is] one of the most valuable aspects to our jobs and our working lives. Everyone valued equally, given the opportunity for equal responsibility and pay, and equal say in decision making. [This] creates a great bond between members, [a] sense of 'all in it together.' (Co-op member, Unicorn Grocery)

Thus ethos within a firm and in wider society is important to the success of workplace democracy. Anecdotal evidence from conversations with employees of the firm during the observation stage of the study suggest that there is a feeling of greater positivity about the firm and its mission in the firm's flagship store, which is both the largest and the longest-established branch. It may be that the co-operative ethos is stronger in this branch, and that there is a greater identification with the firm's values, giving individuals that work there greater feelings of influence. One branch manager lent support to this view during interview when he referred to the importance of 'history':

The Scottish stores are more connected to the co-operative side than the southern stores...partly through the fact that they're further away and there's more people here. And so the smaller stores...there's no history as well, and that makes it more challenging.
(Branch manager, Edinburgh branch)

I therefore hypothesize that workers in the firm's Head Office, in its flagship Edinburgh store, and in its warehouse (which is also located close to the Head Office) will feel more influential than staff in other branches or departments. Dummy variables for branch/department will be included in the regression model in order to test this hypothesis.

Modelling Results

Table 3.4 shows the results of multiple linear regression modelling using UCINET, with p-values calculated using permutation tests.

Table 3.4: Results of multiple linear regression modelling of predictors of sense of influence at work

DV: sense of influence at work

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value
Intercept	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Senior manager or Professional/ technical worker	0.298	0.014	0.377	0.036			0.308	0.087
Middle manager	0.251	0.042	0.290	0.020	0.201	0.131	-0.102	0.540
Junior manager	-0.091	0.432	-0.076	0.545	-0.087	0.475	-0.225	0.082
Manual worker	-0.029	0.809	0.000	0.997	0.033	0.813	0.025	0.861
A-levels/HND	0.074	0.529	0.119	0.350	0.130	0.313	0.143	0.273
GCSEs/Vocational qualification	0.066	0.599	0.089	0.544	0.067	0.654	0.043	0.779
Aberdeen			-0.228	0.073	-0.111	0.435	-0.062	0.669
Canonmills			-0.146	0.218	-0.074	0.528	-0.008	0.946
Head Office			-0.262	0.178	-0.124	0.534	-0.009	0.964
Leeds			-0.165	0.188	-0.094	0.459	-0.072	0.577
Manchester			-0.183	0.143	-0.156	0.223	-0.112	0.391
Newcastle			-0.032	0.805	-0.071	0.604	-0.058	0.671
Sheffield			-0.139	0.286	-0.091	0.483	-0.058	0.651
Warehouse			-0.339	0.016	-0.237	0.102	-0.160	0.280
Social resources - pay & benefits issues					0.302	0.048	0.306	0.053
Instrumental influence							0.464	0.010
Model R²		0.164		0.283		0.338		0.439
P-value		0.041		0.102		0.071		0.037

Model 1 shows the results of including dummy variables indicating formal position in the workplace hierarchy, class measured according to Goldthorpe's occupation-based schema, and highest level of education. Regarding formal hierarchy and class, the contrast class is intermediate class employees,

who in this firm consist of branch shop assistants and Head Office admin workers. Regarding education, the contrast class is workers whose highest qualification is degree level or higher.

Senior managers (department and division managers who have strategic responsibility), professional/technical staff and middle managers (branch and department managers who do not have strategic responsibility) have greater feelings of influence than other staff ($p < .05$). Junior managers (including assistant and deputy branch and department managers) show no significant differences in feelings of influence from non-management staff. Being a manual worker (working class in Goldthorpe's schema) and level of education have no significant relationship to feelings of influence.

Model 2 adds dummy variables for branch/department location. The contrast class is the flagship Edinburgh store. Staff in Aberdeen ($p < .10$) and the warehouse ($p < .05$) feel less influential than other staff.

Model 3 adds a continuous variable measuring respondents' social resources regarding pay and benefits issues. Having direct social ties to more influential individuals is positively related to a respondent's own feelings of influence ($p < .05$). Note that the coefficients for middle managers, the Aberdeen branch and the warehouse are no longer significant. This indicates that the relationships between being a middle manager and feelings of influence, and being located in these two areas of the firm and feelings of influence, are mediated by having social ties to influential colleagues. The coefficient for senior manager/professional worker has decreased in size, indicating that part of its positive effect is accounted for by the social resources variable.

Model 4 adds a continuous variable measuring instrumental influence. Instrumental influence has a stronger positive effect on feelings of influence than social resources. The coefficient for senior manager or professional/technical worker is no longer significant, indicating that the relationship between being a senior manager or professional/technical worker and feelings of influence is mediated by instrumental influence. Being a junior manager is now negatively related to sense of influence at work ($p < .10$). Instrumental influence appears to act as a suppressor variable in this case. Being a junior manager is negatively related to feelings of influence, but is positively related to instrumental influence, which is itself positively related to feelings of influence. The coefficient for middle managers has decreased considerably, and is in fact negative (though not significant), indicating that part of the positive effect of being a middle manager on feelings of influence is explained by instrumental influence. Model 4 is significant ($p < .05$) and explains approximately 44% of the variance in the outcome variable.

Discussion

Hypothesis 1 predicted that those higher in the formal workplace hierarchy would have greater feelings of influence than those lower down, while hypothesis 2 says that employees from higher social class groups and more educated employees will feel more influential. These hypotheses were partially supported, as senior managers, professional/technical workers and middle managers, representing both the upper echelons of hierarchy and the service class, have on average a higher sense of influence than other staff. However, there was no difference between working class and intermediate class employees, and being a junior manager is negatively associated with feelings of influence after controlling for instrumental influence. Education appears to have no effect on feelings of influence.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that instrumental influence and social resources are positively associated with feelings of influence at work. This hypothesis was supported. Moreover, the relationship between being in upper management and feelings of influence were mediated by the structure of social relationships at work. The relationship between being a middle manager and feelings of influence was mediated by having social resources surrounding pay and benefits issues. The relationship between being a senior manager and feelings of influence was mediated by being central in workplace social networks. Thus being a more senior manager has no separate effects on feelings of influence beyond its effects on individual's location in workplace power and influence networks. Meanwhile, junior managers feel less influential than other staff, even after controlling for their higher instrumental influence.

Workers in branches and departments closer to the organization's core were predicted to feel more influential than those located further away (Hypothesis 4). The null hypothesis could not be rejected. Staff at the Aberdeen branch feel less influential than others, as do staff in the warehouse, despite the latter being located in the same building complex as Head Office where senior managers are based. This relationship was mediated by social resources, indicating that staff in Aberdeen and the warehouse have lower social resources than other staff. This is an important finding that suggests that feeling influential is related to building relationships with influential others, and will be discussed further below.

The results of the regression modelling confirm that being seen as someone to go to for help to affect change or make improvements, and having direct access to influential others is positively related to feelings that one has an effective voice in the democratic workplace. The analysis raises several questions:

1. Why do some individuals have higher instrumental influence than others? What kinds of resources do they possess that make them central in decision-making networks, and do these resources translate into ability to affect real change?
2. Why do some individuals have direct access to influential colleagues and others do not? What are the personal and contextual factors that facilitate access?
3. Why do staff in Aberdeen and the warehouse have fewer social resources and lower feelings of influence than other staff?
4. Why are middle managers' feelings of influence predicated on having high social resources?
5. Why do junior managers feel less influential than other staff?
6. What are the contextual factors external to the firm that affect feelings of influence?
7. How do these contextual factors interact with personal and interpersonal factors to affect the dynamics of workplace democracy?

These questions will be explored using data from in-depth interviews conducted with 35 workers. Doing so helps answer the question of the extent to which workplace democracy is able to equalize workplace power for isolated firms in the UK context.

The dynamics of workplace democracy: internal structure and external context

Some actors have higher instrumental influence than others, and feel more influential as a result. Some actors are directly connected to influential colleagues, and also feel more influential as a result. It is hypothesized that what is taking place is an 'exchange' relationship, where actors are able to access each other's resources, broadly conceived, for their own benefit. Central actors have the resources required to make things happen, and those connected to them are able to access those resources due to contextual factors or their own personal characteristics. The interviews provide evidence about the types of resources that central individuals possess, the characteristics of those with high social resources, and the factors facilitating or inhibiting social tie formation in the democratic workplace.

The characteristics of influential workers

A key finding is that the effect of being in upper management on feelings of influence is dependent on social network ties. Figure 3.6 illustrated that workers with high instrumental influence tend to

be managers, but that there are differences in instrumental influence scores between managers. Why do workers tend to approach some colleagues to try to change or improve things rather than others? Interviews with workers revealed a number of sources of influence over decision-making in the firm.

Expertise and differences in influence

In Chapter 1 I reviewed evidence that differences in expertise can lead to the development of informal hierarchies of power within worker co-operatives. A recurring theme in interviews with managers, employee representatives and shop floor staff was the role of expertise, especially business management expertise, in influencing decisions within the firm. Expertise is a key requirement for workers who sit on the Board of Directors. When asked about the skills that Employee Directors require one longstanding Employee Director responded:

People skills is definitely something they need, the ability to be able to do that...And the Employee Directors hold the balance of power on the Board, so you actually have to have some business acumen as well. Or you could end up...with a Board that doesn't understand the business and you could end up having to- and the executive directors will say they do that now - but you have to feed a lot of information that normally a Board would 'get' themselves. Where your Employee Directors have no training...one day, you're a sales assistant or working the workshop, and the next day, you're on the Board and making decisions about a business that employs a hundred and sixty people, and with no training. (Employee Director and branch manager)

The need for specialist knowledge can limit the ability of non-management staff, less skilled staff, and less experience staff to engage with higher-level decisions, as a senior manager pointed out:

I often think that the role that employee directors...[pause]...I think there's kind of two roles that they play which are moderately useful. One role that they play is to...[pause]...make sure things are grounded in a certain reality. Because they experience that reality and so they can say "well actually, I don't know if that's the case," if you see what I mean. And that stuff tends to be about fairly detailed things rather than great issues of strategy...I think the other thing that they can do is shout if they think the train is going off the rails. And I think that might be the only two things that they can do, really...I think in terms of sort of fine-tuning and that sort of stuff, they're fairly useless...because that stuff happens in a kind of realm that they're not really- it's just not really what they're working with, you know? So if somebody's saying "you know - the number of days of stock you're holding is rising and it's a bit high." That- you don't really need to take that standing on the sales floor of a shop, if you know what I mean? (Senior manager, Head Office)

On this manager's view, the role of employee representatives is to increase senior managers' understanding of day-to-day issues in the business, rather than to increase employee participation in higher-level decisions. Lack of expertise makes this inevitable. Some staff found it hard to get to grips with higher-level issues, even though they had access to information about them:

We have a meeting about once every three months where someone from the Board comes down...Again, it's the same thing every time. They bring a load of graphs that nobody understands and a load of figures, and a good accountant can make the worst figures look great or the best figures look terrible. (Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

As Kasmir observed in the Mondragon co-ops, workers' rights to participate are not matched by their powers to influence decisions, partly due to lack of business management expertise. In contrast, lack of expertise on the part of employees appears to enhance the influence of senior management, especially as they have no external shareholders to answer to:

I have a huge amount of autonomy, I don't have a significant amount of pressure upon me from shareholders to- to kind of guide the business in a particular direction. I think the nature of the structure of our business, people are reasonably comfortable with how much involvement they have, sort of, day-to-day, week-to-week, month-to-month, so I'm kind of happy to let the management take quite a lot autonomy and quite a lot of control of what they do in the business. And as long as we have all the checks and balances in terms of whether they think it's going in the wrong direction, then it's- it's quite comfortable in that sense, and I like that. (Senior manager)

Particularly noteworthy is that this senior manager understands workplace democracy as being about 'checks and balances', rather than about the equalization of power or employee participation in decision-making. The staff-management divide in views about the role and purpose of democracy in the firm will be examined in Chapter 4. Business management expertise appears to be a key source of influence over decisions within the firm, and the influence of senior management is enhanced by being accountable only to individuals with less expertise than themselves. An Employee Director who struggled with his task of performance evaluating the Managing Director confirmed this view:

I've maybe been doing it five or six years, now. It's a really odd position...I think the business is at odds with it slightly, having somebody of my level of seniority reviewing the big boss and setting his sort of objectives. (Employee Director and Branch Manager)

Differences in levels of expertise and experience have led to an entrenched division between management and non-managers, with Employee Directors often drawn from a pool of managers

and long-serving staff. One middle manager, who had been an Employee Director for 11 of his 14 years with the company, observed

...it's mostly managers that stand, or it's senior staff that stand...And I guess there's something about that these people are investing their life in the business. They're here for the long-haul rather than short-term...it's also quite intimidating to stand up in front of a hundred and something people and talk. It's quite difficult and a lot of people just don't want to do it...There's been people that've tried to do it and just - completely not able to do it, and, you know, fall apart. And it's not pretty for anybody to see somebody actually just not be able to do it, but it's part of standing in front, giving a speech. It's really difficult. Well, you can do it in smaller groups. But actually, standing in front of a hundred people, if you've never done that before, it's quite intimidating. And I think that puts off some people. (Employee Director and branch manager)

Here it can be seen that influence is not only about expertise, but about participation skills such as giving a speech. These are the same kinds of personal resources identified by Brady et al. as constituting civic skills (Brady et al. 1995). As expected, the personal resources a worker brings to the workplace shape her ability to participate in decision-making. This may explain why some workers engage with influential colleagues and others don't. Indeed, there is evidence that personal and social resources give some individuals an advantage when it comes to participation. One young, degree-educated Employee Director had found it relatively easy to adapt to his role on the Board:

Interviewer: And do you feel comfortable attending Board meetings and engaging with those kind of bigger issues?

Interviewee: I do, yeah. It almost feels weird that, particularly when I first joined the Board, for someone who I felt was quite inexperienced in the business was being let into such - a kinda high level of the business stuff that was going on. So it does feel strange at first because you can't help but feel it wouldn't be that way in any other business. But I think you get used to it very quickly. (Junior manager and Employee Director, Edinburgh branch)

While the Employee Director tasked with the Managing Director's performance appraisal drew upon the knowledge of successful friends outside the business:

A difficult job at first, but I fortunately get a fair bit of help from [two other senior managers] on it, and also outside sources, so the Non-Executive Director, he'll come in and help me out a bit...But I also have friends locally who are- I can use MDs of a reasonably-

sized family company, 50 million pound or so, and it...has helped us out a lot in setting targets. (Employee Director and Branch Manager)

A former Employee Director noted the importance of his extensive past experience to his progression within the firm:

I had plenty of years of management experience in my previous jobs in the States. I walked into the Bruntsfield branch and their Deputy Head had just quit one or two weeks before, so when I went in and I had a CV that was loaded with management experience, the manager came out right away and spoke with me. And I had an interview the next day and the next week I was working. And that was it, I was a Deputy Manager from the get-go. So it was because of all the experience I had previously that catapulted me up. (Branch manager and former Employee Director)

Thus as predicted a combination of personal resources such as expertise, experience, education and participation skills have allowed some employees to attain influential positions. Advantages in these factors characterise the members of the firm's influential 'core'. In line with degenerative tendencies described in the literature on worker co-ops (Carter 2006, p.418), the power differential between core and periphery arose and became entrenched over time due to differences in expertise and the impracticality of direct democracy. In its early history the co-op displayed characteristics of co-ops set up according to the anti-hierarchical, anti-bureaucratic ideologies of New Social Movements described in Chapter 1 (Carter 2006, p.417). It was direct democratic and practised job rotation. A long-serving member described how differences in expertise led over time to a division of labour:

When I started at the co-op, everyone earned the same amount. And I think there were seven or eight of us, and we used to make decisions on a Thursday morning... about a lot of the things that happened in the business. And at that point when it was that small, it was almost impossible to do...And it also became apparent quite soon after that people were better at some things than others. At that point we used to share all the jobs, or rotate the jobs. So when I started working, I used to have to repair bikes and stand in front shop and think about processes and invoicing and stock, and do all of those things, and put newsletters into envelopes. And quite soon after I joined it specialized, and mainly because it was some skilled people who were better at repairing bikes, and it was very difficult for them to watch all the other people who weren't skilled at repairing bikes making a mess of it. And I think that was almost as big a push for the people who were better at paperwork. You know, because it wasn't quite so obvious to see them making a mess of something. I think the general drive was that mechanics needed to be specialist mechanics, because there were people who had specialist, sort of manual skills. And so

then that started to divide up into specialist jobs, because at that point everyone still got paid the same. (Middle manager, Head Office)

As predicted above, being central in workplace networks does not always mean a worker has the resources to make change happen. Despite having higher influence due to expertise and experience, some senior figures found their power limited by skills-gaps, and required recourse to external expertise to supplant their own knowledge:

When you're looking for that, sort of, person beside you that can give you depth of experience and knowledge and understanding of what the business should do, I lack that a lot. We've just recently brought a Non-Executive Director into the business...And he's helping a lot with that now, so we're starting to address the idea of a bit more experience and support. You can only do what you can do as a non-executive director. He's not here every day making decisions, but he's helping me a lot with these kind of bigger issues that I would have found a struggle in the past. (Senior manager, Head Office)

This is a situation of co-determination, where experts make specialist knowledge available to democratic decision-makers (Birch 1993). Cook & Morgan argue co-determination is beneficial to democracy (Birch 1993). However, it raises questions around the undemocratic influence of external expertise on decision-making within the firm. Staff who mentioned the Non-Executive Director had mixed views on his role and seemed unclear about what his impact would be. One senior manager thought it would help transfer power from senior managers back to the Board:

...it does feel like having a very confident and good Non-Exec Director is really gonna help push the co-operativeness back towards the Board and away from, you know, senior management. (Senior manager, Head Office)

Another senior manager sensed wariness among staff, and also suggested that the Non-Exec Director brought a conventional business philosophy to the Board:

...[The Non-Executive Director] is really interested in people and that sort of thing, but whether he's interested in 'co-opness' - I think he's interested in weirdness, just as a sort of hobby...he almost deliberately doesn't take the co-op into account when he says things. And he says, you know, "I'm not taking into account that you're a co-op, but if," you know, "if you were somebody else, this is what I would say," if you see what I mean? And so he's kind of aware of it. I don't know if the Employee Directors feel trampled on by him or not...he's not an aggressive guy, but he's quite capable of trampling, if you see what I mean?...I feel that all the employees who have been with us a long time...are quite suspicious of him. And that's probably quite reasonable. But I don't know if he's actually

very destructive of the co-op thing actually in reality, but his presence or his symbolic nature might be destructive in some way, and we might need to do a bit more PR. (Senior manager, Head Office)

A shop assistant noted that the Non-Exec Director was responsible for suggesting a video mystery shopping policy that proved extremely unpopular with staff, and which will be discussed further below:

...it was brought in by...God, I don't remember, it was some Director of [names the Non-Executive Director's own company] - he's getting paid a little bit to be an independent kind of view of the co-op. (Shop assistant, Edinburgh branch)

The external business expertise of the Non-Executive Director may act as a further degenerative pressure on democracy in the firm. Regardless, due to his status he appears to exercise undemocratic influence on firm decision-making, suggesting that co-determination can compromise as well as benefit workplace democracy.

As hypothesized workers' personal resources are important to their ability to engage with processes of democracy and participate in higher-level decision-making within the firm, and differences in personal resources have led over time to entrenched power-differentials. Further, their social resources in terms of help and advice from more experienced colleagues within the firm, and experienced contacts outside of the firm, help workers to fulfil their business management duties, but further undermine democratic participation in decision-making. It is worth noting that not all staff saw lack as skills as the main barrier to staff participation in higher-level decisions. The well-educated young Employee Director mentioned earlier lamented the unwillingness of staff to get involved:

...it's been a general theme over the years right up until very recently, and it was only managers that were ever on the Board. And there's a certain amount of animosity amongst staff about that. Because- they're like, "oh, you know...it's all the bigwigs on the Board," just like as far as - they don't really understand what the common man needs...But at the same time...you give people all these opportunities and they don't take them, it's that anyone can stand for the Board. And the reason that only managers are on the Board is because only managers stand for the Board. All the Grade 1 employees, no one stands. No one puts themselves forward to go on the Board, and then they complain when no Grade 1 employees are on the Board. And to me, it's just like- it's crazy. (Junior manager and Employee Director)

However, the general view among interviewees was lack of personal resources was a significant barrier to the widespread participation of staff in higher-level decision-making. This partly explains why staff were found to be more engaged in smaller, day-to-day decisions, rather than big, company-wide decisions. In Chapter 1 it was argued that investment in human capital is important for successful workplace democracy as it allows workers to develop the skills for effective participation. This view was confirmed by several interviewees who related a lack of expertise to a lack of staff training:

...there's no formal training and such. But then there's no formal training for our managers either, so, you know, it's not something we're great at as a business, is doing training and we're getting better at ordinary staff level- at sales floor level. We've not great at doing it up the line. (Branch manager and Employee Director)

Training and staff development is constrained by lack of money, and the low levels reflect the prevailing situation in the retail industry as a whole:

It's always come down to finance...we found training courses and we were going to do them and we don't do them for financial reasons...I think a lot of retailers are very bad at training, in my experience. I've been through very little training in my life. Most of it's hands-on. A lot of retailers, you get one day if you're very lucky, and then you're dropped straight into it. Particularly sales staff. Most sales staff probably learn on the job in most retailers. (Branch manager and Employee Director)

This is an example of how external context interacts with the internal dynamics of the firm to constrain workplace democracy. Lack of investment in staff development is related to both the economic difficulties of the firm, and the industry-wide retail business model which does not tend to invest in human capital. The UK retail industry generally operates on low profit margins (Brennan & Limmer 2015, p.12), and so capital for investment in human resources is limited. Brennan & Limmer argue that during the great recession low margins were squeezed further by increased competition, leading to extremely tight trading conditions, and relatively poor profits and investment (ibid.). The study firm has suffered along with others and had not been profitable for a number of years prior to the study. Brennan & Limmer also observe that, since the recession, 'With a larger proportion of the labour market equipped with higher-level qualifications, employers are free to recruit more highly skilled individuals to occupations previously filled by those with fewer or lower-level skills' (Brennan & Limmer 2015, p.36). Thus economic and industry conditions in UK retail have not been conducive to the high levels of workforce investment needed for workplace democracy. Some co-operatives get around the problem of staff investment through highly-selective recruitment. Suma Wholefoods Co-operative in Halifax, Yorkshire, is a successful worker

co-operative exhibiting extensive direct-democratic management. A Suma co-op member described their intensive recruitment processes:

Yes Suma is very selective...We did this because worker co-operative member is a fluid concept that can't be nailed down to simple competencies or functions. We want flexible and adaptable people acting as real people with complex self-managed behaviour and choices but responding to communications from their colleagues. A phrase we use is 'individual initiative within collective responsibility.'

Recruitment attracts hundreds of applications and we take the top fifty scored against the job description. They then go through group selection exercises to test their social skills and only twenty or so get to face-to-face interview.

New probationers do three months in basic warehouse jobs to learn the Suma way of working. If they achieve basic performance levels they enter trial membership training for 6 months when they work in different departments and are expected to learn as much as they can about Suma and become multi-skilled. They have multiple reviews and assessments against the job description. Much of this isn't just about job performance but about behaviours exhibited. If they are performing according to it by the end they get a positive recommendation from personnel. In accordance with the first co-operative principle they are workers able and willing to undertake the responsibilities of membership and should therefore be admitted to membership...

...Balancing all of this and the different roles of a member (worker, employee, manager, member, owner) can be learned by anyone eventually but we need to find people who are more able to start with, due to cost restraints. If the education system trained people to be multi-skilled, self-managing and flexibly practical we wouldn't have to be so selective for the few who escape the servant role conditioning most people are trapped in. (Bob Cannell, Suma Wholefoods Co-operative)

Such selectiveness does not sit comfortably with the idea of co-operation as a large-scale solution to job quality, as selective co-operatives will exclude less-skilled sections of the workforce. Jobs in successful democratic firms may end up the preserve of a privileged class of worker-owners while less privileged workers settle for lower-quality jobs (cf. Oakeshott 1978, p.31). Such 'class' divisions have been observed before in relation to co-ops. Following the onset of the global economic crisis, the brunt of job cuts in the Mondragon co-operatives fell on temporary and non-member workers, while co-op members were protected (Arando et al. 2010, pp.13–14). In recent decades the

Mondragon co-operatives have set up overseas manufacturing subsidiaries staffed by non-member workers. This is in response to the imperative to grow in order to protect jobs at home, and to competitors own location of plants in low labour-cost countries (Arando et al. 2010, p.21).

While workers in co-ops may have control over residuals and could choose to invest them in workforce skills, the need to compete with low-margin, price-slashing firms makes this a viable long-term option only if such investment gives a co-op a significant edge over its competitors. One middle manager pointed out that the co-op found it hard to compete with other firms on price:

As a business it's hard for us to secure outside funding, whereas our competitors, cycling is booming and so they've got investment from investment firms. And they seem to have unlimited cash supply to do all sorts of things, expand or cut prices, or whatever. And that's an obvious drawback to what we do, and so we have to just do what we can within our means. And I mean, it's a more sensible business strategy, but it makes it hard to compete with our competitors. (Middle manager, Head Office)

Note that the firm faces a disadvantage in terms of attracting outside investment, a common problem for co-ops (Schechter 1994, p.138; 143; Ridley-Duff 2009, p.61). However, the firm's co-operative image (and perhaps the 'trickle-down' of educated staff to less skilled jobs observed by Brennan & Limmer) has allowed the recruitment of an over-qualified workforce:

I think we've got one advantage in this particular business...And that is that people perceive our business as quite a kind of middle-class business...and sort of mothers allow their sons to work for us because they're not kind of- it's not an embarrassing place to work like Halfords, if your prized son goes off to college and comes out and works in Halfords, you feel that's a total waste. Whereas "I think I might want to work for a bike co-op," they're kind of a couple of years older or they're groovy graduates who are slumming it, then that's a different thing. Do you know what I mean? It's kind of like a year out or traveling the world or these kind of things. And so I think that's a big advantage that we have, is that we can employ nice middle-class people who are highly-educated and can talk to our nice middle-class customers in the very kind of language that they understand. And everybody feels very comfortable. And I think that is one of the things that we might have or that we might have had and need to kind of do something with. (Senior manager, Head Office)

Managers in the study firm were depending on this high quality customer service model to obtain a competitive edge. Having a highly engaged, motivated and skilled workforce is often touted as a productivity benefit of co-operation (Finch 2010). However, the advantageous workforce qualities described by this manager resemble what Williams & Connell have termed 'aesthetic labour'

(Williams & Connell 2010). Aesthetic labour includes a worker's deportment, style, accent, voice, and attractiveness (Williams & Connell 2010, p.350). They are qualities which allow a worker to 'look good' and 'sound right' for a job role. For workers in high-end retailers this typically means embodying a middle-class, privileged aesthetic because it appeals to these firms' wealthier, middle-class customers. More than just products, workers sell a 'lifestyle' which they embody in their deep-seated, class-based dispositions (Williams & Connell 2010, p.352). High-end retailers attract this type of privileged, middle-class worker not with higher wages or benefits, but by marketing their jobs as 'cool' or desirable (Williams & Connell 2010, p.351; Besen-Cassino 2013). They sell jobs to workers just as they sell products to consumers – as part of a 'lifestyle'. The senior manager seems to be relying on co-operation as an 'alternative lifestyle' to attract middle class workers and enable the firm to target the top end of the market. But the wisdom of this strategy was leading to much hang-wringing within the firm:

...Now the nice middle class customers all have super duper broadband connections, so you're going right at the demographic who know how to shop on the internet and can read endlessly and all the rest of that. So you've got to be careful about that idea too. (Senior manager, Head Office)

Probably the biggest challenge in our business is whether we battle on price in our market. Quite a lot of the retailers that are performing well in our industry at the moment are doing it on the basis of discounts. And we've taken a decision not to be that kind of business. And I think probably on a week to week basis, we revisit that decision just, you know, trying to convince ourselves "are we doing the right thing?" (Senior manager, Head Office)

I think there is a massive shift towards internet retail. And we're stocked with bricks and mortar shops, and...I think there's a kind of blindness to the fact that staying in bricks and mortar shops is a threat in terms of long-term ability to keep trading. (Middle manager, Head Office)

Thus the 'John Lewis model' of high quality service may not be viable for all retail firms, and may be threatened by market competition and trends towards online shopping. Indeed, John Lewis's profitability and ability to pay staff bonuses has been limited recently by supermarket 'price wars' (Ruddick 2015), suggesting having motivated workers is not sufficient for success. The idea of relying on quality service is also premised on targeting a niche market, and so cannot be a general strategy for all firms. It may be that co-operatives are most successful in markets where customer service is particularly important. Supportive of this is the finding that co-operative supermarkets in the Mondragon Group outperform conventional supermarkets in terms of growth only in a niche section of the market where better customer service is particularly important (Arando et al. 2011,

p.24). Even within the study firm, some branches seemed to perform better due to the suitability of the local market:

Our customer base likes the idea that we're a co-operative. Our customer base shops out of M&S and Waitrose alternatively. And that's ideal for us. We've got a new Waitrose nearby, we've got a M&S just up the road. So they're more affluent around here. North Leeds, Green Belt, it's traditionally quite a prosperous area...It's seen a big influx of people who have been less handicapped by the banking crisis because they were working in the public sector...so we've got an awful lot of health service workers around here. This is where all the doctors live. It's also where all the lecturers live, and so on. And our Manchester and Sheffield positioning, for the demographic to which we would appeal, is much, much worse. (Branch manager, Leeds branch)

Recruitment issues present a particular challenge to democracy in the study firm. The perceived need for expertise has led to external recruitment into more senior positions in the firm. This has led to discontent over pay differentials and the pay of senior staff:

...our differential is five to one I think? ...a maximum allowed is eight under our kind of vote, but we operate on five. I think that's thought to be very unfair, by quite a lot of people. And it's just over half what you get in a secondary school, you know. And so we're not talking about, sort of, HSBC or- do you know what I mean? We're not talking about bond traders. We're talking about a fucking secondary school...so we're going out looking for an Operations Director and we can't get close to a senior teacher salary for an operations director. And it's still unfair! And actually, it is probably unfair. Do you know what I mean? You know, you or I might find it unfair that somebody else earns five times more than us. You think, "how could they be doing five times the value of what we do?"...maybe the only thing you can do with that is just kind of brush it under the table the moment it turns up. Maybe all you can do in issues of pay and equity in the modern world is just sort of blow fog over them, I don't know. But it's a big problem, I think...it's twice been not such a big problem. Once was when we were making lots of money and paying lots of bonuses. And then it didn't seem to matter so much how much people earned relative to other people because they were earning more than they thought they were gonna earn. So the kind of comparison with what they thought they were gonna earn was more important than comparison with other people. And the other time where it became kind of a quite interesting issue is with a guy called Irfan, who was our buying manager, who was very good. And he was very, very successful and kind of got our margin up about three percentage points. And everybody got a bonus. And everybody was saying, you

know, "why didn't we employ somebody like Irfan years ago? You know, he's well worth the sort of blah, blah, blah, blah, blah." (Senior manager, Head Office)

...one person is never worth five times another person. I just don't believe that, you know. And so as a kind of principles person, the fact that we've just copied what everyone else is doing is quite interesting. And the original ideas of you pay people according to need, which was about- I'm having children and I'm needing a house, or whatever. Or one day I'm going to retire and I'm not going to have anything to retire on has kind of gone out the window completely, and we've just copied the model from outside. So the way we value people is actually identical to the outside world, and part of that has been about attracting people in instead of bringing them on inside the company. I think that it would be true to say for years and years we didn't actually advertise outside for anyone to come, and certainly didn't advertise for people to come in above other people. You would always just recruit salespeople and they would be developed to do something else in the business. (Middle manager, Head Office)

There has also been an apparent failure to develop existing staff into more senior roles:

I went up to be the Managing Director and I've kinda stepped down to be the Finance Director...I half regret that now because that fills a space that should be for people moving up, if you see what I mean...the kind of escalator in our business with people moving up through the business to better and more senior jobs is kind of a bit broken. And I don't know if people have faith in it. I don't know if we invest enough in it... almost never has a deputy manager from one shop moved to be the manager of another. And that might be because of lots of things like they've got working wives who've a tie to that city, or all these kind of different modern problems to do with moving about, or they've got houses they can't sell, or whatever it is that is going on...(Senior manager, Head Office)

Lack of investment in staff development caused by economic context has led to the need for external skills. This combined with pay inequality in wider society and a competitive labour market has put pressure on pay equality within the firm. Wage differentials have increased while more junior staff have not been able to progress to more senior roles. Lack of progression in low-quality jobs is also a problem more generally:

...a key problem [with the UK labour market] is the nature of the jobs on offer. In particular the disconnect between the 'core' market of secure, well-paid jobs offering chances for development and progression and the 'peripheral' market of insecure, low-paid, dead-end jobs that so many people in poverty get stuck in. (Barnard 2013)

In line with my expectations from Chapter 1, market context has limited the equalization of material rewards in terms of pay and career prospects within the firm. Over time, the co-operative appears to have become more similar to conventional firms in the retail industry, where 'part-time low-wage jobs with no benefits, no autonomy, and very limited opportunities for promotion' are common (Williams & Connell 2010, p.350).

Staff turnover is a second aspect of recruitment that has harmed democracy in the firm. Interviewees suggested high turnover made it hard to accumulate the organizational knowledge necessary for business success and successful workplace democracy:

Interviewee: I think the co-operative thing comes into it because, actually, you have a bunch of guys that are actually motivated. And you know, the majority of my staff that work in this branch are co-op members. And so they take it quite personally when things don't work right, and if another staff member is getting bad advice or bad service- and so there's a huge self-correcting factor that exists in the co-op that makes people want to change. And the owners set standards. And it makes it easier to manage a group of owners. It's much easier to do that than a bunch of new staff that have no understanding, and it's just a job. For them other guys it's more than just a job.

Interviewer: Where does that extra understanding come from?

Interviewee: I think it comes from.....it's difficult because it's probably time served...

...part of the challenge is retaining your good staff, because you're not wanting to give pay raises. And so money is tight, and we're not offering in the way of pay raises...so when that's happening, that makes it difficult to retain staff...The approach that we take as a retailer of...differentiating our sales by service means that you have to retain staff to be able to do that...we're lucky in this branch in that we don't have huge turnover of staff all of the time...And so, you can learn through behaviour...And so you see the way it's done and you mimic that behaviour...So it's self-perpetuating...It's harder in the smaller branches where there's a bigger turnover. If you lose two or three staff, you're losing half of your sales force. And then it's then very difficult to maintain your sales standards. (Branch manager and Employee Director)

When turnover is high it is hard to maintain the culture of high standards and collective responsibility that has made the co-op successful, and it undermines the high customer service strategy of management. This issue will be explored further below in relation to 'co-operative ethos'.

In sum, differentials in skills, experience and expertise are reasons why some workers have higher instrumental influence than others, and why the most influential workers tend to be managers and long-serving staff, despite Employee Director roles being open to all employees. Lack of resources have purportedly made it difficult for the firm to invest in staff development, while the need to attract skilled staff has been used to justify external recruitment and led to increased pay differentials over time. Thus long-standing or skilled staff have become entrenched in positions of influence. The co-op seems to have experienced the kind of organizational degeneration described by Carter, whereby 'control becomes increasingly concentrated in the hands of a few and a range of capitalistic organisational practices, such as a management hierarchy and division of labour, are adopted' (Carter 2006, p.418). The firm displays elements of oligarchy, reflected in the core-periphery structure of influence over decisions described above. High staff turnover, which is characteristic of the retail industry as a whole, has made it difficult to maintain a culture of high standards and collective responsibility in some branches.

Other personal resources

Beyond expertise, personal resources that lead to influence in the co-op include participation skills, interpersonal skills, and personality factors such as empathy, approachability and helpfulness.

Participation skills such as the ability to speak publicly and the confidence to speak out were identified by a number of interviewees as reasons why some workers may not participate in decision-making, either informally by approaching influential others or collectively at meetings. Interviewees showed different levels of outspokenness:

Yeah, yeah. I'll talk to Managing Director, I'll talk to cleaner. They're all human beings, they all need to buy a loaf of bread from the same shop. I don't care. It's nothing. (Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

...when he comes into the store and he walks about and talks to you, yeah, you feel pretty confident. Don't know if I'd walk into his office and sit down and start, but that's just me more than- but yeah, certainly face-to-face chat on quite a casual level yeah. I feel pretty confident telling him what I think the issues are, and he listens. (Junior manager, Aberdeen branch)

Yeah I've raised it in quite a lot of channels, actually. I'm quite an outspoken person when it comes to these sort of things, but you just get the usual "we don't have any money, we can't fix it" talk, but no. Nothing changes. They don't change the management structure or anything to provide better coverage, or they don't do anything like that, you know? (Warehouse worker)

Thus participation skills are important in explaining why some people form ties with influential colleagues and others don't. The interpersonal skills of influential workers were also important in allowing them to effectively represent less vocal staff, as one representative explained:

Some of the meetings you've been in- a lot of the meetings- I find that quite often you get more questions in the elected members section that actually have business-related...but they'll talk more to that person than they will necessarily talk to the Managing Director or the Executive Directors, even if they were in the room...And I think some of the best time you can actually get in is when you're there, just chatting to people, rather than the formal meeting which is more difficult. Some people don't want to talk in a formal meeting. So it's useful having Directors that aren't as intimidating. (Branch manager and Employee Director)

Workers seemed more likely to raise issues with influential colleagues who they found approachable and helpful:

...it's hard when you work in retail to get weekends off, 'cause they're usually the busiest time. But generally...if you've got a specific date on the holiday that you want off a month, he can usually work it out for you. It's very rare you can't take the time off, 'cause he understands. If you pre-book to go, like, to race down south or something, you've booked, like, hotels and things like that, he will make it happen for you. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

Some people are friendly faces who make an effort to chat to you and make you feel welcome. Others you get the opinion that they're not very approachable. (Shop assistant, Manchester branch)

...one of the head people at Head Office, he comes here every now and then passing through, he's got something to talk about with the manager here or whatever. I don't know, but maybe it's just him, it's sort of a little bit of an example, but he comes into the shop, doesn't introduce himself to anybody, he just wanders around, doesn't talk to anyone...you know, weird. [Laughs]...So I don't think that's very good. [Laughs]. But I'm sure that there are other people in Head Office and in the warehouse and other departments who are lovely and completely different. But I think as an example of putting yourself forward as a, you know, an ambassador from Head Office, it's not very good, not very good [laughs]. (Shop assistant)

Empathy and the willingness to understand colleagues' job demands and viewpoints is likely a key competency for co-operative workers, and seemed to be a source of dissatisfaction with management among some workers:

I mean it's hard to say because they hardly come across here. We never really see them. So you can't know the job if they can't come across and talk to us a bit. 'Cause obviously I think people high up ought to come down and see what we actually do. I think one of the mechanics...actually requested that. It never happened. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

Communication skills were also identified as a weakness among some managers:

Basically in my close to a year of working in [the study firm], I had maybe two sentences of conversation with the person who's supposed to be our branch manager. And that's kind of part of the problem. You have a person who is effectively incapable of having a conversation with another human trying to just send out information...so a lack of human skills on the side of the actual management led to a massive disparity between management and branch level. And that's not just that one person. That's at several branches across the co-op as far as I'm aware. (Shop assistant)

Thus personal resources that allow senior individuals to manage relationships with their colleagues seem to be key to influence. The core of influential individuals in the co-op have influence partly due to expertise, partly due to experience, and partly due to formal authority, but the ability to influence junior colleagues, gain their support for decisions and make them feel they have an effective voice is a product of interpersonal skills that not all senior workers possess. This may account for why being directly connected to central individuals increases respondents' feelings of influence. Workers are more likely to approach colleagues with good interpersonal skills for help to change things, and those colleagues use their interpersonal skills to make them feel they have an effective voice in the organization. The two individuals with the highest instrumental influence scores were identified by colleagues in interviews as having good interpersonal and management skills. Research in organizational behaviour has shown that 'individuals are more likely to join collective action, such as implementing change, when there is trust, support, or organizational identification', and that effective managers manage the emotional states of their employees during times of change (Huy 2002, p.31). It seems that during difficult times such as were being experienced in the study firm, the interpersonal management skills of representatives become particularly important to effective workplace democracy. The relations between the economic challenges facing the firm and workers' feelings of influence will be explored further below.

It was hypothesized that education level would be positively associated with the possession of personal resources required for influence, but this hypothesis was not supported by my analysis. It

is likely that education-level does not adequately capture the resources required to participate in decisions in the firm. This may be because a high proportion (53%) of staff are degree-educated, and so other, less formal differences between staff, such as experience or participation skills, help decide who is influential and who isn't. It may also be that formal education is less important to success in retail than other factors.

This brings me to the question of the nature of interactions represented by network ties.

Network interactions and information flows

It was argued that a network tie represents the possibility of interaction and the exchange of resources between two actors in the firm. It is clear that workers have more positive interactions with some senior colleagues than others. What do these interactions consist of, and what kind of resources are 'exchanged'? Many attempts to influence (i.e. interactions) discussed in the interviews took the form of informal chats or electronic communications via telephone and email. Some workers felt these interactions were positive, while others felt they achieved little. Generally, staff felt managers were more responsive to day-to-day issues than big issues:

Transparency is still quite good. We have Company Report Meetings where we can...go through the whole company balance sheets, all the money, what we're planning to do, and you can have some input, you can speak to the MD, you can chin him about something if you're not happy, you know what I mean? And it's quite a relaxed atmosphere. There's very few businesses like that where you can go up to the MD and say "wait a minute, it's freezing cold down there. I need a heater, sort it out," and he'll generally do it, you know what I mean? Like, so that to me is the most valuable thing, the most valuable co-operative element. (Warehouse worker)

Other interactions take place in formal meetings, either quarterly Company Report meetings when senior figures visit branches, share business information and field questions; or the Annual General Meeting where co-op members are able to vote on firm-wide issues. Views on the AGM were mixed. Some staff felt they did not have an effective voice at the AGM, while others saw it as a good chance to have a say. Many saw it as an important opportunity for social interaction with senior figures and staff from other parts of the organization:

The AGM, it's a legal requirement. We generally shut the store down here, 'cause obviously Edinburgh is a long way to go. It's about a fourteen hour day that we do to get up there to say "yep, yeah, yeah." That's it. Quick go to pub, bit of dinner, and then you're on your way back...I mean, it's stagnating the AGM. I mean, I've been to either four or five now -

can't remember...it's all much of a muchness...There's no real strategy to it, you know, that's what I feel. You get more done in the pub afterwards than you do in the AGM. (Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

Interviewee: We just kind of discuss the Board and vote people in and stuff like that...And it's a bit cheeky, I guess. And it's fairly good...the social side of it is nice because you can chat to everyone else at the shops, and you get to see how everyone else runs it. And last time we went to the Edinburgh shop and we got to see all that...and it's good. It just, kind of, feels like it's...a big family - without sounding like...

Interviewer: [Laughs] I know what you mean. But the meeting side of it is tedious, you feel like?

Interviewee: It can be. It's just a lot of numbers and...

Interviewer: Do you feel like there's any point in you being there?

Interviewee: Well yeah, I guess, because it gives me a say in how the company works. And voting on whoever's gonna be on the Board, and who's in charge, and stuff like that...and what's happening, but...It's still a bit tedious. (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

As described in Chapter 1, social networks can be conceptualized as 'pipes' or 'conduits' through which resources 'flow'. A key flow in the study firm was information. It was felt by some workers that the flow of information upwards kept senior management in touch with goings on in the rest of the firm:

I mean I've sat on a couple of the boards, and I do find them quite able to sort of float away in a sort of- because nobody there- nobody apart from the executives on those boards works anywhere in that business, if you see what I mean...so [Employee Directors are] able to ask a certain set of questions which prevent things from floating away completely into unreality. (Senior manager, Head Office)

...people from Head Office on the Board will suggest something and they'll say "we should do this. I'm sure the employees at the store will absolutely love it." And you sit there and you're thinking, "are you crazy? They are gonna absolutely hate that. And here's why they're gonna hate it. And this is what they're gonna think of it, and these are the things they're gonna say about it, and these are the things they're gonna complain about." And I know that because I just- I just know that's how the staff are gonna react. But a lot of people at Head Office, I think, maybe because it's been so long since they've worked on

the sales floor that they go "yeah, the staff will love that. It'll be great." And it's like, "you obviously just have no idea whatsoever." (Junior manager and Employee Director)

Many staff valued information sharing in the company, but as noted above some were dissatisfied with communication from influential individuals. It was not just the communication skills of managers that caused discontent, but the level and frequency of communication:

It's always something that can be improved...they could ring up a bit more regularly, just see how things are going. Even inter-branch communication, it could be a little bit better. I could ring other stores a bit more often and see how they're doing, see what they're doing this week to push winter clothing, you know, whatever...There's not a massive...A massive amount of that is kinda left to your own devices rather than- you could do a little bit more of just communicating. Not even between Board members, but just in general. (Branch manager)

Indeed, some saw the framing of, and selective attention to, information as a source of influence in the firm, and a means by which influential workers exclude others from decision-making. One former Employee Director thought senior managers encouraged him to be overly selective in his attention to staff concerns:

...it sometimes gets a little bit clouded in the meetings to the executive management. They think it's your point of view you're bringing across, and even if you don't agree with it, it's like...your job is to represent the person who brought it. And sometimes I think that that maybe gets a little bit, uh, a little bit clouded. You know, "if you don't agree with it you shouldn't bring it" - I don't think that's the case. I think you should bring it. Because someone wants it, and it's relevant. (Former Employee Director)

While one Senior Manager argued the ability to frame information concentrated power in the hands of two influential individuals. The two individuals identified had the third and fourth highest instrumental influence scores, supporting my argument that centrality in workplace decision-networks is related to the control of resources, in this case, information:

...the main communication of the information about what's going on in the business comes from [name redacted] and [name redacted], you know...I obviously don't go around to the stores and say "what they said is all wrong. What's actually going on-," you know, I don't do that. But the Company Report Meetings, which is the main point of co-operative communication - a significant degree of the communication that we send out is that the view of the Executive Directors on the board. Yeah? So most of the information that the staff have got- most of the knowledge that they have about the business - is from one

particular perspective in the first place. So if they say the problem with the business is the margin, we're working on the margin, well that's the problem with the business. (Senior manager, Head Office)

Influential figures seemed to engage in 'agenda setting', deciding which issues were 'realistic' and which weren't - a key element of Lukes' second dimension of power (Lukes 2005, p.20):

I think that is- it's difficult for Board members because we all want to actually make it a better working place...but we're constrained by realism as well. (Branch manager and Employee Director)

As expected, access to and control of information appears to be a key 'resource' which bestows influence in the co-operative. The way in which some influential figures relayed information to and from their colleagues seemed to give those colleagues a more pragmatic understanding of their role and level of influence in the firm. In this way the framing of information seemed to allow influential workers to manage their colleagues' expectations. For example, one worker with high social resources attributed his limited influence to the inefficiencies of decision-making in a relatively large retail chain:

If you have- like, if something you don't feel it works right, or it could be done slightly differently, you can approach him, but because it's a co-operative and there's a chain of stores, it's not as easy to make a process change. Suddenly he has to then put it to the Board, and the Board after then talk about it, there's certain things that are really annoying and you would like- you know could work a hell of a lot better. It doesn't happen quickly enough sometimes, and then it ends up being either pushed to one side or forgotten about, or resolved in a way that it shouldn't have been done...you can tell the two [branch] managers anything that's a problem, and they'll try and solve it out. But they can only go as far as telling the next person up from them, and it doesn't- if it was like a sole trader, one shop, and you told the manager this was an issue, he'd be the guy to talk it out. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

This worker's understanding of the way decisions are made by senior individuals seems to reflect the core-periphery structure of influence described above, where a core of influential people discuss decisions among themselves and are not always responsive to peripheral actors, so perhaps his immediate manager has provided him with a 'realistic' picture of decision-making in the firm. In sum, information is a key resource that improves senior managers understanding of goings on in the firm, provides satisfaction and feelings of influence to less-influential workers, and can be used to exert power through agenda-setting and information framing.

The last quote suggests that the individuals who workers approach most often for help (i.e. those with high instrumental influence) do not always have the resources to make change happen. It seems that there are two kinds of influence processes at play. First, there is playing a representative role, relaying information and liaising between different groups in the firm over issues. Second, there is being in the executive role. That is, being someone to whom representatives bring issues in order to make change happen, whose influence may result from experience or formal authority. The former role may increase feelings of influence via mechanisms of esteem and social support from less influential colleagues. The latter may increase feelings of influence via esteem from influential colleagues, and via the ability to actually take decisions. This distinction would explain why the relationship between being a middle manager and feelings of influence is mediated by social resources over pay and benefits issues. Middle managers with high social resources may be representatives with access to senior colleagues who are able to relay issues between staff and senior figures. Middle managers with low social resources may be frustrated because they feel they have nowhere to go with staff concerns. This explains why the coefficient for middle managers becomes negative after controlling for social network structure (though it is not significant). The distinction between roles also highlights how measures that take into account whole-network structure may be a useful future direction for research. For example, one version of Bonacich's power centrality measure (Bonacich 1987) conceptualizes power as receiving ties from those who themselves receive many ties (i.e. being connected to high indegree or popular actors). Using such a measure would allow the separating out of feelings influence derived from being popular and from receiving ties from popular others. Gould & Fernandez's brokerage measures capture the extent to which an individual plays various kinds of liaison roles between different groups (Gould & Fernandez 1989; Gould 1989), including the role of representative, allowing the determination of the effect of being a representative on feelings of influence. However, its robustness under missing data makes indegree centrality a more reliable measure for use with my dataset.

So far I have shown that personal resources in conjunction with contextual factors decide who attains positions of influence, who is able to participate in processes of democracy and who is excluded. Influence involves control over valued resources such as information. I have focused mainly on influential individuals. It was noted above that shop floor workers seem concerned mainly with the day-to-day running of their workplace and with pay and benefits issues. The next section examines in more detail the issues staff are concerned with, and their feelings of influence over these issues.

Staff concerns and feelings of influence

Most people are not so bothered about the important stuff in the business - the targeting, the amount of investment, things like that. They're not so worried about that. What they're mostly worried about is the internal functions of the business- and staff benefits and pay. (Senior manager, Head Office)

This senior manager's view was partially borne out in other interviews, where the most common issues mentioned by non-management staff related to the day-to-day running of the firm and staff pay and benefits. However, some staff were concerned with strategic issues, and others with the levels of democracy in the firm.

Issues relating to job content were common. For example, a warehouse worker found individual targets for bike repairs too demanding, and would have preferred team-based targets:

...they need to know how hard our job is...we get a weekly target, and most of the time we do hit our targets. By our weekly and monthly target. But daily targets sometimes can be a problem. But I think...the whole room should be based as a team, a number, rather than individuals, I think. 'Cause we're out working as a team. Should be a team average and then individual average. 'Cause some people may have good days to make up for a couple of bad days. So it should equal itself out. That would be a simpler way to work it. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

Issues affecting the firm as a whole were also frequently mentioned, such as logistics:

Like one of the main examples, which they've started to look at recently, is if a bike gets assembled in the warehouse by the assembly team, it then comes here again to have the same checks done by someone in the store. Before it goes out, work's double done, basically, which wastes a lot of time and, probably, money. And now they're trying to solve that by the warehouse having a bike that gets in here and it should, ideally, should be ready. Put the pedals on and let the customer take it away. And things like that we've gone on about for years (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

As noted above the firm had faced economic difficulties, being unprofitable for a number of years prior to the study. This meant a squeeze on rewards. When the firm was profitable it paid out a proportion of its profits to co-op members. This annual bonus was a source of great satisfaction to interviewees, and many were unhappy that they had not received bonuses or a pay rise for a number of years:

Interviewee: Well we used to get loads of shares. And some extra money when the business was doing well and that. The whole thing was a co-op, really. What you put in, if it makes a profit, it gets handed back out, so...And not as much these days, which sucks but there you go.

Interviewer: So does that bother you? Is it a big issue - because they haven't paid out for a few years have they, I think?

Interviewee: Yes and no. I mean, same as pretty much most people, I've got like...mortgage and two young kids. So a guaranteed monthly pay is enough. I'd much rather work somewhere like this where you know you're gonna get paid from month to month. But when you talk to friends and family, uh...Give an example, me brother works for Sky, and he just pocketed a few hundred quid on top of his wage last week. And then the following month he had the same 'cause he did well. And just like daft little things like that get your brain, don't they? Not like people are gloating of course, but like other people in other jobs doing well, and like, getting something in their hand back for it, for argument's sake. And you don't. Kinda puts your nose out a little bit. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

Several interviewees identified pay and benefits issues as one of the biggest sources of dissatisfaction with the co-op:

Well, there is disaffection with the co-op...And I think it's because we were doing well and then we're not doing very well. I think a lot of it does come down to pay. But it's feeling rewarded. And- if someone's getting regular bonuses, and the shop's doing well, then they feel valued and rewarded...if you haven't got that, they feel- and especially if you used to have that, it's very hard to substitute it. They do try hard to. To make sure that people get positive feedback. But the more positive feedback you give someone, the more likely you are to have a request for a pay rise. (Branch manager)

They've been there a hell of a long time, and they're incredibly imbittered. Not to put it bluntly. That's- that's a big problem within it, because inherently when it was an initially a co-op, the concept of working within a co-op: it will pay you back for the longer you're based there. You can invest, you can get shares, you get a payback, you get a dividend They haven't paid a dividend in four or five years...But it also means it's not a co-op in that regard. And not to, you know, talk bad about these people, but these were people who were invested in the company as a co-op, as it used to be. (Shop assistant, Manchester branch)

Further, it seemed to have exacerbated the problem of staff turnover identified above:

I've done quite a bit of thinking what with staff talking about leaving: what's wrong with this business that causes them to leave? And I think it's that- it's because we're not paying the bonuses anymore...that's all our fault. It's a co-operative. It's not the MD's fault, it's not the warehouse's fault, it's not this company. This company is you, this company is everybody. We're all failing to deliver the profit, so we all ought to...I get tired of wielding a stick and having to no carrots to offer. But we're all responsible to- we're all here to grow carrots. (Branch manager, Leeds branch)

The literature on worker co-operatives indicates that frustrated expectations in struggling co-ops often lead to an atmosphere characterised by doom and gloom (Carter 2006, p.419). The study firm adds to this evidence. Dissatisfaction with pay and benefits seemed to affect many staff, but the problem was worse for long-standing staff who had experienced the co-op's earlier successes and felt that the firm had changed for the worse. Again, the interaction between external economic context and individual factors leads to different outcomes for workers. As I argued in Chapter 1, work-related well-being outcomes depend partly on expectations. So if long-standing workers have higher expectations of rewards than others the impact of poor business performance on their well-being may be larger. The effect of expectations on well-being will be explored further in Chapter 5.

Regardless of expectations, many workers were struggling with low wages typical of the retail industry:

I've been here for six years and I still don't make the living wage, man. So that's pretty pathetic to be honest. (Warehouse worker)

This again points to the limits of the ability of co-operatives to equalize the material rewards from work. While worker ownership and democratic management has led to a relatively equal distribution of rewards within the study firm, overall rewards are pro-cyclical and strongly shaped by prevailing job conditions in the market. Where the large Mondragon co-operative conglomerate is able to retrain workers and relocate them to different co-ops when a subsidiary co-op is performing poorly, smaller co-ops in competitive markets such as the study firm do not have the resources to insulate workers against market trends. The low paying nature of retail jobs makes staff particularly vulnerable the negative effects of pay cuts. The decrease in rewards for shop floor workers seems to have further inflamed the anger about pay-differentials in the firm identified above:

[Senior managers] change their job title so they can get an extra wage-rise. All basically doing the same job. (Junior manager)

Indeed, there was considerable cynicism about the co-op and management amongst shop floor staff. Various interviewees felt that some influential figures did not react well to criticism, did not take staff concerns about high job demands seriously, used a lack of money as an excuse not to address problems, and were non-responsive to communications. A number of workers felt that the firm was no longer a 'real' co-op, and that the idea of co-operation had become empty rhetoric. Some staff pointed out that time pressures and high job demands made it hard for influential staff to address issues and concerns, and to find time for democratic processes - a finding which echoes those of Kasmir's Mondragon study (Kasmir 1996, p.137). Staff grumbled about the oligarchic tendencies of influential colleagues:

They seem to be set in stone, "This is how we did it from when we started in 1977," or somewhere round about that bar, "and it works fine." But it doesn't, because we're not using things to the best ability as a company...And as shareholder that worries me a little bit. (Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

On the other hand, interviewees did feel influential over some issues. One example mentioned by a number of workers was the Board's attempt to introduce mystery shoppers with hidden cameras to evaluate staff performance, causing an outcry which led to the re-assessment of the policy:

A big example of that would be the video mystery shopping...it was something that was introduced without really- it appeared to be it was introduced by the second. Thought they'd just send a memo out to the shops saying "oh, by the way, we're now doing video mystery shopping." And as soon as...the branch manager told me in the morning that email came through, I told him straight away that there's gonna be a certain portion of staff that are just gonna go off their heads about this. Like, it's not gonna be received well...But, you know, like three hours later, we saw it. I coulda told anyone, the Board, that the staff would react that way...and then we had the next Board meeting. And there was tons of employees that had written about it, and we sat in the Board meeting with sort of, like, three emails of complaint and several Employee Directors that had people speak to them. So obviously it was a big discussion on the Board. (Junior manager and Employee Director)

Another interviewee had persuaded influential colleagues that the firm should pay for staff eye care:

Interviewee: When I first came, uh, anybody on the shop floor wasn't allowed to have glasses. You know, firm didn't pay for glasses, and eye treatment. Now they do. That was something that I helped instigate to get put right.

Interviewer: So can you talk to me a bit about that then? How it was instigated, how it came about?

Interviewee: Well, basically, I mentioned it to a Board member, and he put me feelings forward to the Board. And eventually they passed it. You know, uh, they were saying basically the guys on the shop floor didn't need glasses because they weren't on a computer all day. I mean I can be on that shop floor - I can be on that front counter all day using the computer. You know, so...they- so they do listen sometimes. (Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

Many interviewees also noted the humanistic atmosphere of their workplace, characterised by respectful relationships between colleagues:

...Get treated pretty well, you know, get treated with respect, so just good, you know. I've worked for a lot worse organizations, you know. So on the whole they're pretty good...Well to me that means like I guess nobody really gives me grief for anything here. So if I turn up five minutes late for some reason, nobody's gonna give me a hard time about it...if there's stuff going on in my personal life or whatever which is affecting my work, I can speak to somebody like "man, shit's a bit fucked. I need some time," and I can have some time, you know, which is good. 'Cause I've worked for people before where that's not an option, you're just a cog. But there's a bit more humanism here or whatever. (Warehouse worker)

To summarize, staff are concerned mainly with issues about their day-to-day jobs, and with pay and benefits issues. A difficult economic context has led to dissatisfaction with material rewards in the firm, and concomitant dissatisfaction with democracy. This has exacerbated existing industry-related problems of staff turnover. The modelling results indicate having connections to influential individuals about pay and benefits is positively related to feelings of influence. Coupled with evidence about the skills of managers, this suggests that for some staff feelings of influence come from the way influential figures to whom they are connected communicate with them and handle their concerns, even if some issues aren't fully or quickly addressed. This supports the view of democracy as involving open and transparent debate, such that when one party's objectives do not come about there are clear reasons and justifications as to why which can be accepted by that party. On my analysis, successful representative democracy at work is partly about the management of expectations, and this will depend on skills of representatives and on worker attitudes. Chapters 4 and 5 will show how political attitudes shape expectations in the democratic firm. I turn now to why staff in some areas of the firm feel less influential than others.

Propinquity, tie formation, and the co-operative ethos

I found that workers in the Aberdeen branch and the warehouse felt less influential than staff in other areas of the firm. This relationship was mediated by social resources, suggesting that staff in these locations felt less influential because they were less likely to have ties to influential colleagues. It was hypothesized that being close to the organization's core would lead to higher influence because propinquity to key decision-makers facilitates social tie formation, or because the 'co-operative ethos' is stronger in the more established areas of the firm. While workers in the geographical core of the organization do not seem to feel more influential, there is evidence that both these mechanisms are at work in explaining the different outcomes for Aberdeen and Warehouse staff.

Distance from Head Office does seem to limit some workers' interaction with senior management:

One of the managers comes up from the Edinburgh shop a few times. It's not often he comes up, and we talk about the displays and that kind of thing and how it should be done. Not necessarily how we have done it, but how it should be done. (Shop assistant, Aberdeen)

This seems to have created a divide in norms and expectations about work performance between senior staff and Aberdeen workers, where workers feel the results of work are criticized while their work efforts aren't acknowledged:

Some of the managers are very good at coming, some of them aren't so good....But I've got a very good relationship with the staff here. And I see what they do, and I see the things they don't do. And sometimes you get a manager from another branch come in, and it's very easy for them to tell you the things that the staff haven't done. But I see the things that they have done. And I've got guys coming in on their days off. It can be quite disheartening for them to be told that this, that, and the next thing. And they're coming in on their own steam on their days off. And it kinda- it's a wee bit of ill feeling between my staff and some of the other management. (Branch manager, Aberdeen)

Interviewee: Um...You know how they say it's a co-operative? Doesn't really feel like one. It's kinda like- it's just like working in any shop. You try and do stuff off your own back and you get told off for it. It's kind of a bit...Yeah.

Interviewer: Oh, really? Ok, and who does the telling off?

Interviewee: Usually the Head Office, or the Head Office drop an email and then someone else tells us. It doesn't feel like everyone's like a big team. People in the shop are the

team, as all of us are a nice team. But as part of the company, it doesn't really feel like much of a team thing, so I don't know if anyone else in other shops has said that or not. It just seems here, no. Initiative is frowned upon. (Shop assistant, Aberdeen branch)

Aberdeen respondents have had negative interactions with senior management and so may be unlikely to raise issues, or may be prevented from raising issues due to the management style of senior individuals. This is reflected in the analysis in their low social resources and low feelings of influence. One worker was asked how much input he'd had into recent changes at the store:

Not as much as I would have liked. A lot of the decisions I feel have been made by a small group of people who don't necessarily see the bigger picture on a day to day basis. I think they have a good understanding but they don't really run into the issues on a regular basis, so I feel bit more sort of involvement of not just myself, but a lot of other staff. Might've been a better way to go forward with them (Junior manager, Aberdeen branch)

This worker experiences the core-periphery structure of decision-making in the firm very much from the periphery. Thus one reason for the positive relationship between social resources and feelings of influence is that some individuals are able to build relationships with core decision-makers, allowing the raising of issues and the communication of norms and expectations, while others do not have effective working relationships due to lack of opportunities for interaction, or lack of positive interaction.

Returning to the issue of staff turnover, the labour market context at the Aberdeen store leads to high turnover and increased job demands on staff:

Interviewee: Big problem that we have here is the high- we get a lot of students working and because of the oil industry in Aberdeen, most folk want to kind of work in the oil because they're high money. And - they kind of keep people. Because the co-op just doesn't ha- we cannot pay people the pay they deserved. The benefits are very good, you know, if you're a cyclist you get two bikes a year at half price and you get good staff discounts and such like, but the pay for Grade 1s is pretty low. It's just above minimum wage. But we do ask a lot of the staff for that.

Interviewer: And so can you talk to me about the kind of problems that it creates then, not being able to retain your staff?

Interviewee: Constantly training is the main thing...So you may get one person sent away on a training course and then six weeks later he's left. And nobody knows our product. Our systems are fairly complicated...and the products we sell- if we just took someone off the street to try and train them on all the products we sell, given- we don't really have time to

train people. Sometimes the budgets that we're given for staffing is tight, and you're running some days with four people in a shop. One of them goes and leaves for lunch for an hour so you're down with three people. And there's a lot to do with three people in a day. And trying to find time to train someone is pretty much impossible. (Branch manager, Aberdeen branch)

Here again we see external economic conditions making it difficult to accumulate the body of knowledge and experience necessary for business success and workplace democracy. I argue that the 'co-operative ethos' identified in the literature as an important feature of workplace democracy consists partly of 'cultural' practices, including experience-based ways of doing things and positive attitudes towards work. One manager argued that these practices were transmitted by interpersonal influence:

Interviewee: ...And so the smaller stores...there's no history as well, and that makes it more challenging.

Interviewer: Right, yeah...So by history, you mean...?

Interviewee: The staff have no history with the co-op. It's, you know, it's a new job they're starting...that's it.

Interviewer: And say a new member of staff comes to this store compared to a new member of staff coming to one of those other branches - how do you think it differs?

Interviewee: I think it's...if- if your staff that are there, the existing staff, not buying into the co-op, then new staff won't buy into the co-op...they'll pass their negative feelings on rather than their positive feelings on. And when sales have been tough there's a more negative feeling so...Some of the branches, they're having a tough time and they don't feel great, and they want to blame somebody. So my blame is on the co-op rather than...expectations on the co-op are very different from store to store and from individual to individual.

Interviewer: Yeah, and that's something you experience?

Interviewee: Definitely experience it. But I think it's more noticeable in Aberdeen... (Branch manager and Employee Director)

Such practices seem to be maintained by strong and stable interpersonal relationships, which can be undermined by high staff turnover and by negative interactions with senior staff. Compare Aberdeen workers' experiences of high job demands and negative interactions with managers to

staff in other parts of the firm, who valued the positive interpersonal relationships in their workplace:

There's a very strong feeling in all the shops of, of, you know, looking out for each other I think. Certainly, you know, I've got some very good friends there. Most of the people that I work with, I would say are good friends...You know, and the other guys I'd certainly look out for them. I've got their back if you know what I mean. I think there is a feeling amongst the shops of- we're all one big co-op...If- if something needed sorting out in relation to someone that I knew, then I would look after them rather than somebody in one of the other shops, but that's all natural, really, 'cause, you know, you pull together to help each other out. So yeah, there's a good feeling of, like I say, everybody's sort of into bikes, they like bikes, so you've got that in common already, and there's some good guys that work here. (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

I mean it helps having an interest, and obviously I'm a keen cyclist as well. Seems all the fellows here are really- uh, so and like I say the craic and the camaraderie's usually quite good, and that is important because meself and some of the colleagues have been here as long as I have. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

It is interesting that a shared interest in cycling helps to build strong working relationships. Such strong relationships may be harder to build in firms where staff don't share a common hobby in this way. Thus challenges around maintaining a co-operative ethos may be even bigger in other firms. This provides further evidence that co-operation may be best suited to certain industry and market contexts.

Thus it may be that strong and enduring interpersonal relationships in the democratic workplace effect co-operative ethos by transmitting and maintain cultural practices, including experience-based ways of doing things and positive attitudes towards work. Granovetter defines the strength of a tie as 'a (probably linear) combination of the amount of time, the emotional intensity, the intimacy (mutual confiding), and the reciprocal services which characterise the tie' (Granovetter 1973, p.1361). Network closure, which is a measure of the extent to which all individuals in a network are interconnected (form ties with one another) can lead to the dispersion of information and ways of doing things throughout a group, and may be related to co-operative ethos. Network closure is often correlated positively with the strength of ties (ibid.). Burt argues that network closure leads to performance advantages in firms through the mechanism of reputation (Burt 2010, pp.4–5). To preserve reputation among colleagues well-informed about one another's behaviour, people are careful to behave well. They also work to keep up with their peers. One manager in the study firm described just such a process:

...the shops with the happy atmospheres tend to have that kind of self-policing. You know, someone's rocking the boat, then it's sorted out long before it's a management issue, and it's just, the whole thing kind of gets on. (Middle manager, Head Office)

Closure's advantage is manifest as 'enhanced collaboration, productivity and stability that speeds a group down its learning curve' (Burt 2010, p.5). Group Network density is a measure of network closure. It measures the number of social ties between actors in a group as a proportion of the total possible ties. Group network density was calculated for each branch/department in the firm using data from the advice network, which was collected by asking respondents who they go to for advice if they have a question or a problem relating to their day-to-day job tasks. The results are shown in Table 3.5.

Table 3.5: Advice network density by branch/department

Branch/department	Advice network density
Aberdeen	0.14
Canonmills	0.45
Edinburgh	0.29
Head Office	0.16
Leeds	0.32
Manchester	0.30
Newcastle	0.42
Sheffield	0.28
Warehouse	0.18

As expected, advice network density is lowest in the Aberdeen branch, indicating that staff are reportedly less interconnected when it comes to asking for advice about their day-to-day job tasks. This may indicate low levels of network closure, weaker interpersonal relationships, and a less positive ethos. In line with evidence on feelings of influence, network density is also low in the warehouse. It is low in Head Office, which may be explained by the preponderance of senior managers there, as more senior managers tend to have lower network closure due to the nature of their jobs (Burt 2007, p.127). It should be noted that network density is affected by group size, and tends to be naturally lower in larger groups. It is also affected by different response rates across branches. Despite these caveats, it may be that workers in some branches or departments feel more influential because they share many strong social relationships with one another. The importance of 'history' identified by the above manager may be the presence of long-standing

practices and attitudes that are passed onto new staff members through social influence processes. High staff turnover would undermine staff relationships and lead to a degeneration of organizational culture. The relationship between network closure and co-operative ethos would be a fruitful direction for further research.

There are two sides to the closure coin (Burt 2010, p.11). One is social integration – strong connections and shared norms within the network – and can be seen as positive. The other is social monopoly – control and regulation of ideas, norms and behavior - which can enhance the power of management and may be seen as negative. Diefenbach & Sillence suggest the potential for enhanced management control through the regulation of social norms and behaviour may be greater in the representative democratic firm because 'the formal relationship between superiors and subordinates is perhaps even stronger since it is now justified and institutionalized by 'higher' values in addition to 'mere' business-like (e.g. profit) or technocratic ones (e.g. efficiency).'

(Diefenbach & Sillence 2011, p.1524). Strong relationships with senior staff, aided by effective management style, may aid the transmission of norms of behaviour to shop floor workers leading to identification between staff and management, increased feelings of staff influence, and perhaps increased management control. This is another explanation for the link between social resources and feelings of influence. Erickson argues that attitudes are transmitted interpersonally when individuals compare themselves with others who are similar in salient respects, and adapt their views accordingly (Erickson 1988, p.101). Such 'social comparison' is unlikely to take place between groups with 'asymmetrical' relationships, such as the authority-based relationships between management and labour (Erickson 1988, p.104). However, if asymmetrical relationships are based on esteem 'the subordinate group may take superior as a reference group, or as a group with such prestige that it gives nearly objective validity to attitudes' (Erickson 1988, p.104). In this way workers connected to influential people whom they respect may be more likely to accept justifications for decisions and will feel more satisfied with democracy as a result.

In sum, evidence from the Aberdeen branch indicates propinquity to influential individuals affects the ability to form positive social ties with those individuals, leading to poor communication of norms of behaviour between staff and management, and unclear expectations about job performance for staff. Staff turnover makes it hard to maintain a positive culture consisting of strong interpersonal relationships and shared co-operative practices. Both factors increase job demands and lower feelings of influence. Indeed, maintaining a common ethos seems to be a challenge given the size, geographical dispersion and branch structure of the firm, leading to different cultural 'silos' within the organization:

...the branches...act more as co-ops within themselves as a branch. Some of them, less so...Take Edinburgh, where the manager who runs Edinburgh pretty much runs it with an

iron fist. Whereas in Manchester, we've always been a little bit more opinionated. I think that's necessary to the people who work there. We have very high levels of intelligence for the people that work in the business, especially for a bike shop. So it means people are quite vocal and they're quite out with their opinions. And it means we generally get consulted on ideas. Or we would make a choice between the actual members in the branch to do something. But that felt a flaw, I mean, someone from up high would just come in and say "no, you're doing this." So in that way it's inherently not a co-operative...

...I...never felt as though I was working for [the study firm] as a company. I felt as though I was working for the Manchester branch. (Shop assistant, Manchester)

This helps explain the often-observed phenomenon of democratic degeneration as co-operatives grow larger. Size leads to lower propinquity between groups of workers, less possibility for interaction, and a shift from one organizational culture to multiple *cultures*, and perhaps a resultant division between staff and management. The staff-management divide in the study firm will be examined more in the next chapter. Some interviewees had observed the change in social relationships that came with size:

I still think that worker co-ops can be really successful, but I do believe that they stop functioning beyond a certain size. And I'm not sure what that size is. But it might be the number of people that you can get in that small room and know everyone, you know? It might be something quite personal like that, where you know a few things about each person rather than they all just become anonymous, and if you know something about them then you're kind of bought into the idea of this shared, I suppose, not experiment so much as like you're actually brought into sharing with them, really, and maybe twenty to thirty people. (Middle manager, Head Office)

...the bigger the business becomes, the more remote the staff members are from each other. We used to have a setup where the Online Department at Head Office were right there, so because people were interacting with each other on a more daily basis, you could speak to people and get the explanations, and those issues weren't, you know, as big a problem. But when you're so geographically remote from all these different branches, it does make the problems more of an issue. (Junior manager and Employee Director)

If increased size leads to a division of cultures, then outcomes for staff are likely to differ more in larger co-operatives. The equalization of power and the widespread benefits from co-operation would be less likely in larger firms.

Warehouse respondents also feel less influential than respondents in other parts of the firm. Interviews indicate that this is the result of high job demands, repetitive job content and poor relationships with influential staff. Work in the warehouse has intensified over time:

...there's more to do to bikes. I worked here in 2007 for a year, and it was so much more based on quality rather than quantity. So I came back in 2010 and I've noticed it's more intense. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

[Warehouse] staff are under intense pressure. They've been trying to save costs in the warehouse, lots of cost-cutting, they've had more pressure to perform recently. (Shop assistant, Manchester branch)

Increased job demands have resulted partly from internal factors and partly external factors, as suppliers have changed their processes to reduce costs:

...the manufacturers are just cutting back. I mean, years ago, you used to get maybe one bike build every two months. And now you're doing at least one or two a day. So I think it's just manufacturers are just changing their ways of supplying bikes, and we have to make them work. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

Beyond high job demands, other aspects of job content may affect feelings of influence for warehouse staff. Their work is repetitive and driven by externally-set targets, and warehouse staff appear to have low job satisfaction:

...what it is, is come and do work and go home. That's it. Just like at half past five, don't think about it until half past nine the next morning."...Not the worst job I've had, but again it's far from being the best in a way [laughs] (Bike mechanic, Warehouse)

This contrasts with staff in some branches, who gain satisfaction from customer interactions that are not entirely instrumental to making sales:

You meet all sorts of different people doing this, you know? A lot of people will walk upstairs onto our bikes floor and just see an absolute maze of bikes and not have a clue what they're looking for, so I can break it down very quickly, you know? And point them in the right direction. I get a huge amount of satisfaction when people sort of- we see them later on when they come in for bits on their bikes, and they also get a six-week service, and see how they're finding the bike, and they're really enjoying it. And I get a lot of people that come back, sort of, for bikes in later years or they'll bring friends along, and you know you've done a really good job if they're doing that. In terms of difficult parts of my job - I sort of enjoy them as well. I've got a way with people, so a lot of the...the,

should we say, problem customers...They've just got an issue that needs resolving. Some are a little bit more reasonable than others, but I sort of enjoy doing that, really, just because, you know, they come in angry and they usually go out, you know, you can make an angry person miles more happy than you can make a normal person. Just because they've come in thinking that they've got a huge problem and they go out knowing that it's getting sorted and, you know, you can turn round someone that's gonna go and moan about you into someone that thinks the place is fantastic. And that's quite a nice feeling. (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

...we're not just trying to push products, I guess. We're not just trying to sell, sell, sell, so it's a little bit more friendly and everyone's nice...you know, you have like smaller bike shops where everyone knows each other or like a pub where, in a small town, everyone knows each other. It's become like that here. 'Cause all the customers know everyone. (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

Building positive relationships with customers appears to give workers a sense of ownership and autonomy in their work:

I suppose that I do my job how I think it should be done. Uh...not that that necessarily conflicts with what would be wanted by the management, but I'm not in favour of a hard sale. I'm much more in favour of just giving people what advice they want and, sort of, trying to build up a good relationship with customers. (Shop assistant, Canonmills branch)

Some workers are better able to do this than others due to customer base of their branch:

...it gets a bit draining when you're spending quite a bit of time with someone that will ultimately not result in a sale most likely. And, a lot of it will have to do with repairs. Someone will come in saying their bike needs to be repaired that are just in complete shambles and you're spending quite a bit of time showing them why all this stuff needs to be done, but they're not gonna want to do it because it's not cost-effective...And in Edinburgh that's much less of an issue. Everyone that walks in the door is there to buy something. And here it's much more looky-loos and - I don't want to say timewasters - but people who just, you're gonna talk quite a bit and not really anything's gonna happen out of it. (Branch manager, Manchester branch)

Local market conditions don't just affect the viability of the firm's high-level customer service model, they also affect the job satisfaction workers are able to derive from customer interactions.

Thus their job content seems to provide warehouse staff with less satisfaction than other workers in the firm. Further, some warehouse staff complain that they have found management to be

indifferent to their concerns about high job demands. Indeed, senior management characterised warehouse staff as difficult characters whom they had trouble building relationships with, and this divide seemed partly class-based:

...with the warehouse team, which is a difficult team full of kind of 'warehouse guys'. You kind of have to get up in the morning and go "beep, beep, beep" with a gun and it's pretty, kind of, unexciting work. (Senior manager, Head Office)

The guys over at the warehouse probably I'm least connected with, 'cause I don't tend to go over there. And they tend to just keep themselves to themselves over there, so I don't have much interaction with them. (Senior manager, Head Office)

So despite the warehouse being located close to Head Office, strong working relationships have not formed between warehouse staff and senior management, leaving warehouse staff without a voice. As noted above, propinquity is not sufficient for tie formation. Warehouse staff felt management didn't make themselves available for joint problem solving:

And he said to [the Managing Director] "you should come across and see our job and see how hard it is". And that never happened. Can't be bothered. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

Hypothesis 2 was that social class would be related to feelings of influence via the possession of the resources required to affect change at work, and that as a result working class employees would feel less influential than others. This hypothesis was not supported. The dummy variables based on Goldthorpe's schema may not be fine-grained enough to identify the class-based possession of resources in the study firm. Workers in the warehouse may be more working class in Goldthorpe's sense than manual workers (i.e. bike mechanics) located in the firm's shops. Evans describes Goldthorpe's schema thus:

The organizing principle of the Goldthorpe schema is the nature of the employment relationship...the key feature of this relationship is the way in which commitment is obtained from the work-force. Service occupations entail high levels of trust on the part of employers, whereas working-class occupations are more likely to have closely regulated work and payment arrangements. The mechanism of control by which loyalty is obtained from service class employees is via the notion of advancement and perks...In contrast, working-class employees receive payment for work done over a shorter time-span, and are closely supervised to make sure that they carry out that work...one could say that the service-class employees are controlled by the 'carrot' of long-term benefits, and workers by the 'stick' of close regulation and the labour contract. (Evans 1992, p.214)

The target-driven nature of warehouse work, the lack of performance-related rewards, and workers' inability to negotiate with management over job demands (reflected in their lower social resources), accord with Goldthorpe's definition of working class occupations. Note that external constraints, such as cost pressures due to the economic environment and changes in suppliers' practices (which may have been a response to that same environment), partly account for work organization in the warehouse. What's more, the description of service versus working class occupations in terms of carrot versus stick incentives echoes the Leeds branch manager's complaint that he gets tired of 'wielding a stick and having to no carrots to offer'. Economic difficulties may shift the incentive structure of co-op jobs from service class towards working class in Goldthorpe's sense. So external context may limit managers' influence over work processes, even if they were motivated to address workers' concerns. Shop mechanics, on the other hand, may have felt they had more of a say in the organization of their work, and that their efforts were more adequately rewarded. Many of those interviewed certainly felt the atmosphere of mutual respect described by other shop workers:

...feel like everyone in the shop is free...it does feel very much like you're in an equal place to work and people are very approachable, and it's very different in that sense to other places where I've worked where it's...there's not very much room. (Bike mechanic, Manchester branch)

The last place I worked, you were and you often felt as though were just a payroll number. No appreciation for- I mean, you don't have to expect a thank you every day but it goes a long way. And you do kind of get, to be fair, you do get rewarded for your efforts here, if they've any to give out. You know what I mean? So yeah. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

Further, some of the shop-based mechanics had skill levels and education atypical of manual workers, but had chosen their job because it was low stress or because they were interested in cycling:

I used to run Lidl shops. I used to get paid a lot of money, had a company credit card and a company car. I did that for two and a half years, and towards the end I hated it but the money kept us there. And that's why I come back into the bike trade years ago, 'cause me mate had a bike shop and he needed help, and I just quit. Just left one day, went and took the car back, took the keys back, and started working with him a few days later. That's how I got back in the trade, and that was not for the money or the lack of it, it's because I wasn't happy. (Bike mechanic, Newcastle branch)

Thus social class does appear to be related to the possession of the social resources required to exert influence, reflected in the mediating role of social resources in the negative relationship between working in the warehouse and feelings of influence. In fact lack of social resources do not seem to result from lack of personal resources so much as from job content. Job content is structured by external conditions and internal decisions such that warehouse workers have limited autonomy and high job demands, and influential colleagues are unwilling or unable to work with them to improve job quality. While education was not related to feelings of influence in the modelling, warehouse respondents do tend to have lower education and skills than many other respondents in the firm. Whereas some workers in the firm chose their job due to an interest in bikes, or in co-operatives, or a because of a desire for less stressful work, warehouse workers didn't see their job as a choice:

At the end of the day, it's a job. It's not the worst place to work if you have a bit of freedom. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

It's not a job I want, you know what I mean? It's like a job I've ended up in. But it's ok, it's not bad job. It's poorly paid, but that's just the way of jobs at the moment really. (Warehouse worker)

That's not to say that they didn't identify positive aspects of their workplace. Many saw it as better than other places they'd worked. But they expressed lower feelings of influence and autonomy than many other employees.

Junior managers and expectations

A final result to be explained is that after controlling for instrumental influence some junior managers had negative feelings of influence compared with other staff. The interviews suggest this is because junior managers have expectations of influence, and views about how things should be run, but don't have much ability to affect change:

Assistant managers are just the guys who are in charge when the manager is away. They can't implement changes themselves. It's not that managers don't want to help, they just haven't time. (Shop assistant, Manchester branch)

Interviewer: And how much input did you have into the changes?

Interviewee: Not as much as I would have liked. A lot of the decisions I feel have been made by a small group of people who don't necessarily see the bigger picture on a day to day basis. I think they have a good understanding but they don't really run into the issues on a regular basis, so I feel bit more sort of involvement of not just myself, but a lot of

other staff. Might've been a better way to go forward with them. (Junior manager, Aberdeen)

When we were a smaller company, if you said something, it got acted on, nowadays it doesn't. And if management has a view on what's needed to be done, that's the way they want it done. Which is not always the best way to do things. (Junior manager, warehouse)

It may be that, like middle managers with low social resources, some junior managers have lots of colleagues coming to them with issues, but no one to raise them with, causing frustration.

Conclusions

Three conclusions can be drawn from this chapter. First, the democratic workplace should not be seen as a 'black box' with uniform effects on all its workers. Rather, it has been shown that a combination of internal and external factors shape decision-making processes in the democratic firm, allowing some individuals to participate while others feel excluded. Decision-making in the study firm is status-driven, with a core of influential decision-makers, and a periphery of lower status workers who have less input into decision-making. A key finding is that the effects of being in upper management on feelings of influence is mediated by location in workplace social networks. This is because centrality in workplace social networks is associated with the possession and control of resources required to achieve work-related goals. Personal resources of influential workers include business management expertise, work experience, social connections, and interpersonal and personnel management skills. Central individuals also have access to information and control its dissemination, which increases their influence. Another key finding is that having direct social connections to influential colleagues is positively associated with feelings of influence. Direct social relationships with influential colleagues give a worker access to resources that make her feel influential over her work-life. These resources include information and help from influential actors to address issues. Further, influential workers use their management skills to keep their colleagues informed, manage their expectations and help them address day-to-day issues, making those colleagues feel more influential. Resources such as participation skills, and contextual factors such as geography and job content, structure who is able to form positive social relationships with influential colleagues.

Second, a combination of internal processes and external contextual factors can lead to the democratic degeneration of co-operatives over time. Differences in expertise in the study firm and the impracticality of direct democracy have led to specialization and the emergence of hierarchies. The need for business management expertise has motivated external recruitment, leading to pressures on pay equity, a lack of career progression for shop floor staff, and influence of external

actors over decisions. Market pressures and industry characteristics constrain workplace democracy. Cost pressures caused by strong market competition and the economic recession, as well as the dominant retail business model, have made it hard to invest in human capital and to equip staff with the skills for effective democratic participation. This has only increased the need for external recruitment. Economic downturns squeeze wages and benefits, causing discontent and division among workers, and undermining support for the co-op. High staff turnover caused by economic, industry and labour market conditions has made it hard to maintain the body of organizational knowledge and experience needed for business success, or the strong interpersonal relationships that are related to job satisfaction and effective workplace democracy. Firm size has constrained interpersonal interaction, making it difficult for staff to build positive relationships with managers and leading to the emergence of cultural 'silos' across the firm. Over time, these internal and external factors have led to democratic degeneration in the study firm, which is reflected in entrenched division between workers and senior management evident in the core-periphery structure of decision-making networks.

Third, contextual factors are key to the business success and worker benefits of workplace democracy. Retail co-ops seem to do best in high-end markets where high staff motivation and skill provides them with a competitive advantage in terms of customer service. However, high-level customer service models for retail can be undermined by local and macro-level economic conditions, and are threatened by the growth of online shopping. Work organization and job content affects a worker's job satisfaction. Successful retail co-ops can provide job satisfaction through positive staff-customer interactions, which give workers a sense of autonomy in their work. However, economic context and customer demographics affect the possibility of positive customer interactions. Job content and work organization is partly the result of external forces and is class-based. Class-based effects on work organization constrain autonomy and limit the ability of workers to form positive relationships with influential colleagues, who may be powerless to improve job quality in the face of external forces. Worker co-ops can increase material rewards for workers, but rewards are pro-cyclical and economic downturns may shift the nature of the employment contract in retail co-ops from service class to working class, leading to dissatisfaction.

In conclusion, the outcomes of workplace democracy will be different for different groups of workers within firms, and also between firms. This has not been sufficiently acknowledged by the proponents of co-operation. Firm structure alone cannot guarantee the equalization of power and material rewards in the workplace, much less the economy as a whole. Isolated worker co-operatives in competitive markets are not a sufficient answer to problems of job quality in the UK. The role of contextual factors in determining outcomes for workers makes public policy that addresses the political, social and economic causes of poor job quality vital.

The role of expectations in determining outcomes for workers was discussed above. The next chapter examines the role of political identity in determining expectations about workplace democracy and related feelings of satisfaction with influence at work. This will further evidence the way outcomes differ for co-operative workers.

Chapter 4: Political identity, 'New Participants', and workplace democracy: The Pateman thesis revisited

The workplace as a site of political learning

An important thread of the political participation literature sees civic organizations as sites of political learning. Pateman's early theoretical work (Pateman 1970) argued for a causal relationship between workplace democracy and political participation. Workers learn participatory attitudes (especially a sense of political efficacy) through democracy at work: 'the individual generalizes his experience in non-governmental authority structures to the political sphere' (Pateman 1970, p.47). Subsequent empirical tests of the Pateman thesis have found an association between democratic participation in workplace decision-making and political behaviour (Maxwell-Elden 1981; Greenberg et al. 1996; Jian & Jeffres 2008). However, these studies are cross-sectional, making it impossible to determine the direction of causation, or if the correlation between workplace participation and political participation is spurious. Longitudinal studies have called Pateman's theory into question. In a study based on Swedish panel data, Adman (2008) finds no evidence for Pateman's theory. He suggests that an effect may be found in less egalitarian and less participatory societies than Sweden. The Civic Voluntarism model (Brady et al. 1995) claims that individuals can learn civic skills at work and in voluntary organizations. Theories of the workplace as a site of political learning pay insufficient attention to three points, which may have caused them to misinterpret the causes of the association between civic and political participation. First, opportunities to participate and learn civic skills within organizations is internally structured. Second, correlations between workplace participation and political attitudes may result from selection processes. People bring skills and attitudes to the workplace that affect their ability to participate and that determine whether they end up occupying influential positions. Or individuals inclined towards participation outside of work may choose jobs that provide them participatory opportunities at work. Third, contextual factors external to the organization, such as market and cultural context, shape processes of influence and participation within the organization. I will address these three points in turn.

A key problem with empirical work in support of Pateman's thesis is that it pays insufficient attention to the internal dynamics of workplace democracy, and how different workers within the democratic firm have differential access to participation opportunities and thus experience

workplace democracy differently as a result. In the last chapter I argued organizations shouldn't be treated as black boxes when it comes to effects on their members. Although Pateman theorizes the difference between full and partial participation in workplace decisions, and acknowledges that participation opportunities at work are structured by socioeconomic status (Pateman 1970, p.50), empirical work testing her thesis does tend to view the firm as a black box. Research in Business Management and Sociology has shown how outcomes for organization members are contingent on location in organizational social networks, and that network location provides access to valuable resources and opportunities on the one hand, and limiting social constraints on behaviour on the other (Brass 1984; Burt 2010). In other words, individual outcomes are socially contingent (Djupe & Gilbert 2006). Research on political participation acknowledges this point, finding that political participation behaviour is contingent participation opportunities accessed via social networks (Brady et al. 1995, p.271). Location in social networks and concomitant outcomes are only partly the result of individual choice. For example, individuals like to discuss politics with those whose views are similar to their own, but the satisfaction of this preference depends on the availability of similar discussion partners in their social environment (Huckfeldt 2014). Sometimes individuals are forced to discuss politics with those who are different to themselves, such as when they are at work. Such 'cross-cutting' discussion has been found to have a positive effect on political tolerance, by making people aware of rationales for opposing views (Mutz & Mondak 2006).

The social networks approach has been used to identify positions of power and influence in interpersonal networks (Brass 1984; Brass 1992; Brass & Burkhardt 1993) and in-groups and out-groups within political networks (Ray et al. 2003). In the last chapter I used social network analysis to reveal differences in influence over decision-making in my study firm. I asked employees who they go to for help when they want to change or improve something about the running of their workplace. I showed that those who are central in the network feel more influential. Furthermore, employees who have direct access to influential individuals when they want to change things themselves feel more influential. I argued that this is partly because they have access to those individuals' superior resources to help them get things done. This 'exchange' relationship tells us something about the central individual – that they have specific skills and resources required to make change happen, and that others in the workplace can identify this. It also tells us something about those who go directly to central individuals for help. They too are special, because they have either the motivation or the opportunity to access influential colleagues for help to affect change. They may also have characteristics that make influential individuals more likely to interact with them and take their views seriously. I argued that this is partly due to propinquity to influential others: the more you see someone face-to-face, the easier it is to build a relationship. It was also due to other factors such as the confidence to speak up at work. Thus my second criticism of

theories of the workplace as a site of political learning is that influence over workplace decisions partly results from resources and attitudes that an individual brings with her to the workplace.

Further, those with the skills and the motivation to participate in politics outside of work may be more likely more likely to choose to work in co-operatives. Testing the hypothesis that civic organizations are sites of political socialization that positively influence the political participation behaviour of volunteers, van Ingen and van der Meer's (2016) panel study found that the association between civic voluntarism and political participation is actually the result of already politicized, self-selecting individuals. They find a dual selection process, with more politicized people more likely to join a civic organization, and the most politicized joiners more likely to remain members. This is relevant to Pateman's theory because it may well be that politicized individuals self-select into employment in co-operatives, and that the most politicized obtain positions of influence due to their dedication to the cause.

My third criticism of theories of the workplace as a site of political learning is they ignore the firm's external context and how this shapes influence processes and participation within the firm. Pateman acknowledges that only certain work situations are conducive to the development of political efficacy, and that this is partly dependent on technology (Pateman 1970, p.51), but wider contextual factors are ignored. Djupe & Gilbert found that the interaction between the demographics of a church congregation and the demographics of the local neighbourhood influences levels of participation within the church (Djupe & Gilbert 2006). Carter notes that 'external pressures arise from the critical tension facing a democratic organisation operating within a market economy, which make it difficult for co-ops to avoid falling back on capitalist organisational practices' (Carter 2006, p.418). In the previous chapter I revealed how external context interacts with internal factors in the study firm to shape participation and undermine workplace democracy.

The key point to take from these three criticisms is that the democratic workplace should not be seen as an 'island of socialism' separate from the sea of the market economy (Carter 2003, p.3). Rather, the extent and form of workplace democracy and concomitant outcomes for workers are shaped by processes that go beyond the firm's boundaries. I will now argue that there isn't a clear boundary between the workplace and the political sphere, and that politics should be seen as 'lived experience'. I will then be in a position to reassess the relationship between workplace democracy and political participation as a two-way street, where political attitudes, experiences and resources affect the internal dynamics of workplace participation, as well as vice versa.

Politics as lived experience

Theories of the workplace as a site of political learning conceptualise the civic and the political as separate spheres in which individuals do or do not participate. Marsh et al., following Bang, argue that we shouldn't see politics in terms of 'arenas' which people do or do not enter (Marsh et al. 2007, p.93). Doing so leads us to see political engagement as support for traditional political institutions. We may therefore believe falsely that those who do not engage in 'traditional' acts of political participation, such as voting, trade union membership or political party membership, are apathetic (Marsh et al. 2007, p.23). We might also see this lack of engagement as being caused by a lack of civic skills or appropriate psychological qualities, and decide that opportunities to learn civic skills or self-efficacy will lead to increased engagement. Relatedly, it encourages us to see the non-responsiveness of political institutions as the result of a lack of voice on behalf of citizens, through either lack of skill or motivation, rather than as shortcomings in the institutions themselves. The Pateman thesis adheres to this arena definition of politics. For example, she argues that we shouldn't expect the oligarchical and hierarchical structures of the conventional workplace to train workers in democracy (Pateman 1970, p.45). The implication is that people don't engage because they are ill-equipped to. Pateman cites research that explains low participation among low SES individuals by reference to 'psychological underprivilege', stemming from their generally subservient position in their daily lives (Pateman 1970, p.50). In fact, individuals may be politically-minded, but alienated from a political system that they feel is non-responsive to their demands, does not hear their voice, and does not include them in decision-making. Bang has argued that the main problem for advanced liberal democracies is not apathy, but the exclusion of lay people from decision-making. Worker co-operatives might be seen as a means to returning political control to lay people. In my literature review I suggested that co-op workers will display characteristics of Bang's *Everyday Makers* and value the control co-operation gives them over their daily lives.

Indeed, abandoning an arena definition of politics expands the definition of the political into everyday life. Marsh et al. argue that an individual's relation to politics should be understood in terms of their 'structured lived experience'. *Lived experience* means an agent's understanding of the world, of meanings and actions, which shapes her behaviour (Marsh et al. 2007, p.28). *Structured* lived experience implies that an agent's experiences are structured by real world processes (Marsh et al. 2007, p.29). Marsh et al. argue the UK is characterised by structured inequalities of access to scarce goods and resources that shape the lived experiences of citizens (Marsh et al. 2007, p.29;129). So, for example, social class is conceptualized in terms of lived experience. Lower SES individuals often experience political authority in the form of agencies of the

state which control access to resources and define life opportunities, such as through welfare provision or jobs training programmes, without being responsive to the voice of users (Marsh et al. 2007, pp.134–151). Resultantly these individuals experience the state as an immediate and sometimes oppressive presence in everyday life, and yet one that is remote and non-responsive, and this is expressed in low levels of political efficacy (Marsh et al. 2007, p.110). Thus an individual's everyday lived experience affects their understanding of the political and their attitudes towards political institutions. Indeed, Marsh et al. find that lower SES individuals have a broader conceptualization of what counts as political, and they attribute this to their experiences of inequality and daily battles for access to social and economic resources (Marsh et al. 2007, p.150). The conception of politics as lived experience blurs the boundary between the civic and political spheres, and between workplace experience and experience of political institutions. Note the compatibility of this view with the networks approach to social capital, which focuses on possession of and access to resources (Lin 1999; cf. Marsh et al. 2007, p.132). The idea of class as structured lived experience highlights that social capital has consequences for an individual's subjective experiences.

An arena definition of politics may be a product of its time – as Bang argues, modern democratic society has shifted from a situation of hierarchical government to governance (Bang & Sørensen 1999, p.329), and so the locus of political influence and activity has become more disparate, while the means of political expression have multiplied (McCaffrie & Marsh 2013, p.115). It may also result from the theoretical development of the study of political behaviour. Conceptualizations of political behaviour, including political efficacy and acts of political participation, are shaped and limited by the survey instruments used to measure them (ibid). Social survey instruments measuring political attitudes such as sense of political efficacy have their intellectual roots in the work of the Michigan School in political science. In his critique of the political science literature from a social networks perspective, Zuckerman argues that due to the kinds of information collected in national representative sample surveys, the Michigan scholars decided to treat political institutions as objects in the mind of individuals, and thus 'subjective perceptions of social and political objects and reference groups [such as trust in institutions, strength of identification or political efficacy] replace patterns of trust, interdependence and interaction among members of primary groups' as explanans in political behaviour (Zuckerman 2005, p.14). So the idea of political institutions as external objects towards which individuals possess evaluative attitudes, and in which they participate or do not, results from the research 'state of the art' as it was when Pateman was writing.

Considering Marsh's argument against an arena definition of politics and Bang's arguments about governance and the changed nature of the political leads to two possibilities. First, that people may be disengaged from traditional political institutions without being apolitical. Second, that people

may be politically engaged without being supportive of the prevailing political structure of society. Underlying Pateman's theory (and others such as Dahl (1985)) is acceptance of the prevailing political institutions of society, and the appeal to make economic institutions more resembling of political ones. If political engagement is conceptualized more broadly, then the effects of workplace democracy on political attitudes and behaviour may be more complex than the Pateman thesis suggests. Further, the criticisms of the Pateman thesis made in the last section imply that the relationship between workplace participation and political behaviour could be a two way street – that political behaviour can shape the dynamics of workplace participation, as well as vice versa.

In the remainder of the chapter I use my survey data in conjunction with in-depth interview data to explore the relationship between the political behaviour and attitudes of my study participants and their attitudes towards their workplace. I draw on the concept of politics as lived experience, where an individual's political attitudes reflect experiences in multiple areas of their lives, and are not confined to their experience of traditional political institutions. I focus particularly on the idea that political attitudes and behaviours relate to identity. Bang's work foregrounds the role of identity in political behaviour. McCaffrie & Marsh point out that Bang's Everyday Makers

...do not fit easily within traditional definitions of politics because they have a political identity tied to particular projects, rather than a legitimating or oppositional identity. If they see a social problem which directly concerns or affects them, they work to solve it. Once they have solved the problem, they cease to engage in politics until another problem captures their attention or imagination. As such, the behaviour of Everyday Makers does not conform to clear patterns based on ideological preferences or political parties, or on legitimating or oppositional identities and behaviour. Rather, they engage on their own terms in response to political problems that touch their own experience. Typically, this means involvement at a local level, even when political problems have a broader, international dimension (McCaffrie & Marsh 2013, p.115).

I find that my respondents' political identities bear strongly on their attitudes towards their workplace and their sense of their place within it. I contest Bang's assertion that Everyday Makers have do not have a legitimizing or oppositional political identity. Rather, I find that individuals who fit the profile of Everyday Makers have an identity that is oppositional to the political economic system more widely, and they feel dissatisfied by their marginalized role within it. They see the political status quo more broadly than just mainstream political institutions. Such individuals are more likely to be dissatisfied with their level of influence in their workplace, which they see as mirroring wider society's inequalities. Conversely, individuals who are broadly supportive of the political economic system and feel efficacious within it are also more satisfied with their level of influence at work.

Political and civic participation and political attitudes among co-op workers

In this section I examine the participation acts and political attitudes of co-op workers to understand more about their political behaviour. Respondents were asked about acts of political and civic participation undertaken 12 months prior to the survey. Table 4.1 breaks down civic participation acts by number and percentage of respondents who have undertaken that act in relation to at least one type of civic organization.

Table 4.1: Civic participation acts by number and percentage of respondents

Civic participation act	Frequency	%
Member (paid membership fee)	44	43.1
Donated money	38	37.3
Participated in an activity	38	37.3
Undertook unpaid/voluntary work	21	20.6
Overall affiliated	66	64.7

Co-op workers appear to be more civically engaged than the British general public. 43% of respondents are paid up members of at least one civic organization. That is higher than the 31% found by Pattie et al. in their survey of British Citizens (Pattie et al. 2004, p.96). As Pattie et al. found, participation in an activity or volunteering is less popular than membership (*ibid.*). Table 4.2 shows engagement in civic acts by age group:

Table 4.2: Civic participation acts by age group

Type	24 and under		25-44		45-64	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Member (paid fee)	11	50.0	25	39.7	8	50.0
Donated money	7	31.8	23	36.5	8	50.0
Participated in an activity	9	40.9	21	33.3	6	37.5
Undertook unpaid/voluntary work	7	31.8	9	14.3	5	31.3

Staff 24 and under and staff over 45 are more likely to be organization members, participate in activities or undertake voluntary work than those who are aged 25-44. The popularity of donating money increases with age group, which may be because older staff have more financial resources.

It seems that, compared with the Pattie study findings, co-op staff have relatively high levels of civic participation. Table 4.3 shows types of civic organization with which co-op workers are affiliated.

Table 4.3: civic organization type by number and percentage of staff affiliated with that organization type

Civic organization type	Affiliated	%
Youth organization	10	9.8
Environmental organization	15	14.7
Conservation organization	18	17.6
Organization for animal rights or protection	9	8.8
Peace organization	3	2.9
Humanitarian aid/Human Rights organization	9	8.8
Social welfare organization	7	6.9
Organization for medical patients	21	20.6
Organization for the disabled	10	9.8
Pensioners or retired persons organizations	6	5.9
Ex-Service clubs	4	3.9
Sports club or outdoors activities club	35	34.3
Trade Union	3	2.9
Business or Employers Organization	1	1.0
Professional Organization	7	6.9
Consumer organization	0	0.0
Parent and Teachers organisation	1	1.0
Cultural, Musical, Dancing, Theatre organisations	6	5.9
Hobby organisation	9	8.8
Residents, Housing or Neighbourhood organisations	5	4.9
Ethnic organisation	0	0.0
Religious or church organisation	3	2.9
Women's organisation	2	2.0
Social Club	2	2.0
Other not listed above	6	5.9

The table indicates that the relatively high incidence of civic organization membership and participation in activities is due to the high proportion of staff affiliated with a sports or outdoors activities club. 26% of staff are members of such an organization. This is likely because the study firm is in the bike retail industry, and so many staff members are keen cyclists. In fact, it can be seen that affiliation with other types of civic organization is relatively low. This may be because staff tend to be young, and young people in the UK are less likely to be civically and politically active (Pattie et al. 2004; Marsh et al. 2007). That said, the high popularity of sports and outdoor activities organizations compared with other types of organization is broadly in line with Pattie et al.'s findings (Pattie et al. 2004, p.96). The most popular types of organization after sports and outdoor activities are organizations for medical patients, environmental organizations and conservation organizations. While Pattie et al. found that conservation organizations are among the most popular, they found organizations for 'post-material issues', including women's organizations, human and animal rights organizations, and environmental organizations, each attract support from only around 1% of citizens (ibid.). Among bike co-op respondents, 15% are affiliated to environmental organizations and 4% are members. This might reflect an increase in the public profile of environmental issues since the Pattie study, or the youthful demographics of employees, but it is also likely to be because cycling and environmentalism go hand in hand. Certainly a number of interviewees of different ages and seniority levels expressed a concern with environmental issues, and some related this interest to their job:

I think there's certainly disillusionment with society to a degree. Just with the sort of corporate machine, the Western world, you know, the whole thing to me is a bit sickening, the way we're pretty much destroying the planet at the moment. (Warehouse worker, male, 24)

...the other thing is that we're adding to the great scrap heap. We just churn our product, and we quite often churn our product to people who replace it every year or two years. There must be a great hole in the ground full of stuff that we have filled ourselves. Picture it that way. So...it's quite difficult for me to just keep plodding away. (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 52)

Thirty percent of all our carbon emissions come from transport. Forty percent of all car journeys are less than two miles...[Cycling] is something really quick and easy that can be done that's actually fun. (Branch manager, male, 43)

Table 4.4 shows affiliation with the four most popular types of organization broken down by age group.

Table 4.4: Affiliations with four most popular civic organization types by age group

Organization	24 and under		25-44		45-64	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Environmental organization	4	18.2	9	14.3	2	12.5
Conservation organization	2	9.1	13	20.6	3	18.8
Organization for medical patients	4	18.2	13	20.6	4	25.0
Sports Club or Outdoors Activities Club	12	54.5	20	31.7	3	18.8

As a proportion of staff in that age group, environmental and sports organizations are most popular with under 25s, confirming the expected association between youth, cycling and environmentalism. Indeed, most affiliates of environmental organizations are under 44. In contrast, organizations for medical patients' and conservation organizations are relatively more popular with older staff. So it seems that bike co-op staff are characterised by a significant proportion of young staff who are keen sports people (most likely cyclists), and a smaller yet notable proportion of staff who are interested in environmental issues. This is to be expected in this industry. The relatively high popularity of post-material issues may reflect the youthful employee demographics, as well as their relatively high levels of education - 51.5% of staff are educated to degree level or higher. The suggestion, discussed in the previous chapter, that the co-op is able to use its image to attract staff who are more middle class and more educated than average for the industry lends support to this explanation.

A final thing to note is that trade union membership is very low (around 3%), despite the fact that staff are encouraged to join a trade union. This is in line with recent findings about the decline in membership of traditional political institutions such as unions (Pattie et al. 2004, p.79).

I turn now to political participation acts. Respondents were asked whether they had undertaken any of 25 acts in the 12 months prior to the survey 'in order to influence rules, laws or policies'. Results are shown in Table 4.5.

Table 4.5: Political participation acts undertaken in the last 12 months

Political participation act	Frequency	%
Buying goods for political or ethical reasons	50	49.0
Boycotting certain products or services	45	44.1
Giving money to an organization	49	48.0
Raising money for an organization	27	26.5
Signing a petition	52	51.0
Wearing or displaying a campaign badge	9	8.8
Voting in a local government election	42	41.2
Voting in a national election	22	21.6
Voting in a European election	12	11.8
Contacting a public official	16	15.7
Contacting a politician	10	9.8
Contacting an organization	6	5.9
Contacting the media	6	5.9
Contacting a solicitor or judicial body	15	14.7
Taking part in a public demonstration	13	12.7
Attending a political rally or meeting	7	6.9
Forming a group of like minded people	8	7.8
Trying to convince someone how to vote	17	16.7
Giving money to a political party	1	1.0
Working for a party or candidate	1	1.0
Working with a group to solve a problem	19	18.6
Working with others on community problems	14	13.7

In line with Pattie et al.'s findings, the most popular political acts are all individualistic actions, including signing a petition, buying goods for political and ethical reasons, giving money to an organization, boycotting certain products and services, and voting in a local government election, with around 40-50% of respondents having undertaken each of these acts in the previous 12 months. 51% of respondents reported signing a petition, which is similar to the proportion found by Pattie et al. (Pattie et al. 2004, p.69). Notably, the use of consumption behaviour to exert political influence through boycotting or political/ethical buying is more prevalent than in Pattie's nationally representative data, where 31% of people had boycotted and 28% had bought goods for political

or ethical reasons (Pattie et al. 2004, p.77). Another notable feature of the data is the very low incidence of party political activity, with only one staff member giving money to political party or working for a party or candidate. The initial impression is that co-op workers are prone to individualistic modes of participation at slightly higher rates than might be expected if staff were representative of the UK as a whole.

To explore the structure of the data a Principal Components Analysis was carried out using varimax rotation (political party acts were removed from the data due to the small number of respondents engaging in these acts). Five factors were uncovered, and items that loaded most strongly onto each factor (factor loading greater than .6) were grouped together to create five political participation types. *Local action* includes working with others on community problems, working with a group to solve a problem, and forming a group of likeminded people. *Voting* includes voting in a local, national or European election. *Consumer* includes boycotting certain products or services and buying goods for political or ethical reasons. *Charitable* consists of giving money to an organization and raising money for an organization. *Contacting* includes contacting the media, contacting a solicitor, contacting a public official and contacting a politician. This type is similar to the Contacting type uncovered by Pattie et al (Pattie et al. 2004, p.78), except it doesn't include contacting an organization, which did not load strongly onto any single factor. It is also similar to the contacting variable used as a dependent variable in Li & Marsh's empirical study of Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens in the UK (Li & Marsh 2008, p.254). Finally, *collective action* includes taking part in a public demonstration and attending a political rally or meeting, and is similar to the 'collectively organized' participation acts identified by Pattie et al. (Pattie et al. 2004, p.78). The acts signing a petition, wearing or displaying a campaign badge, and trying to convince someone how to vote did not load strongly onto any one factor, and so for the purposes of further analysis these will be considered as separate acts. For each respondent, each participation type was coded 1 if they engaged in at least 1 of the acts included in that type, and 0 otherwise. Table 4.6 shows the frequency of participation in each type of act. The act of working with others on community problems was included in the table separately as it correlates highly with local action (.714) and is more clearly interpretable as a political act than working with a group to solve a problem and forming a group of like-minded people, which are somewhat vague.

Table 4.6: Types of political participation act undertaken in the previous 12 months

Participation type	Frequency	%
Signing a petition	52	51
Trying to convince someone how to vote	17	16.7
Wearing or displaying a campaign badge	9	8.8
Local Action	24	23.5
Work with others on community problems	14	13.7
Charitable	52	51
Voting	42	41.2
Consumer	58	56.9
Contacting	26	25.5
Collective action	13	12.7

The most popular type of participation is consumer activism, with nearly 57% of respondents having used their buying power to exert political influence. Over half of respondents have engaged in acts of charity. As noted above, signing a petition is also popular with around half of respondents. Around 40% of respondents claim to have voted in the past 12 months, but people tend to over-report their voting behaviour (Pattie et al. 2004, 77). Around one quarter of workers have engaged in contacting behaviour in order to exert influence over rules laws and policies. The Pattie study found that just over one in four people had contacted a public official, one in eight a politician, and one in ten an organization or the media (Pattie et al. 2004, p.78), and so the bike co-op workers are not too dissimilar to the general public in this regard. While individualistic modes of political participation are most popular, participation that involves working together with others, either on community problems or through collective action, attracts around 13% and 14% of workers respectively. These are higher rates than those found by Pattie et al. (for example, only around 5% of their respondents had taken part in a public demonstration - *ibid.*). While Pattie et al. find few distinguishing characteristics of collectively organized participators, those who are 24 and younger are more likely to be involved in this type of activity, as are those who remained in full time education beyond the age of 19 (Pattie et al. 2004, p.86). Tables 4.7 and 4.8 show engagement in types of political participation by age and education.

Table 4.7: Participation in types of political act by age group

Participation type	16-24		25-44		45+	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Signing a petition	10	55.6	33	53.2	9	69.2
Trying to convince someone how to vote	7	38.9	7	11.3	3	23.1
Wearing or displaying a campaign badge	3	16.7	16	25.8	5	38.5
Work with others on community problems	1	5.6	9	14.5	4	30.8
Charitable	9	50.0	33	53.2	10	76.9
Voting	8	44.4	29	46.8	5	38.5
Consumer	11	61.1	37	59.7	10	76.9
Contacting	6	33.3	12	19.4	8	61.5
Collective action	4	22.2	6	9.7	3	23.1

Table 4.8: Participation in types of political act by highest educational qualification

Participation type	Degree or higher		A-levels/HND		GCSEs/Vocational	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
Signing a petition	29	58.0	13	56.5	10	52.6
Trying to convince someone how to vote	7	14.0	6	26.1	4	21.1
Wearing or displaying a campaign badge	5	10.0	4	17.4	0	0.0
Work with others on community problems	9	18.0	2	8.7	3	15.8
Charitable	31	62.0	13	56.5	8	42.1
Voting	23	46.0	13	56.5	6	31.6
Consumer	33	66.0	16	69.6	9	47.4
Contacting	14	28.0	6	26.1	6	31.6
Collective action	9	18.0	2	8.7	2	10.5

16-24 year olds are more likely to participate in collective action than 25-44 year olds. However, in contrast to Pattie et al.'s findings, respondents over 45 are the most likely. In line with Pattie et al., those with a degree are much more likely to take part in collective action than less educated colleagues. Thus the co-op's relative young and educated staff might partially account for the

prevalence of collective action. However, there is a small, older cohort of staff who are more likely to engage in all types of political acts, except for those that are voting-related. Some of these are long-serving members of the co-op, who are politicized and who joined the co-op for political reasons:

I was a keen cyclist, and very interested in the idea of worker co-ops from a political point of view. So I came into it with a kind of idea about how you could do things differently and how you had to kind of try things, basically. I suppose I stuck with that idea for a long time. (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 52)

...it's not so much a feature of our business now, but probably ten years ago, we had quite a large number of people who'd been in the co-operative when it was very small, and they did have a sort of seat round the table, and all these different elements. And then as we grew, as we expanded as a business, there are people who just- it grew around them. It grew past them, and they like the ethos of the business, and they like what we stand for, but actually found it quite difficult to kind of process the idea that we're a business that's trying to be profitable and drive growth by expansion, you know. And some people just find that a little bit difficult to deal with. They kind of see their place in the whole thing staying the same as the business grows, and it becomes something that they're not so keen on engaging with. (Senior manager, Head Office)

I will argue below that other factors, such as the role of the Scottish Independence Campaign spurring engagement, and selection processes resulting from the appeal of co-operation to non-traditional political activists, also account for the relative politicization of staff. It should also be noted that older and more educated staff are more likely to work with others on community problems. While older respondents are more likely to engage in contacting behaviour, the least educated group of staff are more likely than others to have contacted someone in the past 12 months. This is at odds with previous findings that contacting is mainly a white, middle-aged, middle class and male sphere of activity (Li & Marsh 2008, p.268).

I turn now to political attitudes. Respondents' attitudes were measured using items from the Pattie study (Pattie et al. 2004, p.302). Following Pattie et al. (2004, p.47), a PCA was carried out on responses in order to uncover the structure of respondents' political attitudes. This produced three components which differ from those found in the Pattie study (see Pattie et al. 2004, p.47). External political efficacy is interpreted as measuring a respondent's belief that the political system treats them fairly and is responsive to the demands of people like themselves. It consists of items:

- The government treats me fairly

- The government listens personally to people like me
- The government takes decisions in accordance with my personal wishes

It is similar to the measure used in the Pattie study, except it does not include items relating to government responsiveness to majority opinion, and so is focused more on the respondent's personal relationship to the political system.

Internal political efficacy is interpreted as measuring a respondent's ability to participate effectively in politics, both individually and collectively with others. It consists of items:

- If people like me work together we can really change Britain
- If people like me all work together we can really make a difference to our local community
- People like me can have a real influence on politics if they are willing to get involved

It combines Pattie et al.'s personal and collective measures of internal political efficacy into a single measure.

A third component not found in the Pattie data was uncovered. Alienation is interpreted as measuring the extent to which an individual feels alienated from traditional politics and unable to influence the political process. It consists of items:

- It really matters which party is in power, because it will affect our lives (negatively correlated with the component)
- people like me have no say in what the government does
- My vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election

I will look at variations in external political efficacy, internal efficacy and alienation by taking the item that loaded most strongly onto each of these factors and looking at the proportion of respondents who agreed and disagreed with that item. For external political efficacy, the statement is 'The government listens personally to people like me'. For internal political efficacy the statement is 'If people like me work together we can really change Britain'. For alienation the statement is 'My vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election'. Table 4.9 shows the proportion of respondents who agree, disagree, or neither agree nor disagree with these statements.

Table 4.9: Political attitudes among co-op workers

	Disagree		Neither agree nor disagree		Agree	
	Frequency	%	Frequency	%	Frequency	%
The government listens personally to people like me	68	66.7	13	14.7	9	8.8
If people like me work together we can really change Britain	13	12.7	40	39.2	34	33.3
My vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election	53	52.0	6	5.9	11	10.8

More than two thirds of respondents think that the government doesn't listen to people like them, indicating low levels of external political efficacy. Only around 9% of workers feel that the government listens personally to people like them. These findings are in line with Pattie et al. (Pattie et al. 2004, p.44). When it comes to internal political efficacy, a large proportion (39.2%) neither agree nor disagree that by working together with others people like themselves can change Britain. This may reflect a detachment from collectivist politics among some staff, and ambivalence about its effectiveness at producing political change. Such ambivalence about the value of collective political action was expressed by a young member of staff from the warehouse, who had become more politicized as a result of the campaign for Scottish Independence. In response to the question of whether he'd ever tried to change anything through political action he replied:

Tried to change...I dunno man, I've never really, like in a political sense, I've never really tried to change anything, you know? I've campaigned for the Independence Movement here. Nothing's happened yet, you know what I mean? You can't tell if it worked or failed yet, but that's probably the most politically-vested thing I've ever been in...just because it's such a hard fight against mainstream media. Every single newspaper, every single TV channel is saying one thing. You know what I mean? Saying the same thing, and...I dunno, it's woken me up to massive political bias in our media. And...it has politically engaged me a lot more in the last year or so, you know, I've been a lot more politically-engaged than I've been before. So I've donated my time to that, you know? I've spent time on the street campaigning and that kind of thing. So I don't know if it'll change anything, but I definitely put in some time to that. (Manual worker, warehouse, male, 24).

One third of respondents think that people like themselves working together could really change Britain. That seems high given Li & Marsh's finding that British people are more efficacious at the local than the national level, and that even among traditional activists only one third feel efficacious

at the national level (Li & Marsh 2008, p.264). However, it is low compared to the Pattie survey, which found that 43% of people agree with the statement (Pattie et al. 2004, p.45). Thus on the whole it seems bike co-op staff have fairly low levels of political efficacy. On the other hand, 52% of staff believe that their vote does make a difference to the outcome of an election, while around 11% think it makes no difference. Pattie et al. found the 53% of people thought their vote makes a difference, and 28% thought it makes no difference (ibid).

To further explore the attitudes of staff they were broken down by highest level of education, age group and occupational group. Table 4.10 shows the results.

Table 4.10: Political attitudes by education, age group and occupational group

			The government listens personally to people like me		If people like me work together we can really change Britain		My vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election	
			Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree	Agree	Disagree
Highest qualification	Degree or higher	Frequency	3	37	18	7	6	30
		%	5.9	72.5	36.7	14.3	15.4	76.9
	A-levels/ HND	Frequency	2	16	7	3	1	15
		%	9.5	76.2	35.0	15.0	5.9	88.2
	GCSEs/ vocational	Frequency	4	15	9	3	4	8
		%	21.1	78.9	50.0	16.7	28.6	57.1
Age	16-24	Frequency	1	13	9	2	0	9
		%	5.6	72.2	50.0	11.1	0.0	81.8
	25-44	Frequency	4	47	20	6	10	33
		%	6.7	78.3	35.7	30.7	21.7	71.7
	45+	Frequency	4	8	5	5	1	11
		%	30.8	61.5	38.5	38.5	7.7	84.6
Occupational group	Senior manager or professional/ technical worker	Frequency	2	5	2	1	1	8
		%	20.0	50.0	20.0	10.0	11.1	88.9
	Middle manager	Frequency	2	9	7	1	3	6
		%	18.2	81.8	63.6	9.1	30.0	60.0
	Junior manager	Frequency	2	8	6	1	1	9
		%	18.2	72.7	54.5	9.1	10.0	90.0
	Shop assistant	Frequency	2	31	14	8	3	21
		%	4.8	73.8	35.9	20.5	10.3	72.4
	Manual worker	Frequency	1	15	5	2	3	9
		%	5.9	88.2	31.3	12.5	25.0	75.0

Those aged over 45, managers and professional/technical workers are more likely to believe that the government listens to people like them. Oddly, those who are educated to GCSE or vocational level are more likely to think that the government listens to people like them than more educated

staff. Those with GCSEs or vocational qualifications are also more likely to think that by working together people like them can change Britain. This may be an age effect rather than a social class effect. This interpretation is supported by none of those aged 16-24 thinking that their vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election. It may be that the bike co-op attracts a number of young and politicized staff who have high levels of political efficacy but are still in education. Indeed, a number of staff work part-time at the co-op whilst studying. This explanation also accounts for the high incidence of political contacting among under 25s.

On the other hand middle managers and junior managers are more likely to express a sense of internal political efficacy than other staff. When it comes to alienation, the least educated and manual workers, staff aged 25-44, and middle managers are more likely to feel alienated. The interview data tells us more about these alienated groups. First, there are middle managers who are (or at least were at one time) committed to the co-op, partly due to their political beliefs, and feel alienated from traditional political institutions for the same reasons:

I could speak for ages about the government in the [United] States...to me it's just a big sideshow. Unfortunately, I kind of have a fairly negative opinion over society as a whole because I really feel like society's becoming much more of the haves and have-nots...

...I appreciate that I'm working in a retail environment while I'm saying this, but I do think what we do as a business is quite good. We get people on bikes to try and reduce people's carbon footprint...we do overall is quite good for society...a financial institution, I don't think does anything for society except for just, "drain it." (Middle manager, male, 31)

I'm generally not a political person in terms of out of work. But within work I tend to be quite a political person. And the only reason I'm like that is because I want to...help people out...being on the board gave me a position to help people more...

...I'm not a very big fan of, sort of, the whole party politics. And that generally puts me off politics. It's, you know, it's not about people...standing up for- or bringing in- or doing what they think is or voting on what they think is right. Within parliament they're voting along party lines, and they'll argue to death on party lines, 'cause they want to advance their position- political party. And that kinda thing just turns me off. That's not what politics should be about, you know? It should be about you being elected by people to make a decision based on what you think is right...it just annoys me, that whole party political thing. That pisses me off. (Middle manager, male, 33)

Second, there are manual workers who feel alienated from both the co-op and the political system:

...the way everything's done in this country is, we have issues here, but we always give money elsewhere. We don't support, like, what we need here. It's kind of like this place a little bit. They're dead quick to dismiss big issues, but I try not to get into politics and stuff like that and, you know, read into loads of it. Because I think I'd probably either drive myself crazy, like, get worried about issues that I'm never going to be able to do anything about or I'd just generally get lost and I'd lose interest in reading about stuff, but...as far as the way things are done in this country, it's probably very similar like this. (Shop bike mechanic, male, 29)

They have a certain way of doing things, "it's our co-op, it's our company," they keep saying. But if you've an idea, and they do like it, they'll do it...I mean, a lot of people get bored with "it's your company, it's a co-op, you can have your say." And they don't really want your say...

...To be honest, I've not voted in a long time...I don't usually vote, and I usually don't vote because whatever they tell you for your votes, it doesn't matter who's in charge, who the party is, something's not gonna make me happy, someone's not gonna be happy. Kind of just to and fro, ey? I will vote on Thursday though. 'Cause I don't trust Alex Salmond! [laughs] But I don't usually vote. You know, last time I voted was 1996 when Labour got in? Yeah, that's the last time I voted. Kind of never really ever vote. (Warehouse bike mechanic, male, 41)

I don't have much of an interest [in politics]. I feel whoever's in charge you're gonna get-they'll shaft you either way. I think the average person in the street will always be done, that's why basically I'm voting 'No' in the referendum that's coming up. But that's- that would just be another lot of cons in charge. It doesn't matter what we- I doubt the average person will see much benefit. (Warehouse bike mechanic, male, 31)

In Chapter 3 it was shown that respondents from the warehouse felt alienated from the co-op. It is evident that there are often parallels between workers' attitudes towards external politics and their attitudes towards the internal 'politics' of their workplace. This issue will be explored further below.

In summary, the bike co-op is characterised by staff with relatively high levels of civic engagement, due mainly to interest in sports and outdoors activities and in environmental issues, both of which relate to interest in cycling. Political participation is largely individualistic, although there is a relatively high incidence of collective action participation compared with research on the UK population, which seems to be related to high education levels. Staff have low levels of political efficacy, while they are perhaps less alienated from the voting system than the public at large

New Participants, Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens

In Chapter 1 I hypothesized that co-op workers will show characteristics of Bang's Everyday Makers, and will derive satisfaction from the control over their day-to-day life and ability to make a political difference that comes from working in a co-op.

Everyday Makers are a new form of political participant that display the following characteristics (Li & Marsh 2008, pp.250–251):

- They do not feel defined by the state, and are neither apathetic, nor opposed to it
- they do not want to waste time getting involved with the state, but prefer to be politically involved at the lowest possible, local level
- they think globally, but act locally
- they are sceptical of Expert Citizens because they pursue their own interests
- they draw a distinction between elite networks and their own politics of the ordinary within their local community
- they live by a 'credo of everyday experience' which emphasizes the following:
 - do it yourself
 - do it where you are
 - do it for fun, but also because you find it necessary
 - do it ad hoc, or part time
 - Do it concretely, instead of ideologically
 - Do it with self-confidence and show trust in yourself
 - Do it with the system, if need be
- They are likely to vote and be informed about big politics, but they do not get their political identities from being citizens of the state or members of an interest group or a social movement
- They are concerned to enhance their personal capacities for self-governance and co-governance

The counterpart to Everyday Makers is what Bang calls 'Expert Citizens'. They are defined as follows (Li & Marsh 2008, p.250):

- They are often new professionals, particularly in voluntary organizations, but not within political parties, trade unions or private firms, who feel they can do politics and policy as well as the old authorities
- many were previously grassroots activists

- they consider themselves part of the political system, rather than identifying themselves in opposition to it
- rather they identify themselves with various overlapping political projects reflecting their overall lifestyle
- they place negotiation and dialogue before antagonism and opposition
- politics is seen as a fusion between representation and participation in a new form of political participation where you use your knowledge, skills and strategic judgement to influence others
- they build networks of negotiation and co-operation with politicians, administrators, interest groups and the media – they develop 'network consciousness'
- as compared with when they were grassroots activists, they have a weakening antagonism to the system; their aim is to make is an effective partner
- they are a resource or political capital for democracy

Li & Marsh find that in the UK context, the middle-aged are more likely to be Expert Citizens or Political Activists (those engaged in traditional political activity within political parties or trades unions), while the young are more likely to be Everyday Makers (Li & Marsh 2008, pp.259–260). Class and education are important correlates of participation identities. The service class and those with a degree are most likely to be traditional Political Activists or Expert Citizens, with the class effect particularly strong for Expert Citizens (Li & Marsh 2008, pp.260–263). Expert citizens exhibit greater trust in political institutions than Everyday makers, and the politically engaged exhibit more trust than non-participants (Li & Marsh 2008, p.264). Expert citizens display higher levels of political efficacy at both the local and national levels than Everyday Makers, but Li & Marsh find the notion that Everyday Makers think globally and act locally hard to operationalize and test (*ibid.*). Li & Marsh conclude that access to economic, cultural and social capital are key to explaining differences in types of participation, and access to such resources is related to class:

The most disadvantaged social groups, namely, those in the working class and with little formal education, are least likely to be engaged in political participation. Informal political participation, especially as Political Activists and Expert Citizens, requires social and cultural capital of which the working class have less and, when they do have some, such capital tends to be of a different type which is less valued in mainstream politics (Li & Marsh 2008, p.271).

Drawing on Li & Marsh's operationalization of Everyday Makers (Li & Marsh 2008, p.256), a variable was created to measure acts of 'new' political participation among co-op workers that might be associated with Everyday Makers. That is, the non-state-focused, non-traditional political acts described above as being predominant among co-op workers. The following items were coded 0 if a

respondent had not participated in that act in the last 12 months, and 1 if they had. They were then summed and averaged for each respondent to create a 'New Participant score', with a higher score indicating involvement in more types of participation.

- working with others on community problems
- consumer activism
- contacting
- collective action
- charitable acts
- signing a petition
- trying to convince someone how to vote
- volunteering in a civic organization
- participating in an activity in a civic organization
- being a paid-up member of a civic organization
- donating money to a civic organization

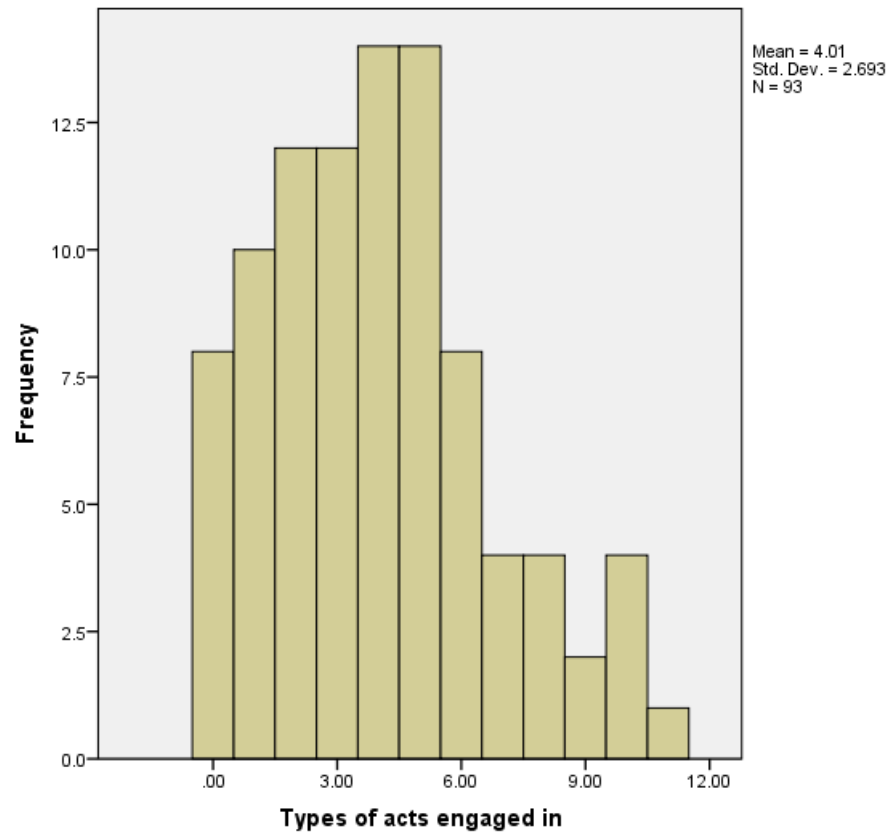
Political party and trade union activities were excluded, as these are the realm of traditional political activists. Although Bang argues that Everyday Makers are likely to vote, voting was excluded from the measure due to the documented tendency of people to over-report voting behaviour, and because respondents are distributed across multiple countries and regions of the UK, and so did not have equal opportunity to vote during the 12 months preceding the survey.

Li & Marsh's operationalization of Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens foregrounds their organizational affiliations and role within organizations. They argue that class effects are important in determining who participates in organizations and in what capacity (indeed, in the previous chapter I argued that social class is related to opportunities to participate in the study firm). In contrast, my New Participant score focuses on types of political and civic acts undertaken by co-op workers in their spare time. It foregrounds the type and extent of an individual's political participation and civic participation behaviour in order to measure the degree to which a particular kind of politics is central to that individual's identity. It will be seen below that extent of politicization interacts with personal resources and opportunities for participation to influence the extent to which an individual engages in political acts. It will be argued that the difference between Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens is best seen as being 'gradated' or laying on a 'continuum', whereby both have a similar oppositional attitudes to an elite-driven political economic system, and both have project or issue-based political identities, but Expert Citizens have greater social, economic and cultural capital, due in part to generational and social class processes, and are therefore better able to build and participate in existing governance networks. In short, Everyday

Makers and Expert Citizens both have New Participant identities, but the difference between them comes from the types of participatory opportunities afforded to them by their resources. Everyday makers display a 'latent politicization' that comes to the surface when opportunities to participate arise and allow them to influence issues that matter to them. A New Participant identity affects both attitudes towards democracy in the co-op, and attempts to exert influence. New Participants desire more influence at work, and see inequalities of influence over decisions in the co-op as reflective of wider social inequalities that underlie exclusion from political decision-making. A co-operative is a private firm, and so Li & Marsh's operationalization precludes those who are involved in leadership or representation within the co-op from categorization as either Everyday Makers or Expert Citizens. However, I will argue that the extent to which individuals have a New Participant identity determines whether they see their role at work as political, and so Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens are best categorized according to their political identity, while the interaction between identity and resources determines the extent and realms of their participation. In the co-op there is a conflict between influential managers and employee representatives who are driven by business imperatives, and New Participants who see these imperatives as excluding them from decision-making. This staff-management divide in ideology and behaviour will be related to external contextual factors.

To begin with I examine some of the characteristics of New Participants in the co-op to see whether they are similar to Everyday Makers. Figure 4.1 shows the distribution of the New Participant score variable:

Figure 4.1: Histogram showing the distribution of New Participant Score



The distribution is skewed to the right, with a mean number of types of acts just over 4 and a median of 4. The 75th percentile of acts is 5.5 while the 25th percentile is 2. So those respondents who engage in 6 or more types of acts will be considered to have high levels of 'New Participant' behaviour, and those with 5 or more types of acts will be considered above average.

Table 4.11 shows the results of a multiple linear regression model of predictors of New Participant score fitted in UCINET with p-values calculated using permutation tests.

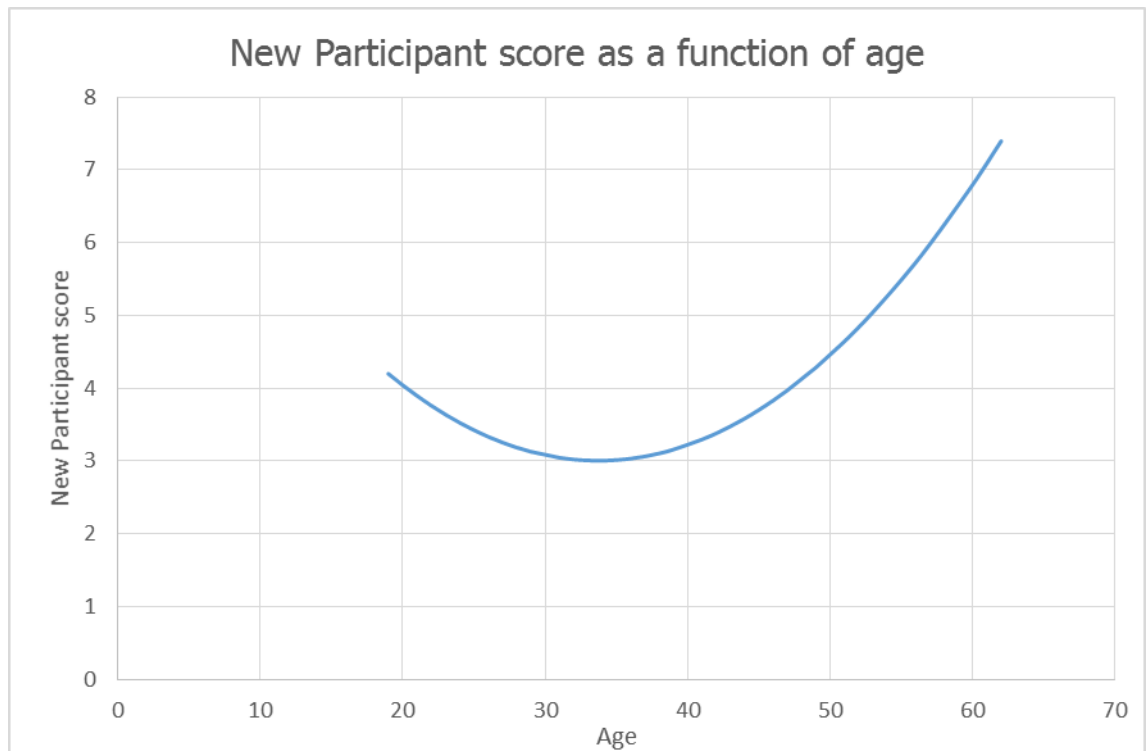
Table 4.11: Multiple linear regression analysis of predictors of new participant behaviour

DV: New Participant score

	Standardized coefficient	P value
Intercept	0.000	0.000
Age (mean centred)	0.130	0.407
Age (mean centred) squared	-0.291	0.066
External political efficacy	-0.057	0.662
Internal political efficacy	0.260	0.042
Alienation	0.260	0.038
Voting	0.245	0.045
Model R2	0.294	
P-value	0.008	

The age coefficient is not significant and the age squared coefficient is positive ($p < 0.10$). Figure 4.2 shows the plot of the relationship between age and New Participant score over the age range of respondents. It indicates that age has a u-shaped relationship with New Participant behaviour. External political efficacy is negatively related to New Participant behaviour but the relationship is not significant. Internal political efficacy and alienation positively predict New Participant score and are significant at the 5% level. Finally, voting is also positively and significantly related to New Participant behaviour ($p < .05$).

Figure 4.2: Plot of New Participant score as a function of age



New Participant behaviour is positively related to both internal political efficacy and alienation. There is no significant relationship with external political efficacy, but this may be because the alienation variable is better characterising New Participants' attitudes towards traditional political institutions. The alienation variable consists of an average of responses to the items 'My vote makes no difference to the outcome of an election', 'People like me have no say in what the Government does', and 'It really matters who is in power, because it makes a real difference to our lives', which is inversely related to the alienation variable. Thus the more a respondent participates in non-state focused, non-traditional political and civic activities, the higher their sense of internal political efficacy is likely to be, and the more likely they are to feel alienated from government and electoral politics. Interviews with staff who display New Participant behaviour shed further light on these attitudes. They are cynical about big politics, sceptical about the ability of government to address social problems, and unlikely to think that government acts in their interests:

I'm a little bit disillusioned with politics in general. I'm definitely left-leaning. But I don't think I've ever seen a political party - apart from maybe the Greens actually - the Greens are a good party. I like the Green party. They're quite progressive. And they're not afraid to talk about things that need to be talked about. But other than that like mainstream politics kind of sickens me a little bit. It's pretty vulgar. It doesn't really get much done. It's

just boys bickering, you know? So like yeah, if I was gonna align myself somewhere politically, it's gonna be like pretty leftist, quite liberal, and definite like- I dunno, I believe in smaller government, I think we need to write down the whole system from the top to bottom. And govern ourselves in much smaller groups, because there's just so much wastage trying to organize a big society like we have just now. But I don't think anybody's found the Mecca, you know what I mean? Nobody's found the political ideal, 'cause we're such a different group of people, man. I've got my views, you've got your views, you know what I mean? So I think, yeah, politics can be quite divisive. (Warehouse worker, male, 24, new participant score: 6)

I'm gonna vote 'no' in the referendum, you know...I mean it's a crazy opportunity to get rid of the Tories, but I'm sure we'll have our own Tories. (Shop assistant, male, 51, new participant score: 7)

...not overly impressed with [the Government] to be honest. But, uh, couldn't really see Labour doing a great deal better, to be honest. I was quite disappointed in Lib-Dems and what's happened to them, really. But yeah...don't really know where we're going [chuckles]...I was mostly surprised with the Scottish devolution thing that Labour were so behind it... if we lost Scotland, it would probably help the Conservatives, uh, certainly win the next election. But yeah, a little bit unhappy with the state of things, but, well, what can you do really? (Shop assistant, male, 35, New Participant Score: 5)

This fits with Li & Marsh's findings that Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens have higher political efficacy than non-participants (Li & Marsh 2008, p.267), and that Everyday Makers view the state as shaping their lives and experiences, but as non-responsive, which is reflected in low levels of external political efficacy (Marsh et al. 2007, p.123). In this case this effect is captured by the alienation variable. The interview data also reveals that New Participants tend to feel efficacious at the local level, rather than the national level (Li & Marsh 2008, p.264):

I normally vote Green. But on the political spectrum I would call myself an anarchist. So I take important, like, direct action...and other kind of grassroots...sort of demos and other sort of local, like, community, sort of, camp- like gardening, and things like that. Kind of hands on...kind of things. Occupy campaign. Things like that...I lived in Lancaster for like six years, so I was very part of all different groups there. Here in Manchester, I'm still kind of new [laughs], new to the place. And just meeting people now...So I'm coming from quite a...grassroots kind of, activist kind of background and perspective, which is not what everyone is in co-ops. Especially here. (Shop bike mechanic, female, 31, new participant score: 10)

I'm not a member of any political party at the moment. I was a member of the Communist Party when I was a student for a few years, but I haven't been in any party since then. At the moment I would say the Green party reflects my views most strongly. I'm a firm believer in social justice, and actually outside of the co-op, I work with deprived people in schemes to help them to grow vegetables, and to teach them about how to cook with the vegetables they grow and things. So I found another outlet for my beliefs, another way of acting on them. (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

I've been to rallies and things like that, or not rallies, it's more kind of marches just to show my support for various things. But I've never gone that far. I've not been to London and done anything there. It's all just been local stuff...I just think you can make your voice known through social media and stuff like that. It's - well - you don't really need to go away to do that. (Shop assistant, male, 25, New participant score: 4)

It can also be seen that Bang's characterization of Everyday Makers as neither supportive of, nor opposed to the State, is not a sufficient description of the New Participants in the co-op. Almost all New Participants interviewed expressed opposition to or dissatisfaction with the prevailing social, political and economic order, and many expressed a wish that things were different or a desire to affect change. Many also expressed a perception of the state and big politics as the realm of elites who benefit from and actively maintain this order. They seem to see the world both in terms of issues (the 'project-based identity' described by Bang):

Any other issues? That I think about? ...things like pollution. Pollution, wars, yeah, that sort of thing. (Shop assistant, male, 51, new participant score: 7)

And in terms of an 'us versus them' narrative that pits an elite-dominated system against everyone else:

How do I feel about the government? I think there's a lot of issues within the government. I think there's a lot of people there that are in it for...the rich. You know it's them kind of protecting themselves and their own sort of class, as it were. Which I'm not really a fan of. I think a lot of the sort of lower-wage people are often forgotten about or taken advantage of. (Shop bike mechanic, male, 25, New Participant Score: 5).

New Participant score is also positively correlated with voting behaviour, in line with Bang's view that Everyday Makers are likely to vote and be informed about high politics. It seems that while the New Participants in the co-op are dissatisfied with the system, this is not manifested in complete disengagement from it, and they still tend to vote. There is evidence that they feel their vote has expressive significance, if not political impact:

I vote Lib Dem. And it was really, really annoying when the Conservatives came to power...I will always vote. But I'm a little bit, kind of, jaded by that fact I think. I'm kind of annoyed by politicians who promise the world and- and don't tell you where any of the money's gonna come from. That's why...in the past I voted Lib Dem because I found that it was the most rational form. They could say "Well, look, we're gonna have to cut from somewhere if we want to improve these things." And that- I think it's logical...Yeah. I don't think I'll ever be happy with any government...

I would never not vote, because as a female in particular I feel I have to use my vote, but right now it would probably be Green because I cannot think of anybody that I think I would trust to run, you know, a good show down there. I feel disillusioned with it all.

Thus it seems that in terms of political efficacy and attitudes towards the state, New Participants within the co-op are similar to Bang's Everyday Makers. However, on the face of it their attitudes towards the political system are more antagonistic than Bang allows. It would be better to shift the definition of the 'system' from a broad definition of everything relating to the traditional hegemonic governance institutions of society, to what New Participants themselves might understand by the system, which is any elite-driven institution which they see as exclusive and working against the interests of people like themselves. Thus, where New Participants are 'offered a hand' by elements of the system – where they see it as working in their interests, or towards projects they see as valuable, they are liable to join with it. This will be seen in my discussion of the Scottish Independence Referendum below. Bang himself seems to sometimes shift to this understanding of the relationship between Everyday Makers and the system, such as in his discussion of the demographics that participated in the Obama Campaign:

They can be out fighting against 'the system' in one particular context and then shift to teaming up with it in another; they can ignore an institution's attempts to involve them, but they can also help the institution in solving its problems on condition that it simultaneously empowers them to pursue their own life-political project (Bang 2009, p.130).

...Reflexive individuals, who mix identity politics and project politics, the personal and the communal, and the local and the global...want empowerment from above in order for them to be able to do things themselves from below (Bang 2009, p.118).

The important thing is that, to ECs and EMs, participation and support are not solely a matter of being either for or against 'the system'. They adopt an oppositional or

legitimizing identity only if it is functional to developing their project identity and, thus, to meeting their specific life plans or policies (Bang 2009, p.129).

Turning to the final predictor in the model, age, New Participant behaviour has a U-shaped relationship with age, with younger and older staff members likely to have a higher score than those in the middle of the age distribution. Selection processes may be at play here. Older, longer-standing members of the co-op tended to join for political reasons when the co-op was smaller, while younger staff are also sometimes attracted by the politics of co-ops:

I was a keen cyclist, and very interested in the idea of worker co-ops just from a political point of view. So I came into with a kind of idea about how you could do things differently and how you had to kind of try things, basically, I guess. I suppose I stuck with that idea for a long time. (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

I lived in Lancaster before and spend ages doing shit jobs and being unemployed and all sorts. Then moved here, and I just didn't expect to get a job, though, quickly. But I found this job. Got it, and it was like...amazing. 'Cause it was exactly what I wanted. I wanted to work as a bicycle mechanic in a worker co-op. So that was specifically what I wanted. (Shop bike mechanic, female, 31, new participant score: 10)

What of the relation between New Participants in the Co-op and other attributes of Everyday Makers? Bang argues that Everyday Makers 'think globally, but act locally'; that they are 'reflexive individuals, who mix identity politics and project politics, the personal and the communal, and the local and the global' (Bang 2009, p.118). Li & Marsh find this hard to substantiate. We can see from the interview data that New Participants draw no hard and fast distinction between the local and the global. They have an eye on global or 'big' political issues such as environmentalism, war and human rights:

Well, ecological issues, green issues, obviously interested in that. I'm interested in education, I'm interested in not being ruled by the establishment that is Westminster. I'm interested in...what else am I interested in? Internationalism, supporting other people and Human Rights. (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

I have [taken part in political activities] in the past, yeah...one in Manchester, actually. The, uh, you know, like, anti-war marches and been to like the Reclaim the Streets demonstrations and things like that. (Shop assistant, male, 35, New Participant Score: 5)

They have political identities that are premised on perceived exclusion from political decision-making, and the valuing of certain kinds of political projects. However, their participation is a mix of local level and community action, along with expressive actions designed to influence more global

issues, such as going on demonstrations or signing petitions. The extent and mode of their participation is shaped by the availability of opportunities to influence. I argue that this is a product of their individual social, cultural and economic resources. This is illustrated by an exchange with one young New Participant, who exerts influence over issues that concern him by donating money and signing petitions online:

Interviewee: I do sign petitions online, Amnesty International. Quite often go on there and see what's going on. There's quite a lot of...interesting stuff.

Interviewer: Yeah, so what motivates you to do that?

Interviewee: Just...someone out there's not being treated right, so that's not fair. Do you know what I mean? So I want to- just to help them. And I have got loads of money, I don't need...I don't need all my money.

Interviewer: So do you donate as well?

Interviewee: I do donate sometimes, yeah. I mean...not to any particular charity, it's just to random charities from time to time. Right when I get paid, I always take a bit of my money that I get paid, like ten percent, or something, and spread that apart to a few charities. And I keep looking into trying to help out, but like, some sort of homeless shelter. Like there's St. Joseph's Crypt, or something like that, it's in central Leeds, but...I've never really got round to it. Like...I can go buy myself a sandwich for lunch when I want a sandwich, but I don't need that sandwich. (Shop assistant, male, 19, New Participant Score: 6)

Contrast this with narratives from two older, more educated and experienced middle managers:

I love my job. I really, really enjoy this. I kind of stumbled into it, but if you'd asked me when I was fourteen what I wanted to do when I'd grown up, I'd have said "I want to run a bike shop." And I've done lots of other things in between and given up riding bikes and so on. And...I got back into cycling about five years ago when I quit my job in order to do study and find something more fulfilling, rather than just rewarding. And I ended up a customer here, and convinced of how much better my life was with an old mountain bike rather than a BMW 5-Series. And I've now spent probably about the same cost of a BMW 5-Series on [laughs] on a ludicrous collection of bikes...I want other people to use bikes for transport and leisure. I think it can make such a huge- I was looking for something practical, but tackled climate change, that addressed my concern. My degree was in the philosophy of the environment. Environmental Studies and Philosophy. Quite scientific-leaning, but motivated by "are we screwing the planet up," and "should we care about it,"

and "why should we care about it?" And I came out of it thinking about moving into geothermal energy 'cause that would've been closer to what I used to do - new technology. I was interested in being a warden at our RSPB reserve or similar, 'cause I've done some guiding ornithology as my other thing...And I've worked with friends and got those businesses. But I stumbled into this, and...very happy that I did. It's a frustrating country and particularly city in which to do it, because Britain doesn't get cycling, despite all the reports and all the politicians' platitudes. And even the public who cycle, I think many of them don't quite get cycling. Thirty percent of all our carbon emissions come from transport. Forty percent of all car journeys are less than two miles. This is something really quick and easy that can be done that's actually fun. The obesity epidemic is globally as a result of car use. There's no other significant factor- it has nothing to do with diet. Which is really interesting. (Branch manager, male, 43, New Participant score: 10).

I retrained in horticulture, though my first degree's in botany, so it wasn't such a retraining. I never studied business. I retrained in horticulture because that's just what I enjoy doing on a very practical level. And then started- I volunteered in primary schools, kids growing vegetables, and I started to apply for different bits of work in community gardens. [Unclear] volunteering in a local community garden, and then just realized that that's what gives me the best buzz really... (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

Both the younger worker and his older colleagues have politicized identities and are concerned with political issues. But the older workers use their superior education, skills and resources to exert influence over issues that matter to them. In doing so politics becomes more central to their daily lives and more fundamental to their identities. It is not just that differences in opportunities lead to differences in the extent of participation. It seems to be that opportunities to participate lead to more exposure to politics and actually shape political identity and increase the motivation to participate – so causation is two-way. Political identity is shaped by life experience – by politics as a lived experience. Lived experience is related to social class, as well as gender, age, race, nationality, and other factors (Marsh et al. 2007). For example, political identity shows generational variations resulting from the different life experiences of generations. One New Participant explained how her life experience had altered her political views:

I've stood back from politics for the large part for a long time. I've been busy bringing up kids and got involved in a much more kind of local, community-based stuff, I would say. So I've become much more community-minded than I was when I was younger. Much more interested in the person than the idea, I think. So the ideology of the co-op- I mean I still believe in it, but I think it has to run much more like a group of people with something in

common than an abstract idea of just a different structure...Yeah, I think it's life experience really that brought me round to that view that, actually. I've been involved in a lot of things over time and...the changes that you can actually make in the world or in people's lives are at a very personal level. And I think even bringing up my kids, it's like getting that right was much more important at times than any ideology, and getting that right was actually about very, very small interactions on a personal level. And I think I became more and more aware of that, and that actually small interactions on a personal level is where this place has become really bad; that actually we're probably much worse at that than any other business. So that's pretty interesting. I mean I talk to people who don't work in co-ops, which is basically all my friends. And some of them work in traditional businesses, and quite a lot of them work in voluntary sector. Quite a lot of them work for themselves, and they're often amazed at how little like a co-op this place is from what they think it might be like. But I don't know what ideas they have. They're surprised at how much like a business we have become. Like a faceless business, almost. (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

Thus I argue that Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens are best conceptualised as laying on a continuum. They are all New Participants who share a similar issue-based, marginalized political identity that orients them against the status quo or an elite-dominated system. But they differ in the extent of their human, social and economic capital, and therefore the ways in which they participate, the centrality of politics to their daily lives, and the strength of their New Participant identity. Indeed, some of the co-op workers with the highest New Participant scores appear to have the skills and resources required to act as Expert Citizens. When asked whether he felt his work experience had shaped his political views, one middle manager responded:

...probably, yeah. Although, certainly, my family come from a more...capitalist idea as well. So, I think I'm shaped by that...but yeah, I'm self-employed and I'm sixteen, seventeen in retail. So I think you- you're building it up yourself...I think that shapes you at seventeen, eighteen, running your own business. It's not about sharing that with somebody else, that's about you want to get somewhere and do something. Probably not in a very communist-type way, very much in a capitalist type of way. So, I guess it's always been there. (Branch manager, male, 47, New Participant score: 9).

Meanwhile, those with lower New Participant scores seem to display a 'latent' politicization which is characteristic of Everyday Makers and which is apt to emerge when opportunities arise to influence their lives or issues that are important to them. This is evident in the way the Campaign for Scottish Independence, which was in full swing when the interviews were being conducted, had engaged some workers:

Interviewer: And have you ever had any particular experiences of trying to change anything? Anytime you've got involved in - not necessarily a big issue or anything national, but maybe something local or small-scale?

Interviewee: Tried to change...I dunno. Um...there was something...I dunno man, I've never really, like in a political sense, I've never really tried to change anything, you know? I've campaigned for the independence movement here...

Interviewer: And what were you doing? Were you knocking on doors or talking to people, or?

Interviewee: A bit of like the working the street stalls. So just chatting to people out, seeing what they're doing, going around, I'm helping just with logistics and shit. Delivering stuff, sorting people out, you know? So yeah, I mean it's good...this whole issue's been really good for this country, anyway. And getting people a bit more clued up on what's going on, you know? So like, I dunno, I've definitely been inspired by that, you know, seeing people actually getting positive about something. So time will tell, eh? (Warehouse worker, male, 24, new participant score: 6)

...at this time, at the minute, with kind of tomorrow going on? I try to not talk about it because there's lots of people, 'Yes' voters who will kind of get up and arms and try to convince you. I just...I've made my decision and it's my decision. So leave me alone [laughs]...I went to university before the student riots and stuff happened. I've got a friend who went to the riots and things like that, and it's something that I feel strongly about, but it's- I don't feel like I know enough to go and have a huge, long discussion about it. With stuff like the independence vote, I sat down and I read lots of stuff about it and made my decision from that. (Shop assistant, male, 25, New Participant score: 4)

Bang argues that the Obama Campaign tapped into just such a resource of people:

Obama here seems to speak directly to those that alternative participation studies have described as 'everyday makers and expert citizens' those who consider politics as lived experience and who can be mobilized if 'governance initiatives can open up political spaces for young people to organize around and articulate the issues that concern them' (Bang 2009, p.119).

Thus, political campaigns that aim to empower people from above in order for them to be able to do things themselves from below (Bang 2009, p.118) speak to the identities of Everyday Makers and tap into their latent politicization, which has wrongly been interpreted by some as apathy. The Obama campaign and the Scottish Independence campaign are two examples, and Bernie Sanders

ongoing campaign for the Democratic Party nomination appears to be a third. New Participants are not apathetic, they want the system to work for people like them, and will partner with politicians, organizations or movements they feel can make that happen.

In sum, New Participants in the co-op share elements of a political identity that includes cynicism about elites, scepticism about big politics, and a self-image of the outsider. At the same time they care about big political issues and seek to make a difference, mainly through participation at the local level and actions that have expressive significance for global issues. The extent and form of individual participation depends on personal resources, and individuals with fewer resources show signs of a latent politicization that can be stimulated by opportunities to make a difference, most notably in this context the possibilities afforded by the Scottish Independence Campaign. In support of the findings of Li & Marsh (2008) and Marsh et al. (2007), the difference between Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens seems to be a question of personal, social and economic resources. The more resources one has, the more one is able to define and shape oneself through one's political identity. Thus identity and participation shape each other reciprocally through lived experience.

What of Bang's theory that Everyday Makers live by a 'credo of experience'; that they 'do it themselves, for fun, where they are, ad hoc and part time, non-ideologically, self-confidently and with the system if necessary'? Some of the New Participants interviewed displayed the self-confidence to 'do it themselves':

I got into cycling as...through kind of political and, kind of, Green ideology. Before I was cycling I did furniture making. Couldn't find a job doing that, was always trying to fix my bike and things, and then got together with two friends and we applied for funding, and we got funding...and set up our own worker co-op...in Lancaster, just the three of us, small, kind of grassroots workshop. Recycling bikes and repairing bikes and selling those. Didn't sell many bikes...for various different reasons, we folded after like two years. And then after that I'd finished. Yeah, I still wanted to be a bicycle mechanic [laughs]. That was the bit I enjoyed most. (Shop bike mechanic, female, 31, new participant score: 10)

But, contrary to my expectation that Everyday Makers in the co-op would derive satisfaction from the difference they could make through their work, many expressed frustration with their workplace:

A co-op is something when everyone has a choice in what actually happens within the company. It is inherently a co-operative business where everyone has- not necessarily a higher-ranking say - but everyone can make a decision on everything that's done. The entire of [the study firm] isn't a co-op. It has definitely diverged away from that. It's

definitely more of a...if you want to think of it as a kind of semi-socialist business in that people have a view into what happens as a company, but they don't have an actual really high-level view. Suppose it's the difference between socialism and Marxism if you want to think of it that way. (Shop assistant, male, 33, New Participant Score: 7).

This New Participant identified the democratic degeneration of the co-op described in the last chapter, and is unhappy with it. This brings me to the next section, where I examine the relationship between political behaviour and behaviour and attitudes at work.

The Pateman Thesis revisited

In this section I examine the relationship between individuals' political behaviour, their behaviour at work and their attitudes towards the co-op. I find that New Participants have higher expectations and desire for influence at work, and so are less satisfied with the level of democracy in their workplace. They are more likely to try to influence things by raising issues with influential colleagues, but they are less likely to be seen as influential themselves. Conversely, those with higher levels of external political efficacy are more likely to feel satisfied with their level of influence at work, and this relationship is partially mediated by instrumental influence. I identify two explanations for this. First, processes of political lived experience mean New Participants relate their experiences at work to inequality and exclusion experienced outside work; and influential people have a more pragmatic understanding of both workplace democracy and political democracy. Second, selection processes mean that more politicized individuals eventually become disillusioned, disengage from participation, and perhaps leave the co-op; while less politicized, more business-minded people obtain positions of influence. This brings me back to the Pateman thesis and my earlier criticisms of it: that it draws too hard a distinction between the workplace and political spheres; that it ignores selection processes; and that it sees democratic firms as 'islands of socialism' detached from the effects of external context. I conclude that while workplace experience as an element of lived experience can affect political attitudes and behaviour, the reverse is also true. Because the dynamics of workplace democracy are not divorced from a firm's political, cultural and economic context, worker co-operatives may better be described as 'prisms of socialism', which have modifying, but not transformational, effects on their workers.

I hypothesized that New Participants would gain satisfaction from the control co-operation gives them over their daily lives. However, interview evidence suggested New Participants were dissatisfied with the co-op and their influence within it. I also argued that the relationship between workplace participation and political behaviour could be a two way street – that political behaviour

can shape the dynamics of workplace participation, as well as vice versa. It is therefore expected that political identity (including attitudes and behaviour) and attitudes and behaviour at work will reciprocally influence one another. I predict that New Participants will be more likely to try to influence things at work, but, given the findings of the previous chapter on democratic degeneration in the co-op, will also be more dissatisfied with their level of influence.

To examine the relationship between political behaviour and attitudes towards the co-op, a multiple linear regression model was fitted using UCINET, with the variable satisfaction with influence at work as the dependent. In the survey respondents were asked to agree or disagree with the following four statements, corresponding to four levels of decision-making in the firm:

- I would like to have more of an influence over the day-to-day running of my immediate place of work (my branch, division or department)
- I would like to have more of an influence over how things are done in the firm as a whole/the day-to-day running of the firm as a whole
- I would like to have more of an influence over the firm's future direction, its mission, or its long-term goals
- I would like to have more of an influence over staff pay or benefits across the firm as a whole

Responses were on a 5-point Likert scale (strongly disagree to strongly agree). To create the variable satisfaction with influence at work, I averaged responses to these four items, and subtracted the average from each respondent's sense of influence at work score (detailed in the Chapter 3). A maximum score on the resultant variable would be obtained by feeling influential at work and not wanting more influence, and a minimum score would be obtained by having low feelings of influence and wanting more. The variable is interpreted as representing how satisfied a respondent is with their influence over workplace decisions. It takes into account a respondent's preferences or expectations, as the effect of low feelings of influence is magnified, and high feelings of influence attenuated, if the respondent would like to be more influential. The Pearson correlation of satisfaction with influence with sense of influence is .796 ($p < .01$), indicating that the two variables are correlated in the direction one would expect (more influential people are more satisfied with their level of influence), but not so highly that they cannot be treated as separate constructs. I expect that New Participants will have high desire for influence, and *ceteris paribus* will have lower satisfaction with influence than other workers.

In Model 1, political behavioural and attitudinal variables were included as predictors, controlling for age and whether an individual works part time. Controls for education and occupational group were found to have no substantial effect on the model. In Model 2, level of instrumental influence at

work was added to see how possession of influence-relevant resources is related to political identity and satisfaction with influence. Results are displayed in Table 4.12.

Table 4.12: Multiple linear regression model of predictors of satisfaction with influence at work

DV: Satisfaction with influence at work

	Model 1		Model 2	
	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value
Intercept	0	0	0	0
New Participant score	-0.254	0.061	-0.183	0.185
Internal political efficacy	0.036	0.791	-0.024	0.859
Alienation	0.105	0.419	0.043	0.748
External political efficacy	0.303	0.017	0.225	0.096
Part time	0.260	0.129	0.282	0.047
Age (mean centred)	0.306	0.020	0.175	0.219
Instrumental influence			0.389	0.007
Model R2		.184		.299
P-value		.056		.012

In Model 1, New Participant score is negatively related to satisfaction with workplace influence as expected ($p < .10$), while external political efficacy is positively related ($p < .05$). Age is also positively related ($p < 0.5$). Being part time has no significant effect. Internal political efficacy and alienation have no significant effects on the dependent variable. They act as suppressor variables to New Participant score. They are both positively related to satisfaction with influence at work, and positively related to New Participant score (as shown in Table 4.11), which is itself negatively related to satisfaction with influence at work. This suggests that although these attitudes predict New Participant behaviour, it is the behaviour itself rather than the attitudes that is related to dissatisfaction with workplace influence. Workers who participate outside of work appear to want more influence at work. In Model 2 instrumental influence is a significant predictor of satisfaction with influence ($p < .05$), while the effects of New Participant score and age become non-significant, and the effect of external political efficacy is now just significant at the 10% level ($p = .096$). Working part time now has a significant positive effect on satisfaction ($p < .05$). This indicates that the effects of age, external political efficacy and New Participant score on satisfaction with influence at work are mediated by instrumental influence. Those who are influential tend to be older and

have higher external political efficacy, and are more satisfied with their level of influence over workplace decision-making. New Participants tend to have lower instrumental influence and are less satisfied with their influence over decisions. Instrumental influence acts as a suppressor variable to the part time variable, indicating that being a part time employee has a positive relationship with satisfaction with influence but a negative relationship to instrumental influence, which itself has a positive relationship to satisfaction with influence. Thus part time employees are less influential but seem typically more content with their influence. This is probably because their work is not their long-term career and so they are less invested in it.

To examine the relationship between New Participant behaviour and behaviour at work, a second multiple linear regression model was fitted in UCINET with New Participant Score as the dependent variable. Those variables that were found above to predict New Participant score – age, alienation, internal political efficacy and voting behaviour were again included in the model as controls. Two workplace behavioural variables – instrumental influence, and social resources were added. Social resources is the maximum instrumental influence score of ego’s alters in the four issues networks calculated using only outgoing ties. It is a measure of the most influential person an individual goes to in order to try to change or improve any aspect of work-life. A higher score means they have access to more influential colleagues. Table 4.13 shows the results.

Table 4.13: Multiple linear regression model of predictors of New Participant score

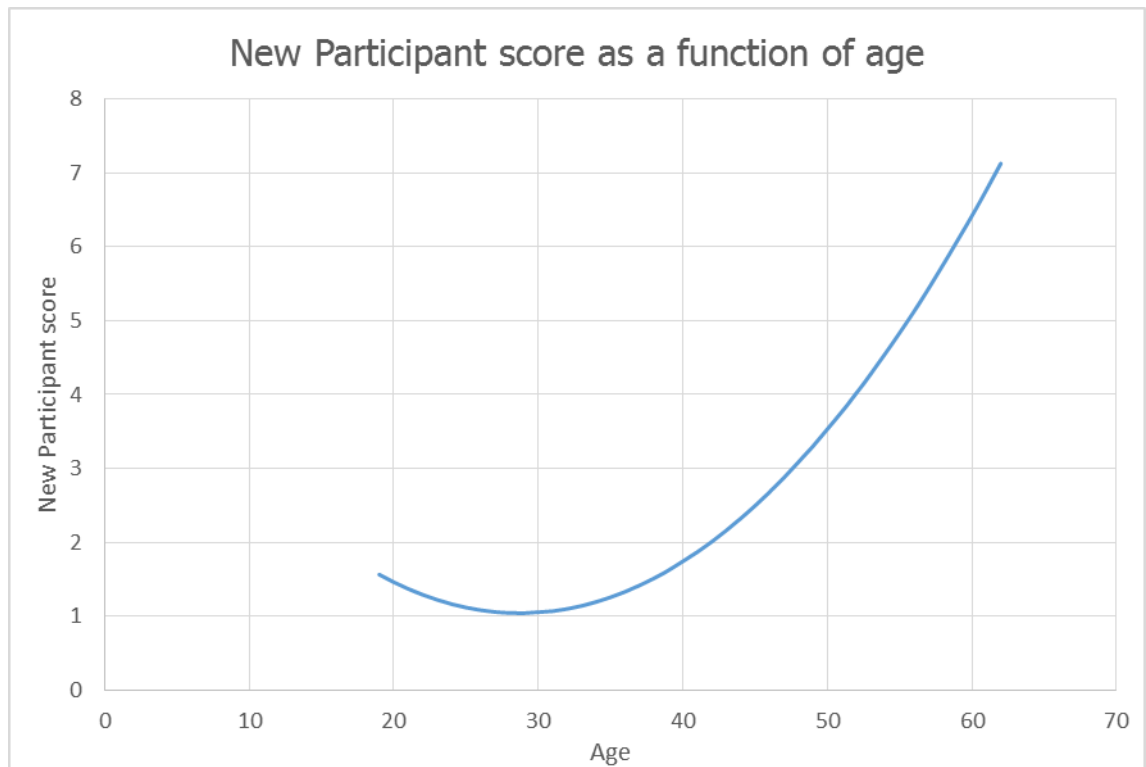
DV: New Participant Score

	Standardized Beta	P-value
Intercept	0	0
Social resources	0.254	0.016
Instrumental influence	-0.309	0.005
Age (mean centred)	0.194	0.095
Age (mean centred) squared	0.239	0.029
Alienation	0.315	0.001
Internal political efficacy	0.254	0.010
Voting	0.249	0.011
Model R2		0.374
P-value		0.000

Alienation, and internal political efficacy continue to be positively and significantly related to New Participant score. Instrumental influence is negatively and significantly related to New Participant

score ($p < 0.01$), confirming that New Participants tend to be both less influential and less satisfied with influence. As expected, social resources is positively correlated with New Participant score ($p < 0.05$). So those who engage in New Participant behaviour are more likely to go to influential individuals in order to try to influence the running of their workplace. This could be a spurious correlation linked to the branch structure of the organization. Perhaps New Participants simply approach their immediate line manager with issues, but tend to be located in branches or departments alongside influential workers. This may be because influential managers are more likely to recruit politicized workers into departments, or because external contextual factors such as local labour market demographics mean New Participants are more likely to work in particular branches. On this interpretation, it is not that New Participants are seeking out influential colleagues, but that some unknown contextual factor means New Participants are concentrated in certain areas of the firm. However, there are two reasons to think this isn't the case. First, workers with above-average New Participant scores are distributed across the entire firm. Second, as I will describe below, interviews suggested New Participants were more vocal about issues and more likely to agitate for change. After controlling for the workplace behavioural variables, the relationship between age and New Participant score is less u-shaped with workers in the middle of the age distribution becoming more similar to younger workers, as illustrated in Figure 4.3. This is probably because workers in the middle of the age distribution have higher instrumental influence than younger workers. Instrumental influence is negatively related to New Participant score so controlling for this flattens the curve.

Figure 4.3: Plot of New Participant score as a function of age



In sum, modelling of my survey data indicates that influential workers in the firm tend to be older, have higher external political efficacy, and be more satisfied with their level of influence over workplace decision-making. New Participants tend to be both less influential and less satisfied with their influence. However, New Participants are also more likely to seek out influential individuals in order to try to influence the running of their workplace.

In the following section interview data will be used to add texture to these relationships and provides clues to the link between political behaviour and the dynamics of workplace democracy in the co-op.

Work as political lived experience

New Participants are likely to be less satisfied with their influence at work than other workers who do not share the same political identity. For example, one New Participant talks about what she does with her concerns about the business's strategic direction:

I tend to share them with my colleagues, and if there's an open forum I would question why we're not being more reactive. There are a few times where there's a general

discussion. Like we have these quarterly meetings where the performance of the business is presented to a group, quite often a work group, and you are allowed to ask questions at that point, and it's probably the main interface that you have with the management. There's one representative of the Board of Directors there, and one Employee Director. But I think it would be true to say they don't really welcome criticism. So you could ask a question and they would respond, and I mean it would be a reasonable response, it wouldn't be abusive or- it wouldn't throw you off. But they wouldn't take it anywhere. I think that's the feeling you get, is that they would respond and then they wouldn't do anything. (Middle manager, Head Office, 52, New Participant score: 11)

It is true to say that many staff feel their views are disregarded:

...it's one of those places where you work where you can always put yourself forward and say "I think this" or "I think that," but in all honesty I don't think a great deal gets done about it at all. So...a lot of people then tend not to say these things. Suggestions have been made over the years of how things could be trialled or made better, and...We feel, as the mechanic staff, it just gets disregarded. (Shop bike mechanic, male, 37, New Participant score: 0)

But many of these staff are more ambivalent in their attitude towards their lack of voice:

...a lot of people get bored with "it's your company, it's a co-op, you can have your say"...And they don't really want your say really, ey? But I mean, it's not a problem by me. It's, at the end of the day, part of the job. (Warehouse bike mechanic, male, 41, New Participant score: 2)

New Participants are more likely to go to senior managers or other influential colleagues with complaints, ideas, suggestions, or to try to change things. In interviews this was particularly evident around issues of pay and benefits in the firm. Due to the business's performance, staff have not received a staff bonus (a share of the firm's profits) for several years. Being in the retail sector, many staff are low paid. New Participants are more likely to talk about issues of pay and benefits in terms that relate them to wider issues of social justice. They are also more likely to have tried to do something about it. Just as they are still likely to vote despite feelings of alienation, they still try to make their voices heard at work.

...if a company like this - this is quite a responsible company as far as companies go - can't take the initiative and go on treating people better and paying people better, it's fucking hopeless man. You know what I mean?

...I've raised a few things and not actually at the AGM. Generally at the meetings we have here. Primarily the things I raise are about pay. So like before last year- we got a 3% pay rise last year - but we went five years previous to that with no pay rise...and then I brought that up a lot, 'cause I earned less than I do now then as well. And I was genuinely really struggling. I didn't have enough food. And it's like you're working hard and you've not got enough food. That's not funny. So I brought that sort of stuff up a lot, and sometimes it's listened to, sometimes it's kind of, you know, laughed off, sometimes it's like "we don't want to deal with this right now." (Warehouse worker, male, 24, new participant score: 6)

I generally don't think that someone is worth three times someone else. That's a principle of mine...it's actually debatable whether or not they should be rewarded for being cleverer than someone else, you know, and actually that's what we've got. We've got a kind of meritocracy or something going on. And actually what a lot of people get out of being cleverer or being able to make big decisions or having that authority or that power is the esteem that goes with it from your colleagues. That's worth tons, I think, in terms of psychological worth compared to what you would actually hand somebody in money...And so as a kind of principles person, the fact that we've just copied what everyone else is doing is quite interesting. And the original ideas of you pay people according to need, which was about- I'm having children and I'm needing a house, or whatever. Or one day I'm going to retire and I'm not going to have anything to retire on has kind of gone out the window completely, and we've just copied the model from outside. So the way we value people is actually identical to the outside world. (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 52, New Participant score: 11)

I work in a co-op and I expect to be asked about these things, or at least for them to say "look, we're thinking of doing this. What do you think?" And even if they then turn around and go "well, we're doing it," at least I feel like my opinion's been heard. (Shop assistant, male, 25, New Participant score: 4)

There is evidence from my research here that New Participants see their workplace as displaying similar inequalities and exclusion from decision-making as the political sphere. Their lived experience is one of political, social and economic exclusion due to class, generational and gender factors that they see as present outside of their workplace and as influencing the dynamics within it.

It seems to me that the co-op, they seem to dangle on stuff like "well you don't really get paid very well, and you don't get this, that, but we are a co-op." You know, it's a bit of a rebuttal to a lot of complaints. So maybe I wouldn't work for a co-op again, I'm not sure.

Like I'd have to see a really co-operative co-op I think. 'Cause yeah, I mean, I don't know what I think. I guess in all companies, workers, people who grasp at the bottom of the ladder, are treated like shit and underrepresented and underpaid. That's countrywide up and down. And it's marginalizing a massive part of society which causes knock-on social problems that are huge. (Warehouse worker, male, 24, new participant score: 6)

There's just not enough time for the democratic stuff. Managers have to work more than the thirty seven hours per week they are contracted, and they just don't often have time. (Shop assistant, female, 26, New Participant score: 8)

I think it would be true to say that there's...a kind of male-dominated culture in this place that isn't sexism, do you know what I mean? Well, it is as in they never have enough women's products in the shop, there's no women directors and blahdy-blah, but nobody would ever say anything sexist in the office ever. (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 52, New Participant score: 11)

I still think it feels different to in another business. But you know, you do have the freedom that goes with it which is really great...I'm- personally I'm allowed quite a lot of flexibility in how I manage my workloads. And, you know, I've got a small daughter and if things come up with that then generally the business treats me well, which is really good...I think with the hierarchical management structure it doesn't feel too different to another business...the other thing is sometimes I do feel, and other people have voiced this, that we kind of play on the co-op idea in our marketings. So we, you know, we push that as an idea but we don't necessarily...follow through with that. Do you know what I mean? And what else do I think...I think it's difficult. I think fundamentally, the idea of the co-op and everybody having an equal say in decisions...actually, I just don't think it works in practice because, for example, I look at our Board and I think it's great that, you know, there are representatives on our Board from shop level. But fundamentally, there are three senior managers at the co-op who are quite intimidating, very knowledgeable, very bright, and actually I am just not convinced that the representation from shop level can work, because that person is usually going to be pretty intimidated at the Board level. And to have the knowledge to actually be able to contribute, I just don't really see how it can work... (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 38, New Participant Score: 5)

Thus I argue that New Participants are less likely to be satisfied with their influence at work because they have a political identity that attunes them to inequities both at work and in wider society, and causes them to value their voice in workplace decision-making for political reasons, and as a potential means to realise their political goals. In short, they desire more influence for

political reasons, and they see their lack of voice in political terms. Returning to the Pateman thesis, their workplace experience affects their political attitudes because it is an element of their lived experience that shapes their views: ‘...if a company like this - this is quite a responsible company as far as companies go - can't take the initiative and go on treating people better and paying people better, it's fucking hopeless man. You know what I mean?’ Thus the boundary between the workplace and the political sphere is not rigid for politicized workers. Both form part of their daily lived political experience, and both influence their political attitudes. On this view, the ways in which a worker draw parallels between her workplace and political experiences depends the way in which her identity causes her to frame those experiences. Such an argument is alluded to by Schweizer when he suggests we shouldn't expect co-op workers to become more politically efficacious in representative liberal democracies because if workplace democracy were to create participatory attitudes workers would be more likely to regard the impersonal, remote institutions of liberal democracy as meaningless and therefore be less inclined to participate in them (Carter 2006, p.422). It also adds context to findings that support for democracy and existing institutions is positively related to electoral forms of participation and negatively related to non-electoral forms of participation, and that political cynicism fuels protest politics (Heath 2004, p.86). It will be seen below that experiences in the co-op have caused some workers to alter their behaviour at work, sometimes to go as far as leaving or considering leaving their job, and to alter their political behaviour outside of work. It will also be seen that the staff-management divide in the co-op alluded to in the previous chapter is related to worker perceptions of differences in identity between senior managers and shop floor staff.

New Participants are not the only workers who display parallels between their workplace attitudes and political behaviour. Those with high instrumental influence are likely to have higher external political efficacy than less influential workers. This is partly because their influential roles mean they have to consider how political issues relate to the business, and this might give them a greater sense of their own efficacy in relation to big politics. Indeed, the Scottish Independence Campaign had increased the relevance of politics to the business:

...I'm very concerned about what the results could be. I don't think it'll be good for our business...if a 'yes' vote happens, devolution will not be good for [the study firm]....I'm worried about an English backlash. Which will affect fifty percent of our turnover. Fifty percent of our stores are English, and if there is some sort of anti-Scottish vibe, it'd be very out we're a Scottish company. It's in your face, you can't mistake us for anything else. So that's a huge concern. And then, you know, all of the costs that could be associated- and actually, we're coming out of a recession, and Scotland could be yanking itself right back into a recession. So you might've gathered I'm voting 'No'. So my views on government at

the moment are very slanted by the fact that we're in the middle of a vote on Thursday. (Branch manager and Employee Director, male, 47).

This finding provides some support for Pateman's prediction that 'experience in the management of collective affairs in industry' would give workers 'insight into the relationship between decisions taken in the enterprise and their impact on the wider social and political environment' (Pateman 1970, p.74). Another reason for the relationship between instrumental influence and external political efficacy comes from the conflicting roles of influential individuals in the co-op. Influential individuals talked of having to balance business imperatives with the voice and demands of staff, and this seemed to give them a pragmatic understanding of both workplace democracy and political democracy:

...I mean I'm fairly open with my views, whether it's senior or staff I sort of try and tell it as it is, but yeah, I think I have to find a balance...I'm really interested in what the employees want. But I'm keen to press a balance between what the business can provide...the more work I do on the Board as Chairman, I'm trying to send a message to staff that if the business performs, the staff reward comes out. I don't think staff always see that...The staff are naturally gonna demand more. We've got to sort of police it so you keep a lid on that and you keep expectations...I think with the co-op environment there's always a sense of entitlement. And I think you've got to balance that with the responsibilities, so that's the message...if you work long term in this environment, I think there's a responsibility that comes with ownership that people have got to respect that. And then if they do that, I think that the rewards follow...

...I think when the current government took over, I think they had a big job to do...it's the old omelette and breaking some eggs. I think it had to be done, it had to be cut. What do I think? I think there's a fairly unrealistic expectation. The thing I think is that I'm sort of - I wouldn't say I'm a socialist, but I quite like the values. But I think it's difficult when you look at public sector and promises that are being made, pensions and that sort of thing. I think people are generally unrealistic about, take pensions, for example, and the government having to cap pensions. I think there's an unrealistic expectation from the public sector about how these things are actually gonna be paid out. So I think the government have got a difficult job on their hands, but they're also sort of masters of their own downfall as well...(Branch manager and Employee Director, male, 43)

...But it's been a general theme over the years right up until very recently...it was only managers that were ever on the Board. And there's a certain amount of animosity amongst staff about that. And because- they're like, "oh, you know...it's all the big wigs on the Board," just like as far as- you know, they don't really understand what the common man

needs....But at the same time...you give people all these opportunities and they don't take them, it's that anyone can stand for the Board. And the reason that only managers are on the board is because only managers stand for the board. All the grade 1 employees, no one stands. No one puts themselves forward to go on the Board, and then they complain when no grade 1 employees are on the Board. And to me, it's just like- it's crazy...

I'm quite disillusioned, but I guess I accept it as...the problem is that politicians need to be popular to get where they are. And the way to be popular is to do a whole bunch of stuff that probably isn't in people's best interests. It involves a certain amount of dishonesty, and a certain amount of bullying, and a certain amount of promising stuff that you're never going to deliver. But we as a people kind of lap it up...I almost think that the people who want to get involved in politics are sort of the people that you shouldn't let be running the country. And the sort of people who would be really good at it are the sort of people that would never put themselves forward in the first place. So I think the setup that we have in this country is a very decent setup. I think it's a very stable setup, and I think it's probably the best of a number of bad options. I could not suggest a better way of running our country than the setup we have at the moment. But I think it's far from perfect...Centre Left is my, kind of, political affiliation. I feel that people have a moral...requirement to get involved in politics. And I think that if I'm being really honest about it, it's quite disgusting how little interest a lot of people take politically in their country. I think they take a lot for granted. I think it's probably because things are so good in this country that people are so apathetic. If we had civil wars going on, or if there was a lot more people that were in poverty, maybe people would take more political interest. But the fact of the matter is, our country's pretty decent, probably always will be pretty decent, no matter which party you vote for. Things will probably work out pretty decent in the end, so I can see how that would breed apathy amongst people...But at the same time, I think that...if you're going to take advantage of everything this country has to offer, then you're kind of obliged to be interested, to some degree, in politics. Take some kind of interest, do some kind of research, and vote. And I think a lot of people don't, and I think that's really shit. (Junior manager and Employee Director, male, 25)

Thus there seem to be parallels between the workplace lived experience of influential people and their political lived experience. It seems clear that workplace experience can have some effect on political attitudes, and that co-op workers frame their workplace experiences in similar terms to their political ideas and experiences. However, it will be argued below that selection and exclusion processes are key explanations for the observed relationship between political behaviour and workplace behaviour in the co-op.

Management capture, democratic degeneration and exclusion from decision-making

There is ample evidence in the interview data to support the notion that despite New Participants having higher social resources, politicized individuals eventually select out of decision-making processes at work, and even select out of employment at the co-op, due to frustration with their lack of voice. One middle manager describes how she has become increasingly disillusioned with her workplace, and has transferred her political energies elsewhere:

...I negotiate with power suppliers about the rate we'll pay for our electricity or our insurance company about how much we're going to pay out for a public liability claim, and it's all meaningless to me...the other week I bought five hundred thousand dollars and in the afternoon I went to this local housing scheme and taught them how to cook with kale that they'd been growing, and I know what made me feel better. So it was quite an interesting day because I had been playing around on basically international money markets and not really adding any value to the world whatsoever. In fact taking value out of the world. So yeah, there's some things about my job that just drive me crazy. (Middle manager, Head Office, female, 52, New Participant score: 11)

Another New Participant is ready to leave his job due to frustration with lack of employee voice in the co-op:

I don't really know what to do. My next move is escape. Exit. 'Cause yeah, I don't think things are gonna change here fundamentally. (Warehouse worker, male, 24, new participant score: 6)

One New Participant, who had already left the co-op by the time of the interview, explained that those workers who most want to make a difference in the co-op are the ones most likely to leave:

There's two camps: you have the camp of people who just want to bitch 'cause they enjoy bitching, and you have the camp of people who want to make things better and they're not happy. And that's the difference. You've people who - they're just gonna whinge, but they're never gonna leave the job. Because they've too much invested, be it through shares or be it through...they're too lazy to get another job. But then you've the other camp of people who actually want to make the company better. And they get frustrated and more frustrated, and I think that's easily been seen in the fact that four people left within a two month period who were four of the main...I wouldn't say detractors from the whole idea of the co-op, but four people who, realistically, did feel quite passionate that they should actually be run correctly. And left because of it. And other people have

definitely changed their attitudes since that, and if anything that's made the interaction between higher-level management and the store worse. Because, you know, massive outflux of talent to one other bike shop, which isn't stopping. And it's not going to stop.

Some senior figures seemed to welcome this outflux of more politicized employees:

Sometimes I think people get sort of disaffected by what we're doing as a business...it's not so much a feature of our business now, but probably ten years ago, we had quite a large number of people who'd been in the co-operative when it was very small, and they did have a sort of seat round the table, and all these different elements. And then as we grew, as we expanded as a business, there are people who just- it grew around them. It grew past them, and they like the ethos of the business, and they like what we stand for, but actually found it quite difficult to kind of process the idea that we're a business that's trying to be profitable and drive growth by expansion, you know. And some people just find that, find that a little bit difficult to deal with. They kind of see their place in the whole thing staying the same as the business grows, and it becomes something that they're not so keen on engaging with...I think most people, quite a lot of the people who are caught up in that sort of idea that "this isn't the business that I signed up for sort of 25, 30 years ago," a lot of them have gone now. And most of them just decided, "time for a new challenge." Some of them are still here, but it's a small, small pocket of people I would say. (Senior manager, male, Head Office)

At the same time there is evidence of a parallel process by which workers who are more business-minded and less concerned with the equalization of power in the co-op have obtained positions of influence. This is evidenced in the negative relationship between New Participant score and instrumental influence, and the positive relationship between external political efficacy and instrumental influence. The positive association between age and instrumental influence also supports this interpretation, suggesting the influential workers may be the ones who have stuck around for longer. It seems that there are two competing ethoses in the co-op. Similar to the dual selection process observed by van Ingen & van der Meer in voluntary organizations, where more politically engaged citizens self-select into the organization, and then are more likely to remain in the organization and obtain influence (van Ingen & van der Meer 2016), more politicized individuals are selecting out of the co-op while less ideologically driven individuals have attained positions of influence.

This process seems to have affected the co-op's ethos. One middle manager's testimony suggests a more conventional, business-minded and less radically co-operative ethos has become dominant. Her use of the first person pronoun 'We' is telling:

I think with the idea that you attract corporate refugees is that possibly people see it as a safe haven, and actually we're at the point now with business that we need to energize ourselves again, and to move forward. You know, it's kind of keeping that sense of co-op identity but actually with pushing the business forward as well. So yeah...sometimes that's difficult because I think people see the co-op as a nice cuddly place to work...and historically we have had a very relaxed way of working and allowed staff a lot of freedom, and I think by necessity that's starting to change, 'cause...it's gone too much the other way...our kind of principle of working initially was that we allow people to be very independent in their work and allow them to make their own decisions, but actually I think as we've got bigger we've found that we need to take a bit more control than we have, possibly, in the past. So there's a bit of that. The other thing that we do have is we've got quite a lot of people who are pretty much institutionalized, so they've been with us maybe twenty, thirty years, have, you know, started their main job at the co-op, and basically have never left. And I think a lot of those people are really not very happy working with us anymore, they would really want to be somewhere else, but either they're terrified to go somewhere else or they can't find something else, 'cause they've been here such a long time. And that's not good for our business either...people feel kind of stuck, and they feel that the old co-op ways might be gone but that they don't really want to be here anymore. So that creates quite a lot of tension sometimes with a certain pretty small group of pretty unhappy people. So we're starting to try and do a bit of a culture shift in the workplace. And what we're trying to do is get people to understand- we're still at the very early stages of it, 'cause it's turning into a massive organizational development project. But what we're trying to do is get people to understand the idea of rights and responsibilities, and people in a co-op are all about- everyone knows their rights, so you know "it's my right to vote for this and it's my right to vote for this and it's my right to know that." And there's not much about the responsibilities that comes with those rights. So what we're trying to do is introduce to idea to people so that actually, yes you have these rights but with those rights come these responsibilities. So we're trying to do a wee bit of a culture shift along those lines, and also for people that are desperately unhappy and have been here for thirty years, that kind of idea of if you're really not happy then it's your choice to work here. You know, we're not forcing you to stay here and- so there's lots of different stuff going on.

It seems that if more radical groups of workers are not being completely excluded from decision-making, they are not being permitted to participate on their own terms. A process of management capture seems to have taken place at the co-op, a trend which has been observed in past studies of workers co-ops and is often cited by those who draw on Michel's Iron Law of Oligarchy to argue that democratic degeneration in workers co-operatives is inevitable (Carter 2006, p.118). Thus

there are two further explanations for the core-periphery structure of influence in the bike co-op described in the previous chapter. First, politicized individuals seem to get frustrated by their lack of voice and eventually withdraw from participation in decision-making or leave their jobs. Second, influential managers have brought a conventional business philosophy with them when hired to the firm (the degenerative effect of external recruitment on democracy was discussed in the previous chapter), or have come to see a more conventional approach to business as the appropriate response to market pressures described in the last chapter, leading to the exclusion of more radical workers.

Indeed, some senior figures had come to see the co-op and the demands of some employees as a nuisance, as described by one New Participant:

My favourite is my own boss. He's very good...I think what's interesting is that actually we've got very different political opinions on things about the co-op. He doesn't like the co-op. He's written off the co-op because it just leads to us not being able to make difficult commercial decisions. So it's worrying too much about putting staff's noses out of joint. He feels that it handicaps the business. And he feels that it causes people to moan. And causes us to be uncompetitive. I think he's completely wrong. (Branch manager, male, 43, New Participant score: 10)

This philosophical divide over what the co-op should be is largely a divide between staff and senior management, with some influential staff representatives trying to see both sides and laying somewhere in between. The divide is about the political identities of individuals and groups, as well as the identity of the co-op. But it is also about divides in identity more broadly. Interviewees frequently 'othered' different groups within the firm, and emphasized how their identities were different to their own, or were negative identities that did not fit with the interests of the co-op. Warehouse workers tended to be highly cynical about senior management:

I think there's an element of it being hijacked by a very hard business mind. Not even in the MD, in some of his surrounding people that are...more concerned with monetary matters than welfare...To me if you set up a worker co-operative, you set up to provide a service and make a business on one hand, but primarily set up to benefit the members...And I think they're losing the way of that a little bit in the hunt to be the biggest business to get the most jobs, and that's not what it's about to me. I think there's a big element of CV-building in the top echelons of this company, where they go "I worked for this company for three years, we opened three shops, hire into your company." There's a lot of ladder-climbing, and that's what fucks the whole thing up. (Warehouse worker, male)

I'm still a member but I stopped going to the AGMs and that's because my view is it's not a co-operative anymore. The impression I get is there are a lot of people out for looking after themselves, and that's it. (Junior manager, warehouse, male).

While, as described in Chapter 3, senior managers expressed a disconnect from warehouse staff:

With the warehouse team, which is a difficult team full of kind of 'warehouse guys'. You kind of have to get up in the morning and go "beep, beep, beep" with a gun and it's pretty, kind of, unexciting work...I kind of took them off [names another senior manager] as part of this kind of exchange of people. And he, for a long time, had been beating them over the head about how they had to work better. And they did have to work better. They were very inefficient in lots of ways. And- they- we were kind of not getting anywhere. And so I sort of tried the other side of the thing to try to get something in to help them. (Senior manager, Head Office, male)

Managers were also were liable to be dismissive of some aggrieved staff as stuck in their ways and unwilling to embrace change.

Thus it seems those with politicized identities feel excluded from decision-making while those with a more business-minded ethos and a more pragmatic, less ideological attitude towards the co-op are dominant in positions of influence. There is an apparent divide between staff and management, the influential and non-influential, and issues of identity are central to that divide. The divide is both a driver and consequence of the core-periphery structure of influence over decisions identified in the previous chapter. Business-minded individuals have attained influence due to the need for expertise and the shaping effect of market pressures. More idealistic workers have seen their workplace change around them and have begun to select out of participation and even employment. It does not seem to be the case generally that management are cynically excluding shop floor workers from decision-making. Indeed, several managers described how they were trying to maintain but redesign structures for employee influence. But workers with strong New Participant identities often felt alienated from decision-making. Ashforth & Mael argue that organizational identification is a specific form of social identification. An individual's organization can provide one answer to the question, 'who am I?' (Ashforth & Mael 1989, p.22). For New Participants, the co-op forms (or has in the past formed) an important part of their identity, and so they are particularly aggrieved by their perceived lack of voice. Further, Ashforth & Mael argue 'The individual's social identity may be derived not only from the organization, but also from his or her work group, department, union, lunch group, age cohort, fast-track group, and so on' (ibid.). So we see a division in the co-op between those with New Participant identities who feel alienated from workplace decision-making and political decision-making more widely, and those with less oppositional political identities who are more comfortable

with the business ethos of their workplace and the pragmatics of an imperfect political democracy. This intersects with a division in identities between management and shop floor staff. By this reckoning, Pateman's thesis that workplace democracy will lead to increased political participation via increased political efficacy is too simplistic. To the extent that workers see their workplace as part of their lived political experiences or draw identities from their workplace roles it may affect their political attitudes and behaviour. By the same token their wider lived experiences will shape their attitudes and behaviour at work. When a worker co-operative faces economic and cultural pressures in a market context it may struggle to satisfy New Participants (or Everyday Makers) who define themselves in opposition to the inequities in society and may come to see their workplace as reflecting those inequities.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have argued that the Pateman thesis must confront three important criticisms. First, that it pays insufficient attention to the internal dynamics of workplace democracy, and how power and influence over decision-making and concomitant outcomes for workers differ systematically within organizations. Second, that it ignores selection processes into and out of organizations, and to positions of power within organizations. Third, it pays insufficient attention to the external contextual factors that shape the internal dynamics of organizations. Consequently, worker co-ops should not be seen as islands of socialism, separate from their political, economic, social and cultural context.

With these criticisms in mind I examined the links between political attitudes and behaviour and workplace attitudes and behaviour in the study firm. I found that workers tended to engage in individualistic forms of political participation, exhibit low levels of political efficacy, and show an interest in outdoor activities and environmental issues, often related to an interest in cycling. I identified a New Participant political identity among co-op members which is positively related to feelings of internal political efficacy, and to feelings of alienation from the hegemonic political and economic institutions of society. I argued that New Participants shared many characteristics with Bang's Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens. Based on the data from co-op workers I made the case that Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens share a similar political identity, but that the difference between them stems from disparities in their political, economic and cultural resources, which lead to differences in the extent and form of their political behaviour. More extensive participation makes politics more central to daily life and strengthens political identity. This builds on the insights of Li & Marsh (2008) and Marsh et al. (2007).

Finally, I showed that New Participant behaviour is negatively associated with both being perceived as influential by colleagues and satisfaction with influence, and positively associated with attempts to influence through interactions with influential colleagues. Instrumental influence at work is positively related to external political efficacy. I argued that New Participants felt alienated from workplace decision-making because they saw it as reflective of wider societal inequities. Influential workers were more likely to have a pragmatic understanding of both workplace and political democracy. New Participants are self-selecting out of the co-op and perhaps being excluded from decision-making, while less ideological workers have obtained positions of influence (and influential workers have become less ideological). This process is reflected in a divide in philosophies about what the co-op should be between influential staff and New Participants. This intersects with a more general staff-management divide, evident in the core-periphery structure of influence uncovered in the previous chapter. Finally, I concluded that the Pateman thesis is too simplistic because it conceives as the workplace and politics as arenas in which individuals engage or do not, rather than lived experiences which shape an individual's identity. To the extent that an individual sees their work as a political endeavour that is related to their political identity, causation between workplace experience and political behaviour will be reciprocal.

In the next chapter, I further explore how a divide in political identities leads to a divide in attitudes about work. It will be shown that New Participants have feelings of lower job rewards than other workers, a theoretical construct that has been shown to be related to poor health and well-being outcomes.

Chapter 5: Political identity, expectations and well-being

In Chapter 1 I reviewed theoretical literature which argues that worker co-operatives can help to equalize the material and non-material rewards from work, improving worker well-being. Many of the supposed benefits of co-operation are premised on widespread and effectual worker participation in decision-making and the equalization of power that should follow. However, Chapters 3 and 4 have demonstrated that co-operative governance and ownership structures cannot by themselves guarantee the equalization of power at work and benefits for all employees within isolated firms in competitive markets. A combination of individual, interpersonal and contextual factors structure who is able to participate effectively in workplace decision-making, leading to different outcomes for different groups of workers and across different firms. Contextual factors were shown to be key to the possibility of workplace democracy and its benefits for workers. Economic downturns can lower material rewards, while culture and market competition can undermine the equal distribution of rewards. Economic and industry conditions can constrain human capital development. Work organization, partly a consequence of economic and industrial context and structured by social class, impacts job satisfaction. Proximity of workers to influential colleagues affects their ability to build strong working relationships and influence decisions. Staff turnover due to labour market, sectoral and economic context affects the ability of workers as a body to build the knowledge, experience and strong interpersonal relationships required for successful co-operation. Interpersonal factors such as an individual's social resources shape her ability to exert influence. Finally, individual differences were shown to be crucial to the outcomes of workplace democracy. Differences in personal resources such as expertise, personality and participation skills were shown to shape ability to participate effectively in decision-making. In Chapter 4 I argued that political identity affects satisfaction with influence at work. Some workers in the study firm displayed characteristics of Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens, Bang's 'new' types of political participant. I hypothesized that New Participants would gain extra satisfaction from their work because they especially value autonomy in their daily lives. However, it was shown that the study firm had undergone democratic degeneration and displayed elements of oligarchy, with a core of influential decision-makers and a periphery of workers who felt excluded. New Participants were more likely to see their exclusion from workplace decision-making and from the material benefits of work as mirroring political exclusion and economic injustice in wider society. They therefore placed a higher value on participation for political reasons, and were more

dissatisfied with their level of influence as a result. In Chapter 1 I argued that expectations mediate the relationship between workplace experience and well-being outcomes.

In this chapter I further explore the effect of individual differences on the outcomes of co-operation. I argue that political identity shapes expectations about work and therefore mediates the well-being outcomes of co-operation for workers. In Chapter 1 I reviewed evidence that the balance between the efforts a worker expends at work, and the material and non-material rewards she receives for her work, influence stress levels, which in turn are related to health and well-being outcomes (Siegrist 2002; Marmot 2004). I argue that New Participants have higher expectations of fairness in the exchange of work effort for work rewards. They are therefore more likely to see their own work rewards as unfair and inadequate. Workers with high external political efficacy, who feel that the political system is fair and representative of people like themselves, tend to be more satisfied with the content of the workplace exchange relationship, leading to a perception of higher workplace rewards. Thus more politicized workers may be at higher risk of the harms associated with effort-reward imbalance than less politicized workers. Further, successful co-operation raises expectations of work rewards, and so co-operative workers may be more likely to suffer effort-reward imbalance during economic downturns than their counterparts in conventional firms.

In Chapter 4 I argued the key difference between Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens is the extent of their personal and social resources that allow them to pursue their political projects. More resources facilitate participation, making politics more central to daily life and a bigger part of identity. In this chapter I argue Expert Citizens, who have more resources and a more politicized identity, have higher expectations of rewards and lower perceptions of their actual rewards than Everyday Makers.

I explore how workplace social relationships affect well-being. I find that individual social capital, measured as having access to influential colleagues to raise pay issues, is positively related to work rewards. This further supports my argument that being connected to certain influential individuals is related to positive feelings about work because those individuals use their superior management and interpersonal skills to give staff an understanding of the pragmatics of decision-making in the firm, make them feel they have a voice, and provide help with day-to-day issues and to implement smaller changes.

Finally, I show that despite the numerous qualifications I have made to theories of the benefits of workplace democracy, the study firm is characterised by relatively harmonious workplace relationships compared with conventional firms in the retail sector. Respondents reported satisfaction with the humanistic nature of their relationships with colleagues and superiors. Thus while theories of the well-being benefits of co-operation are hubristic, worker co-operatives likely have more modest benefits in the form of the humanization of work.

Effort-reward imbalance, expectations, and workplace social capital

Well-being at work is dependent on expectations. Brown et al. argue that the u-shaped curve they find in the relationship between job quality and income for UK workers is partly explained by the low expectations of low income workers (Brown et al. 2007). Similarly, Green points out that subjective job satisfaction measures do not represent the utility gained from work because job satisfaction is assessed by workers partly in relation to what they expect from a job, and workers might be conditioned to expect a lot or a little from different jobs (Green 2006, p.11). Many workers in the study firm have low-paid jobs with limited career prospects that are characteristic of the retail industry, and so it is important to take into account subjective expectations when assessing the well-being effects of the co-op. Expectations can be conditioned by micro and macro-level power processes (Lukes 2005). Following Marsh et al. (2007) I argued that lived experiences of structured inequalities of power and resource access in wider society shape individuals' attitudes towards their workplace. New Participants concerned with social justice were more concerned by the unequal distribution of pay and benefits in the firm than other workers. Past experience also shapes expectations. Long-serving workers who had experienced the study firm's successes seemed to be hit hardest by benefit cuts and stagnating pay. In this chapter I will show that well-being outcomes for co-operative workers depend on their expectations, which are related to their political identities. To explain the gradient in well-being outcomes he finds running from the top to the bottom of the workplace hierarchy, Marmot draws on Karasek & Theorell's demand-control model and Siegrist's effort-reward model of well-being at work (Marmot 2004). The latter model says that the balance between the efforts a worker expends at work, and the material and non-material rewards she receives for her work, influence stress levels, which in turn are related to health and well-being outcomes (Siegrist 2002). It will be argued that fairness in workplace exchange is more salient for New Participants, leading to perceptions of low work rewards. In contrast, workers with high external political efficacy (those who believe the political system treats them fairly and is responsive to the demands of people like themselves) tend to be more satisfied with the content of the workplace exchange relationship, leading to a perception of higher work rewards. Thus well-being outcomes for co-op workers may depend on their political identity and its formative effect on expectations.

Siegrist's effort-reward imbalance (ERI) model is derived from a sociological theory that an individual's feelings of self-efficacy, self-esteem and belonging are essential to her health and well-being, and are contingent on successful social exchange of costs and gains in salient social roles (Siegrist 2002, p.263). Certain social roles, such as marital and parental roles, work roles, and various civic roles, can contribute positively to self-efficacy, self-esteem and belonging through

processes of social exchange (ibid.). Conversely, threats to exchange, lack of reciprocity in exchange, or exclusion from exchange can have negative effects on well-being. The work role is an important source of self-efficacy (for example, through satisfying work performance or personal development through work), self-esteem (for example, through recognition, material reward, or promotion prospects) and belonging (through participation in workplace social networks and the creation of a sense of identity that draws upon one's work role). Threats to the work role exchange in the form of job insecurity are known to lead to poor well-being, as is exclusion from work through unemployment (ibid). An example of lack of reciprocity in the work role exchange is a lack of reciprocity between the efforts a worker expends at work and rewards she receives for her work (Siegrist 2002, p.264). Siegrist writes that

Effort at work is spent as part of a socially organized exchange process to which society at large contributes in terms of rewards. Rewards are distributed by three transmitter systems as scarce resources: money, esteem and career opportunities. The model of effort-reward imbalance claims that lack of reciprocity between the costs and gains (i.e. high cost/low gain conditions) elicits negative emotions with special propensity to sustained autonomic and neuro-endocrine activation. (ibid.)

In other words, ERI leads to a stress response which in turn can lead to poor health and wellbeing.³

Siegrist identifies three 'structural' sources of ERI. The first is that the employment contract is incomplete and does not specify the full range of obligations and benefits for the employee (Siegrist 2002, p.263). This leaves room for work role exchange to become unbalanced, leading to a high-cost, low-gain working environment. What's more, reciprocity in the employment contract is based on a social norm that is shared between employer and employee, and this is often unbalanced, in that employers expect high effort for relatively low reward. Indeed, there is evidence that this is increasingly the case, such as the 'insecure workforce thesis' discussed above (Heery & Salmon 2002). It was seen in Chapter 3 that differences in the employment contract within the study firm affected job satisfaction, with warehouse jobs more target-driven and pressured than shop assistants' work. It was also seen that the firm's poor economic performance had changed the nature of the employment contract as material incentives were withdrawn. One manager bemoaned the lack of 'carrots' available to incentivise his staff. Second, employees themselves might contribute effort-reward imbalance, intentionally or unintentionally (Siegrist 2002, p.264). He gives the example of an employee who accepts unfair employment conditions in the short-term with the long-term aim of gains such as promotion. There is evidence that failure to achieve such

³ For a more detailed discussion of the physiological basis of the model see Siegrist 2002 pp.267-9

goals following high levels of investment is especially harmful to well-being (ibid.). A line repeated by management in the study firm, and one that sometimes evoked cynicism in workers, was that employees had to pull together to return the firm to profitability, so that they could once again collectively reap the rewards of success:

I think most people know that in order to develop their careers, to kind of make their lives better, to get bonus payments, and to increase the share price in the business - all these things come from a growing, expanding, profitable business. (Senior manager, Head Office)

If staff work extra hard on the promise of future rewards that don't materialize then this could be particularly harmful for well-being. Co-op workers may be more likely to over-invest in their work in this way, as evidenced by the tendency of staff in alternative co-ops to experience burnout (Carter 2006, p.419). It was seen above that one worker felt the goodwill and commitment of co-op staff was exploited by management to make them work harder for no extra reward. Third, individual psychological differences can increase ERI or its harmful effects. 'Over-commitment' can be seen as the inability to withdraw from work (Hyvönen et al. 2011, p.290). Siegrist writes

People characterised by a motivational pattern of excessive work-related over-commitment and a high need for approval may suffer from inappropriate perceptions of demands and their own coping resources more often than their less involved colleagues...As a consequence, they underestimate demands, and overestimate their own coping resources, while not being aware of their own contribution to non-reciprocal exchange (Siegrist 2002, p.264).

Siegrist derives three hypotheses from the model (Allisey et al. 2012, p.231). The effort-reward imbalance (ERI) hypothesis states that an imbalance involving high effort and low reward produces adverse health effects. The over-commitment hypothesis states that a high level of individual commitment increases the risk of negative health effects, even in the absence of ERI. The interaction hypothesis posits that people who are characterized by over-commitment *and* who experience ERI are at greater risk of poor health.

The ERI model is thought to impact on a range of health and well-being outcomes through physiological, psychological and behavioural mechanisms. ERI been shown to be related to cardiovascular disease; cardiovascular disease risk-factors and symptoms; smoking and increased alcohol consumption; addictive behaviour; mental health symptoms; and job related well-being, including emotional exhaustion (burnout) and low job satisfaction (Van Vegchel et al. 2005). There is also evidence that ERI increases the risk of musculo-skeletal disorders; metabolic diseases and poor self-rated health (Siegrist et al. 2009, p.1006). Evidence for the over-commitment and

interaction hypotheses is generally supportive when the outcomes are physical or psychological well-being, but there are fewer studies and mixed evidence regarding job-related well-being outcomes (Allisey et al. 2012, p.233).

A crucial point about Siegrist's effort-reward model is that the content of a 'balanced' exchange in the employment relationship is partly socially defined, and partly determined by the individual. What constitutes lack of reciprocity between costs and gains at work will be influenced by a firm's internal culture, its macro-economic context (Siegrist 2002, p.283), and an individual's beliefs and attitudes. Carter notes that co-op members' high expectations can lead in the long-term to dissatisfaction and poor well-being:

Disillusionment in alternative collectives may occur where 'high expectations and the sense of mission in collectives may lead to more intense, engaging work, but engagement exacts a price: stress' (Rothschild and Whitt 1986, 156). The combination of emotional intensity, interpersonal conflict and tendency to overwork frequently results in the burnout of some of the most active members of small co-operatives, characterised by growing disillusionment that the organisation is not living up to their high expectations (Carter 2006, p.419).

A co-operative's internal culture should heighten workers' expectations of rewards, so if a firm does not live up to members' expectations of influence and success it could lead to ERI. Further, co-operative workers may be prone to over-commitment due to their dedication to the cause. Workers who have self-selected into co-operative employment may especially value the non-material rewards of co-operatives, such as the 'humanizing effects' on workplace relationships, leading to positive well-being outcomes. On the other hand, if the material rewards provided by a firm cannot match a societally-determined standard of living, the non-material rewards of co-operation may do little to counter effort-reward imbalance. There is certainly evidence of this in the study firm, with some workers suffering due to the low pay characteristic of the retail industry.

Building on Siegrist's work, this chapter uses data from the study firm to explore how political attitudes and workplace social capital are related to the rewards component of the ERI model. There are various ways to operationalize the co-occurrence of high effort and low reward, leading to an outstanding question in the literature of whether high effort and low reward separately have an effect on employee health, or if they have to occur together (Van Vegchel et al. 2005, pp.1126–1127). There is some evidence in this regard, with esteem rewards found to be strongly negatively related to psychological distress (Allisey et al. 2012, p.242). There is also a growing body of research on how individual differences affect the model; for example, how personality affects perceptions of effort and rewards (Tei-Tominaga et al. 2009). The question of how political

attitudes, individual social capital and firm context affect perceptions of job rewards is therefore a pertinent one. It was shown in Chapters 3 and 4 that the cultural and economic context of the study firm had raised the salience of rewards issues for staff. In this chapter it will be shown that in addition to feeling dissatisfied with influence at work, New Participants have lower perceptions of job rewards. Workers with high external political efficacy have higher perceptions of job rewards. I argue that these outcomes are due to expectations of fairness in work role exchange relationship. It will also be shown that being directly connected to influential colleagues in workplace social networks is positively associated with job rewards. I argue this is due to resources accessed via exchange relationships.

Work rewards were measured using Siegrist's short ERI questionnaire (Siegrist et al. 2009). The rewards measure includes components measuring respondents' subjective feelings about esteem from colleagues, job security and promotion prospects (including income). A principal components analysis was carried out on responses to the questionnaire, revealing a three item factor structure for the rewards scale that matched that found by Siegrist, except that the item 'My job security is poor' did not load clearly onto any factor, and so was removed from the analysis. A continuous variable measuring work rewards was created by summing the remaining items.

Hypothesis 1: Workers more senior in the workplace formal hierarchy will have greater feelings of rewards

It is postulated that senior and middle managers will have higher rewards than other workers, because being more senior in the study firm is associated with higher material rewards in terms of pay.

Hypothesis 2: Age will show a u-shaped relationship with job rewards

There are well-established lifecycle effects on well-being. For example, Blanchflower & Oswald find that across different nations and cultures the relationship between psychological well-being and age follows a u-shape, with a typical individual's happiness reaching its minimum in middle age (Blanchflower & Oswald 2008). It is therefore hypothesized that job rewards will be lowest among middle age employees, with younger and older employees having relatively higher perceptions of rewards.

Hypothesis 3: Instrumental influence will be positively related to job rewards

A number of studies have related location in workplace social networks to job-related well-being. Participation in workplace discussion networks has been shown to be positively associated with job satisfaction (Roberts & O'Reilly 1979). Centrality in social networks has been found to be positively associated with job-related well-being. Flap & Volker find that number of strategic ties is positively related to satisfaction with the instrumental side of one's job (satisfaction with job security, utilization of skills, income, clarity of expectations and career opportunities) (Flap & Völker 2001, p.311). A strategic tie indicates having talked to a colleague in the last 3 months in order to try to influence a decision important to one's work, and is therefore similar to my network measures. They also find that having strategic ties and a network characterised by many structural holes (measured by betweenness centrality) has a positive effect on instrumental job satisfaction (Flap & Völker 2001, p.314). Their work is cross-sectional making the direction of causation unclear. Agneessens & Wittek argued that centrality in workplace trust networks should be related to satisfaction via access to resources and social support, although their study did not support this hypothesis (Agneessens & Wittek 2008).

The esteem component of Siegrist's rewards scale measures a respondent's feelings that they get the respect and prestige they deserve from colleagues and superiors given their efforts and achievements at work. I have argued that instrumental influence in the study firm is related to possession of resources that are valued by colleagues, such as information, expertise, and management skills. I therefore hypothesize that instrumental influence will be positively associated with rewards via respect and prestige from colleagues.

Hypothesis 4: social resources will be positively related to work rewards

In Chapter 3 it was shown that having direct connections to influential colleagues was positively related with feelings of influence in the study firm. I argued this was due to a combination of access to resources such as information and help, and the way influential workers used interpersonal and management skills to make colleagues accept decisions and help them feel they had a voice in the firm. This provided support for Lin's thesis that the content of ties matters. The literature on workplace social capital indicates that connections to certain kinds of others has a positive impact on well-being. Flap & Volker find that receiving help from both managers and colleagues increases satisfaction with the social aspects of work compared with receiving help only from colleagues (Flap & Völker 2001, p.314). Agneessens & Wittek find contagion effects of job satisfaction:

Interpersonal ties of trust to satisfied alters will increase the likelihood that the focal actor will also become more satisfied with his or her job, while he will become less satisfied if the persons he trusts have a low level of satisfaction. (Agneessens & Wittek 2012, p.630)

In Chapter 1 I reviewed evidence on the role of social networks in providing resources necessary to achieve instrumental goals. The literature on social support shows that social relationships, including workplace social relationships, also benefit well-being by fulfilling emotional and physical needs. Social support is a broad term referring to processes through which social relationships might promote health and well-being (Cohen et al. 2000, p.4). Social support has been defined as the functional content of relationships, such as the degree to which the relationships involve flows of affect or emotional concern, instrumental help and information (Haly 2012, p.45). Likewise, Cohen defines social support as involving 'provision or exchange of emotional, informational or instrumental resources in response to the perception that others are in need of such aid' (Cohen et al. 2000, p.4). Social support therefore 'refers to social resources that persons perceive to be available to them or are actually provided to them by non-professionals in the context of formal support groups or informal helping relationships' (ibid.). Thus social networks provide individuals with resources that help them fulfil their physical and emotional needs (e.g. Thoits 2011) as well as resources that promote autonomy by enabling them to achieve their instrumental goals.

I hypothesize that social resources regarding pay and benefits issues will be positively associated with work rewards. Having ties to influential workers may increase esteem due to the way in which influential workers with good management skills treat their colleagues. The promotion component of Siegrist's rewards scale measures whether respondents feel their promotion prospects and salary are adequate. Having connections to influential individuals may positively influence satisfaction with salary by giving workers actual influence over pay and benefits issues; causing them to understand/accept pay and benefits-related decisions because of the way they are framed for them by influential colleagues; or because they indicate that workers are being 'sponsored' to the organization's core of influential decision-makers in processes analogous to those identified by Ray et al. (Ray et al. 2003).

Hypothesis 5: New Participants will have lower work rewards than other staff

In Chapter 4 I argued that New Participants in the study firm define themselves in opposition to inequalities of power in their workplace and wider society. They see democracy in their workplace as a key part of their identity, and are dissatisfied with their level of influence over decisions and with the democratic degeneration of the co-op. They are also more likely to be peripheral to decision-making. As a corollary to their political identity they are concerned with the distribution of

pay and benefits in the firm, and tend to frame their concerns using social justice arguments. I hypothesize that New Participants will have lower job rewards than other workers because their political identities make issues of fairness in pay more salient to them, raising their expectations and causing them to see their work rewards as inadequate. Evidence suggests that fairness perceptions effect workplace outcomes, including workplace morale (Falk et al. 2011, p.2). Falk et al. find that perceived pay unfairness leads to negative emotional response, stress, impaired cardiac control, and is related to long-term stress-related illness (Falk et al. 2011).

Hypothesis 6: External political efficacy will be positively related to job rewards

I argued that influential workers in the study firm tend to have higher external political efficacy partly because business-minded individuals with pragmatic attitudes towards both workplace and political democracy were selected to positions of influence, and partly because their resultant job roles required them to understand how political economic issues affected the business, further increasing their feelings of efficacy. I postulate that pragmatic attitudes mean workers with high external political efficacy will tend to see their job rewards as adequate because they view them in relation to the firm's difficult economic context and the long-term strategic aims of the firm.

Hypothesis 7: the interaction between New Participant score and external political efficacy will be negative

In Chapter 4 I argued that the key difference between Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens is that Expert Citizens possess more resources which allow them to participate more effectively in civil and political society. New Participants in the co-op all displayed a broadly similar political identity, but some had superior education, skills and resources which they used to exert influence over issues that mattered to them. In doing so politics became more central to their daily lives and more fundamental to their identity, and so they experienced more dissatisfaction with the shortcomings of democracy in their workplace. External political efficacy can be seen as being related to the possession of resources necessary to participate in politics. As shown in the previous two chapters, instrumental influence is positively related to external political efficacy partly because influential individuals have the resources to both manage a business and engage with big politics. Some New Participants also had higher external political efficacy than others. Given Bang's argument that Expert Citizens are more likely than Everyday Makers to use their resources to work with 'the system' to implement political change (Bang 2009, p.131), I suggest that New Participants with high external political efficacy are likely to be Expert Citizens, in that they have more of the resources required for participation and they therefore engage more with the system. Since the more resources New Participants possess, the more politicized they seem to be, it is expected that

New Participants with higher external political efficacy will have a lower sense of job rewards than New Participants with lower external political efficacy, because they are more concerned with fairness in work exchange and have more demanding expectations of what is fair. Thus, external political efficacy ought to have different effects for different groups of respondents in the study firm, and this should be reflected in a negative interaction effect between New Participant score and external political efficacy.

Modelling Results

Table 5.1 shows the results of multiple linear regression modelling of predictors of work rewards. Models were fitted in UCINET with p-values calculated using permutation tests.

Table 5.1: Multiple linear regression modelling of predictors of work rewards

DV: work rewards

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value	Standardized Beta	P-value
Intercept	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
Senior manager	-0.018	0.858	-0.005	0.960	-0.071	0.648	-0.265	0.104
Middle manager	0.065	0.531	0.095	0.402	-0.014	0.931	-0.091	0.553
Junior manager	-0.207	0.046	-0.184	0.080	-0.214	0.060	-0.358	0.002
Professional/technical worker	0.112	0.283	0.121	0.257	0.134	0.200	0.093	0.353
Manual worker	0.141	0.179	0.172	0.111	0.203	0.054	0.151	0.136
Age (mean centred)			-0.107	0.397	-0.148	0.226	-0.045	0.700
Age (mean centred) squared			0.173	0.143	0.188	0.101	0.231	0.041
Instrumental influence					0.107	0.555	0.155	0.407
Social resources (pay & benefits issues)					0.277	0.006	0.291	0.003
New Participant score (mean centred)							-0.289	0.006
External political efficacy (mean centred)							0.863	0.000
New participant score (mean centred) X external political efficacy (mean centred)							-0.662	0.003
Model R2		0.089		0.110		0.189		0.389
P-value		0.111		0.134		0.019		0.000

Model 1 includes dummy variables for occupational group. The contrast class consists of intermediate class workers, including branch shop assistants and Head Office administrative workers. Senior and middle managers do not have higher work rewards than other staff. Junior managers have lower work rewards than other staff ($p < .05$).

Model 2 adds variables for age and age squared. The coefficients are not significant.

Model 3 adds the social network variables measuring instrumental influence and social resources regarding pay and benefits issues. The coefficient for instrumental influence is positive but not significant, while the coefficient for social resources is positive and significant ($p < .01$).

Model 4 adds the political behavioural and attitudinal variables. The coefficient for New Participant score is negative ($p < .01$), indicating that at the mean level of external political efficacy New Participant score is negatively associated with work rewards. The coefficient for external political efficacy is positive ($p < .01$), indicating that at the mean New Participant score external political efficacy is positively related to work rewards. The interaction between external political efficacy and New Participant score is negative ($p < .01$). Figure 5.1 is a plot of the interaction effect of external political efficacy and New Participant score on work rewards.

Figure 5.1: Plot of the interaction effect of external political efficacy and New Participant score on work rewards

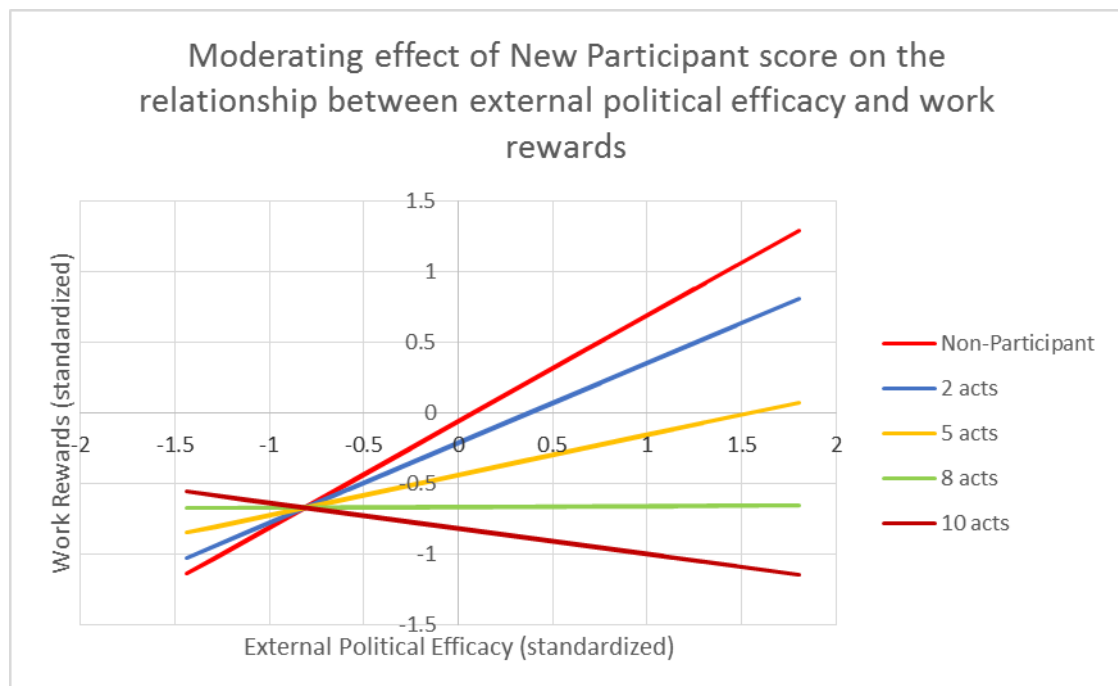
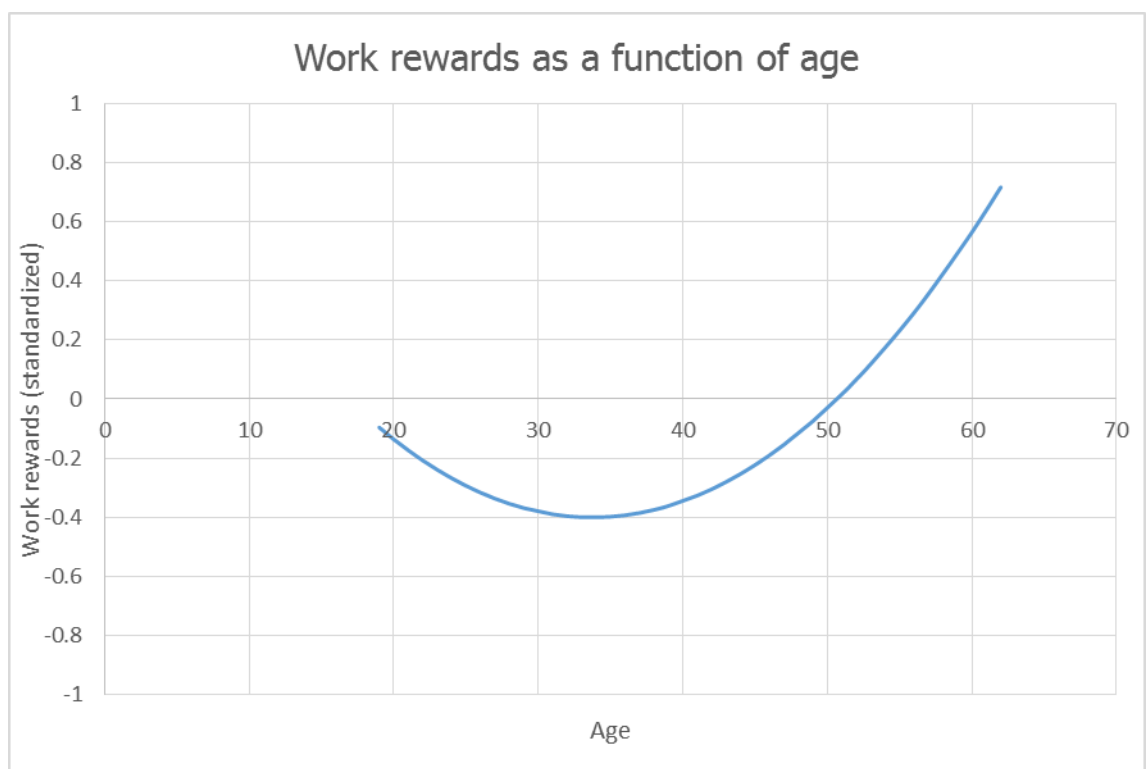


Figure 5.1 indicates that New Participant score fully moderates the effect of external political efficacy on work rewards. For those who participate in politics little or not at all, the effect of external political efficacy on work rewards is positive. For workers who engage in high levels of New Participant behaviour, the effect of political efficacy on work rewards is negative. When the

political variables are included in the model the age squared coefficient becomes significant at the 5% level. Figure 5.2 is a plot of work rewards as a function of age over the age range of respondents. It indicates that, *ceteris paribus*, work rewards tend to be lowest for workers around the middle of the age range, with younger and older workers tending to have higher rewards. Model 4 explains 38.9% of the variance in the dependent variable, compared with 18.9% for Model 3. The inclusion of the political variables considerably improves the explanatory power of the model.

Figure 5.2: Plot of work rewards as a function of age



Discussion

Despite having higher material rewards than other workers, senior and middle managers were not found to have a higher sense of work rewards. The null hypothesis could not be rejected. Interview evidence suggests that this may be due to the particular job content of senior managers in the co-op. Job demands on management have increased due to the co-op's growth:

[The Managing Director] put it best. He said like a year ago that we're like a Cadillac car with a Peugeot engine. You know, we're quite large but really the engine that we have that's running the business is still quite small when you think about it, so there's not that many people to do quite a bit. And the same goes for this particular branch. So I understand the reason why things might get delayed is because there's so much happening. Every branch is gonna be busier in the summertime, therefore we're gonna ask more from Head Office, and it's gonna put more strain on them, so...I get it. But, again, trying to get the staff to get it as well, so why things aren't happening in a timely manner, is difficult. (Branch Manager, Manchester branch)

Given that respondents are asked to assess their rewards in relation to their feelings of desert given their work efforts and achievements, it may be that managers do not feel that their rewards are especially generous given the challenges of the job. Indeed, the coefficient for senior managers is negative, though not significant. One senior manager felt he lacked support in his job, and that the isolation was made worse by the co-op's structure:

On the sort of slightly negative side, if there is a negative side, I feel exposed. Because I don't have a sort of clear structure above my head that can kind of guide me with depth of experience of business, you know, I don't have sort of Chairmen of Boards and so on that can guide me, and then I very much feel exposed by the fact that the business is driven, and its ideas, and the progression it's to trying make, is all pretty much on my shoulders. And that can sometimes feel a bit lonely, and a bit exposed, which I think is reasonably normal in most businesses, but in this business it's particularly the case because the people above me are also the people below me, and that can be challenging. So there are the kind of key features of how I can react emotionally to the role, if you like. (Senior manager, Head Office)

Despite the lack of support for the hypothesized relationship between work rewards and middle and senior management, the modelling results confirmed that junior managers have negative work rewards compared with other staff. This echoes the findings on feelings of influence in Chapter 3, and is likely because junior managers in the firm are asked to perform extra duties for no extra rewards.

A u-shaped relationship was found between age and work rewards, indicating that younger and older respondents have higher feelings of reward than respondents in the middle of the age range. Therefore Hypothesis 2 was supported. Research has found a u-shaped curve in well-being across the lifecycle after controlling for confounding factors such as income, education and marriage (Blanchflower & Oswald 2008, p.1746). There is no consensus in the literature on the cause of this

phenomenon, but some explanations include middle-aged people realizing they will not achieve the goals of their youth; older people learning to count their blessings; or systematic variation in death rates between happier and more miserable people (Blanchflower & Oswald 2008, p.1747). My results are consistent with this research, and so there may be lifecycle effects on perceptions of job rewards among workers. Another possible explanation for the observed relationship is that employees who are unhappy with their work rewards are more likely to leave the firm, and so older workers who have stayed in their jobs are likely to have higher rewards. Older workers may also have more experience and so gain greater esteem rewards through colleagues approaching them for help and advice. As noted in Chapter 4, many younger workers see their job as temporary whilst they pursue an education or other goals, and so they may be more satisfied with their work rewards due to lower expectations. Workers in the middle of the age range may be frustrated by their lack of progression within the firm – it was noted in Chapter 3 that the firm is bad at internal promotion – accounting for their lower feelings of rewards. Respondents in the middle of the age range may also be the demographic that experienced the co-op's earlier good times and so are particularly impacted by pay reductions. Beyond these explanations, it may be that the u-shaped curve is due to more subtle, psychological reasons like those identified by Blanchflower & Oswald.

I hypothesized that instrumental influence would be positively related to work rewards through esteem mechanisms (Hypothesis 3). No support was found for this hypothesis. This accords with Agneessens & Wittek's finding that there is no relationship between indegree centrality in workplace trust networks and job satisfaction (Agneessens & Wittek 2008, p.628). Thus it may be that 'popularity' in workplace networks simply has no relationship to well-being. Or it may be that structural features of the whole network are more important to rewards than the more localised measures of centrality – Flap & Völker found that bridging structural holes is positively related to satisfaction with the instrumental aspects of work, a similar measure to work rewards (Flap & Völker 2001, p.314). It is possible that rather than feeling esteemed, influential individuals are conscious of the cynicism and distrust generated by their inability to meet the demands and expectations of staff in the struggling firm; or that influential individuals are dissatisfied with promotion rewards and this is cancelling out esteem effects. The relation between network location and the promotion, security and esteem subcomponents of the rewards measure is a topic for further research.

Hypothesis 4 - that social resources regarding pay and benefits issues will be positively related to rewards - was supported. Furthermore, using a measure of social resources over issues related to the day-to-day running of the respondent's branch/department also gave positive and significant results, and did not substantially alter the model. It seems that having direct connections to influential colleagues in order to influence a variety of issues is positively related to rewards. This

provides further support for my argument that being connected to certain influential individuals is related to positive feelings about work because those individuals use their superior management and interpersonal skills to give staff an understanding of the pragmatics of decision-making in the firm, make them feel they have a voice, and provide help with day-to-day issues and to implement smaller changes:

[The previous and current branch managers are] both just very good people to work for...they're approachable, you can ask them anything. You know, if you want to change a shift or do other things like that, leave a bit early to catch a plane or something, they'll always try to accommodate that and they won't moan and groan about it. They're very positive in terms of how they manage you. They're not, sort of, negative and- getting at you all the time or anything like that...that, to me, just makes work much easier and more pleasurable. And you just feel more positive about being here and contributing. (Shop assistant, Canonmills branch)

There's things I've mentioned. Like when I started doing the courses, actually I spoke to- it was Martin and Euan at the time, and Simon. I was kind of going over and above what other people were doing and I wasn't getting paid any more, so...over a couple of months I was just making it known that I was a little bit unhappy with the situation, and I'd spoken to Andrew about it before and then...Andrew pulled me into his office and said "look, we're gonna do this, 'cause both you and Martin and Simon have come and said to me that we think you should." So it worked out well for me.

Interviewer: Ok, so you got what? Extra pay?

Interviewee: Yeah. (Shop assistant, Edinburgh branch)

Graham tends to have thought of everything. And so you, you know I'll raise something with Graham and he'll say "oh, it's already on my list of things to raise with the Board"...I mean, there are times when I've worried about, things like the efficiency of building bikes, and we've talked about sort of building bikes once in the warehouse, and then shrouding them up, sending them down here, and then having them finished off here and saying "is that really an efficient process and is it doing the business any good?" And, yeah, we've kind of talked about it, but by that time Graham has already written a big, big email to the Board about it anyway...we have gotten a response on it saying it - he copied me on the response - saying that it is under discussion and we are costing other options... (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

There is evidence that management style can be important to work rewards. Tei-Tominaga et al. find that an anxious temperament is associated with lower recognition of esteem rewards, and a depressive temperament is associated with lower recognition of promotion and security rewards (Tei-Tominaga et al. 2009, p.514). They suggest managers ought to adapt their style towards workers with different temperaments in order to improve psychosocial rewards (Tei-Tominaga et al. 2009, p.515). It may be that certain influential individuals have the skills to manage workplace rewards better than other colleagues. The testimony of one middle manager supports this view:

Interviewee: ...actually when you come down to it, what we do, and, you know, how we do it, our computer interface and things like that, it's actually very similar...But I think where the differences [between different branches or departments] actually come in relate to your manager, and how he manages. So when I was in the sales side of things, I had two managers. And they had very, very contrasting styles. One of them would be a very, sort of, could be called demanding. You know, he'd expect results. And he was in everything you were doing. You know, he was micromanaging every step of it...and it's a way of working. And it gets results, I suppose. The other manager, very hands off. If you weren't causing him problems, he wasn't causing you problems. And he kinda let you be. I thought that's very interesting, the two different styles. And how I reacted to them. 'Cause when, you know, when I was under the first manager I described there, I was like "Christ, he's very harsh," and then you know, it's a lot of stress all the time. And you go, "pew..." You know, "I wish I was managed by somebody else." And then when I was managed by the other guy, because I was doing nothing, really no input. I was sitting thinking "I'm not challenged"...and thinking "maybe I preferred working for the other guy." And actually, what the correct thing is, is the middle position, you know. There needs to be input. But it doesn't need to be micromanaged...

Interviewer: And do you think that has big impact on the staff then and how they feel? Those different management styles that might exist across the business?

Interviewee: They can do, yeah. It can do that, I think so. Very much so. (Middle manager, Head Office)

Causation may also run in the other direction. Individuals who are satisfied with their work rewards may be more likely to form ties with influential colleagues. However, the finding that New Participants form ties with influential colleagues in order to try to affect change despite being dissatisfied with influence speaks against this. Further, in other firms it has been found that similarities in job satisfaction between colleagues connected in social networks are due to contagion

rather than selection processes (Agneessens & Wittek 2008, p.626). There seems to be a contagion effect between influential individuals with positive attitudes towards the co-op and staff who are directly connected to them:

[names influential colleague] is very good at reading the positive message- erm, positives into things that are going on, and communications that are coming down from above. And I think to some extent it probably shelters us from of the negative things. Only really discloses when he has to do. But I think that probably helps the atmosphere a little bit. But that's- that's just his management style, I suppose. (Shop assistant, Leeds branch)

Having connections to influential colleagues may also indicate a respondent is being 'sponsored' to the organization's core, increasing their sense of promotion rewards. For example, the well-educated young Employee Director mentioned above seemed to find satisfaction and opportunities for initiative and self-development in his representative role:

I will tell them that I will take it to the next Board meeting, let them know when the next Board meeting is. If it was something I was taking to the Board meeting, it was something I probably wanted to look into myself. So it might involve a certain amount of investigating or speaking to people. And depending on what the issue is. Sometimes it's an issue that's involving particular staff members or particular processes and stuff, in which case I'll take a look into to find how much merit there was to it and to try and do something about it before taking it to the Board. And then I take it to the next Board meeting, and then feedback to them afterwards. Get back in contact with them and let them know how it went...

...I enjoy [my job] quite a lot, yeah. I mean I gave up studying mechanical engineering at university to just work in a bike shop instead because I enjoyed it that much. (Junior manager and Employee Director)

The link between social resources and rewards confirms my expectation in Chapter 1 that differences in personal and social resources lead to different well-being outcomes for different groups of workers within the firm.

It was postulated that New Participants would have lower rewards than other workers (Hypothesis 5). The modelling results lend qualified support to this hypothesis. Figure 5.1 indicates that at very low levels of external political efficacy New Participant score is positively related to work rewards. This is likely due to the contrast between workers with low external political efficacy who participate politically and the manual workers, discussed in Chapter 4, who felt alienated from both the co-op and the political system. The latter are highly cynical about big politics and rarely

participate, and they may have especially low feelings of work rewards compared with other workers. At higher levels of external political efficacy New Participant score is negatively related to work rewards. Given the evidence presented in previous chapters, it is likely that New Participants have lower feelings of rewards because their politicized identities make issues of fairness in workplace exchange more salient for them:

I just want a fair deal for myself and the people that I work with, you know? (Warehouse worker, New Participant score: 6)

Interviewee: I think [the Conservative Party] represent...people that have a bit more than others. Yeah, I don't think they're particularly egalitarian or fair.

Interviewer: And so is that something that's important to you, then?

Interviewee: Yeah. (Shop assistant, New Participant score: 7)

I generally don't think that someone is worth three times someone else. That's a principle of mine. (Middle manager, Head Office, New Participant score: 11)

Due to their political beliefs they place greater value on fairness in workplace exchange, and have higher standards of what is fair. They are more likely to perceive their work rewards as inadequate given their efforts and achievements. Thus New Participants are not only more dissatisfied with their level of influence in the study firm, but have lower feelings of job rewards and may be at higher risk of negative emotions, stress and poor well-being outcomes as a result. As anticipated, expectations mediate the relationship between workplace democracy and well-being outcomes for individual workers. This contributes to the literature on individual differences and the ERI model (Allisey et al. 2012; Tei-Tominaga et al. 2009). It also helps explain my observation in Chapter 4 that politicized individuals are withdrawing from participation in decision-making and self-selecting out of employment in the study firm. Workers will generally not stay in a high effort, low reward situation – they will try to cognitively and behaviourally reduce their effort and increase their reward (Van Vegchel et al. 2005, p.1118). Effort-reward imbalance has been associated with turnover intentions (Hyvönen et al. 2011, p.291), and esteem rewards have been associated with organizational commitment (Allisey et al. 2012, p.242). Politicized employees who have low feelings of reward may be more likely to leave their jobs:

I don't really know what to do. My next move is escape. Exit. 'Cause yeah, I don't think things are gonna change here fundamentally. (Warehouse worker, New Participant score: 6)

This worker's words echo Hirschman's seminal *Exit, Voice and Loyalty* (Hirschman 1970; Farrell 1983). Having accepted the situation is unlikely to improve he seems to have made the painful decision to leave his job (Farrell 1983, p.597). Politicized employees may also be more likely to withdraw from participation at work and find other outlets for their beliefs:

I'm a firm believer in social justice, and actually outside of the co-op, I work in with deprived people in schemes to help them to grow vegetables, and to teach them about how to cook with the vegetables they grow and things. So I found another outlet for my beliefs, another way of acting on them. (Middle manager, Head Office, New Participant score: 11)

New Participants tend to have higher social resources, representing their inclination to exercise voice, while withdrawal from participation and exit from the firm may come in time when they realize their voice won't lead to change.

Withdrawal or exit may be more possible for some workers than others. Politicized workers who are unable to change jobs, perhaps due to their low skills or a slack labour market, may be stuck in a situation of ERI and experience poor well-being outcomes as a result. ERI could also be a mechanism that links poorly performing co-ops to poor member well-being (Carter 2006, p.419). Success in a workers co-operative raises expectations of reward, which may make ERI more extreme in times of economic crisis. This also explains why long-serving staff in the study firm seem to be especially affected by cuts to pay and benefits. One manager described the effect of withdrawing benefits:

Benefits can become...almost seen as a right. If you offer someone something and you do it on a frequent basis, not because you're obliged to but because you're being nice, or whatever. If you then stop it - it was something you were giving for nothing - then it becomes an issue. "Why are we getting this thing taken away from us?" There is a word for it, I can't remember...Non-contingent rewards and things like that, you know...We do give a lot to our members. They can go out and claim thirty pounds a month toward race fees or event fees, and discounts and whatever. But as soon as you start messing with it, it becomes a big issue. (Middle manager, Head Office)

The link between ERI and turnover intentions would help explain the democratic degeneration and core-periphery structure of influence observed in the study firm. If, over time, more politicized staff who are more concerned with workplace democracy have withdrawn from participation or left their jobs due to ERI, decision-making in the firm would become increasingly dominated by a core of less-politicized, more businesses-minded individuals. This in turn may further increase ERI for staff with high expectations of workplace democracy.

Hypothesis 6 stated that external political efficacy would be positively related to work rewards. The modelling results support this hypothesis. I argue this is because more business-minded workers who have pragmatic attitudes towards both workplace democracy and political democracy have more 'realistic' expectations about their job rewards and feel more satisfied as a result. One young worker with relatively high external political efficacy provides a good example:

In terms of how I feel about the co-operative at the moment, a lot of people are quite negative about the co-operative aspect of the business...I'm a little bit more forgiving on that, basically because I know the reason why people have not received a bonus and shares or dividends...is basically because of the economic downturn and the fact that the company's not profitable. And to be honest with you, I wouldn't really want to be paid dividends or bonuses and shares if the company wasn't profitable...

...I am bit more left-wing rather than right-wing, so I'm not one hundred percent behind our current government to be honest with you...I do find politics quite interesting but at the same time I am a little bit unsure on how much of an impact it actually makes. I mean especially to myself. I do kind of see it impacting other people, especially when it comes to things like welfare and things like that. And that's why I think I prefer to be a bit more left wing. (Junior manager, Manchester branch)

Greenberg observed a similar phenomenon in his study of plywood co-ops in the Pacific North West United States. He found that employees of the co-ops were skilled blue collar workers characterised by a self-sufficient, small business mentality. They were more generally satisfied than non-co-op workers, and more likely to agree with the statement that 'our current economic system gives almost everyone a fair chance to get what they need to live a decent life' (Greenberg 1981). The effect may also be the result of workers who are not necessarily business minded but are just more generally satisfied with life, perhaps due to their personalities:

Nothing bothers me too much. As I say, I just grin and bear it. I know some people let things get to them, but I just come in, do my job, and go home. (Bike mechanic, Warehouse)

Thus the political identities of workers shape their expectations and how they frame their work experiences in ways that are relevant to their well-being. High expectations may explain the recent finding that co-op workers in Mondragon-owned supermarkets have lower job satisfaction than their counterparts in conventional supermarkets (Arando et al. 2011, p.27).

Finally, Hypothesis 7 postulated that the interaction effect between New Participant score and external political efficacy would be negative. Hypothesis 7 was also supported. For workers who engage in high levels of New Participant political behaviour, in contrast to other workers, having higher external political efficacy is associated with lower perceptions of job rewards. Li & Marsh find evidence supporting Bang's argument that Expert Citizens have higher political efficacy than Everyday Makers (Li & Marsh 2008, p.267). I argue that New Participants with high external political efficacy in the study firm display the characteristics of Bang's Expert Citizens. They share an anti-elitist, anti-establishment political identity with Everyday Makers, but they possess superior resources which allow them to participate more often and more effectively in politics. This is reflected in their relatively high external political efficacy. Their higher level of political engagement serves to strengthen their political identity. This in turn makes issues of fairness in workplace exchange highly salient for Expert Citizens. They also have more stringent standards of fairness than other workers. They therefore perceive lower work rewards. Thus the negative effect of being an Everyday Maker on perception of work rewards is captured by the main effect of New Participant score. The even stronger negative effect of being an Expert Citizen on rewards is captured by the interaction effect of New Participant score and external political efficacy. For New Participants, external political efficacy can be seen as a proxy for the resources required for engaging in the kind of networked governance described by Bang (Bang & Sørensen 1999). It may be that, *ceteris paribus*, any negative well-being impacts associated with the study firm's economic difficulties are greater for Expert Citizens than for Everyday Makers, which in turn may be greater than for less politicized workers.

In summary, evidence from the study firm supports my hypothesis that individual expectations play an important mediating role between workplace democracy and well-being outcomes. Perception of work rewards, a key element of Siegrist's ERI model, is related to a range of well-being outcomes. Among respondents from the co-op, age has a u-shaped relationship with rewards. This may be due to younger employees having lower expectations of reward because they see their job as temporary; workers in the middle of the age range having higher expectations because they see their work as a career, and may have experienced the co-op's earlier success; and lifecycle effects. Everyday Makers feel less rewarded than other staff because their political identities raise their expectations of fairness in workplace exchange. Expert Citizens are even more politicized, and have even higher expectations of fairness, so their work rewards are particularly low. For less politicized workers, external political efficacy is positively associated with a pragmatic attitude towards workplace democracy, tempered expectations, and higher perceptions of rewards.

Evidence from the study firm also supports my argument that expectations are shaped by micro- and macro-level power processes, and by other contextual factors. Having direct links to influential colleagues leads to higher work rewards, partly because influential workers use their personal

resources to shape their colleagues' perceptions of work rewards. Experience of structured inequalities in wider society is partly responsible for the politicized identities of New Participants and their heightened standards of fairness in workplace exchange. The culture of co-operation creates high expectations among workers, leading to frustration during economic downturns.

Finally, this chapter contributes to research on the relationship between social network structure and content, and well-being. Resources accessed through direct social ties can increase work rewards.

The body of evidence from the study firm indicates that workplace democracy is not as universally beneficial for workers as the theoretical literature suggests. Benefits and harms accrue differentially to different groups of workers according to internal and external contextual processes. However, most interviewees, even some of those who felt particularly aggrieved with their workplace, talked of positive aspects of interpersonal relationships in the co-op. This 'humanizing' effect of co-operation will be explored in the last section.

Co-operation and the 'humanization' of work

An interest in 'humanizing' work, or in treating workers less as means to production and more as ends in themselves, has been an important part of the history of workplace democracy (Busck et al. 2010, p.289; Restakis 2010, p.243; Green 2006, p.12). A number of workers in the study firm identified 'humanized' interpersonal relationships, characterised by friendship, mutual respect, trust, and understanding, as one of the main differences between the co-op and other places they had worked. Some interviewees described positive relationships between colleagues:

I like that it's a good laugh in there sometimes. It's a good atmosphere most of the time...we all get along reasonably well, I'd like to think! [Laughs]. (Bike mechanic, warehouse)

I suppose there is quite a more relaxed atmosphere about the place. And yeah, that's something I like...that's the interaction with the people, isn't it? (Shop assistant, Edinburgh branch).

Others described positive relationships with management:

The relationship with management here is good. Go to birthday parties together and funerals and weddings and stuff like that. Go out for a drink whenever we have a thing...senior management in the store will start at the same time and we'll all sort of groan together. There's no bad feeling between any of head staff or anything - towards

Head Office or anything like that. We just tend to feel that we're a bit out of the loop.
(Shop assistant, Sheffield branch)

Interpersonal relationships in the co-op often compared favourably to workers' other jobs:

You feel people are working together. They're all trying to achieve the same goals, not, sort of, politics, or people trying to promote themselves or that sort of thing, which I've experienced in in other office-based jobs...I worked as a lawyer for some time in a number of big commercial firms, and...there would always be a number of people who were just trying to do it for themselves and, you know, shout loud and get their name heard, and there could be an element of backstabbing going on and all those sorts of political games, which I'm just not really interested in. We also had a lot of people getting bullied and, you know, really tragic kind of behaviour in my view. Here, whilst still quite a big organization, there tends to be less of that from what I can see. (Shop assistant, Canonmills branch)

You felt pretty much just like a number when [I was working in the oil industry]. It's one of the reasons I left to be honest. I wanted to come somewhere where there was more people who I share interests with and you can talk to and have a bit of a laugh...like the Managing Director, if he comes in he will stand and ask you how you're doing outside of work. He remembers you, talks to you on quite a personal level about stuff that he knows you're interested in that aren't just bikes. Which is quite nice. (Junior manager, Aberdeen branch)

Some of this positivity was generated because staff shared a passion for cycling:

The shops tend to be...quite friendly places. When I've been there there's always a bond, there's always a relationship between shop floor staff. They'll always find common ground. They have common ground: they work in a bike shop, they like bikes, and so they always, within their groups, get on. (Middle manager, Head Office)

Yeah, I enjoy it. It's a really good job. It's obviously what we enjoy, and quite a lot of cyclists work in bike shops. It's very different to any other retail environment - you're actually, like, enthused about what it is you're selling... (Branch manager, Sheffield branch)

...working with your main sort of hobby with a group of people that are really like-minded as well. It just makes it an easy place to work. Not an awful lot of confrontation. (Junior manager, Aberdeen branch)

However, some interviewees pointed out that it was better than other cycling retail firms they'd worked for:

...just the feeling of 'us against them', from a staff point of view, felt a lot more of that at Evans...And then when you get Directors coming in and visiting and the staff felt a little bit more detached from what I see here. We do tend to be a little bit more of a friendlier company, we're a little bit more kinda left-wing, almost...you've got more of an input...Whereas you very much, at the other retail, you're- kinda told what to do. And you felt like your managers are getting told what to do. And we've still got things to do here, we still do get told what to do. Don't get me wrong...But the grand scheme of things, it does feel like you've a bit more of an effect. You can take things to Board meetings. You could even be on the Board if you chose...that'd been unheard of at Evans. (Branch manager, Sheffield branch)

Thus while the study firm undoubtedly faces difficulties, many workers seem to gain job satisfaction from positive interpersonal relationships at work. These are helped by a shared interest in cycling, but they also seem to be due to the co-operative ethos of the firm, and the related values and behaviour of staff and management. More humanistic interpersonal relationships seem to be a well-being benefit that accrues more evenly to all co-operative staff.

Conclusions

Existing literature on workplace democracy argues worker co-operatives will help equalize the material rewards from work. It also suggests they will increase the non-material rewards from work by giving workers more autonomy in their work lives and harmonizing workplace interpersonal relationships. Thus it is suggested that workplace democracy will be good for workers' well-being.

However, I have argued that the well-being outcomes of workplace democracy will not be uniform for all workers. My analysis leads to several important conclusions on how workplace democracy relates to well-being. First, well-being outcomes depend on individual expectations, and expectations are shaped by political identity. Second, the impacts of co-operation on well-being are mediated by the structure and content of workplace social networks. Third, expectations are shaped by power processes that take place within the firm and in wider society. Fourth, differences in well-being outcomes across individuals and groups shape the dynamics of workplace democracy. Finally, co-operatives can 'humanize' work through their effects on interpersonal relationships. I will discuss these five points in turn.

Previous research has shown that subjective well-being outcomes depend on individual expectations. Siegrist's rewards measure forms part of his theoretically rigorous and empirically-supported ERI model of well-being at work. There is evidence that the well-being outcomes associated with ERI vary across individuals according to factors such as personality and temperament. My analysis of data from the study firm demonstrates that perceptions of work

rewards vary systematically with respondents' political behaviour and political attitudes. Workers with New Participant identities have higher expectations of fairness in the exchange of work effort for work rewards. They are therefore more likely to see their own rewards as unfair and inadequate. Thus more politicized workers may be at higher risk of the harms associated with low rewards and effort-reward imbalance than less politicized workers.

A key contribution to the political participation literature is the finding that the relationship between work-related attitudes and political efficacy is moderated by political identity. As argued in Chapter 4, and by Li & Marsh (2008), the difference between Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens lies in the extent of their resources. I argue that more resources permit more participation in politics, which makes politics more central to the lives of Expert Citizens and more fundamental to their identity. A corollary of this is the increased salience of fairness in the work role exchange. Thus, while Everyday Makers have lower work rewards than less politicized workers due to expectations of fairness, issues of fairness at work are even more important for Expert Citizens, their expectations are even higher, and their perceptions of work rewards are even lower. This is reflected in a negative interaction effect between extent of New Participant behaviour and external political efficacy. Expert citizens have the skills to participate in big politics, but their identity is one of exclusion from and opposition to the political system. Thus they are more likely to frame work rewards in terms of wider social injustice. In contrast, external political efficacy is positively related to rewards for workers who do not have New Participant identities. This is because more business-minded workers, who have pragmatic attitudes towards both workplace democracy and political democracy, have more 'realistic' expectations about their job rewards and feel more satisfied as a result. They are likely to frame their rewards with reference to the economic difficulties of the firm and the pragmatic goal of returning the firm to profitability. The Pateman thesis claims that workplace democracy will increase political participation via increased political efficacy. In Chapter 4 I argued that the relationship between workplace experience and political behaviour is likely to be reciprocal and contingent on political identity. Politicized workers interpret work experiences as part of political lived experience – work for them is a political endeavour - and so their political attitudes affect their views of work and vice versa. In this chapter I have found further support for reciprocal causation with the findings that political identity mediates the relationship between workplace democracy and psychosocial well-being, and that workplace experience can shape political views more widely, causing workers to change political focus – 'I've found another outlet for my beliefs, another way of acting on them' – or to become disillusioned - 'if a company like this - this is quite a responsible company as far as companies go - can't take the initiative and go on treating people better and paying people better, it's fucking hopeless man'.

My second conclusion is that workplace social relationships mediate the impact of workplace democracy on well-being. Centrality in workplace social networks was found not to be related to work rewards, in line with previous research on job satisfaction. However, social resources – having direct access to influential colleagues to change or improve things about pay issues – was positively related to rewards. This further supports my argument that being connected to influential individuals is related to positive feelings about work because those individuals use their superior management and interpersonal skills to frame decisions and help staff to accept them, make staff feel they have a voice, and help colleagues with day-to-day issues and to implement smaller changes. In Chapter 3 I showed how personal resources and context shape workplace social networks. The evidence from this chapter confirms my expectation that differences in personal and social resources lead to different well-being outcomes for different groups of workers within the firm.

My third conclusion is that expectations are shaped by power processes that take place within the firm and in wider society. Having direct links to influential workers leads to higher work rewards, partly because influential workers use their personal resources to shape their colleagues' perceptions of work rewards. Experience of structured inequalities of resource access in wider society is partly responsible for the politicized identities of New Participants and their heightened standards of fairness in workplace exchange. Co-operative culture creates high expectations among workers, leading to discontent and possibly increased well-being harms during economic downturns.

Fourth, differences in well-being outcomes across individuals and groups shape the dynamics of workplace democracy. High expectations lead to dissatisfaction and low rewards in politicized workers who value direct democracy and the equalization of power at work. This may cause them to withdraw from participation or leave their job. Conversely, less politicized, more pragmatic workers who value workplace democracy instrumentally to the extent that it is conducive to business success are more satisfied with work rewards and have attained positions of influence. Thus the democratic, collectivist, anti-bureaucratic ideology that marks the founding of alternative co-ops (Carter 2006, p.416), and seems to have been dominant in the early days of the study firm, may be progressively diluted, leading to democratic degeneration and adoption of capitalistic business practices.

Overall, the well-being benefits of workplace democracy theorized in the literature are hubristic for isolated firms in the UK context. However, evidence from the study firm suggests that worker co-operatives have more modest, though important, benefits for workers in the form of 'humanized' workplace interpersonal relationships characterised by friendship, mutual respect, trust, and

understanding. The extent to which these relationships can persist despite degenerative pressures is a matter for further research.

Conclusions and future directions

I employed a novel, mixed-methods approach in an in-depth case study of a worker co-operative in the UK retail sector. I revised and updated theories of the relationship between workplace democracy, well-being and political participation, and situated them in a contemporary UK context. Particularly novel was my application of the social networks approach to the democratic workplace, to demonstrate how micro-level social context shapes outcomes for worker in co-operatives, and how collecting data on workplace social networks can provide new insights into the mechanisms by which workplace democracy relates to worker outcomes. My research leads to three important conclusions about the relationship between worker co-operatives and the well-being and political participation of workers.

First, the outcomes of workplace democracy for workers are highly context-dependent. Effects that have been observed in very different societies, such as the Basque country (Kasimir 1996; Arando et al. 2010; Arando et al. 2011), Scandinavia (Adman 2008), or the United States (Greenberg 1981; Greenberg et al. 1996) cannot be assumed to be generalizable to the UK context. Findings from past research, much of which was done in the 1970s and 1980s (Oakeshott 1978; Rothschild & Russell 1986) at a time where worker co-operatives were thought of as a midway between free market liberalism and state socialism or as a solution to the labour disputes of the day, might not be relevant to co-operation in the contemporary UK economy. Governance and ownership structures in worker co-operatives take many forms, and so findings in one context are not necessarily generalizable to others, but should be treated as working hypotheses which have to be transferred to another context with similar conditions (Bellotti 2015, p.68). Unfortunately, how the influence of employees over decision-making is structured - the attributes of who is influential, the contextual factors that facilitate influence by particular individuals or groups within a firm, and cause the exclusion of others - has been largely ignored in the empirical literature on the benefits of workplace democracy. It tends to focus on the association between participation and certain outcomes for individuals, rather than the firm-level and wider contextual determinants of who is influential and who can participate effectively.

In Chapter 3 I argued that firms should not be conceptualized in empirical research as 'black boxes' which have uniform effects on their workers. I found that personal resources interact with contextual factors to determine who is able to exert influence within the democratic firm and who is excluded from meaningful participation in decision-making. An important finding was that social context played an important role in enabling and limiting influence. The effects of being in upper

management on feelings of influence was mediated by location in workplace social networks. This is because network location is associated with the possession and control of resources required to exert control over work-life. Personal resources that enabled influence over work-life included business management expertise, work experience, social connections, and interpersonal and people management skills. Central individuals also had privileged access to information and controlled its dissemination, which increased their influence. Building on the work of Brass (1984), another key finding was that having direct social connections to influential colleagues is positively associated with feelings of influence. Direct social relationships with influential colleagues gave workers access to resources that made them feel influential over their work-lives. These resources included information and help from influential actors to address issues. Further, influential workers used their management skills to keep their colleagues informed, manage their expectations and help them solve day-to-day problems, making those colleagues feel more influential. Resources such as participation skills, and contextual factors such as geography and job content, structure who is able to form positive social relationships with influential colleagues.

Previous work has observed tendencies towards democratic degeneration in worker co-operatives (Kasim 1996; Carter 2006; Cathcart 2013a; Cathcart 2014). My research has enriched this line of research by uncovering some mechanisms by which degeneration takes place. A combination of internal processes and external contextual factors can lead to the democratic degeneration of co-operatives over time. Individual skill differences and the impracticality of direct democracy can lead to specialization and the emergence of hierarchies. The need for business management expertise can motivate external recruitment, leading to pressures on pay equity, a lack of career progression for shop floor staff, and influence of external actors over decisions. Market pressures and industry characteristics constrain workplace democracy. Cost pressures caused by market competition and economic downturns can make it hard to invest in human capital and to equip staff with the skills for effective democratic participation. Dominant industry-based business models have strong shaping effects on work organization and job content. Economic downturns squeeze wages and benefits, causing discontent and division among workers, and undermining support for co-operation. High staff turnover caused by economic, industry and labour market conditions can make it hard to maintain the body of organizational knowledge and experience needed for business success, or the strong interpersonal relationships that are related to job satisfaction and effectual workplace democracy. Firm size constrains interpersonal interaction, making it difficult for staff to build positive relationships with managers and leading to the emergence of cultural 'silos' across the firm. Over time, these internal and external factors can lead to divisions between workers and management and the adoption of more conventional business practices.

Thus contextual factors are key to the success of worker co-operatives and outcomes for workers. Democratic governance structures and worker ownership are not enough to guarantee the equalization of power at work and beneficial outcomes for workers for individual firms in the UK context. My study supports previous findings in other contexts, which suggest that market forces place degenerative pressures on democracy in worker co-operatives. It accords with Miller's argument that worker co-ops need to be somewhat sheltered from market competition for democratic practices to survive (Miller 1981). For example, worker co-operatives in the UK are most successful in certain niche markets such as high-end retail, where customers value high levels of service and co-ops are not forced to compete on price to the same extent as other retailers. Co-ops that apparently display high levels of direct democracy, such as Suma Wholefoods, are highly selective in their recruitment, as having a highly competent workforce seems necessary for both business success and successful democracy. Given the lack of understanding of worker co-operatives among policymakers, an important conclusion is that due to the general inability of isolated firms to counteract market and cultural forces, worker co-operatives cannot on their own be a solution to poor job quality in the UK. State-led public policy to reverse trends towards poor quality jobs is vital, and if the co-operative sector is to grow public policy that supports co-operative business models is necessary, for example, by providing access to finance or changing the legal context so that it is more suited to worker ownership.

My second important conclusion is that political identity is a key mediator in the relationship between workplace democracy and political behaviour. Pateman's influential thesis (Pateman 1970) was that co-operatives are sites of political learning that teach workers the skills and attitudes required for participation in liberal democratic institutions. Theories of the workplace as a site for political learning have been called into question by the possibility that the direction of causation runs in reverse, and that selection mechanisms rather than educative mechanisms are responsible for the relationship between workplace affiliations and political behaviour (Greenberg et al. 1996, p.322; van Ingen & van der Meer 2016). Worker co-ops have been found to attract certain demographics, depending on context (Greenberg 1981; Oliver 1984). Chapter 4 finds that causation can be two way, and depends on both individual and contextual factors. Workers who have the 'new' political identities of Bang's Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens are attracted to the co-op for ideological reasons. They value workplace democracy as a means to equalize power and provide autonomy at work, and to counteract the structured inequalities they experience in wider society. For such politicized individuals, identity can affect workplace behaviour. They are more likely to try to influence things and agitate for change at work. But workplace experience can also affect political views. They are more dissatisfied with exclusion from decision-making than less radical staff, and experiences of democratic degeneration at work may undermine their faith in

certain kinds of progressive politics. More pragmatic workers who are more content with the political system and see workplace democracy as an instrumental good are likely to draw parallels between their experience of workplace democracy as imperfect, about compromise, and requiring the balancing of rights and responsibilities, and their views of political democracy. My work updates the Pateman thesis and proves that it is highly-context dependent, building on Greenberg et al.'s limited findings on the role of context in moderating political outcomes of workplace democracy for workers (Greenberg et al. 1996).

My third conclusion is that the subjective well-being outcomes of workplace democracy are influenced by expectations, which are themselves shaped by political identity and by past experience. Expert Citizens and Everyday Makers have higher expectations of fairness at work than less politicized workers, and therefore have lower perceptions of work rewards. In this regard, I have argued that the difference between Expert Citizens and Everyday Makers lies in the former's greater personal and social resources, which allow them to participate more in politics in order to influence the issues that matter to them. In doing so politics becomes more central to their daily lives and more fundamental to their identity. Thus they become more politicized. Everyday Makers display a latent politicization which manifests itself when they are presented with opportunities to exert influence, whether it be through participation at work or mass political campaigns. These insights build on Li & Marsh's findings about the relationship between Bang's new participants and resources (Li & Marsh 2008). My research also provides a test of Bang's theories in a contemporary UK context. Indeed, my finding that Everyday Makers and Expert Citizens are more oppositional to 'the system' than Bang allows could be due to context. Bang's work was originally based on empirical data collected in Denmark in the mid-1990s (Bang & Sørensen 1999), where citizens might have viewed the then social democratic government as working more in their interests. It was also conducted prior to the 2008 financial crisis and the ensuing Great Recession, which has likely further dented faith in the political system among those Bang calls 'lay people'. Past experiences of successful co-operation seem to raise workers' expectations of material rewards, so where co-operation has increased the material rewards for work compared with conventional firms, economic downturns may affect the well-being of co-op workers more negatively compared with their counterparts in ordinary firms.

Future research directions

My survey data and interview data contain evidence on far more topics than it was possible to cover in the thesis. At various points in the thesis I noted fruitful directions for further research. I will now look in more detail at future research directions. These fall into four areas. First, extending research on the relationship between social networks, influence and other outcomes in democratic

firms. Second, looking at the outcomes of workplace democracy for workers in different contexts. Third, using multilevel and longitudinal research designs and content analysis of qualitative data to extend the findings presented in my thesis. Fourth, exploring the relationship between social networks and political identity.

A key finding of my research is that location in workplace social networks affects workers' feelings of influence. My research focused on ego network measures due to missing data. However, there are a range of whole network measures that have been shown to be related to power and influence in other contexts, including betweenness centrality (Brass 1984), brokerage measures (Burt 1992; Gould & Fernandez 1989), group centrality (Everett & Borgatti 1999) and hubs and authorities (Oliver et al. 2013). It will be fruitful to collect whole network data from democratic firms and examine the relationship between network structure and location and influence. Measures of influence could be extended to include reputational measures (Brass 1984) or performance-based measures (Burt 2007). I could also look at the relationship between social network structure and other outcomes in the democratic firm. For example, I collected survey data on worker perceptions of work demands, job control and social support based on Karasek & Theorell's demand-control-support model (Sanne et al. 2005). I also collected data on work effort and overcommitment based on Siegrist's ERI model (Siegrist et al. 2009). Carter has argued that co-operation can cause overwork and burnout in the most active workers (Carter 2006, p.419). It may be that workplace democracy increases job demands for certain workers, such as representatives who must liaise between staff and senior management (cf. Gould 1989). If ethical and practical hurdles can be overcome, research on negative interpersonal relationships and conflict in democratic workplaces could prove fruitful (Nelson 1989; Labianca et al. 1998; Carter 2006, p.421).

It would be useful to extend the study of the relationship between workplace democracy, well-being and political participation to different contexts. For example, worker co-operatives of different sizes, in different industries, and displaying more direct democratic governance structures than the study firm. Some research has suggested that direct democracy at work increases political participation while representative democracy does not (Greenberg et al. 1996). I originally planned to conduct a comparative study between a co-op and a conventional firm of similar size in the UK bike retail industry, comparing the effects of firm governance and ownership structures on workplace social networks and worker outcomes. However, access problems with the conventional firm necessitated a change in research design.

A limitation of my findings is that the research design was cross-sectional. Qualitative data provided evidence regarding the causal direction of relationships observed in my quantitative data. However, it is not possible to draw definitive conclusions in this regard based on my data. For example, I

argued that workers who are directly connected to influential alters feel more influential and have higher work rewards because influential workers use their management and interpersonal skills to foster feelings of influence and reward in their colleagues. But it could be that workers who feel influential or rewarded choose to form relationships with influential colleagues. Longitudinal research designs can provide evidence on the causal direction of the observed relationships between network location and attitudes. Statistical actor-oriented models (SAOMs) allow the determination of whether relationships between networks and attitudes are the result of homophily (selection) or peer influence processes (Snijders et al. 2010; Steglich et al. 2010). It would be fruitful to collect further waves of data from the study firm and apply these modelling techniques.

Respondents in the study firm were located within branches and departments. This 'nesting' will have a shaping effect on respondents' social networks, so where network structure and organizational structure are likely to be correlated it is impossible to separate quantitatively using multiple linear regression modelling the variability in respondent outcomes that is associated with branches/departments from variability that is associated with networks. I have good reason to believe this does not provide a problem for my findings. However, Multilevel modelling allows the analysis of data with complex patterns of variability, with a focus on nested sources of such variability, such as employees in firms (Snijders & Bosker 2004, p.1). Multilevel network modelling can allow the attribution of variance to different levels of analysis – the individual, the network, and the organization (Brass & Greve 2004). Sample size issues prevented me from employing multilevel modelling techniques on my dataset, but would be fruitful in future research.

A further methodological possibility with my current dataset would be to apply content analysis techniques to my qualitative interview data. Content analysis involves the tagging of a set of texts with codes that are derived from prior theory or from open-ended coding and then analysing the distribution of codes statistically (Bernard & Ryan 2010, p.288; Borgatti n.d.; Gersick et al. 2000). Content analysis would allow me to derive variables from my qualitative data for use in statistical modelling, extending and enriching the results of my quantitative data analysis.

Finally, an important direction for future research would be longitudinal research into the relationship between social networks and political identity in worker co-operatives. Evidence from the study firm suggested that the political identity is related to the dynamics of workplace democracy. More radical staff seem initially to be more vocal, then perhaps withdraw from participation or leave their job as a result of their perceived exclusion from decision-making. Those with high external political efficacy seemed to be selected to positions of influence, and their experience of balancing the demands of staff with business imperatives seemed to have shaped their views of political democracy. They may also be actively excluding more politicized workers

from decisions. Longitudinal modelling would help establish causal directions and further narrow plausible mechanisms for the observed relationships between political identity and workplace behaviour.

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