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CORPORATE RESISTANCE TO EARLY RETURN TO WORK POLICY

By

Roger J. Shoemaker

A Dissertation  
Submitted to the  
Faculty of The Graduate College  
in partial fulfillment of the  
requirements for the  
Degree of Doctor of Public Administration  
School of Public Affairs and Administration

Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan  
December 1989

## CORPORATE RESISTANCE TO EARLY RETURN TO WORK POLICY

Roger J. Shoemaker, D.P.A.

Western Michigan University, 1989

The purpose of this research was to discover the extent and patterns of resistance the concept of an early return to work policy is encountering in private corporations. Early return to work policies encourage and enable injured/disabled employees to return to duty before being fully recuperated. The degree of resistance was examined through variables which are component elements of the macro themes of corporate culture and corporate structure theory. Corporate culture embodies a set of beliefs and values collectively held and socialized by a corporation. Specific elements of corporate culture which were examined are corporate goals (to increase market share, to maximize profits, to manufacture a quality product, to value employees, to provide quality service, and to serve society), corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence. Corporate structure is the formal pattern of relationships among the various parts of the organization. The specific elements of corporate structure that were examined are corporate size, corporate shape, work force complexity (blue collar versus white collar and line personnel versus staff personnel), degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization.

The research efforts were confined to the state of Michigan. The determination was made to identify as a population all employers with 250 employees or more in the state involved in manufacturing. The data were collected through the use of a survey questionnaire mailed to the corporate official identified as responsible for the human resources function.

The relationships between the dependent and independent variables were analyzed through the use of Pearson product-moment correlation and eta for the bivariate hypotheses. Multiple regression was used to test the three multivariate hypotheses involving models of resistance.

The research findings were as follows: Corporations that have a higher degree of bureaucracy, do not value employees, do not endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees, and do not support job and work place accommodations are more likely to be resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations with a relatively lower degree of bureaucracy, that value employees, and endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees and job and work place accommodations.

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Roger J. Shoemaker

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## CHAPTER I

### PROBLEM AND THEORY

#### Introduction

Expenditures for disability benefits are increasing every year. Currently, disability costs approximate the amount that employers spent on general health care five years ago. Current literature indicates that workers who become disabled will return to work sooner and more often to their previous job if they are encouraged to do so. A number of private-sector employers have initiated a new personnel policy which provides such encouragement; it is called early return to work. This policy is one in a continuum of policies and practices that address and promote steady employment and equal employment opportunity in the work place.

Early return to work policies encourage and enable injured/disabled employees to return to duty before being fully recuperated. During the recovery period, the injured employees are assigned to redesigned jobs that can be performed within their physical/medical restrictions. At the same time, providing work place accommodation for injured/disabled employees demonstrates compliance with Civil Rights legislation protecting the handicapped from work place discrimination.

The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires employers to take "affirmative action" in the hiring of the handicapped and states that those corporations and organizations receiving federal financial assistance must not discriminate against the handicapped in any of their policies and practices. However, even though there are national policies that might be interpreted as encouraging early return to work and even though there is an expressed concern for early return to work policy in the private sector, this early return to work concept appeared to be spreading slowly and meeting resistance. This was evidenced by a national study in 1986, which indicated that only 8% of all American corporations had in-house early return to work programs for the disabled (Schwartz, 1986b). Szilagyi and Wallace (1983) state, "Most changes create a number of potential areas of resistance, such as the manner in which the change is introduced, the magnitude of the change, and the change itself" (p. 541).

#### Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this research is to discover the patterns of resistance and to provide explanations for the resistance which the concept of an early return to work policy is encountering in the private sector. The study will measure the degree of resistance in private-sector corporations. The degree of resistance will be examined through the variables that are the component parts of the macro themes of corporate culture and corporate structure theory.

### Literature Review

The literature review will describe the macro themes of corporate culture and corporate structure theory and show how each can be used or has been used to account for resistance to early return to work policies. At the end of this section, these themes are integrated into a comprehensive theory of resistance to early return to work.

#### Corporate Culture Theory

Corporate culture embodies a set of beliefs and values collectively held and socialized by a corporation. It is useful to talk about corporate culture when analyzing organizational behavior. Technically, corporations are not cultures since corporation members do not derive complete identities, lives, value systems, and emotional bonds from their corporate affiliations to the extent that they do from true cultural systems. Corporate culture is a sensitizing concept and is used metaphorically. Every corporation embodies and inculcates beliefs and values which may help explain employee behavior. A familiar example is the IBM corporation, which has cultural values that dictate that males should wear white shirts and conservative suits and ties. Culture can also dictate what is right and good or wrong and evil. For instance, bribes and payoffs may be accepted as a proper way of doing business in corporate organizations in some cultures, but they are considered wrong,

unethical, and illegal in most corporations in American culture. American corporations operating abroad may have different corporate cultural components in response to different operating contexts.

Deal and Kennedy (1982) state:

Values are the bedrock of any corporate culture. As the essence of a company's philosophy of achieving success, values provide a sense of common direction for all employees and guidelines for their day-to-day behavior. Values make up what people really care about in the firm. (p. 21)

For our purposes, specific elements of corporate culture to be examined are: the value of the employee, the goals of the corporation, the flexibility of the corporation, personnel principles, unions, and corporate social responsibility. These elements may be organized in some order of importance in a corporate culture. The employee may be viewed as a valuable human resource, or as an interchangeable instrument. The goal of the corporation may be a greater market share or a steady state. Flexibility as a cultural characteristic reflects a corporation that is disposed to change in response to changes in its environment; it may be flexible or slow changing in general, or flexible in some directions, slow changing in others. Personnel principles involve beliefs and values about the hiring, training and retraining of workers, supervision, and disabled worker costs. The latter includes the willingness to spend money on sick leave, increased insurance premiums, retraining, accommodation of task and equipment alteration, specialized administration, and safety. The presence of a union may result in endorsement or opposition to early return to work policies and

programs. The concept of corporate social responsibility focuses on the type and extent of the responsibility that corporations feel they have to the society within which they operate. As a general term, corporate social responsibility includes ethics, codes of conduct, social innovation, social investment, and service to society.

Resistance to early return to work policies or programs may be related to all of the corporate culture issues. The individual as a human resource, the goals of the corporation, the flexibility of the corporation, personnel principles, unions, and corporate social responsibility will be addressed separately as they relate to resistance to early return to work.

#### The Individual as a Human Resource

The employee may be viewed as a valuable human resource, or as an interchangeable instrument. If the employee as an individual is not valued as a human resource, there may be considerable resistance for the corporation to pursue an early return to work policy. If employees are valued, there may be little resistance or endorsement.

The 3M corporation is an example of a corporation in which the employee as an individual is a valued human resource. This is evidenced by a quotation from Gordon W. Engdahl, Vice-President of Human Resources in 1981 at 3M, which typifies a positive corporation climate:

People are 3M's most valuable resource. The occurrence of a disability which interferes with an individual's productivity is a matter of serious concern which requires our prompt and continuing attention. In addition to the moral aspects there are compelling legal and financial considerations which make it clearly in our best interest to practice effective disability management. This is not difficult. Just as we strive to maximize our return on our material resources, it is also our policy to maximize our human resources. (Wickersham, 1983, p. 26)

Galvin (1986) shares this view also when he states, "Enlightened employers are those who view the employee as a total person who, more than any product, holds the key to the company's future success" (p. 176).

In a study conducted by Hester, Decelles, and Planek (1988), employers had a 76.7% overall positive response rate when asked whether they felt that the establishment of a return to work program would have a positive effect on employee morale. "Another employer attitude, generally necessary before an organization will establish an effective return to work program, is the belief that most employees who become disabled want to work rather than collect disability benefits" (Hester et al., 1988, p. 19). In the study, the average proportion of positive employer responses was 67.2%.

#### The Goals of the Corporation

Goals have a central position in corporate culture analysis for the following reasons. Goals limit the attention of the corporation to a certain object by defining what particular action is organizationally relevant. The technological processes or practices

required to achieve specific goals impose restrictions on personnel activity and resource allocation. Finally, goals are centrally involved in the adaptation of corporations; whether goals are achieved or not affects the ability of the corporation to command resources and legitimation from the society as a whole (Zald, 1963). Later, Zald states, "Goals are defined as the outputs of service needed to meet the expectations of clients or agents who legitimate and supply resources to the organization" (p. 208).

If the primary goal of a corporation is an increased market share or the maximization of profits, everything else may be subordinate to it. Consequently, that corporate culture would tend to be more resistant to the introduction of any new programs unless they involve an increasing market share or profit margin.

The goals may be and occasionally are written down, but they may be implied by the actions of the management of an organization. Some of the more common goals are increased or higher performance, improved motivation, increased cooperation, clearer communications, reduced absenteeism and turnover, minimization of conflict, and reduced costs. (Szilagyi & Wallace, 1983, p. 519)

All of the aforementioned goals may contribute to increased performance, which may lead to increased productivity. When increased productivity, leading to an enhanced market share, is emphasized as the primary goal of a corporation, there would be resistance to the introduction of any new program such as early return to work unless it is perceived to contribute significantly to the achievement of the primary goal of the corporation. Hester et al. (1988) state, "Obviously, the most important attitude on the

part of employers toward their workers who become disabled concerns the continued productivity of these workers" (p. 17). The study reports that 61% of the employers felt that disabled employees could maintain acceptable productivity levels. However, 13% of the employers did not feel that the disabled employee would be able to do as good a job as he or she had done before. In a DuPont study reported by Nathanson (1977), 91% of the 1,452 disabled employees were rated as average or better than average when compared to the regular work force on a job performance survey.

Perrow (1961) differentiates between official goals and operative goals. Official goals are the general purposes of the corporation found in its charter, annual reports, and public statements by key corporate executives. Operative goals are the actual operating policies of the corporation; they are what the corporation is really trying to do.

#### The Flexibility of a Corporation

The flexibility of a corporation refers to the disposition of that corporation's culture to make changes. The term flexibility will be used interchangeable with innovation or propensity to program change. Price (1972) states, "In literature about organizations, material relevant to innovation is found in discussions of social change, adaptiveness, flexibility, bureaucratic ossification, ritualism, and program change" (p. 118).



Pritchard and Karasick (1973) contend that a corporation that is achievement oriented and dynamic will be higher on flexibility and innovation and lower on decision centralization. Hage and Aiken (1967) concur when they state, "Given that an organization is complex, decentralized, and non-formalized, then it is likely to be high in rate of program change" (p. 518). If a corporation has a culture that promotes flexibility and adaptability, it would be more likely to entertain the innovations and make the accommodations that a return to work program requires.

"Organizational design needs to be considered as a way to achieve multiple goals and should not be chosen merely to satisfy employees, to earn additional profits, or to satisfy the board of directors" (Luthans, 1985, p. 506). Later Luthans is more specific when he states, "Flexibility and adaptability are necessary requirements for modern organization structures" (p. 538). Job and work place accommodation require changes that may not be routine. Therefore, if a corporation's culture is adaptable and flexible, that is, able to change easily, it would tend to be less resistant to early return to work, should it find the concept itself attractive.

#### Personnel Principles

Personnel principles refer to the practices of recruiting, hiring, and training of replacement personnel and to the practices through retraining and work place and job accommodation of current

experienced personnel. If the principle of replacement is endorsed by a corporation through the hiring and training of new personnel, that corporation would tend to be more resistant to the introduction of an early return to work program. On the other hand, if the principle of support is endorsed by a corporation through retraining and work place and job accommodation of current employees, then that corporation would tend to be less resistant to the introduction of an early return to work program. "One factor cited by potential employers to justify their reluctance to hire disabled persons is that they must spend a lot of company time and money to accommodate those that they do hire. This too, is a myth" (Hill, Mehnert, & Lederer, 1987, p. 44). The literature supports the contention that if corporations are willing to retrain them and make job and work place accommodations (Amkraut, 1985), the disabled worker compares favorably with the nondisabled worker in terms of production rates and in the performance of quality work (Nathanson, 1977). "For employers, altering a job or worksite often is less costly than replacing an experienced worker or paying for years of disability insurance" (Nyland, 1983, p. 19). "Although environmental and transportation barriers tend to restrict employment opportunities for the handicapped, the crucial factor continues to be employer attitude. Employers continue to believe that the handicapped worker will be a liability rather than an asset" (Deane, 1975, p. 23). However, if accommodations are not made, employers lose the services of valued workers and incur the

additional costs of recruiting and training replacements (Victor, 1985). "A growing number of employers are fighting such high dollar and human costs through job retention, job modification, and return-to-work programs for their disabled employees" (Amkraut, 1985, p. 52). The key to successful worker participation is their ability to remain in the same job after the onset of a disability (Tate, Habeck, & Galvin, 1986). "A recent study of 5,620 disabled workers found that the sooner the intervention occurs, the greater the chance for improved rehabilitation. Early intervention shifts employees' attitudes from disability toward rehabilitation and return to work" (Lundell, 1985, p. 9). In the Hester et al. (1988) study, employers (64.7%) expressed the belief that employers can save money by bringing the disabled employee back to work. Louis Harris (1987) previously reported that 71% of the employers sampled felt that it was more cost-effective to rehabilitate and return the employee to work as opposed to paying disability benefits and replacing them.

The issue of safety has also been addressed. Nathanson (1977), in reporting on the DuPont study, indicated that 96% of the disabled had average or above-average safety records. The Louis Harris study (1987) revealed that 47% of the employers felt that handicapped employees have fewer on-the-job accidents than do the nonhandicapped. In the Hester et al. (1988) study, only one-third of the employers felt that returned workers would improve their

company's safety record. These studies may indicate a declining belief in the safety record of handicapped or returned workers.

Perceived barriers to the introduction of return to work programs were surveyed by Hester et al. (1988), also. They were practicability of job accommodation, the offering of rehabilitative services as an admission of liability, technological changes in the work place, current corporate economic conditions, high rate of unemployment, and cost for equipment modification. The authors report that the average positive response to these perceived barriers was 51.3%. They were disturbed to learn that nearly two-thirds (64%) of the employers surveyed felt that there was at least one barrier in their respective corporations.

"In addition, employers still assume that workmen's compensation insurance rates will increase with the hiring of handicapped workers. This is usually not the case" (Deane, 1975, p. 23). The disability efforts of 3M, Sears, Herman Miller, Polaroid, and Control Data are frequently cited for achieving substantial worker's compensation cost reduction through early return to work of injured employees (Galvin, Tate, & Schwartz, 1986; Tate, Habeck, & Galvin, 1986; Tate, Habeck, & Schwartz, 1986). The relative hazards on the job and a given corporation's accident experience are the two factors that determine worker's compensation rates (Nathanson, 1977).

There is a problem in the literature in obtaining good information about actual costs for rehabilitation and the

cost-benefits associated with disability management and rehabilitation. In a study of 400 major employers, only 26% of the responding corporations tracked health care costs for disabled employees. Also, 44% of the corporations modified jobs to suit the needs of disabled employees and returned them to work; however, only 2% tracked costs associated with the required job modification (Schwartz, 1986a). With regard to cost-benefits, Davidson (1985), Carpenter (1985), and Mitchell (1982) all report that very few studies have specifically investigated the impact, or costs and benefits, of disability management and rehabilitation programs, even though everyone is concerned about the high cost of health care in general. Eckenhoff (1984) contends that the apparent lack of concern about cost-benefit studies may be due to an attitude problem. However, precedent and inertia may be the culprits. Traditionally, employers have paid compensation claims and written off the disabled employee as a cost of doing business. He further contends that the choice currently to the corporation is simple: "The corporation may choose to bear the ongoing costs of sustaining unrehabilitated, disabled employees. Or, it may choose to underwrite rehabilitation, thus either minimizing its ultimate outlay or, when the employee returns to work, eliminating it entirely" (p. 31). Thus, while corporations are concerned with high health care costs, little effort has been put into the actual tracking of the costs and benefits of disability management. As was

mentioned previously, worker's compensation costs have been reduced at 3M, Sears, Herman Miller, Polaroid, and Control Data.

However, if all the costs associated with the introduction of this innovation are substantiated, and if the goal of the corporation is increased market share which would require increased productivity at lower production costs, then it is likely that the corporation would assume a resistant posture. As the following quotations indicate, health care costs are an important consideration of employers. "Containing health care costs, including appropriate health benefit design, is the immediate and primary concern of most employers" (Galvin et al., 1986, p. 46). Amkraut (1987) reports that cost for disability may take many varied forms: "The cost of a chronically ill or disabled employee shows up not only on the health budget but also in absenteeism, lost productivity, training, retraining and increased turnover" (p. 48). "Each injury is now estimated to cost an average of \$19,000. A corporation with 1000 employees can expect to have 27 lost workday injuries each year. With a 4.5% profit margin, a corporation must realize \$11.3 million in sales to offset these costs" (Carbine & Schwartz, 1987, p. 1). Resistance on the part of supervisors and employees may be due to prejudice against disabled persons or the feeling that a restricted worker will jeopardize unit productivity if there is an emphasis on increased productivity (Carbine & Schwartz, 1987).

### Unions

The presence or absence of a union plays an important role in corporate culture. What role do unions play in return to work programs? Enteen, Tramm, and Herman (1979) indicate that unions can play an important role in affirmative action programs for the handicapped by maintaining members in the work force following disability, returning to the work force members who have withdrawn as a result of disability, and promoting the entry of these individuals into union jobs. They report that the Amalgamated Clothing and Textile Workers Union (ACTWU) developed a model program in which the union, employers, and rehabilitation agency personnel worked together to achieve collective goals. Klett (1984) reports that unions are participating in the search for mutually acceptable health care cost solutions by lobbying at the national level for major regulatory reform and working with employers to determine the causes of uncontrolled and out-of-hand health costs. The Louis Harris survey (1987) indicates that 85% of the management surveyed did not feel that union regulations prevented or impeded job reassignments or job modification for disabled employees.

However, the Hester et al. (1988) study reveals a different picture. When asked whether unions help their disabled members return to work, 45% of the employers disagreed. Likewise, 42% of the employers felt that union contracts made it impossible to shift job assignments for disabled employees. The researchers then

compared the responses of employers with unions and employers without unions. They conclude:

It appears that first-hand experience with unions has a significantly positive effect on employers' belief that unions try to help employees who become disabled return to work. On the other hand, experience with union contracts does not change employers' perception that union contracts are a barrier to reassigning workers who become disabled. (p. 38)

Although unions may be perceived as individually helpful to employees returning to work, union contracts continue to be a barrier in job assignments for disabled employees.

#### Corporate Social Responsibility

The concept of corporate social responsibility focuses on the type and extent of responsibility that corporations feel they have to the society within which they operate. Corporate social responsibility is related to early return to work policies and programs in the following way: If a corporation subscribes to social responsibility (public good), to serve society, it should welcome early return to work policies and programs. Bock (1982) states:

. . . It will be asserted that corporate social responsibility [CSR] is a system (or doctrine) holding that the corporation should respond to the moral and ethical values of the society within which it is chartered and which it serves. In so responding, a given corporation will draw from and shape the values of the society from which it draws legitimacy. CSR is thus a "crude blend of long run profit making and altruism . . . a doctrine which fuses social values with profit maximization goals." (p. 47)



According to Pati (1978), the reasons why many corporations hire, retain, and use the handicapped are varied. They range from simple human compassion to a feeling of social responsibility. The business has internal social responsibilities in addition to social responsibilities outside the firm. Specifically, expectations of employees that they be granted certain rights have been the focus of recent attention. Five employee rights in particular have been emphasized in recent years; they are (a) job satisfaction in the work place, (b) freedom of speech, (c) due process of law, (d) privacy, and (e) safety in the work place (Carroll, 1981). Carroll (1981), Nisbet (1975), and Smedley (1985) all concur that society has a social obligation toward handicapped individuals to ensure that they are cared for and, if possible, made self-reliant through rehabilitation processes.

Weissman (1966) in The Social Responsibilities of Corporate Management, while discussing the interest of corporations in projecting favorable images, states:

Thus, management has shown increased interest in creating an image showing a corporate sense of social responsibility to employees. The use of credos, which in many cases are translated into operating reality, would tend to indicate that the corporations wish to project a favorable image to their employees and by so doing indicate an acceptance of responsibilities beyond profit making. (p. 24)

He later states, "The fact that many of the statements used to evaluate a company's image were not in the slightest way connected with the profit motive would indicate that the large corporation is accepting moral and social responsibilities" (p. 25).

If, on the other hand, the corporation is primarily responsible to boards and shareholders, it should resist the value of social responsibility if it is perceived as unprofitable. "Many disagree as to whether the corporation should be responsible to the public at large, the various constituents of corporate affairs, or strictly to the board of directors and shareholders" (Bock, 1982, p. 43). The traditional view, led by economist Milton Friedman, is that social concerns such as early return to work should not be the concern of business people; management has only one responsibility: the maximization of profits (Carroll, 1981). Hester et al. (1988) through the use of five items assessed employer responsibility toward employees who become disabled. The average percentage of positive employer responses was 59.8%. The employers (85%) agreed that the primary objective of worker's compensation programs should be to return injured/disabled employees to work; however, only 35% felt all employees should be treated equally and that exceptions should not be made for disabled employees. The Louis Harris study (1987) agreed with these findings. In that study an average of 71% of all employer groups felt that it is the employer's responsibility to rehabilitate the disabled employee.

#### Summary

In summary, the analysis of corporate culture suggests a series of relationships:

1. To the extent that the employee is valued, there is less resistance to early return to work policies and programs.

2. If the primary goal of a corporation is an increased market share, everything else may be subordinate to it. Consequently, corporate culture would involve resistance to the introduction of any new programs such as early return to work unless they clearly lead to an increasing market share, which we view as unlikely.

3. If the maximization of profits is a corporate goal, it is likely that the corporation would be resistant to the introduction of any new programs unless they would contribute to an increase in the profit margin.

4. To the extent that a corporation endorses corporate social responsibility, to serve society, there will be less resistance to early return to work policies and programs.

5. If a corporation has a culture that promotes flexibility and adaptability, it would be more likely to entertain the innovations and make the accommodations that early return to work programs require.

6. If the principle of replacement is endorsed by a corporation through the hiring and training of new personnel, that corporation would tend to be more resistant to early return to work.

7. The presence of a union is negative in regard to early return to work; unions may oppose early return to work policies and programs.

Bivariate Hypotheses Concerning  
Corporate Culture

The analysis presented and the relationships posited in the preceding discussion provide the basis for the following bivariate hypotheses:

1. There will be a negative association between employees as a valued resource and the degree of resistance to early return to work.
2. There will be a positive association between a corporation's goal of increased market share and the degree of resistance to early return to work.
3. There will be a negative association between a corporation that subscribes to the value to serve society and degree of resistance to early return to work.
4. There will be a positive association between a corporation's goal of maximization of profits and the degree of resistance to early return to work.
5. There will be a negative association between a corporation's flexibility and the degree of resistance to early return to work.
6. There will be a negative association between an endorsement of personnel principles and the degree of resistance to early return to work.
7. There will be a positive association between union presence and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

Variables operate both alone and in combination to account for variation in a dependent variable. Thus, a hypothesis including all of the independent variables of corporate culture can be formulated:

The corporate culture variables--to value employees, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

#### Corporate Culture Model

The corporate culture model shown in Figure 1 depicts schematically the effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable, resistance to early return to work policies.

#### Corporate Structure Theory

Corporate culture cannot be considered as a complete explanation; corporate structure theory as another employer theme may play a major role. Corporate structure is the formal pattern of relationships among the various parts of the corporation. It is also the design of a corporation, which includes characteristics such as its size, shape, work force complexity, degree of centralization, and its degree of bureaucratization. The corporate size of corporations may vary. They may be large or medium-sized or small. The relationship between organization size and employee

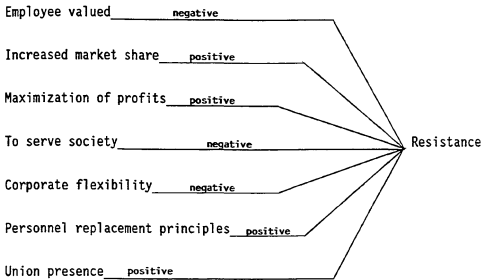


Figure 1. Corporate Culture Model.

attitudes and behavior has been studied and reported in the literature. Corporation shape is another variable. Such terms as tall, flat, and pyramidal are used to discuss shape. The element of work force complexity includes employee composition and line-staff relationships. What is the employee composition of blue-collar workers versus white-collar workers? Line-staff relationships deserve consideration, since employees in line and staff roles differ in their perceptions of one another and of their relationships and importance to the organization. Centralization involves the degree of centralization of the organization. In a centralized corporation there is uniformity of policy and action, lower risk of deviation by subordinates, and closer control of

operations. In a less centralized organization there is lower-level participation in decisions. This affords employees invaluable experience in decision making, with increased motivation as a by-product. It also allows more time for top management to concentrate on policy making and creative innovation. Finally, corporations may vary in their degree of bureaucratization, the most bureaucratic being the classical Weberian bureaucratic model with its major characteristics of division of labor, positional hierarchy, formality, and written rules.

In summary, then, corporate structure is the formal pattern of relationships among various parts of the corporation. Corporate structure is also the design of a corporation; characteristics that are included are its size, shape, work force complexity, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization. Each of these characteristics will now be considered as they relate to early return to work.

#### Corporate Size

Size refers to the scale of operations of a corporation. The scale of operations in a corporation may be indicated by the number of personnel, the amount of assets, and the degree of expenditures. The size of a corporation will be related to the degree of resistance to an innovation such as early return to work; it is expected that larger corporations would be less resistant since, due to their size, they would have more flexibility in job assignments.

The size of large corporations gives them an advantage in being able to utilize disabled workers more effectively. Their size allows well-developed human resources management systems, greater specialization in jobs, increased importance of recruitment and selection functions, and greater availability of resources for hiring, training and advancement. (Rabby, 1983, p. 23)

This opinion is widely shared in the literature (Combs & Omvig, 1986; Conley & Noble, 1979; Gottlieb, Vandergoot, and Lutsky, 1987; Leonard, 1986). Moch and Morse (1977) state, "As it allows for differentiation in technology, size also allows organizations to more finely differentiate tasks (functional differentiation) and personnel (specialization)" (p. 717). Later they add, "Both factors increase intraorganizational pressures to adopt innovations which are compatible with the interests and perceptions of department heads" (p. 717).

#### Corporate Shape

Shape is a construct used as an analog to describe selected structural characteristics of a corporation. The terms flat and tall are used to describe in organizational analysis the total pattern of spans of control and the levels of management. Highly bureaucratic structures in the classical sense are typically very tall. Tall structures facilitate closer control over subordinates. Flat structures require superiors to delegate a certain amount of work; therefore, there is an encouragement of decentralization. In the flat corporation there are fewer levels of hierarchy, which



means that both downward and upward communication should be enhanced, contributing to less communication distortion. McGregor's Theories X and Y assumptions may be applied to shape. Theory X sees humans in need of close control; tall structures encourage close controls. Theory Y suggests that the nature of humans indicates that if they are not given close controls but are assigned responsibility, they will react by being highly motivated. This theory depicts a flat structure with built-in loose controls as more effective than one with tight controls. Luthans (1985) contends that, "Overall the flat structure, at least from a behavioral standpoint, is generally preferable to the tall structure. It can take advantage of the positive attributes of decentralization and personal satisfaction and growth" (p. 550). Lawrence and Lorsch (1986) state, "To have more points of contact with the environment, a flatter organization is employed" (p. 206). As a result, more of an all-to-all communication pattern follows, which fosters an interpersonal style emphasizing the building of strong relationships (Lawrence & Lorsch, 1986). "In summary, shape has been studied and is generally influenced by span of control, and it appears that some people are affected by different arrays of hierarchy" (Szilagyi & Wallace, 1983, p. 504). Shape of a corporation may not be as important as some other variables in predicting resistance by itself, but it is one of the numerous variables that is interrelated. It would be expected that flatter corporations would be less resistant to early return to work policies and programs

since key decisions would be required to traverse fewer levels of decision makers.

#### Work Force Complexity

The variable work force complexity includes employee composition, that is, the proportional distribution of blue-collar positions and white-collar positions and the proportional distribution of line-staff positions within a given corporation. The work force's complexity will be related to the degree of resistance. It would be expected that the corporations with larger percentages of blue-collar workers would be more resistant due to more required job modifications, more different tasks, and the perception of lowered productivity. On the other hand, white collar workers could be accommodated more easily because their jobs and work place environments are less physically oriented; there then would be less resistance. There could be two intrinsic limitations on job/work place accommodations. Corporations with large proportions of line personnel, which by its nature is labor intensive and physical, would find it difficult to modify its work day. The staff which is highly specialized, although it could modify its work day, might find it difficult or impossible to eliminate a specialized function. Stein (1987) states that "there are certain types of jobs for which it is very hard to accommodate disabilities. For example, it is difficult to modify work on an

assembly line" (p. 44). Sussman and Hagan (1979) support this view as well when they state, "The higher income individuals are likely to be in skilled jobs and the medical and physical rehabilitation they received enabled them to return to their old jobs without too much difficulty or to adapt more easily to new jobs than lower income, unskilled workers" (p. 49). Smedley (1985) feels also that the disabled worker should have a maximum opportunity to return to his or her old job. However, he feels that rehabilitation efforts should be concentrated on those disabled who are the most difficult to place: the unskilled, less educated worker.

Since having a skill is such a major factor in determining whether the disabled worker--in fact any worker--is employed, emphasis should be on training disabled people. The handicapped, with few exceptions, can be trained, and there is a need for trained and skilled workers. (Smedley, 1985, p. 46)

The same point is made in an empirical study conducted by Hester, Decelles, and Gaddis (1986). In this study it was found that ten items differ significantly between workers who return to work and those who do not. The ten items are type of disability, age, sex, education, marital status, type of occupation, area of residence, type of employer, type of disability support received, and amount of wage replacement. The authors combined these items in a unique way to form what they refer to as the Menninger RTW Scale. This scale is then used as a predictor as to the likelihood of a disabled person returning to work without rehabilitation assistance.

Table 1 represents a finding in this study, which indicates that the white-collar employee is more likely to return to work as

opposed to the blue-collar employee. In this table, the white-collar employee is represented by the managerial/professional and the technical occupational groups, and the blue-collar employee is represented by the service, craft, and assembly occupational groups. For the current study, farming is not relevant.

Table 1  
Relationship Between Return to Work and Predisability Occupation

Occupational group	Returned to work (%)	Did not return (%)	Total (%)
Managerial/professional	68	32	100
Technical	53	47	100
Service	29	71	100
Craft	41	59	100
Assembly	44	56	100
Farming	45	55	100

Source: Hester, E. J., Decelles, P. G., & Gaddis, E. L. (1986). Predicting which disabled employees will return to work: The Menninger RTW Scale. Topeka, KS: The Menninger Foundation.

In the white-collar group, 68% of the managerial/professional group and 53% of the technical group returned to work. However, in the blue-collar group, only 29% of the service group, 41% of the

craft group, and 44% of the assembly group returned to work. Therefore, we conclude that the white-collar group is more likely to return to work than the blue-collar group. The finding corroborates Smedley's (1985) contention that rehabilitation should be directed toward those who are most difficult to place and most unlikely to return to work: the disabled blue-collar and service worker.

### Centralization

Centralization refers to the degree of centralization and organizational distribution of the authority to make decisions affecting the organization. Degree of centralization would, then, be a factor in resistance to an early return to work policy. Luthans (1985) reports that decentralization provides invaluable experience in decision making for lower-level executives. Centralization, on the other hand, provides uniformity of policy and action, uses the skill of central and specialized experts, and enables closer control of operations. However, Szilagyi and Wallace (1983) feel that there should not be a dichotomy. They state: "Centralization/decentralization should not be viewed as two separate concepts, but opposite ends of a single continuum of delegation" (p. 455).

Centralization as a concept is the degree to which power is differentially distributed within a corporation (Hall, 1972). Price and Mueller (1986) indicate that power is basic to Weber's concept of bureaucracy; his different types of bureaucracies are based on

different types of power or authority. Centralization is implicit in Weber's hierarchy of authority. If most of the decision making occurs at the top of the corporation, the corporation is centralized. Hage (1980) has defined centralization as "the level and variety of participation in strategic decisions by groups relative to the number of groups in the organization" (p. 65). His approach emphasizes the fact that this power is exercised in a variety of ways and in a variety of locations in a corporation. A corporation indicates its view of personnel through the degree of centralization. In a highly centralized corporation, the personnel are not trusted to make decisions; less centralized corporations indicate a greater willingness to allow personnel to act in a more autonomous manner. Hage also found that a concentration of specialists (professionals) leads to decentralization; however, if they are trained as generalists, there is likely to be a greater degree of centralization.

Hage and Aiken (1970) state,

The concentration of power in the hands of few persons in the organization tends to lead to the preservation of the status quo because one aspect of power is the ability to veto ideas for change or otherwise block attempts to introduce change into an organization. (p. 38)

They then state the following hypothesis: "The higher the centralization, the lower the rate of program change" (p. 38).

Tannenbaum and Massarik (1950) and Worthy (1950) all emphasize the importance of the allocation of power in a corporation and

suggest that a decentralized power structure for corporations results in higher employee morale. They also consider the relationship between the centralization of power in a corporation and its effect on organizational performances such as morale and efficiency. This, then, emphasizes the importance of centralization as a corporate structure variable. It is conceivable that the most centralized corporation could be the most resistant or the least resistant, while a less centralized corporation would adopt a middle-of-the-road posture: a curvilinear relationship.

#### Degree of Bureaucratization

Finally, bureaucratization refers to the presence of the classical Weberian bureaucratic model characteristics of division of labor, positional hierarchy, formality, and written rules. It is conceived to range on a continuum from high bureaucracy to low bureaucracy. The degree of bureaucratization would have an effect on the degree of resistance to an early return to work policy or practice. "With increasing bureaucratization, it becomes plain to all who would see that man is to a very important degree controlled by his social relations to the instruments of production" (Merton, 1962, p. 50).

Any discussion of bureaucracy must begin with a discussion of Max Weber's thoughts on authority, which leads to the pure or "ideal" type of bureaucracy. "Weber argued that every system of authority must establish and secure a belief in its legitimacy but

that this may be done in many different ways" (Denhardt, 1984, p. 29). In doing so he identified three "pure" types of legitimate authority: legal authority, traditional authority, and charismatic authority. Legal authority depends on the establishment of legal norms within a group, the agreement of the members to be bound by the legal system, which in turn is exercised through a bureaucratic administrative staff. This is the purest type of the legal authority. In the purest type, individual officials who are appointed function according to the following criteria:

1. They are personally free and are subject to authority only with respect to their impersonal official obligations.
2. They are organized in a clearly defined hierarchy of offices.
3. Each office has a clearly defined sphere of competence, in the legal sense.
4. Each office is filled by a free contractual relationship. Thus, in principle, there is free selection.
5. Candidates are selected on the basis of technical qualifications.
6. They are remunerated by fixed salaries in money, for the most part with a right to pensions.
7. The office is treated as the sole, or at least the primary, occupation of the incumbent.
8. The office constitutes a career. Promotion is based on seniority, achievement, or both and depends on the judgment of superiors.
9. Officials work entirely separated from ownership of the means of administration and without appropriation of their positions.
10. They are subject to strict and systematic discipline and control in the conduct of the office. (Weber, 1947, p. 328)



Weber's ideal-type bureaucracy is an "ideal" type. No formal association or corporation will have all of the characteristics of the ideal-type bureaucracy. Harmon and Mayer (1986) are emphatic when they write, "It is important to emphasize that the ideal type has, more or less, objective validity, which is not to be confused with objective reality. In other words, the ideal type does not exist in the real world, in any sense" (p. 73). Gouldner (1950) and Udy (1959) in their writings imply that bureaucracy is a condition that exists along a continuum rather than being either absent or present.

Having previously addressed corporate flexibility, work force complexity, and centralization as individual variables, we are now concerned with the remaining bureaucratic variables of formality, rules, universalistic versus particularistic, and promotion and selection based on technical competence. Merton (1962) states,

Formalism, even ritualism, ensues with an unchallenged insistence upon punctilious adherence to formalized procedures. This may be exaggerated to the point where primary concern with conformity to the rules interferes with the achievement of the purposes of the organization, in which case we have the familiar phenomenon of the technicism or red tape of the official. (p. 53)

The less formal corporation is likely to be particularistic in its treatment of personnel, while the more formal corporation is likely to be universalistic (see Talcott Parsons's "pattern variables" in The Social System, 1951), which would embody a set of written policies. "Most people would agree that formalization, or a

tendency toward a 'bureaucratic personality,' would be associated with lower job satisfaction" (Szilagyi & Wallace, 1983, p. 504).

Weber (1947) notes that bureaucracy is an instrument of policy makers, external to the corporation. One policy maker, with increasing suasion is the federal government with its regulations about the treatment of the handicapped. Therefore, a highly bureaucratic corporation might be more responsive to the pressures of governmental intervention, making early return to work a desirable formal policy.

#### Summary

In summary, the analysis of corporate structure suggests a series of relationships:

1. A large corporation would be less resistant toward early return to work policies and programs.
2. A tall-shaped corporation would be likely to be more resistant toward early return to work policies and programs.
3. A large percentage of blue-collar workers would increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work due to more required job modifications, increased differentiation of tasks, and the perception of lowered productivity.
4. A large percentage of line personnel would likewise increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work since, by nature, their functions are labor intensive and physical, requiring workday and job modifications.

5. A high degree of centralization would tend to support resistance toward early return to work policies and programs.

6. A high degree of bureaucratization could increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work policies and programs. However, there is some degree of ambivalence with regard to the effect that a highly bureaucratic corporation would have; there is speculation that a highly bureaucratic corporation might be more responsive to governmental intervention, making early return to work a desirable formal policy.

The analysis presented and relationships posited in the preceding discussion provide the basis for the following bivariate hypotheses.

Bivariate Hypotheses Concerning  
Corporate Structure

1. There will be a negative association between size of a corporation and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

2. There will be a positive association between tallness in corporate shape and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

3. There will be a positive association between the percentage of blue-collar workers and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

4. There will be a positive association between the percentage of line personnel and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

5. There will be a positive association between the degree of centralization and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

6. There will be a positive association between the degree of bureaucratization and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

Variables operate both alone and in combination to account for variation in a dependent variable. Thus, a hypothesis including all of the independent variables of corporate structure can be formulated:

The corporate structure variables--corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue-collar workers, percentage of line personnel, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

#### Corporate Structure Model

The corporate structure model (see Figure 2) depicts schematically the effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable, resistance to early return to work policies.

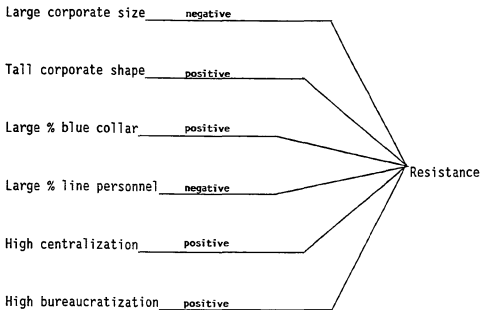


Figure 2. Corporate Structure Model.

#### Complete Multivariate Model

##### Theory

Early return to work policies encourage injured/disabled employees to return to work before their being fully recuperated from their injury or illness. During the recuperative period, the employees may be assigned to redesigned jobs which can be performed within their physical/medical restrictions. It is also possible that the work place may require modification to accommodate the injured/disabled employee. Provision of work place accommodation demonstrates compliance with Civil Rights legislation protecting the

handicapped from work place discrimination. The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 requires employers to take "affirmative action" in the hiring of the handicapped and states that those corporations and organizations receiving federal financial assistance must not discriminate against the handicapped in any of their policies and practices. Even though there are national policies that encourage early return to work and even though there is an expressed concern for early return to work policy in the private sector, this concept is spreading slowly and meeting resistance. In an attempt to account for resistance, the corporate culture variables--employee value, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and unions--and the corporate structure variables--corporate size, corporate shape, work force complexity (percentage of blue-collar and percentage of line personnel), degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization--will be measured.

It is clear that the variables cited in the preceding discussion occur in combination in all corporations. Further, not all of the variables discussed have the same relationship to resistance to early return to work. Previously, the effects of the variables of corporate culture and corporate structure were discussed separately. However, the corporate culture and corporate structure variables may work together to account for variability in the dependent variable, resistance toward early return to work

policies. In this section two ideal types are discussed: a most resistant type of employer and a least resistant type of employer. In an ideal-type most resistant model, the employee as an individual is not valued by the corporation as a human resource. The primary goals of the corporation are an increased market share and maximization of profits, and everything else is subordinate to it. The corporation's culture is inflexible, unable to adapt and entertain the innovation of and to make the accommodations that a return to work program requires. Personnel principles of support through retraining and work place and job accommodations are not endorsed; rather, the concept of replacement is endorsed. The union, if it is present, would not endorse the concept of an early return to work program in an ideal most resistant model. Primary responsibility of the corporation is to its board and shareholders. In terms of corporate structure, a most resistant employer would have a very tall structure with a high degree of centralization, small in size, largely a blue-collar operation, and a high degree of bureaucratization.

In an ideal-type least resistant model, the employee as an individual is valued by the corporation as a human resource. The primary goal of the corporation is not an increased market share; rather, the corporation is satisfied with a steady state. The corporation's culture is flexible, able to adapt and entertain the innovation of and to make the accommodations that a return to work program requires. Personnel principles of support through

retraining and work place and job accommodations are endorsed and practiced. The union, if it is present, would endorse the concept of an early return to work program in an ideal least resistant model. The primary responsibility of the corporation is the public good; that is, it would subscribe to the value to serve society. In terms of corporate structure, a least resistant employer would have a very flat structure with a low degree of centralization, be large in size, be primarily a white-collar operation, and have a low degree of bureaucratization.

Since in reality we are not likely to find either model in the real world, the closer the corporation is to the positive end of the continuum, the less resistant the corporation will be toward early return to work. However, the more closely the corporation resembles the other polar type, the more resistant it will be toward early return to work. The importance of each variable in each polar type is not known at this time; the Hester et al. (1988) study did not explain it either. The use of the multivariate model allows the exploration of the contribution (using beta weights) of the variables in the model to the explanation of the variation in the dependent variable of early return to work.

### Summary

In summary, the complete multivariate model (see Figure 3) representing all the independent variables associated with the macro



themes of corporate culture and corporate structure suggests a series of relationships:

1. To the extent that the employee is valued, there is less resistance to early return to work policies and programs.

2. If the primary goal of a corporation is an increased market share, everything else may be subordinate to it. Consequently, that corporate culture would involve resistance to the introduction of any new programs, such as early return to work, unless they clearly lead to an increasing market share, which we view as unlikely.

3. If the maximization of profits is a corporate goal, it is likely that the corporation would be resistant to the introduction of any new programs unless they would contribute to an increase in the profit margin of the corporation.

4. To the extent that a corporation subscribes to the value to serve society, there will be less resistance to early return to work policies and programs.

5. If a corporation has a culture that promotes flexibility and adaptability, it would be more likely to entertain the innovations and make the accommodations that early return to work programs require.

6. If the principle of replacement is endorsed by a corporation through the hiring and training of new personnel, that corporation would tend to be more resistant to early return to work.

7. The presence of a union is negative in regard to early return to work; unions may oppose early return to work policies and programs.

8. A large corporation would be less resistant toward early return to work policies and programs.

9. A tall-shaped corporation would be likely to be more resistant toward early return to work policies.

10. A large percentage of blue-collar workers would increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work due to more required job modifications, increased differentiation of tasks, and the perception of lowered productivity.

11. A large percentage of line personnel would likewise increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work since, by nature, their functions are labor intensive and physical, requiring workday and job modifications.

12. A high degree of centralization would tend to support resistance toward early return to work policies and programs.

13. A high degree of bureaucratization could increase the likelihood of resistance toward early return to work policies and programs. However, there is some degree of ambivalence with regard to the effect that a highly bureaucratic corporation would have; there is speculation that a highly bureaucratic corporation might be more responsive to governmental intervention, making early return to work a desirable formal policy.

### Multivariate Hypothesis

The analysis presented and the relationships posited in the preceding discussion provide the basis for the following hypothesis since variables operate alone and in combination to account for variation in a dependent variable. Thus, a hypothesis including all of the independent variables of corporate culture and corporate structure can be formulated:

The corporate culture variables--to value employees, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence--and the corporate structure variables--corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue-collar workers, percentage of line personnel, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

### Complete Multivariate Model

The complete multivariate model shown in Figure 3 schematically depicts the effect of each of the independent variables on the dependent variable, resistance to early return to work.

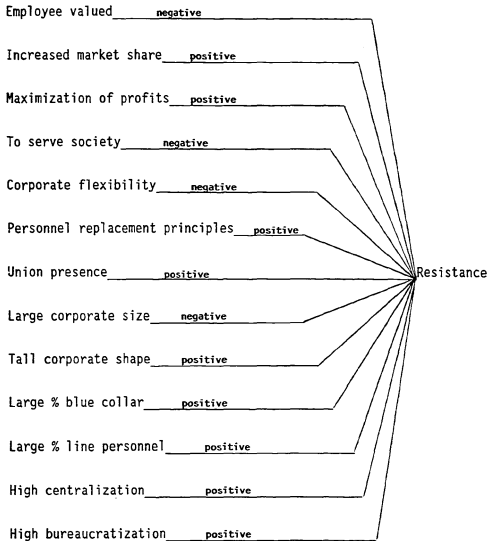


Figure 3. Complete Multivariate Model.

## CHAPTER II

### RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODS

#### Basic Research Design

In the social sciences there are many modes of observation available to the researcher: content analysis, analysis of existing data, experiments, evaluation research, and survey research. Survey research is the mode most commonly used. In a typical survey the researcher selects a sample of respondents and administers a standardized questionnaire. According to Babbie (1979), the survey is probably the best method available to the researcher who is interested in collecting original data about a population that is too large to observe directly. The survey then becomes an excellent vehicle for the measurement of attitudes and orientations prevalent within a large population.

In the current study the self-administered survey was selected as the means for collecting the data. The survey technique was chosen over other possible approaches due to considerations of cost, timeliness, and standardization. Survey questionnaires were mailed to the corporate official responsible for the Personnel Division of each selected corporation, if he/she was able to be identified. If this was not possible, the questionnaire was mailed to the President

of the corporation. The mailing included a cover letter, the questionnaire, and a stamped pre-addressed return envelope.

#### Definition of the Population

To measure the resistance of private-sector employers toward the concept of early return to work, it was decided to direct the research efforts within a single state, since a single state constitutes a common legal environment. Michigan was selected because it is not atypical of large industrial states and it was convenient to the conduct of the research. For practical purposes, the selection of one state limits the scope of the study. The determination was made to identify at least 500 private-sector employers who are involved in manufacturing in the state of Michigan as a population. A corporation size of 250 employees was considered to be a convenient minimum number for which the assumption could be made that early return to work would be a personnel issue relevant to management.

A computer service, DIALOG, an informational retrieval service, was used to access D & B--Dun's Market Identifiers, an on-line database maintained by Dun and Bradstreet (1988), which lists corporate data. The data retrieved consisted of corporate name, phone number, address, city, zip code, country, Standard Industrial Classification (SIC code), total employment, employee growth, and total sales. To build a subset of the database, criteria of 250 or more employees and a SIC code from 2000-3999 (Division

D--Manufacturing) were used in the retrieval process. This resulted in a population of 508 Michigan corporations with 250 or more employees, engaged in some form of manufacturing. Of the 508 corporations, 47.4% have 250 to 499 employees, 26.4% have 500 to 999 employees, and 26.2% have over 1,000 employees. The 508 corporations comprised the research population.

#### Data Collection

The selection had three phases. The first phase consisted of the computer generation of a listing containing the corporation name, address, city, zip code, phone number, and total employment. In the second phase, the 1988 edition of the Michigan Manufacturers Directory was used manually to supply the name of the corporate official in charge of the Personnel Division of the corporation. In the third phase, those corporations that did not have an identified corporate official responsible for personnel were contacted by telephone in an attempt to obtain that information. Very few corporations were reluctant to provide the name of the individual responsible for personnel functions. The survey questionnaire was addressed to the personnel official, if he/she was able to be identified. If this was not possible, the survey material was mailed to the corporate president. A personally addressed survey should generate the maximum response rate and facilitate follow-up procedures. If a response was not received in two weeks, a

follow-up questionnaire was mailed to those corporate officials who had not responded. If a reply to this follow-up was not received in three weeks, a second follow-up letter was mailed to those corporate officials who had not responded. The cover letter and the two follow-up letters are presented in Appendix A.

### Operational Definitions and Instruments

#### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is the degree of resistance in private-sector corporations to the adoption of an early return to work policy. To measure the resistance to an early return to work policy directly, two items were used. First, the respondents were asked to indicate their corporation's position regarding early return to work on a check list. The response options are on an interval scale of 1 to 6. During the coding process, the most positive option was assigned the value of 1, the most negative option was assigned the value of 6, and the intermediate options were continuous from negative to positive. This resistance to early return to work was measured in the questionnaire with the following item:

The concept of early return to work from illness or disability typically includes provisions for moderation of work hours, jobs or other working conditions. With regard to the concept of early return to work, please read the following statements and place a check next to the one statement which most closely describes your corporation's position.



- ☐ 6. Has considered early return to work and rejected it.
- ☐ 5. Is considering early return to work and is not favorably disposed toward it.
- ☐ 4. Is considering early return to work but has not adopted a policy supporting it.
- ☐ 3. Is considering early return to work and is favorably disposed toward it.
- ☐ 2. Has adopted an early return to work policy but it is not yet implemented.
- ☐ 1. Has an early return to work policy and it is fully implemented.

Second, a list of personnel policies which a corporation may have in place was used to determine whether an early return to work policy existed, creating a validity check for the prior item. The following list of personnel policies which were used is shown.

Please check all the personnel policies that your corporation currently has in place.

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Disability insurance | <input type="checkbox"/> Maternity leave    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Medical insurance    | <input type="checkbox"/> Paternity leave    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dental insurance     | <input type="checkbox"/> Affirmative action |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Pension plan         | <input type="checkbox"/> Adoption leaves    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Matched investment   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Wages and salaries   | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety eyewear     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Early return to work | <input type="checkbox"/> Safety shoes       |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Life insurance       | <input type="checkbox"/> Sick leave         |

### Independent Variables

The operational definitions of the independent variables associated with the macro theories of corporate culture and corporate structure will be discussed at this point. Although the individual as a human resource and corporate social responsibility were discussed conceptually as separate independent variables, in operationalizing them they will be discussed as corporate goals. The corporate culture variables of corporate goals (to increase market share, to maximize profits, to value employees, to serve society), flexibility of the corporation, personnel principles, unions, and corporate social responsibility will be considered first. These will be followed by the corporate structure variables of corporate size, corporate shape, work force complexity, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization.

The independent/predictor variables were measured using one of two general formats. Items that were designed to elicit factual information were presented with options for check off or a space to write in a number. However, items designed to assess attitudes were presented as Likert scales with a stimulus statement, followed by four response categories: strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree.

In the development of operational definitions for each of the variables, a number of authors were used as reference sources to

determine if any measurements were already available in the literature.

#### Corporate Culture Variables

Corporate goals. Corporation goals are the ends toward which effort is directed by a corporation. Hall (1972) states that "goals involve intents and outcomes and serve as constraints on decision making. Organizational goals by definition are creations of individuals, singly or collectively" (p. 278). He goes on to indicate that goals change over time, changing the activities of the corporation and new considerations become part of the overall goal structure.

Corporations customarily have several goals. These include the value of human resources, increased market share, and the value to serve society, in addition to maximization of profit, quality product, and quality service. These goals are not mutually exclusive but rather may exist simultaneously in a priority ranking and along a continuum from very important to not important. Three of these goals have been identified earlier in the multivariate model: the value of human resources, increased market share, and the value to serve society.

What is the conceptual definition of each of these corporation goals? Conceptually, the value of human resources refers to the importance placed on the human resources of a corporate enterprise. While, ideology, the well-being and sacredness of human life, may be

subscribed to in the abstract by corporations, what may be directly observed is the priority that the welfare and care of human resources are given, when compared to the priority given other corporate resources necessary for the accomplishment of stated corporate goals.

To serve society, as a goal, conceptually refers to the corporate disposition to respond to the moral and ethical values of the society (public good). In responding to the moral and ethical values of the society, a given corporation will draw from and shape the values of the society from which it draws legitimacy.

Increased market share as a goal in a corporation may be conceptualized in the following manner. Increased market share places a corporation in direct competition with other corporations producing a comparable product or providing a comparable service. It is the emphasis on achieving a larger portion of the existing market for one's corporation at the expense of the competition that is being measured here, not its success in doing so.

Conceptually, the maximization of profits refers to the emphasis that a corporation places on achieving the greatest profit margin in relation to the dollars expended to produce a product or provide a service.

Quality product as a corporation goal conceptually is the production of a commodity that is available for human needs and desires; it can be touched and handled. Quality service, on the

other hand, as a corporation goal conceptually is the production of some sort of useful labor not manifested in a tangible commodity or product.

In the current study, the corporation goals of the value of human resources, increased market share, to serve society, maximization of profits, quality product, and quality service were measured through the priority ranking that a corporation places on these goals. Also to be measured is the importance of each of these goals to the corporation. The instrument, as designed, is shown below. (A complete copy of the survey questionnaire is presented in Appendix B.)

Typically corporations have a number of corporate goals. Of the six goals below, please tell us their priority and importance to your corporation.

First, priority: Rank each goal using the numbers from 1 to 6. "1" is the highest priority, "2" is the second highest priority, and so on. RATE FROM YOUR CORPORATION'S PERSPECTIVE, AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

Second, importance: Rate each goal individually on the continuum from very important to not important. Place an "X" on the line at the place reflecting its degree of importance. RATE FROM YOUR CORPORATION'S PERSPECTIVE AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Goals</u>	<u>Rating</u>	
		Very Important	Not Important
_____	To increase market share	I _____	I _____
_____	To maximize profits	I _____	I _____
_____	To manufacture a quality product	I _____	I _____

_____ To value employees	I _____ I
_____ To provide a quality service	I _____ I
_____ To serve society	I _____ I

Corporate flexibility. The flexibility of the corporation refers to the disposition of that corporation to make changes. The variable, flexibility, is used interchangeably with innovation or program change and can range along a continuum from flexible to inflexible. Price and Mueller (1986) state, "Only change that is intentionally implemented is innovation" (p. 159). Price (1972) concludes that a corporation that readily accepts job changes is most likely an early user of an idea and therefore reflects flexibility.

In the current study, flexibility was measured through the use of selected items from the Siegel Scale of Support for Innovation as reported by Siegel and Kaemmerer (1978). In their study they attempted to identify and define the characteristics of innovative corporations, measure these characteristics by a questionnaire, and test the resulting instrument for reliability and validity. The latter was accomplished through a factor analysis of the items measuring "support for creativity." These Likert-type items had factor loadings ranging from 0.45 to 0.61. The items, with some semantic modifications, are shown below. Four responses ranging from strongly agree through strongly disagree were provided for the

respondents; the items in the original study had six response options.

This corporation can be described as flexible and continually adapting to change.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

This corporation is always searching for fresh, new ways of looking at problems.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Attempts at innovation are usually rejected here.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Personnel principles. As previously noted, personnel principles in this research refer to the practices of recruiting, hiring, and training of replacement personnel as opposed to the support of current experienced personnel through retraining and work place and job accommodations. It is the principle of replacement versus the principle of support.

The issues of retaining and retraining experienced personnel as opposed to hiring new, inexperienced personnel was measured in the current study by two Likert-type items. The issue of accommodation was measured by one Likert-type item. Each of the Likert-type items

has four response categories ranging from strongly agree through strongly disagree.

This corporation feels it is more desirable to retain experienced personnel than to hire new employees.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

This corporation feels it is more desirable to hire and train new personnel than to retrain old employees.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

This corporation feels it is more desirable to make job and work place accommodations for old employees than to hire and train new personnel.

- ☐ Strongly agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly disagree

Unions. Unions as a variable in corporate culture is rather complex, with two dimensions to be considered within it. Presence or absence of a union within a corporation is one such dimension. The perceived union attitude with regard to endorsement of early return to work as opposed to not, from the corporation's perspective, is the second dimension.

Union presence or absence was measured in the current study with the following item:



Are all or most of your personnel represented by a union?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

The union's endorsement or opposition with respect to their involvement in the issue of early return to work was measured using the following item:

On early return to work policy, the union contract representing most of your workers at your corporation: (Please check one)

☐ Is mute  
☐ Allows discussion of early return to work provisions  
☐ Requires the development of early return to work policy  
☐ Contains an early return to work policy  
☐ Don't know

#### Corporate Structure Variables

The corporate structure variables of size, shape, work force complexity, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization will be considered next. The definition of each concept will be followed by an appropriate measurement.

Corporate size. "Size is the scale of operations of a social system" (Price, 1972, p. 174). The scale of operations in a corporation may be indicated by the number of personnel, the amount of assets, and the degree of expenditures. While Price (1972) feels that the number of personnel is but one indicator of scale, many researchers do use the number of full-time personnel solely as a measurement of size. Price and Mueller (1986) use this definition of size as their measurement selection.

Information about the number of full-time personnel may be obtained from payroll printouts or some official current listing of personnel such as an employee register or a computer listing. If these means are not available, the question would be included in the questionnaire. In the current study, corporation size was obtained as one of the variables on the corporation's data set.

Corporate shape. Shape is a construct used as an analog to describe selected structural characteristics of a corporation. A corporation may be very flat or very tall. The vertical dimension has been used frequently in the literature as a straightforward indicator of the depth of the hierarchy; hence, shape is indicated. Meyer (1968) used the proliferation of supervisory levels within divisions to measure the depth of a corporation. Pugh, Hickson, Hinings, and Turner (1968) report that the vertical dimension of a corporation can be measured by a "count of the number of job positions between the chief executive and the employees working on the output" (p. 78). This study used the approach suggested by Pugh et al. The factual information was elicited using the option format; the respondent was asked to check the number of levels of authority.

What is the number of levels of authority between the chief executive and the lowest level employee? Please select one.

- ☐ 2 or less
- ☐ 3-4
- ☐ 5-7
- ☐ 6-8
- ☐ 9 or more

Work force complexity. The variable work force complexity includes employee composition--that is, the proportional distribution of blue-collar positions and white-collar positions and the proportional distribution of line-staff positions within a given corporation. In addition, work force complexity is also characterized by the number of occupational roles and the number of subunits within the corporation. In some organizational literature, "complexity of an organization refers to the level of knowledge and expertise in an organization" (Hage & Aiden, 1970, p. 32). Price and Mueller state, "Complexity is the degree of formal structural differentiation within an organization. A highly complex organization is characterized by many occupational roles, subunits (divisions and departments), levels of authority, and operating sites" (p. 100). Occupational roles and subunits are illustrative of horizontal complexity, while vertical complexity is illustrated by levels of authority. This study measured work force complexity through the proportional distribution of the number of blue-collar and white-collar positions, the proportional distribution of line-staff positions, the number of occupational roles, and the number of subunits within the corporation.

In this study the proportional distribution of the number of blue-collar positions and the number of white-collar positions was measured in the following manner. Positions which are considered to be blue-collar positions are technical, production/service, and

maintenance. White-collar positions are administrative/management, professional, and office/clerical support staff. This factual information was elicited on the questionnaire with the item shown below:

What is the approximate percentage of white-collar workers (administrative/management; professional; office/clerical support) and the approximate percentage of blue-collar workers (technical; production/service; maintenance) at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%.]

White collar  
 Blue collar

The distribution between line and staff was addressed with the following item:

What is the approximate percentage of line workers and staff workers at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%.]

Line personnel  
 Staff personnel

The number of occupational roles, which is a component of complexity, was measured with the following item:

What is the approximate number of different official job titles in your corporation? For example: Chief Executive Officer, President, Vice-President, Executive Director, on down to the lowest-level employee. Please check one.

1-5  
 6-10  
 11-15  
 16-20  
 21-25  
 26-30  
 More than 30

The number of subunits within the corporation was measured with the following item:

What is the approximate number of major subunits (divisions, sections, etc.) within your corporation? Please check one.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ More than 20

Centralization. Centralization refers to the degree of centralization and organizational distribution of the authority to make decisions. Pugh et al. (1968) state, "Centralization has to do with the locus of authority to make decisions affecting the organization" (p. 76). The range will be on a continuum from centralized to decentralized. Moch and Morse (1977) conducted a study in which they found that adoption of innovations compatible with the interests of lower-level decision makers occurred more frequently in large, decentralized organizations. Siegel and Kaemmerer (1978) concur when they state, "In addition, Guetzkow (1965) has suggested that organizational processes related to the propensity for innovation include the decentralization of authority" (p. 554). It was to that end that they selected leadership as a dimension to measure.

Centralization was measured in this study through the use of two selected leadership items, which measure centralization, from the Siegel Scale of Support for Innovation. The selected items are shown below, with response category modification. Four responses ranging from strongly agree through strongly disagree were provided for the respondents. The original instrument had six response

alternatives. In the interest of consistency, in the current study the term "corporation" is used rather than "organization."

In this corporation, the power of final decision can always be traced to the same few people.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

The main function of members in this corporation is to follow orders that come down through channels.

- ☐ Strongly Agree
- ☐ Agree
- ☐ Disagree
- ☐ Strongly Disagree

Bureaucratization. Bureaucratization refers to the degree of bureaucracy, on a continuum from high bureaucracy to low bureaucracy. The most bureaucratic is the classical Weberian bureaucratic model, with its major characteristics of division of labor, positional hierarchy, formality, and written rules. Gouldner (1950) and Udy (1959) in their writings imply that bureaucracy is a condition that exists along a continuum rather than being absent or present.

According to Hall (1963), the works of Gouldner (1950) and Udy (1959) support the contention that Weber's bureaucratic model is best approached from a multidimensional perspective. In his study Hall selected six dimensions on the basis of citation frequency and theoretical importance. They are:

1. A division of labor based upon functional specialization.
2. A well-defined hierarchy of authority.
3. A system of rules covering the rights and duties of positional incumbents.
4. A system of procedures for dealing with work situations.
5. Impersonality of interpersonal relations.
6. Promotion and selection for employment based upon technical competence. (p. 33)

Hall (1963) has stated, "In the ideal-type bureaucracy all of these dimensions would be present to a high degree, while non-bureaucratized or simple organizations would ideally have a low degree of all the dimensions present" (p. 33). Hall (1961) developed an excellent empirical measurement scale to study bureaucracy.

Some researchers choose to survey formalism in the study of bureaucracy since Weber's emphasis on "bureaucratic rules" illustrates his concern with formalism, and rules are explicitly formulated norms. Pugh et al. (1968) state, "Formalism denotes the extent to which rules, procedures, instructions, and communications are written" (p. 75). Extensive research on formalism has been done by Aiken and Hage (1966), as well as House and Rizzo (1972).

In the current study, an assessment of the degree of bureaucracy was based on the empirical study of Hall (1961). However, the term "organization" was replaced by the term "corporation" for consistency in the current study. The questionnaire used by Hall (1961) has a Likert-type format; the

responses are based on a 5-point scale from Definitely True through Definitely False. Selected items, which measure four of the six dimensions cited by Hall, are shown below for inclusion in the current study. The four dimensions are hierarchy of authority, system of rules, system of procedures, and promotion and selection for employment based on technical competence.

Scale II (Hierarchy of Authority)

Everyone has a specific job to do.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

When a person finishes a piece of work, it is always passed to the same person.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Most jobs have something new happening every day.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False



## Scale III (System of Rules)

The corporation has a manual of rules and regulations.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

The employees are constantly being checked up on for rule violations.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Most people here make their own job rules.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

## Scale IV (System of Procedures)

Whatever situation arises, we have procedures to follow in dealing with it.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Employees are often left to their own judgment as to how to handle problems.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Going through the proper channels is constantly stressed.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Scale V (Promotion and Selection for Employment)

In order to get a promotion, you have to "know somebody."

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Applicants must be qualified before they are hired here.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

The corporation keeps a record of everyone's job performance.

- ☐ Definitely True
- ☐ Partially True
- ☐ Undecided
- ☐ Partially False
- ☐ Definitely False

Data Analysis

After the data were coded, the codes and the interval-level responses were key entered manually from the individual survey questionnaires into a data file. Both data and control files were created on Western Michigan University's VAX computer in Kalamazoo, Michigan. Using the SPSS (version X) program, data were analyzed to

produce statistics necessary to test the research hypotheses (questions).

The relationship between the dependent and independent variables was analyzed through the use of various statistics. To test the bivariate hypotheses, appropriate zero-order correlations, Pearson product-moment correlation, and eta were used. The three multivariate models were tested using multiple regression analysis. The first two multiple regression analyses were confined to the corporate culture variables and the corporate structure variables that were statistically significant, as revealed by the tests of the bivariate hypotheses. Then a combined multiple regression analysis was performed on the significant surviving corporate culture and corporate structure variables, revealed by the initial two multiple regression analyses.

## CHAPTER III

### DESCRIPTIVE FINDINGS

#### Response to the Survey

There are 508 Michigan-based corporations engaged in some form of manufacturing, with 250 or more employees, on Dun and Bradstreet's (1988) on-line data base, D & B--Dun's Market Identifiers, to which questionnaires were mailed. However, eight of the questionnaires were not delivered, so the population surveyed consists of 500 corporations. A total of 248 corporations (49.6%) responded to the self-administered questionnaire. As shown in Table 2, the sample consists of 119 corporations that have 250 to 499 employees, 70 corporations that have 500 to 999 employees, and 59 corporations that have 1,000 or more employees.

Corporations with 250 to 499 employees had a 50.2% return rate, those with 500 to 999 employees had a 53.0% return rate, and those corporations with 1,000 or more employees had a 45.0% return rate. While minimum size for the sample and the population by definition was 250 employees, the largest respondent corporation has 114,000 employees, compared to 915,000 employees for the largest corporation in the population.

Table 2 also provides a comparison of the sample with the population. The median number of employees for both the sample and

population was 500. The sample approaches the population closely in all employee size categories; returns did not vary greatly from one category to another.

Table 2  
True Response Rate by Corporation Size

Size	Sample		Population		% Return
	<u>N</u>	%	<u>N</u>	%	
250-499	119	48.0	237	47.4	50.2
500-999	70	28.2	132	26.4	53.0
1,000-915,000	59	23.8	131	26.2	45.0
Total	248	100.0	500	100.0	49.6
Minimum	250		250		
Maximum	114,000		915,000		
Median	500		500		

#### Descriptive Statistics for the Variables

This study involves one dependent variable (degree of resistance to early return to work) and 13 independent variables: corporate goals (to increase market share, to maximize profits, to manufacture a quality product, to value employees, to provide a quality service, and to serve society), corporate flexibility, personnel principles, union presence, corporate size, corporate

shape, work force complexity (blue collar versus white collar and line personnel versus staff personnel), centralization, and degree of bureaucratization. The descriptive statistics for each of the critical variables will be discussed, and the findings will be summarized in tables.

#### Dependent Variable

The dependent variable in this study is the degree of resistance in private-sector corporations to the adoption of an early return to work policy. Two items were used to measure the resistance to an early return to work policy directly. First, respondents were asked via a check list their corporation's position regarding early return to work. The response categories ranged from the most resistant (value 6) to the least resistant (value 1). The descriptive statistics for the dependent variable are presented in Table 3.

Second, a list of personnel policies that a corporation had in place was used to determine whether an early return to work policy exists, creating a validity check for the preceding item. The personnel policy list consisted of 16 personnel policies, including early return to work. The descriptive statistics for the item measuring corporate personnel policies are presented in Table 4.

Table 3  
Corporate Positions About Early Return to Work

Value		Freq.	%
6	Has considered early return to work and rejected it.	39	15.7
5	Is considering early return to work but is not favorably disposed toward it.	27	10.9
4	Is considering early return to work but has not adopted a policy supporting it.	44	17.7
3	Is considering early return to work and is disposed toward it.	19	7.7
2	Has adopted an early return to work policy but it is not yet implemented.	16	6.5
1	Has an early return to work policy and it is fully implemented.	103	41.5
Total		248	100.0

Mean = 3.0    SD = 1.9    Minimum = 1    Maximum = 6    Skewness = .31

Referring to Table 3, we note that 41.5% of the corporations report a fully implemented return to work policy, a proportion considerably higher than the earlier literature would lead us to predict. High resistance to early return to work, rejection, and unfavorable disposition are reported by just over 25% (26.6%) of the sample corporations. The remaining quarter of the sample evince varying degrees of resistance, either through absence of a policy or

the failure to implement an existing policy. If we note the proportion of the sample with least resistance, those having a policy or being favorably disposed, over half (55.7%) of the corporations fall into these categories. In spite of the unanticipated degree of lack of resistance, this dependent variable has sufficient variability to support the analyses required for hypotheses testing. As shown in Table 3, this item has a mean of 3.0 and a skewness value of .31 (a low positive skew), an indication of the relative symmetry of the distribution.

As shown in Table 4, early return to work was checked by 46.4% of the corporation respondents, which is about half as frequent as the presence of policies such as medical insurance, life insurance, disability insurance, and safety policies. Early return to work as a policy placed 13th in the list of 16 policies; there were 12 other policies that have a greater frequency among the corporations surveyed. In spite of encountering less resistance to early return to work than expected, it is not among the more common policies. These data serve as a validity check on our measurement of resistance to an early return to work policy, since, in Table 3, 48.0% of the corporations indicated that they had a policy.

#### Independent Variables

There are 13 independent variables. These variables will be looked at one at a time with a brief definition, how they were measured, the possible range of values, and evidence of reliability.



Then the descriptive statistics will be presented in tables, followed by a substantive statement.

Table 4  
Corporate Personnel Policies (N = 248)

Policy	%
Medical insurance	100.0
Life insurance	99.2
Disability insurance	97.6
Safety	96.4
Wages and salaries	91.5
Pension plan	88.7
Maternity leave	88.7
Sick leave	87.5
Safety eyewear	86.3
Dental insurance	81.9
Affirmative action	73.0
Safety shoes	61.3
<b>EARLY RETURN TO WORK</b>	<b>46.4</b>
Matched investment	41.5
Adoption leaves	9.7
Paternity leave	7.7

### Corporate Culture

The goals of the corporation. Corporate goals are the ends toward which effort is directed by a corporation. Corporations customarily have several goals. As measured in this research, they include the value of human resources, increased market share, corporate social responsibility, maximization of profit, quality product, and quality service. These goals are not mutually exclusive. They can be both prioritized and rated for importance.

The value of human resources refers to the importance placed on the human resources of a corporate enterprise. Corporate social responsibility, as a goal, refers to the corporate disposition to respond to the moral and ethical values of the society (public good) and to serve society. Increased market share places a corporation in direct competition with other corporations producing a comparable product or providing a comparable service. It is the emphasis on achieving a larger portion of the existing market for one's corporation at the expense of the competition that is being measured here, not its success in doing so. The maximization of profits refers to the emphasis that a corporation places on achieving the greatest profit margin in relation to the dollars expended to produce a product or provide a service. Quality product as a corporation goal is the production of a commodity that is optimum for human needs and desires; it can be touched and handled. Quality service, on the other hand, as a corporation goal is the production

of some sort of useful labor not manifested in a tangible commodity or product.

In the current study, the goals of a corporation were measured through the priority ranking that a corporation places on each of these goals. The priority ranking has a range from 1 to 6. The highest priority was ranked as 1; the lowest priority was ranked as 6. Also measured was the importance of each of these goals to the corporation through rating them on a continuum from very important to not important. The goal rating is on a continuum from 1 to 50. The highest rating (very important) was 50; the lowest rating (not important) was 1. The descriptive statistics describing corporate goals are presented in Table 5.

It should be noted in Table 5 that to manufacture a quality product was given the highest priority ranking most frequently, whereas to serve society (social responsibility) was the priority ranked the lowest, most frequently. To value employees was ranked fourth. This relatively low ranking of human resources suggests that corporations in this study are more interested in the monetary side of the business through the production of quality products, maximization of profits, and an increased market share than in their employees.

The rating of the goals on a continuum from "Not Important" to "Very Important" generally follows the pattern of the priority ranking. To manufacture a quality product has the highest rating with a mean of 45.6, whereas to serve society has the lowest rating

Table 5  
Corporation Goals by Priority Ranking and Rating of Importance

Goals	Priority ranking (freq.)						Mean	SD
	1	2	3	4	5	6		
Manufacture a quality product	90	80	58	15	4	1	2.1	1.0
Maximize profits	84	55	33	45	22	9	2.6	1.5
Increase market share	43	38	46	31	69	21	3.4	1.6
Value employees	15	34	57	87	54	1	3.5	1.2
Provide a quality service	12	41	51	59	77	8	3.7	1.3
Serve society	4	0	3	11	22	208	5.7	.8
Range = 1-6, N = 248								

Goals	Rating of importance of goals		
	Mean	Median	SD
Manufacture a quality product	45.6	47.0	4.5
Maximize profits	43.7	46.0	6.5
Increase market share	39.0	42.0	9.6
Value employees	40.3	43.0	8.8
Provide a quality service	40.0	43.0	9.1
Serve society	25.7	26.0	11.4
Range = 1-50, N = 242			

with a mean of 25.7. To value employees has a mean of 39.0, which places it third in the list of the six corporation goals. This finding is further support for the conclusion that corporations in this study consider the manufacturing of quality products and the maximization of profits to be more important than their human resources.

Corporate flexibility. The flexibility of the corporation refers to the disposition of that corporation to make changes. Flexibility was measured through the use of three items selected from the Siegel Scale of Support for Innovation. The three flexibility items are as follows:

This corporation can be described as flexible and continually adapting to change.

This corporation is always searching for fresh, new ways of looking at problems.

Attempts at innovation are usually rejected here (reversed scoring).

The responses to the three items were summed to create a measure of corporate flexibility with a possible range from 3 to 12, 12 indicating high flexibility. Cronbach's standardized alpha was .74, which indicates acceptable reliability for the Corporate Flexibility Scale. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, range, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's standardized alpha for the scale are presented in Table 6. (The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard

deviation, and skewness for each of the flexibility items included in the scale are presented in Appendix D, Table 1.)

Table 6  
Corporate Flexibility Scale

Scale value	Frequency	%
5	1	0.4
6	5	2.0
7	7	2.8
8	14	5.6
9	86	34.7
10	58	23.4
11	38	15.3
12	39	15.7
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 9.8    $SD = 1.4$    Possible range = 3-12   Minimum = 5  
Maximum = 12   Cronbach's standardized alpha = .74   Skewness = -.31

The mean is 9.8, which is above the a priori mean of 7.5. On the average, the respondents considered their corporations flexible. Only 5.2% of the respondents rated their corporations below the scale's a priori mean. A skewness value of -.31 (a low negative skew) is an indication of the relative symmetry of the distribution.

Personnel principles. Personnel principles in this study refer to the practices of recruiting, hiring, and training of replacement personnel as opposed to the support of current experienced personnel through retraining and work place and job accommodations. It is the principle of replacement versus the principle of support.

The personnel principle items are:

This corporation feels it is more desirable to retain experienced personnel than to hire new employees.

This corporation feels it is more desirable to make job and work place accommodations for old employees than to hire and train new personnel.

This corporation feels it is more desirable to hire and train new personnel than to retrain old employees (reversed scoring).

The responses to the three items were summed to create a measure of personnel principles with a possible range from 3 to 12, 12 indicating a high degree of support for retaining and retraining. Cronbach's standardized alpha was .70, which indicates acceptable reliability for the Personnel Principles Scale. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, range, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's alpha for the scale are presented in Table 7. (The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, and skewness for each personnel principles item included in the scale are presented in Appendix D, Table 2.)

The mean is 9.0, which is above the a priori mean of 7.5. On the average, the respondents considered their corporations supportive toward the retention and retraining of current experienced personnel. Over three-fourths (76.3%) of the

respondents rated their corporations above the scale's a priori mean. A skewness value of  $-.34$  (a low negative skew) is an indication of the relative symmetry of the distribution.

Table 7  
Personnel Principles Scale

Scale value	Frequency	%
4	2	0.8
5	4	1.6
6	6	2.4
7	21	8.5
8	41	16.5
9	94	37.9
10	49	19.8
11	15	6.0
12	16	6.5
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 9.0 SD = 1.5 Possible range = 3-12 Minimum = 4  
Maximum = 12 Cronbach's standardized alpha = .70 Skewness =  $-.34$

Unions. Unions as a variable in corporate culture is rather complex. In the study, there were two variables addressing unions. The first variable measured union presence or absence; the second variable, for corporations with unions, addressed the respondent's



knowledge about the union contract's provision for early return to work. Union presence or absence was measured by the following item:

Are all or most of your personnel represented by a union?

Perceived union endorsement or opposition was measured using the item:

On early return to work policy, the union contract representing most of your workers at your corporation:

- ☐ Is mute
- ☐ Allows discussion of early return to work provisions
- ☐ Requires the development of early return to work policy
- ☐ Contains an early return to work policy
- ☐ Don't know

The descriptive findings with regard to the union dimensions are presented in Table 8.

Table 8 summarizes the data about union presence and the contract's provision for discussion of or policies about early return to work. There was union representation in 96 corporations or in 38.7% of the corporations that responded to the survey. Three-fifths (61.3%) of the corporations in the study have no union representation. A high percentage (87.5%) of the union contracts do not require the development of or contain an early return to work policy. Based on the finding that 48% of the corporations have early return to work, and few contracts address it, when early return to work exists as a policy, it occurs as a corporate rather than as a union initiative.

Table 8  
Union Presence Within a Corporation

	Freq.	%
<hr/>		
Are all or most of your personnel represented by a union?		
Yes	96	38.7
No	152	61.3
Total	248	100.0
<hr/>		
On early return to work policy, the union contract representing most of your workers at your corporation (yes only):		
Is mute	62	64.6
Allows discussion of early return to work provisions	22	22.9
Requires the development of early return to work policy	2	2.1
Contains an early return to work policy	9	9.4
Don't know	1	1.0
Total	96	100.0
<hr/>		

#### Corporate Structure

Corporate size. Size refers to the scale of operations of a corporation. The scale of operations in a corporation may be indicated by the number of personnel, the amount of assets, and the degree of expenditures. Many researchers use the number of

full-time personnel as the measurement of size. In the current study, corporation size was obtained as one of the variables on Dun and Bradstreet's (1988) on-line database, D & B--Dun's Market Identifiers. Corporation size was subsequently grouped into five groups for statistical purposes: 250-349, 350-449, 450-649, 650-999, and 1,000-114,00. Table 9 presents the frequency and percentage distributions, median, minimum, and maximum for corporate size.

Corporate shape. Shape is a construct used as an analog to describe selected structural characteristics of a corporation. Corporate shape may range from very flat to very tall. The vertical dimension has been used as a straightforward indicator of the depth of the hierarchy; hence shape is indicated. Pugh et al. (1968) report that the vertical dimension of a corporation can be measured by the number of job positions between the chief executive and the employees working on the output. This factual information was elicited using the following item:

What is the number of levels of authority between the chief executive and the lowest-level employee? Please select one.

- ☐ 2 or less
- ☐ 3-4
- ☐ 5-6
- ☐ 7-8
- ☐ 9 or more

The frequency and percentage distributions for the number of levels of authority (shape) are presented in Table 9.

Table 9  
The Nature of the Corporation

Size	Freq.	%	Levels of authority	Freq.	%
250-349	68	27.4	2 or less	7	2.8
350-449	43	17.3	3-4	96	38.7
450-649	43	17.3	5-6	97	39.1
650-999	35	14.1	7-8	40	16.1
1,000-114,000	59	23.9	9 or more	8	3.2
Total	248	100.0		248	100.0
Median = 500					

Work Force Complexity					
Employee composition	Mean	Median	<u>SD</u>		
White collar	31.4	25.0	18.6		
Blue collar	68.8	75.0	18.6		
Line	75.3	80.0	15.4		
Staff	24.7	20.0	15.4		
Occupational roles (job titles)	Freq.	%	Major subunits	Freq.	%
1-5	13	5.2	1-5	113	45.6
6-10	36	14.5	6-10	65	26.2
11-15	35	14.1	11-15	36	14.5
16-20	27	10.9	16-20	15	6.0
21-25	17	6.9	More than 20	19	7.7
26-30	17	6.9	Total	248	100.0
More than 30	103	41.5			
Total	248	100.0			

Work force complexity. The variable work force complexity includes employee composition--that is, the proportional distribution of blue-collar positions and white-collar positions and the proportional distribution of line-staff positions within a given corporation. In addition, work force complexity is also characterized by the number of occupational roles and the number of subunits within the corporation.

The percentage of blue-collar positions and the percentage of white-collar positions was measured by the following item:

What is the approximate percentage of white-collar workers (administrative/management, professional, office/clerical support) and the approximate percentage of blue-collar workers (technical, production/service, maintenance) at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%.]

\_\_\_\_ White collar  
 \_\_\_\_ Blue collar

The percentage of line and staff was addressed by the following item:

What is the approximate percentage of line workers and staff workers at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%.]

\_\_\_\_ Line personnel  
 \_\_\_\_ Staff personnel

The means, medians, minimums, and maximums for employee composition are presented in Table 9.

The number of occupational roles, which is a component of complexity, was measured by the following item:

What is the approximate number of different official job titles in your corporation? For example: Chief Executive Officer, President, Vice-President, Executive Director, on down to the lowest-level employee. Please check one.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ 21-25
- ☐ 26-30
- ☐ More than 30

The number of subunits within the corporation was measured by the following item:

What is the approximate number of major subunits (divisions, sections, etc.) within your corporation? Please check one.

- ☐ 1-5
- ☐ 6-10
- ☐ 11-15
- ☐ 16-20
- ☐ More than 20

The frequency and percentage distributions for occupational roles and the number of subunits are presented in Table 9.

Table 9 presents the nature of the corporations in this study through the variables of size, shape (levels of authority), and work force complexity. The size of the corporations ranged from 250 to 114,000 employees. Of the 248 corporations, 68 (27.4%) have 250 to 349 employees, 43 (17.3%) have 350 to 449 employees, 43 (17.3%) have 450 to 649 employees, 35 (14.1%) have 650 to 999 employees, and 59 (23.9%) have 1,000 or more employees. The median corporation size is 500 employees.

More than half (58.4%) of the respondents indicated that their corporations have five or more levels of authority, which would

indicate that the majority of the corporations have a vertical dimension (shape) that is tall.

Work force complexity is comprised of the components of employee composition, occupational roles, and major subunits within the corporation. Employee composition is presented in terms of the mean distributions. The average corporation has 31.4% white-collar and 68.6% blue-collar employees. The average corporation in the sample has 75.3% line personnel and 24.7% staff personnel. Therefore, the majority of the corporations in the sample are comprised of blue-collar, line personnel.

It appears that the corporations in the sample are complex in terms of occupational roles but not in terms of the number of divisions or subunits. Of the 248 corporations, 137 or 55.3% have 21 or more occupational roles. Interestingly, of the 137 corporations, 103 or 41.5% have more than 30 occupational roles. On the other hand, major subunits within the corporations did not reflect a great deal of complexity. Of the 248 corporations, 178 or 71.8% indicated that they have 10 or fewer major subunits. Thus, the majority of the corporations are comprised of blue-collar, line personnel, with relatively few subunits but many occupational roles.

Centralization. Centralization refers to the degree of centralization and organizational distribution of the authority to make decisions affecting the corporation. Centralization as a concept is the degree to which power is differentially distributed within a

corporation (Hall, 1972). Centralization is an aspect in Weber's hierarchy of authority. If most of the decision making occurs at the top of the corporation, the corporation is centralized. A corporation indicates its view of personnel through the degree of centralization.

Centralization was measured through the use of two leadership items from the Siegel Scale of Support for Innovation. The items are:

In this corporation, the power of final decision can always be traced to the same few people.

The main function of members in this corporation is to follow orders that come down through channels.

The responses to the two items were summed to create a measure of centralization with a possible range from 2 to 8, 8 indicating a high degree of centralization. Cronbach's standardized alpha was .72, which indicates acceptable reliability for the Centralization Scale. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, range, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's standardized alpha for the scale are presented in Table 10. (The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, and skewness for each centralization item included in the scale are presented in Appendix D, Table 3.)

The mean is 5.6, which is slightly above the a priori mean of 5.0. Most of the corporations are perceived as having a moderate degree of centralization as indicated by this measure, since the



values are clustered toward the higher end of the range. A skewness value of  $-.01$  (a very low negative skew) is indicative of the symmetry of the distribution.

Table 10  
Centralization Scale

Scale value	Frequency	%
2	4	1.6
3	11	4.4
4	34	13.7
5	77	31.0
6	63	25.4
7	30	12.1
8	29	11.7
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 5.6 SD = 1.4 Possible range = 2-8 Minimum = 2  
Maximum = 8 Cronbach's standardized alpha = .72 Skewness =  $-.01$

Bureaucratization. Bureaucratization refers to the degree of bureaucracy on a continuum from high bureaucracy to low bureaucracy. The ideal-type bureaucracy, according to Weber (1947), has the following characteristics: division of labor, positional hierarchy, formality, and written rules. Some researchers contend that Weber's bureaucratic model is best approached from a multidimensional

perspective and that in an ideal-type bureaucracy all of these dimensions would be present to a high degree, while nonbureaucratized or simple corporations would ideally have a low degree of all the dimensions present.

The measurement of the degree of bureaucracy is based on the empirical study of Hall (1961). The items that were used to measure four of the six dimensions cited by Hall (1961) are presented by dimension. The four dimensions are hierarchy of authority, system of rules, system of procedures, and promotion and selection for employment based on technical competence.

**Dimension: Hierarchy of authority**

Everyone has a specific job to do.

When a person finishes a piece of work, it is always passed to the same person.

Most jobs have something new happening every day (reversed scoring).

**Dimension: System of rules**

The corporation has a manual of rules and regulations.

The employees are constantly being checked up on for rule violations.

Most people here make their own job rules (reversed scoring).

**Dimension: System of procedures**

Whatever situation arises, we have procedures to follow in dealing with it.

Employees are often left to their own judgment as to how to handle problems (reversed scoring).

Going through the proper channels is constantly stressed.

**Dimension: Promotion and selection for employment**

In order to get a promotion, you have to "know somebody" (reversed scoring).

Applicants must be qualified before they are hired here.

The corporation keeps a record of everyone's job performance.

The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, and skewness for each of the items of the four bureaucracy dimensions are presented in Appendix D, Tables 4 through 7. The responses to each of the dimensions were summed to create measures for those dimensions, and Cronbach's standardized alpha was computed. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, range, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's standardized alpha for each dimension are presented in Appendix D, Tables 8 through 11.

The degree of bureaucracy was originally analyzed through the summation of all 12 items for the bureaucracy dimensions. The resulting Cronbach's standardized alpha of .69 was viewed as somewhat low, and the 12-item scale was discarded. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's standardized alpha for this scale are presented in Appendix D, Table 12.

The degree of bureaucracy scale was then summed again and reanalyzed with the elimination of three items to obtain an acceptable reliability scale. Cronbach's standardized alpha was .74, which indicates acceptable reliability for the modified

Bureaucracy Scale. The possible range of values is from 9 to 45, 45 indicating a high degree of bureaucracy. This scale hereafter will be referred to as the Bureaucracy Scale. The frequency and percentage distributions, mean, standard deviation, minimum, maximum, skewness, and Cronbach's standardized alpha for the Bureaucracy Scale are presented in Table 11.

Table 11  
Bureaucracy Scale

Scale value	Frequency	%
14	2	0.8
15	0	0.0
16	1	0.4
17	2	0.8
18	1	0.4
19	2	0.8
20	0	0.0
21	4	1.6
22	8	3.2
23	15	6.0
24	8	3.2
25	9	3.6
26	11	4.4
27	16	6.5

Table 11--Continued

Scale value	Frequency	%
28	19	7.7
29	19	7.7
30	25	10.0
31	17	6.9
32	21	8.5
33	10	4.0
34	8	3.2
35	7	2.8
36	7	2.8
37	8	3.2
38	4	1.6
39	1	0.4
40	3	1.2
41	2	0.8
42	2	0.8
43	4	1.6
44	4	1.6
45	8	3.2
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 30.2    SD = 6.2    Possible range = 9-45    Minimum = 14  
 Maximum = 45    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .74    Skewness = .40

The mean is 30.2, which is slightly above the a priori mean of 27.0. All of the corporations are distributed throughout the scale, with a slight clustering near the center, indicating a moderate degree of corporate bureaucracy. A skewness value of .40 (a low positive skew) is indicative of the relative symmetry of the distribution.

#### Summary

The corporations in this sample place a very high emphasis on the manufacture of quality products and the maximization of profits, a moderately low emphasis on the value of the employee, and a very low emphasis on social responsibility. The corporations are very high in flexibility and personnel principles in support of the retention and retraining of their current experienced personnel. The majority of the corporations do not have unions. However, among those that do, a high percentage of the union contracts do not require the development of or contain an early return to work policy. The corporations on the average are moderate in size; approximately two-thirds or 62% have 250 to 649 employees and are tall-shaped, an indication of high hierarchical shape. In terms of employee composition, the majority of the corporations in the sample are comprised of blue-collar, line personnel. The corporations are very complex in terms of occupational roles; however, this is not true in terms of the number of subunits. There is a moderate degree

of centralization and a moderate degree of bureaucracy perceived in the corporations that were sampled.

## CHAPTER IV

### FINDINGS: TESTING THE HYPOTHESES

#### Testing the Bivariate Hypotheses

The first section of this chapter presents and discusses the findings of the tests of each bivariate hypothesis about the degree of resistance associated with the variables comprising the two theoretical foci of the study: corporate culture and corporate structure. The Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test were selected as the appropriate statistics to determine the magnitude, direction, and significance of association between the dependent variable (degree of resistance to early return to work) and the independent variables of corporate culture (corporate goals, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence<sup>1</sup>) and corporate structure (corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue collar, percentage of line personnel, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucracy).

#### Corporate Culture

The bivariate hypotheses postulated for the independent variables of corporate culture are listed below.

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<sup>1</sup>Eta used as a substitute for Pearson product-moment correlation due to the dichotomous nature of the variable.



1. There will be a negative association between employees as a valued resource and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

2. There will be a positive association between a corporation's goal of increased market share and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

3. There will be a negative association between a corporation that subscribes to the value to serve society and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

4. There will be a positive association between a corporation's goal of maximization of profits and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

5. There will be a negative association between a corporation's flexibility and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

6. There will be a negative association between an endorsement of personnel principles and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

7. There will be a positive association between union presence and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

The results of the tests for Hypotheses 1 through 7 are presented in Table 12.

Hypothesis 1 is supported. Based on the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is a significant negative association between employees as

a valued resource and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .001 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of  $-.283$ , indicating a small inverse relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for 8.0% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low negative correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that do not value employees are somewhat more resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that do value employees as a resource.

Table 12  
Correlations Between the Degree of Resistance to Early  
Return to Work and the Corporate Culture Variables

Independent variable	N	Pearson $r$	$r^2$	$p^*$
Value employee	248	$-.283$	.080	$< .001$
Increased market share	248	.023		n.s.**
Serve society	248	$-.189$	.036	$< .01$
Maximize profits	248	.049		n.s.
Flexibility	248	$-.156$	.024	$< .01$
Personnel principles	248	$-.274$	.075	$< .001$
Union presence	248	.087		n.s.

\*One-tailed test.

\*\*Indicates not significant.

Hypothesis 2 is not supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is no association between the corporate value of increased market share and degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 3 is supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is a significant negative association between the goal to serve society and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .01 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of  $-.189$ , indicating a small inverse relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for 3.6% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low negative correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that do not place a value on serving society are somewhat more resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that do place a value on serving society.

Hypothesis 4 is not supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is no association between the goal to maximize profits and the degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 5 is supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is a

significant negative association between corporate flexibility and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .01 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of  $-.156$ , indicating a small inverse relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for only 2.4% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low negative correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that have greater flexibility are somewhat less resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that do not have flexibility.

Hypothesis 6 is supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is a significant negative association between an endorsement of personnel principles and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .001 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of  $-.274$ , indicating a small inverse relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for 7.5% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low negative correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that do not endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees and do not support job and work place accommodations are somewhat more resistant to early

return to work policies than those corporations that do endorse those personnel principles.

Hypothesis 7 is not supported. Based on the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 12, there is no association between union presence in a corporation and degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

#### Corporate Structure

The bivariate hypotheses postulated for corporate structure are listed below.

8. There will be a negative association between size of a corporation and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

9. There will be a positive association between tallness in corporate shape and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

10. There will be a positive association between the percentage of blue-collar workers and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

11. There will be a positive association between the percentage of line personnel and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

12. There will be a positive association between the degree of centralization and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

13. There will be a positive association between the degree of bureaucratization and the degree of resistance to early return to work.

The results of the tests for Hypotheses 8 through 13 are presented in Table 13.

Table 13  
Correlations Between the Degree of Resistance to Early  
Return to Work and the Corporate Structure Variables

Independent variable	N	Pearson $r$	$r^2$	p*
Corporate size	248	.090		n.s.**
Corporate shape	248	.192	.037	< .01
Blue collar	248	-.095		n.s.
Line personnel	248	-.067		n.s.
Centralization	248	.320	.102	< .001
Bureaucracy	248	.384	.147	< .001

\*One-tailed test.      \*\*Indicates not significant.

Hypothesis 8 is not supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13, there is no association between corporate size and the degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 9 is supported. Based on the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13, there is a significant positive association between tallness in shape and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .01 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of .192, indicating a small relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for 3.7% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low positive correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that are tall shaped (many levels of hierarchy) are somewhat more resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that are flat shaped.

Hypothesis 10 is not supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13, there is no association between percentage of blue collar and the degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 11 is not supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13, there is no association between percentage of line personnel and the degree of resistance to early return to work. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted.

Hypothesis 12 is supported. Based on the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13,

there is a significant positive association between degree of centralization and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .001 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of .320, indicating a low moderate relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for only 10.2% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low positive correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that have a higher degree of centralization are somewhat more resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that have a lower degree of centralization.

Hypothesis 13 is supported. Based on the results of the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance test shown in Table 13, there is a significant positive association between the degree of bureaucracy and the degree of resistance. The association is significant at the less than .001 level with a Pearson  $r$  correlation of .384, indicating a moderate relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable. This association accounts for 14.7% of the variance in the dependent variable. The null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population. The low positive correlation can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that have a higher degree of bureaucratization are somewhat more resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations that have a lower degree of bureaucratization.



### Summary

In summary, the bivariate hypotheses postulating significant associations between the corporate culture variables--employee as a valued resource, to serve society, corporate flexibility, and endorsement of personnel principles--and the dependent variable, degree of resistance to early return to work, were supported. However, the bivariate hypotheses postulating significant associations between the corporate culture variables--increased market share, maximization of profits, and union presence--and the dependent variable, degree of resistance to early return to work, were not supported.

The bivariate hypotheses postulating significant associations between the corporate structure variables--corporate shape, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucracy--and the dependent variable, degree of resistance to early return to work, were supported. However, the bivariate hypotheses postulating significant associations between the corporate structure variables--corporate size, percentage of blue collar, and percentage of line personnel--and the dependent variable, degree of resistance to early return to work, were not supported.

### Testing the Multivariate Hypotheses

The second section of this chapter presents and discusses the findings of the tests of each multivariate hypothesis about the

predictability of the degree of resistance associated with the statistically significant variables comprising the two theoretical foci of the study: corporate culture and corporate structure. The corporate culture model and corporate structure model are depicted schematically on pages 22 and 37. Previously, the multivariate hypotheses associated with those two models as stated on pages 20 and 35-36 were:

1. The corporate culture variables of to value employees, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

2. The corporate structure variables of corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue-collar workers, percentage of line personnel, centralization, and bureaucratization are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

However, the Pearson product-moment correlation and its significance tests, just completed and discussed, eliminated as significant some of the corporate culture and corporate structure variables. Therefore, the multivariate analysis that will be presented are refined multivariate analyses based on the findings of the bivariate hypotheses. Multiple regression and its significance tests were selected as the appropriate statistics to determine whether there are statistically significant associations between the dependent variable (degree of resistance to early return to work) and the statistically significant independent variables of corporate

culture (to value employees, to serve society, corporate flexibility, and personnel principles) and corporate structure (corporate shape, centralization, and bureaucratization).

The refined multivariate analyses for the independent variables of corporate culture and corporate structure will be tested in these forms:

1. The corporate culture variables--to value employees, to serve society, corporate flexibility, and personnel principles--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

2. The corporate structure variables--corporate shape, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

The results of these analyses are presented in Tables 14 and 15, respectively.

Hypothesis 1 is supported. The four corporate culture variables presented in Table 14 have a multiple correlation of .321 and explain about 10% (multiple  $R^2 = .103$ ) of the variance of the dependent variable. As a group they are significant at the less than .001 level. To value employees and personnel principles are the variables that are the most powerful predictors of resistance in corporate culture toward early return to work policies. To value employees has a beta value of -.21 and is significant at the less than .01 level. Personnel principles has a beta value of -.20 and is significant at the less than .01 level. To value employees is

slightly stronger than the variable, personnel principles, in predicting resistance toward early return to work policies. They both have a significant negative association with the dependent variable. The other two variables are not significantly related to the dependent variable, resistance toward early return to work policies. The null hypothesis is rejected and the results can be generalized to the population.

Table 14  
Prediction of Degree of Resistance for Corporate Culture  
by Regression Analysis

Predictors	<u>b</u>	Beta	<u>I</u>	<u>p</u> *
Value employee	-.046	-.209	-2.79	< .01
Personnel principles	-.256	-.195	-3.01	< .01
Serve society	-.007	-.040	-0.56	n.s.**
Corporate flexibility	-.003	-.002	-0.03	n.s.
(Constant)	7.382			

Multiple  $\bar{R}$  = .344     $\bar{R}^2$  = .118    Adjusted  $\bar{R}^2$  = .103  
Adjusted  $\bar{R}$  = .321     $\bar{SE}$  = 1.84     $F$  = 7.92     $p$  (Sig. of  $F$ ) = .0001

\*One-tailed test, significance of I.    \*\*Indicates not significant.

Hypothesis 2 is supported. The three corporate structure variables presented in Table 15 have a multiple correlation of .410 and explain about 17% (multiple  $\bar{R}^2$  = .168) of the variance of the dependent variable. As a group they are significant at the less

than .001 level. The degree of bureaucracy is the only corporate structure variable predictive of resistance toward early return to work policies. It has a beta value of .27, which is significant at the less than .001 level. Bureaucracy is positively associated with the dependent variable. The other two variables are not significantly related to the dependent variable, resistance toward early return to work policies. The null hypothesis is rejected and the results can be generalized to the population.

Table 15  
Prediction of Degree of Resistance for Corporate Structure  
by Regression Analysis

Predictors	<u>b</u>	Beta	<u>I</u>	<u>p</u> *
Bureaucracy	.085	.270	3.88	< .001
Centralization	.236	.169	2.49	n.s.**
Corporate shape	.241	.107	1.79	n.s.
(Constant)	-1.568			
Multiple <u>R</u> = .422 <u>R</u> <sup>2</sup> = .178    Adjusted <u>R</u> <sup>2</sup> = .168 Adjusted <u>R</u> = .410 <u>SE</u> = 1.77 <u>F</u> = 17.65 <u>p</u> (Sig. of <u>F</u> ) = .0001				

\*One-tailed test, significance of I.    \*\*Indicates not significant.

The three surviving significant variables of corporate culture and corporate structure--to value employees, personnel policies, and bureaucracy--now permit the refined analysis of the third multivariate hypothesis:

The corporate culture variables, to value employees and personnel principles, and the corporate structure variable, bureaucratization, are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

The results of this analysis are shown in Table 16.

Table 16  
Prediction of Degree of Resistance for Corporate Culture  
and Corporate Structure by Regression Analysis

Predictors	<u>b</u>	Beta	<u>T</u>	<u>p</u> *
Bureaucracy	.103	.332	5.69	< .001
Value employee	-.040	-.182	-3.03	< .01
Personnel principles	-.214	-.163	-2.73	< .01
(Constant)	3.432			

Multiple  $R = .472$      $R^2 = .223$     Adjusted  $R^2 = .213$   
 Adjusted  $R = .461$      $SE = 1.72$      $F = 22.72$      $p$  (Sig. of  $F$ ) = .0001

\*One-tailed test, significance of T.    \*\*Indicates not significant.

Hypothesis 3 is supported. The three independent variables combined in one multiple regression statistic presented in Table 16 have a multiple correlation of .461 and explain about 21% (multiple  $R^2 = .213$ ) of the variance of the dependent variable. As a group they are significant at the less than .001 level. The degree of bureaucracy, to value employees, and personnel principles are the

most powerful predictors of resistance among the statistically significant variables of corporate culture and corporate structure toward early return to work policies. Bureaucracy has a beta value of .33 and is significant at the less than .001 level. To value employees has a beta value of -.18 and is significant at the less than .01 level. Personnel principles has a beta value of -.16 and is significant at the less than .01 level. Bureaucracy has a positive association with the dependent variable and is the strongest of the three variables, whereas to value employees and personnel principles have a negative association with the dependent variable, resistance toward early return to work. Of the three variables, bureaucracy is considerably stronger than either to value employees or personnel principles, as shown by the beta values in Table 16. Therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected and the results generalized to the population.

In summary, the multiple regression results can be interpreted as follows: Corporations that have a higher degree of bureaucracy, do not value employees, do not endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees, and do not support job and work place accommodations are predictive of more resistance to early return to work policies than those corporations with a low degree of bureaucracy, that value employees, that do endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees, and that do support job and work place accommodations.

## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS

In this final chapter the research procedures are described, the findings are summarized, and the theoretical implications are examined. The possible reasons why some of the variables were not useful in explaining the dependent variable while others were, are speculated on. Theoretical contributions, policy implications, limitations of the present research, and implications for future research are discussed. Finally, the chapter closes with concluding observations.

#### Summary of Research Procedures and Findings

The purpose of this research was to discover the extent and patterns of resistance the concept of an early return to work policy is encountering in private corporations. The degree of resistance was examined through variables which are component elements of the macro themes of corporate culture and corporate structure theory. Corporate culture embodies a set of beliefs and values collectively held and socialized by a corporation. Specific elements of corporate culture which were examined are corporate goals (to increase market share, to maximize profits, to manufacture a quality product, to value employees, to provide quality service, and to serve society), corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and



union presence. Corporate structure is the formal pattern of relationships among the various parts of the organization. The specific elements of corporate structure that were examined are corporate size, corporate shape, work force complexity (blue collar versus white collar and line personnel versus staff personnel), degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucratization. The dependent variable was the degree of resistance in private-sector corporations to the adoption of an early return to work policy. The corporate culture and corporate structure variables comprise the independent variables in this study.

The research efforts were confined to a single state, since a single state constitutes a common legal environment. Michigan was selected because it is not atypical of large industrial states and it was convenient to the conduct of the research. The determination was made to identify as a population all employers with 250 employees or more in the state involved in manufacturing. Two hundred fifty employees was considered to be a convenient minimum number for which early return to work would be likely to be a personnel issue relevant to management. A computer service, DIALOG, was used to access D & B---Dun's Market Identifiers (Dun & Bradstreet, 1988), and a subset of manufacturing companies with 250 employees or more was retrieved. A database containing 508 Michigan companies was secured.

The data were collected through the use of a survey questionnaire mailed to the corporate official identified as

responsible for the human resources function. If he/she could not be identified, the survey materials were mailed to the corporation president. The initial mailing consisted of the survey questionnaire, a cover letter, and a stamped pre-addressed return envelope. Follow-up letters were mailed to those corporations that did not respond to the initial mailing. The cover letter as well as the follow-up letters appealed to the official's imputed interest in the understanding of the nature of policies and their corporate consequences. In addition, every letter stressed the importance of the respondent's contribution to the research effort. Eight survey questionnaires were not delivered, so the population surveyed consisted of 500 corporations. A total of 248 corporate officers responded to the self-administered questionnaire, an overall response rate of 49.6%.

The relationships between the dependent and independent variables were analyzed through the use of Pearson product-moment correlation and eta for the bivariate hypotheses. Multiple regression was used to test the three multivariate hypotheses involving models of resistance. Models were developed using only the variables identified as significantly related to the resistance to early return to work through the testing of the bivariate hypotheses. The complete multivariate model was developed from variables identified as adding significantly to the explanation of the dependent variable in the tests of the two previous models. The

results of the tests of the bivariate and multivariate hypotheses for the corporate culture and corporate structure variables are summarized in Table 17.

As shown in Table 17, the corporate culture variables significantly associated with resistance to early return to work policy in the bivariate hypotheses were employee as a valued resource, to serve society, corporate flexibility, and endorsement of personnel principles. The corporate culture variables that were not significantly associated with early return to work policy were increased market share, maximization of profits, and union presence.

The corporate structure variables significantly associated with resistance to early return to work policy in the bivariate hypotheses were corporate shape, degree of centralization, and degree of bureaucracy. The corporate structure variables that were not significantly associated with resistance to early return to work policy were corporate size, percentage of blue collar, and percentage of line personnel.

The tests of the bivariate hypotheses eliminated some of the corporate culture and corporate structure variables from the original multivariate hypotheses, which resulted in two refined multivariate hypotheses and the creation of two refined models. The original multivariate hypotheses were:

1. The corporate culture variables--to value employees, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society,

Table 17  
Summary of the Outcomes of the Hypothesis Testing

Independent variables	Bivariate hypothesis	Restricted models <sup>a</sup>	Complete model <sup>b</sup>
<u>Corporate culture</u>			
Value employee	Supported	Significant	Significant
Increased market share	Not supported		
Serve society	Supported	Not significant	
Maximize profits	Not supported		
Flexibility	Supported	Not significant	
Personnel principles	Supported	Significant	Significant
Union presence	Not supported		
<u>Corporate structure</u>			
Corporate size	Not supported		
Corporate shape	Supported	Not significant	
Blue collar	Not supported		
Line personnel	Not supported		
Centralization	Supported	Not significant	
Bureaucracy	Supported	Significant	Significant

<sup>a</sup>"Restricted models" refers to the variables in the corporate culture and corporate structure restricted models.

<sup>b</sup>"Complete model" refers to the model combining the corporate culture and corporate structure variables.

corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

2. The corporate structure variables--corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue-collar workers, percentage of line personnel, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

The two refined multivariate hypotheses were:

1. The corporate culture variables--to value employees, to serve society, corporate flexibility, and personnel principles--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

2. The corporate structure variables--corporate shape, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

As shown in Table 17, the corporate culture variables in the restricted model that contributed to the explanation of the dependent variable were to value employees and personnel principles. The corporate culture variables in the restricted model that did not add significantly to the explanation of the dependent variable were to serve society and corporate flexibility. The corporate structure variable in the restricted model that contributed to the explanation of the dependent variable was degree of bureaucracy. The corporate structure variables in the restricted model that did not add significantly to the explanation of the dependent variable were corporate shape and degree of centralization.

The tests of the restricted models resulted in additional corporate culture and corporate structure variables being eliminated as significant from the models, leading to a more refined complete multivariate hypothesis and a correspondingly more refined complete model. The original complete multivariate hypothesis was:

The corporate culture variables--to value employees, increased market share, maximization of profits, to serve society, corporate flexibility, personnel principles, and union presence--and the corporate structure variables--corporate size, corporate shape, percentage of blue-collar workers, percentage of line personnel, centralization, and bureaucratization--are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

The refined complete multivariate hypothesis was:

The corporate culture variables, to value employees and personnel principles, and the corporate structure variable, bureaucratization, are predictive of resistance to early return to work policies.

As shown in Table 17, the variables in the complete model that contributed to the explanation of the dependent variable were to value employees, personnel principles, and degree of bureaucracy. The complete multivariate hypothesis was supported, as evidenced by a significant and meaningful multiple  $R$  of .461. Therefore, the refined complete model is judged an advance in the explanation of resistance to early return to work policy.

In summary, the test of the complete model can be interpreted (noting the signs of the betas reported in Chapter IV) as follows: Corporations that have a higher degree of bureaucracy, do not value employees, do not endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees, and do not support job and work place accommodations are more likely to be resistant to early return to work policies than those corporations with a relatively lower degree of bureaucracy, that value employees, and endorse the personnel principles of retaining and retraining employees and job and work place accommodations.

#### Theoretical Implications

In Chapter I two ideal-type model corporations were discussed: a most resistant type of corporation and a least resistant type of corporation. As a result of the findings of this study, the two ideal-type models of corporations were refined.

In a refined ideal-type most resistant model: The employee is not valued by the corporation as a human resource, personnel replacement principles to support retraining and work place and job accommodations are not endorsed, and the corporation is rigidly bureaucratic.

In a refined ideal-type least resistant model: The employee is valued by the corporation as a human resource, personnel principles of support through retraining and work place and job accommodations

are endorsed and practiced, and the corporation is less rigidly bureaucratic.

Table 18 contrasts the two a priori model types with each other and compares them with the two new empirically derived models.

#### Why Some of the Independent Variables Were Not Useful in Explaining the Dependent Variable

An inclusive theory was constructed which assigned a role to every corporate culture and corporate structure variable that was suggested in the literature as relevant to the explanation of response to disability policy. As revealed by the research, not every variable was useful; some added to the explanation of the dependent variable; others did not and were not included in the refined model. The result is a sparser, more refined picture informed by the data.

The theoretical question is why were some variables useful in explaining the dependent variable while others were not? Three possible reasons why some of the variables posited in the ideal typology were not useful are: The extrapolation from the literature was inapplicable, some variables were highly correlated with other independent variables (multicollinearity), and some of the variables were attenuated.



Table 18  
Summary of the Ideal Model Corporations

Independent variables	A priori models		Empirically derived models	
	Most resistant	Least resistant	Most resistant	Least resistant
<u>Corporate culture</u>				
Value employee	-	+	-	+
Increased market share	+	-		
Serve society	-	+		
Maximize profits	+	-		
Flexibility	-	+		
Personnel replacement principles	+	-	+	-
Union presence	+	-		
<u>Corporate structure</u>				
Large size	-	+		
Tall shape	+	-		
Blue collar	+	-		
Line personnel	+	-		
Centralization	+	-		
Bureaucracy	+	-	+	-

### Literature Extrapolation

A number of variables were not useful in explaining the dependent variable because their extrapolation from the literature was inapplicable. This was true of some of the corporate goals (to increase market share, to maximize profits, to manufacture a quality product, and to provide quality service), union presence, and the percentage of blue collar/white collar, and line/staff personnel). Each of these variables will be discussed briefly.

The logic was that if some of the goals were highly valued, others would not be valued. What was discovered was that the goals were not antithetical and all but one were rated as very important. When corporate officers rated the goals on a continuum from "Not Important" to "Very Important" with a range from 1 to 50, only one goal (to serve society) had a mean rating of less than 39. This indicates that corporate officers consider the goals, to manufacture a quality product, maximization of profits, increased market share, to value employees, and to provide a quality service, as all very important goals. This indicates corporations can and do endorse what were posited as logically disparate goals in the ideal type. Further, as discovered in the tests of the bivariate hypotheses, the goals least involved with the personnel area were not relevant to early return to work.

Contrary to the literature, a high percentage (64.6%) of the union contracts were mute on early return to work policy. Since

Michigan is a highly unionized state, it was expected that the literature would be supported: that union contracts would be a barrier in early return to work policy. If the assumption is made that the measurement was appropriate, then an explanation is that unions do not want to risk offending their able-bodied constituency by supporting an early return to work policy for the less able. It is reasonable to assume that the unions are concerned that if they support early return to work there will be friction, so potential constituency conflict is resolved by remaining mute.

In developing the corporate structure theory and the logic behind the prominent variables, it was theorized that the corporations with large percentages of blue-collar workers would be more resistant due to perceived production disruption because of required job modifications, and task differentiation. Similarly, it was theorized that corporations with a large proportion of line personnel, which by its nature is labor intensive and physical, would find it difficult to modify their work day and therefore would be resistant to an early return to work policy. Sussman and Hagan (1979), Smedley (1985), and Stein (1987) are of the opinion that it is more difficult to make work place accommodation and job modifications for the blue-collar/line type of position as opposed to the white-collar/staff position. Corporate officers were asked to indicate the proportional distributions of blue-collar/white-collar positions and the proportional distributions of line/staff positions, but those corporations with early return to work policies

were not asked who were included in their policies. They may have had exclusive blue-collar/line policies and/or exclusive white-collar/staff policies. Blue-collar/line employees and white-collar/staff employees may each have unique problems and job and work place accommodations associated with them. If this variable is theoretically relevant, it may not have been pursued in this research in a way that would reveal its saliency; this then would be a study limitation. In the development of the dependent variable, resistance to early return to work was examined, not the extent of the policy; if a corporation had one it may have been for selected groups or it could have been ubiquitous. If we had looked at the groups of employees for which there were/were not early return to work policies, the blue-collar/white-collar and line/staff variables might have been useful in explaining the dependent variable.

#### Multicollinearity

A number of variables were not useful in explaining the dependent variable because they were correlated with and subsumed by other independent variables (multicollinearity). These variables appear to be to serve society, corporate flexibility, corporate shape, and centralization.

While there was a significant negative zero-order association between the goal, to serve society, and the degree of resistance, this variable did not add to the explanation of the dependent

variable during the test of the restricted corporate culture model and was eliminated as an explanatory variable. A review of the correlation matrix reveals that there is a significant Pearson product-moment correlation of .515 with another goal, to value employees, which did contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable in the complete model. We conclude that the variable, to serve society, was eliminated as explanatory due to multicollinearity.

While there was a significant negative zero-order association between corporate flexibility and the degree of resistance, this variable did not add to the explanation of the dependent variable during the test of the restricted corporate culture model and was eliminated as an explanatory variable. A review of the correlation matrix reveals that there is a significant Pearson product-moment correlation of .290 with another corporate culture variable, personnel principles, which did contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable in the complete model. We conclude that the variable, corporate flexibility, was eliminated as explanatory due to multicollinearity.

While there was a significant positive zero-order association between the corporate structure variable, corporate shape, and the degree of resistance, this variable did not add to the explanation of the dependent variable during the test of the restricted model and was eliminated as an explanatory variable. A review of the correlation matrix reveals that there is a significant Pearson

product-moment correlation of .248 with another corporate structure variable, bureaucracy, which did contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable in the complete model. We conclude that the variable, corporate shape, was eliminated as explanatory due to multicollinearity.

Finally, while there was a significant positive zero-order association between degree of centralization and the degree of resistance, this variable did not contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable during the test of the restricted corporate structure model and was eliminated as an explanatory variable. A review of the correlation matrix reveals that there is a significant Pearson product-moment correlation of .517 with another corporate structure variable, bureaucracy, which did contribute to the explanation of the dependent variable in the complete model. We conclude that the variable, centralization, was eliminated as explanatory due to multicollinearity.

#### Variable Attenuation

Two variables were not useful in explaining the dependent variable due to attenuation. These variables appear to be union presence and corporate size.

Contrary to the literature, three-fifths (61.3%) of the corporations in this study had no union representation, and a high percentage (87.5%) of the union contracts did not require the

development of or contain an early return to work provision. This variable was not investigated thoroughly in the study because of the low percentage of corporations that had a union presence. Union presence is not relevant in the corporate culture model, although the case was made that it was an element of corporate culture; since Michigan is a highly unionized state, it was expected to have a "union culture." If it has a place in any model, it might more appropriately be an element of corporate structure, where it could be an inhibitor.

Size was considered to be an important variable when the concept behind corporate culture theory was being developed, since it appeared to figure prominently in the literature. However, the literature dealt primarily with large corporations as opposed to small corporations; it was faulty logic to extrapolate the very small corporations' experience to those of 250 employees or more. An explanation for the lack of association may be the truncation of corporate size by establishing a minimum of 250 employees. In the Schwartz (1986b) study, corporations with a minimum of 10 employees were examined. It is possible that the minimum of 250 employees is beyond the threshold at which size is a factor in resistance; had the minimum size been lower, a possible positive association may have been observed. Theoretically, this variable may be relevant.

### Theoretical Contribution

A major theoretical contribution of this research, therefore, is at least the partial clarification of major variables contributing to the resistance to early return to work policy and, by implication, a clue to factors germane to other personnel policies. Bureaucracy in its broadest conception, subsuming centralization and shape, and, crossing into corporate culture content, flexibility, is a powerful and useful tool for understanding. The findings point to the effects of bureaucratization as a whole--as the interaction of its component elements, as befitting the use of an ideal typology, as an explanatory theoretical component. From this perspective a theoretical question remains: To what extent is the degree of bureaucracy inhibiting a corporate policy, advanced by external social forces, such as legal precedent and the changing views of severe and chronic illness and disability? Will there be a retardation of the advancing early return to work policy adoption, or will bureaucratization be a diminishing factor in this policy area?

A second useful theoretical contribution is the penetration of the view of monolithic corporate culture. In this area of investigation, at least, corporate culture can be viewed as variegated. Diverse beliefs and values may be combined in corporate culture, even if a priori logic included the model corporate culture



as characterized by the domination of the most powerful of antithetical and potentially competing values. Even though early return to work may involve all aspects of corporate activities, it appears to be those values most relevant to and perhaps ensconced within the personnel segment of the corporation that are of greatest importance in the acceptance or rejection of this sort of policy. Hence we are alerted to a more detailed analysis of the mix of corporate values, their sites of endorsement, and their direct relevance to given policies. The theoretical import of corporate culture is not diminished but appears to be a richer and more complex conceptual tool than was originally conceptualized in this research and much of the relevant literature.

#### Policy Implications

This research has broader implications than the application to the personnel area alone. It is reported in the literature that among working-age Americans, 16 through 64 years old, more than 13 million are disabled. Based on Current Population Survey results, the percentage of disabled employees in the work force doubles at 10-year intervals after age 44. It is estimated that by the turn of the century one-half of the U.S. population will be physically disabled, chronically ill, or over 65 years of age (Bowe, 1983; McNeil, 1982). This puts a heavy burden on active employees in the remaining half.

In the current study we looked at a single small policy restricted to the personnel area. The implication is for corporations and other institutions to have to make accommodations in policies and the work place for other, broader reasons. Two of these broader reasons would be the impact of affirmative action and its associated legislation.

The federal policy of equal employment opportunity and affirmative action has evolved slowly over a 45-year period (Goldstein, 1984; Jones, 1985). The impetus for the federal policy came from executive orders and bureaucratic programs to implement those orders, rather than through legislation. In 1961, President Kennedy concluded that employers were demonstrating indifference to the neutral requirement of equal opportunity, so he issued Executive Order 10925 to obligate federal contractors to take positive measures and to pursue affirmative action to insure nondiscrimination. Employers were encouraged to make a good-faith effort to monitor the composition of their work force and to establish goals and timetables to increase minority-group representation. They were expected to develop their own means for achieving the end result required by the government. If hiring targets were met, then there was a presumption of compliance on the part of the contractor with his affirmative action obligation.

The mid- to late 1960s was a period in which many changes in affirmative action took place. The first of these was the Civil Rights Act of 1964, Public Law 88-352, enacted by the 88th Congress

on July 2, 1964. Of particular note in this act is Title VII, which addresses "Equal Opportunity." The final guidelines for Title VII were published by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) in the Federal Register on January 19, 1979. In the overview it is stated, "The Act requires the Commission to investigate complaints and attempt to correct violations it discovers, informally and through conciliation, or, if necessary through court action." Later the guidelines state,

Thus the Supreme Court recognizes that persons subject to Title VII will consider race, sex and national origin in their analyses and evaluations. In addition, the Court emphasized the concept of conciliation and voluntary action rather than litigation as the primary method of enforcing Title VII.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was followed by the revised Philadelphia Plan of 1969, which was issued by the United States Department of Labor under Executive Order 11246. Under this plan, construction contractors in Philadelphia were required to hire minorities in accordance with numerical goals in order to expand minority employment opportunities. Jones (1985) contends that the modern concept of affirmative action had its inception in the Philadelphia Plan.

Many state and federal laws prohibit discrimination against the handicapped. These early laws originated in the 1970s at a time when the handicapped were trying to get protection similar to the protections that women and minorities enjoyed under the Civil Rights Act of 1964. However, it was not until 1978, through the

Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended in 1978, that the handicapped were finally acknowledged in the law. The Act allows for the creation of a comprehensive federal-state program in each state which provides the handicapped with a wide variety of rehabilitation services and broadly worded civil rights protection against discrimination. The Act specifically prohibits discrimination against the handicapped by the federal government, federal contractors, and recipients of federal funds.

Of particular significance in this Act are several titles that address the needs of the handicapped. They are Title I, Title VII, and Title V. Title I sets up the basic vocational rehabilitation program under which the handicapped may receive evaluation and diagnostic services, medical care, counseling, training, and prosthetic devices or other technological aids. These services are to be provided by local agencies or private organizations under contract or subgrants with the state. Title VII uses supplementary grants to the states to establish a program for comprehensive services for independent living for the handicapped whose disabilities are so severe that they do not presently have the potential for employment but who may benefit from vocational rehabilitation services which will enable them to live and function independently. Title V of the Rehabilitation Act establishes the protection of the civil rights of handicapped people as a national policy. The three key provisions in Title V provide significant protection to the handicapped. They are Sections 501, 503, and 504.

Section 501 carries out the intent of Congress that the federal government be an exemplary employer of the handicapped. Each federal agency, including the U.S. Postal Service, is required to annually establish an affirmative action plan encouraging the hiring, placement, and promotion of the handicapped. There is a requirement to establish written affirmative action plans specifying goals for the employment and promotion of the handicapped.

Section 503 addresses employment under federal contracts. It requires all businesses that have federal contracts of \$2,500 or more to take affirmative action in the employment and advancement of handicapped individuals.

Section 504 addresses nondiscrimination under federal grants and programs. Interestingly, Section 504 was patterned after, and has language almost identical to the antidiscrimination language of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Education Amendments of 1972 (Jacobs, 1979). Frank Bowe (1978), a leading advocate of civil rights for the handicapped, is of the opinion that Section 504 is the most important civil rights provision ever enacted on behalf of the handicapped.

On the state level, in 1976, the State of Michigan enacted an Act protecting the civil rights of the handicapped. It is entitled the Michigan Handicappers' Civil Rights Act, Act no. 220, Public Acts of 1976, as amended by Act 478, Public Acts of 1980. It states in Section 102(1), "The opportunity to obtain employment, housing,

and other real estate and full and equal utilization of public accommodations, public services, and educational facilities without discrimination because of a handicap is guaranteed by this act and is a civil right."

On May 9, 1989, new civil rights legislation affecting the handicapped was introduced in the United States Senate (S. 933) and the House of Representatives (H.R. 2273) on the federal level. Co-sponsored by Senators Lowell Weicker (R-CN) and Thomas Harkin (D-IO) and Congressmen Tony Coelho (D-CA), Silvio Conte (R-MA), and Major Owens (D-NY), the legislation would outlaw discrimination on the basis of handicap by state and local governments, certain employers and housing providers, the broadcasting and communications industry, and in public accommodations and transportation. The legislation, called the Americans With Disabilities Act of 1989, parallels the scope and coverage of the major civil rights laws which prohibit discrimination on the basis of race, sex, national origin, religion, and age.

The Act would apply to employers, employment agencies, labor organizations, and job training programs subject to Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; to housing covered by Title VIII of the Act; to public accommodations subject to Title II; to transportation services; to states and agencies of the states; and to broadcast, communications, and telecommunications services. It is also explicitly stated that the Act would not undercut the requirements of Title V of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act (which includes

Section 504) or the requirements of any federal, state, or local law that provides more stringent protection against discrimination. The forms of discrimination made unlawful by this Act are also delineated.

The Act also clearly states the requirements on three kinds of discrimination: the removal of architectural, transportation, and communication barriers; the requirement to make reasonable accommodations for the disabled worker; and the elimination of standards and criteria that screen out individuals with disabilities.

Sanctions against noncompliance would include both civil penalties and monetary penalties. Businesses with 15 or fewer employees are exempted from this Act. Even though no one has taken issue with the intent of the legislation, critics have already questioned the feasibility of and the costs associated with compliance ("Senate Approves," 1989). On September 7, 1989, the U.S. Senate, by a wide margin, approved the Americans With Disabilities Act. The House of Representatives is expected to approve it in the current session.

The research identified some characteristics that promoted early return to work policy and some that retarded early return to work policy. One characteristic that acts to retard early return to work is the degree of bureaucracy. Bureaucracy is strong and getting stronger in many corporations. However, there appears to be

some kind of accommodation in the process of bureaucracy that permits early return to work, or it would be on a collision course since it has become a policy imperative.

The Rehabilitation Act as amended in 1978 clearly targets corporations and institutions. They are required to examine their personnel policies and practices and to create additional policies to accommodate this legislation. Public policy generated by the Congress that makes specific provisions for corporations and other private-sector institutions is the link between public and private administration.

The research study discovered that there was a large proportion (41.5%) of the corporations in Michigan that already have a fully implemented early return to work policy. These policies were adopted even in the absence of specific legislation but perhaps in anticipation of it. Since some corporations already have begun to make accommodations, there appears to be a shift in values which supports the introduction of some of the recent legislation, such as H.R. 2273 and S. 933. The Americans With Disabilities Act of 1989 will require additional accommodations by corporations and institutions.

For those corporations that have not as yet adopted an early return to work policy, an example of a "model" early return to work policy would be as follows. This corporation will not discriminate against the handicapped/disabled (permanent or temporary) employee in its employment policy. Periodically, employees have injuries or



illnesses that prevent them from performing all of their usual duties for a period of time. This corporation will provide employment to "early return" employees with medical/physical restrictions. These "early return" employees will be accommodated through whatever means are necessary; they may include but are not limited to job retraining, job modification, and/or work place accommodation. This corporation feels that its employees are its most valuable resource and should be used as such.

As the concept of affirmative action is broadened and new public policies are developed, corporations and private-sector institutions are made responsible to accommodate them. In that context, the findings of this research have application to this process of corporate and institutional accommodation.

#### Limitations of the Present Research

The perfect research has yet to be crafted. This research was conducted with some limitations stemming from practical restraints and others that became apparent during the research process. There were some limitations in the selection of the particular respondent, the minimum corporation size selected for the study, and the development of the dependent variable. The decision was made to address the survey materials to the corporate officer responsible for corporate human resources since an early return to work policy would be a personnel policy and that officer should be most

knowledgeable about it. However, a recent study on the reliability of information possessed by corporate officers in terms of corporate culture and corporate structure rated the human resources officer as the least reliable source of information (Knoke & Kaufman, 1989).

In an ideal research scenario, it would be advisable to interview five corporate officers in a group to obtain the true corporate perspective (particularly in light of the variety of corporate values held simultaneously). However, in the current study questionnaires were sent to a single source and as such this does constitute a research limitation. Currently there is very little literature available on studying corporations (or any other organization) through the use of survey questionnaires (Knoke & Kaufman, 1989). The literature that is available addresses the study of corporate structure, less often the study of corporate culture. An exception is the Organizational Assessment Instrument (OAI) developed by Van de Ven and Terry (1980), which includes a corporate culture scale which has been validated (Harrison, 1987, pp. 64-65).

Second, the population and sampling procedure limited minimum corporate size to 250 employees. The truncation of corporate size to a minimum of 250 employees may have affected the study findings that there was no association between corporate size and resistance, contrary to the literature. The size of corporations ranged from 250 to 114,000 employees in the study. In the Schwartz (1986b) study, corporations with a minimum of 10 employees were examined; it

is possible that the minimum of 250 employees is beyond the threshold at which size is a factor in resistance.

Third, the development of the dependent variable may be a study limitation. The decision was made to examine resistance to early return to work policy. However, those corporations that had early return to work policies were not asked what groups of employees were covered by their policies. If we had looked at the groups of employees for which there were/were not early return to work policies, the blue-collar/white-collar and line/staff variables might have contributed to the explanation of the dependent variable (see Literature Extrapolation, p. 123).

Although these limitations are apparent and need to be noted, the research remains useful and intact.

#### Implications for Future Research

The current study was restricted to one midwestern state, Michigan. The sample selection could be expanded to include representative corporations from an eastern state, a midwestern state, a western state, and a southern state, possibly one of the "right to work" states.<sup>1</sup> This study, then, would permit the

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<sup>1</sup>According to Donovan and Hillman Johnson (1987), right to work states have right to work laws, which are defined as follows: "state laws which make it illegal for a collective agreement to contain union shop, maintenance of membership, preferential hiring or any other clauses calling for compulsory union membership. State legislatures were authorized to pass such laws by the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947" (p. 109).

assessment of the effect of the geographical location and the fiscal and social contexts of the corporations on resistance to an early return to work policy.

In addition to measuring resistance to early return to work directly, the nature of employer beliefs associated with it could be measured. Attitudes and beliefs shape corporate policy; the nature of employer beliefs may be important since the prevalence of misconceptions could have a serious effect on the generation of early return to work policy. The literature suggests that early return to work policy as a concept may be meeting resistance for a variety of reasons which should be the focus of future investigation.

Nathanson (1977) addressed four common myths that some believe to be fact; they were the insurance myth, the dependability myth, the productivity myth, and the accommodation myth. Some corporations believe that hiring or retaining the disabled/handicapped will cause insurance and workmen's compensation costs to increase along with an increase in the number of accidents for which the corporation will be liable. It is also believed by some that the disabled/handicapped employees will have higher absenteeism and tardiness rates. Finally, there is also the belief that their productivity will be lower in quantity and quality and that the work place will require costly modification to accommodate the disabled/handicapped employee. Research of employers' beliefs in these myths

and consequences needs to be investigated, particularly since other literature indicates that these are myths and not facts (DuPont, 1982).

Other future research is presaged by a pilot study conducted by Hurren, Leneway, and Shoemaker (1986). Forty-six private-sector employers and 67 public-sector employers were surveyed with regard to their attitudes toward the early return to work concept. Three hypotheses were confirmed for both the endorsement and implementation of early return to work. They were:

1. Endorsement/implementation of early return is positively associated with perceived flexibility available in job modification.
2. Endorsement/implementation of early return is negatively associated with the degree of expected loss of productivity.
3. Endorsement/implementation of early return is negatively associated with the magnitude of perceived inequity.

All are based on attitudes and/or perceptions of the respondents representing their corporations. This was a preliminary study on employer attitudes that needs to be expanded and the results connected to this study. It is expected that this, if extended, would be a very productive line of research.

A third proposal for future research would be to examine the question through a different population. The current study surveyed corporations; a logical next step would be to survey corporate employees' resistance to early return to work policy. For example, in a recent attitude survey by Hurren and Shoemaker (1986) comparing

a broad spectrum of attitudes of 118 public-sector and 198 private-sector employees, nearly 75% of the public-sector employees surveyed opposed the implementation of an early return to work policy in which employees could return to duty with physical/medical limitations. In contrast, approximately 90% of the private-sector employees favored such an early return policy. Future research could examine employee resistance through the macro themes of equity theory, the Protestant Work Ethic theory, and social responsibility. Equity theory argues that a major input into job performance and satisfaction is the degree of equity (or inequity) that people perceive in their work situation (Adams, 1963, 1965). The literature (Furnham, 1984; Greenberg, 1979) notes that the Protestant Work Ethic also has been tied to equity theory. In current secular representation, the term "Protestant Work Ethic" has come to mean a cluster of attitudes, goals, and values which stress the importance of giving full effort to one's work (Carroll, 1981).

Social responsibility is a macro theme that embodies a belief that society, its institutions, organizations, and members have a moral/legal obligation to correct injustices in the social environment (Bunzel, 1986). The Hurren and Shoemaker (1986) study was a preliminary employee attitude study that needs to be expanded to a larger attitude study and the results connected to this study through research investigating the macro themes of equity theory, Protestant Work Ethic, and social responsibility.

### Concluding Observations

In closing, it is my feeling that this research increased our understanding of early return to work policies, which are increasingly relevant to affirmative action and handicapped statutes. We learned that it is possible to predict acceptance or resistance of a corporation on the basis of that corporation's profile. In terms of public and private administration, the findings of this study have serious implications that are not restricted solely to early return to work policy. There are patterns of endorsement or resistance that apply to the entire gamut of policies relative to disability.

Finally, the research was important because it examined a salient issue, dealing with the employment of handicapped/disabled employees, affirmative action, and basic human rights and values. It is at the cutting edge of policy issues in public and private administration. The result of the research is a leaner and theoretically plausible model and a pattern for policy decision making not confined solely to the issue of early return to work policy. It is a beginning, a model that demonstrates how policy may be influenced in public and private administration.

Appendix A  
Cover Letter and Follow-up Letters



Jan. 3, 1989

mr. john doe  
title  
xyz co.  
address  
city, state, zip

Dear

With the enclosed questionnaire we are asking for your help in gathering information about Michigan-based corporations and some selected personnel policies. We are all aware that corporate personnel policies are being monitored by state and federal agencies and affected by statute as never before. Understanding the nature of these policies and their corporate consequences is of increasing importance.

We know that you are busy. In asking your help we've tried to keep the questionnaire as short and easy to respond to as possible. (We really have.) The importance of these data, and your unique insights as a corporate officer make this effort worthwhile. Although the questionnaires are numbered for record-keeping purposes, we will keep all responses confidential and anonymous. No respondent or corporation will be identified to others. All participants will receive a summary of the research findings.

We are contacting all 508 manufacturing corporations employing 250 or more persons as listed in the Michigan Manufacturers Directory. The response of each is very important. If you have any questions about the questionnaire or the study please contact me at 3923 Stonegate Dr., Kalamazoo, MI 49007, or phone me at (616) 342-6091. The research is being conducted through the School of Public Affairs and Administration at Western Michigan University.

There is no substitute for the knowledge and insights that you possess. Your help is critical, valued, and appreciated. For your convenience we are enclosing a self-addressed, post-paid envelope for the questionnaire return. Thanks for your valuable time and help!

Sincerely,

Roger J. Shoemaker  
Principal Investigator

Jan. 20, 1989

NAME  
TITLE  
COMPANY  
ADDRESS  
CITY

Dear

Recently we sent you a questionnaire asking for your help in THE MICHIGAN SURVEY OF CORPORATE STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL POLICIES study. Since corporate personnel policies are being monitored by state and federal agencies and affected by statute, understanding the nature of these policies and their corporate consequences is of increasing importance to everyone.

We know that you are very busy. We've tried to keep the questionnaire as short and easy to respond to as possible. These data are important and your unique insights as a corporate officer make this effort valuable. We will keep all responses confidential and anonymous. No respondent or corporation will be identified to others. All participants will receive a summary of the research findings.

Your help is essential, there is no substitute for the knowledge and insights that only you possess. In case you have misplaced the original questionnaire, we are providing a replacement for your convenience. We are also enclosing another self-addressed, post-paid envelope for the questionnaire return. Thanks for your help.

Sincerely,

Roger J. Shoemaker  
Principal Investigator

Feb. 6, 1989

Dear Administrator;

Recently we sent you a questionnaire (and a follow-up questionnaire) asking for your help in THE MICHIGAN SURVEY OF CORPORATE STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL POLICIES study. We are attempting to survey corporate personnel policies and better understand their corporate consequences.

We know you are very busy and apologize for this continued request. We've kept the questionnaire as short and easy as possible. This subject is important and your understanding and unique insights as a corporate officer are important information. All responses are confidential and anonymous, no corporation will be identified.

Your help is essential, there is no substitute for the knowledge and experience that only you possess. Please spare a few minutes to respond to the questionnaire and mail it in the previously supplied post-paid envelope. If you need another copy of the questionnaire, please call (616) 323-5608. Thank you for your help.

Sincerely,

Roger J. Shoemaker  
Principal Investigator

**Appendix B**  
**Survey Questionnaire**

THE MICHIGAN SURVEY  
OF  
CORPORATE STRUCTURES AND PERSONNEL POLICIES

Roger J. Shoemaker  
Principal Investigator

1. Typically corporations have a number of corporate goals. Of the six goals below, please tell us their priority and importance to your corporation.

First, priority: rank each goal using the numbers from 1 to 6. "1" is the highest priority, "2" is the second highest priority, and so on. RANK FROM YOUR CORPORATION'S PERSPECTIVE, AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

Second, importance: Rate each goal individually on the continuum from very important to not important. Place an "X" on the line at the place reflecting its degree of importance. RATE FROM YOUR CORPORATION'S PERSPECTIVE AS YOU UNDERSTAND IT.

<u>Priority</u>	<u>Goals</u>	<u>Rating</u>	
		Very Important	Not Important
_____	To increase market share	_____	_____
_____	To maximize profits	_____	_____
_____	To manufacture a quality product	_____	_____
_____	To value employees	_____	_____
_____	To provide a quality service	_____	_____
_____	To serve society	_____	_____

2. Please check all the personnel policies that your corporation currently has in place.

_____ Disability insurance	_____ Maternity leave
_____ Medical insurance	_____ Paternity leave
_____ Dental insurance	_____ Affirmative action
_____ Pension plan	_____ Adoption leaves
_____ Matched investment	_____ Safety
_____ Wages and salaries	_____ Safety eyewear
_____ Early return to work	_____ Safety shoes
_____ Life insurance	_____ Sick leave

The following set of items have response categories ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. For each please select the response that reflects your corporation's position.

3. This corporation can be described as flexible and continually adapting to change.

☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

4. This corporation is always searching for fresh, new ways of looking at problems.

☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

5. Attempts at innovation are usually rejected here.

☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

6. This corporation feels it is more desirable to retain experienced personnel than to hire new employees.

☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

7. This corporation feels it is more desirable to make job and work place accommodations for old employees than to hire and train new personnel.

☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree

8. This corporation feels it is more desirable to hire and train new personnel than to retrain old employees.
- ☐ Strongly agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly disagree
9. In this corporation, the power of final decision can always be traced to the same few people.
- ☐ Strongly Agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly Disagree
10. The main function of members in this corporation is to follow orders that come down through channels.
- ☐ Strongly Agree  
☐ Agree  
☐ Disagree  
☐ Strongly Disagree
11. The concept of early return to work from illness or disability typically includes provisions for modification of work hours, jobs, or other working conditions. With regard to the concept of early return to work, please read the following statements and place a check next to the one statement which most closely describes your corporation's position.
- ☐ Has considered early return to work and rejected it.
- ☐ Is considering early return to work but is not favorably disposed toward it.
- ☐ Is considering early return to work but has not adopted a policy supporting it.
- ☐ Is considering early return to work and is favorably disposed toward it.
- ☐ Has adopted an early return to work policy but it is not yet implemented.
- ☐ Has an early return to work policy and it is fully implemented.



12. The implementation of an early return to work policy is thought to have consequences for corporations. Please check all the statements you believe to be true for your corporation.

- ☐ Permitting blue collar employees to return to duty with medical/physical restrictions at your corporation would result in generally lower productivity for your corporation.
- ☐ Permitting white collar employees to return to duty with medical/physical restrictions at your corporation would result in generally lower productivity for your corporation.
- ☐ Making job accommodations for employees with medical/physical restrictions is costly.
- ☐ Retaining employees who have medical/physical restrictions is not an appropriate use of the corporation's resources.
- ☐ The technology in my corporation makes it difficult to retain employees who become disabled.
- ☐ Returning employees to duty with medical/physical restrictions will cause an increase in the corporation's insurance premiums.
- ☐ A returned employee who was seriously injured on the job will be a safer employee in the future.
- ☐ Bringing a worker who was injured on the job back to work will improve safety consciousness among other workers.
- ☐ For a corporation to offer rehabilitation services to a work-injured employee is to admit liability.
- ☐ Retaining employees who have medical/physical restrictions will cause an increase in workmen's compensation premiums.
- ☐ Employees who have returned to work with medical/physical restrictions will have a higher absenteeism rate than other employees.
- ☐ It is difficult for management to reassign returning employees from one job classification to another in your corporation to accommodate disability management.
- ☐ It costs less to accommodate returning employees who have medical/physical restrictions than to train a new hire.

The following items are about unions. Please respond to each item reflecting your corporation's experience.

13. Are all or most of your personnel represented by a union?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

If you answered "Yes" to the previous item [13], please respond to the following items regarding the union. [If "No", skip to item 17]

14. How interested are the union officers in the welfare of the rank-and-file workers? Please check one.

☐ Very interested  
☐ Interested  
☐ Rarely interested  
☐ Disinterested

15. Does the union interfere inappropriately with corporate management?

☐ Yes  
☐ No

16. On early return to work policy, the union contract representing most of your workers at your corporation: (Please check one)

☐ Is mute  
☐ Allows discussion of early return to work provisions  
☐ Requires the development of early return to work policy  
☐ Contains an early return to work policy  
☐ Don't know

The following set of items have response categories ranging from definitely true to definitely false. Please check the category which reflects your corporation's perspective.

17. Everyone has a specific job to do.

☐ Definitely True  
☐ Partially True  
☐ Undecided  
☐ Partially False  
☐ Definitely False

18. The corporation has a manual of rules and regulations.

☐ Definitely True  
☐ Partially True  
☐ Undecided  
☐ Partially False  
☐ Definitely False

19. Whatever situation arises, we have procedures to follow in dealing with it.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
20. In order to get a promotion, you have to "know somebody."
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
21. The employees are constantly being checked upon for rule violations.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
22. Employees are often left to their own judgment as to how to handle problems.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
23. Applicants must be qualified before they are hired here.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
24. When a person finishes a piece of work, it is always passed to the same person.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False

25. Going through the proper channels is constantly stressed.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
26. The corporation keeps a record of everyone's job performance.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
27. Most jobs have something new happening every day.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
28. Most people here make their own job rules.
- ☐ Definitely True
  - ☐ Partially True
  - ☐ Undecided
  - ☐ Partially False
  - ☐ Definitely False
29. What is the number of levels of authority between the chief executive and the lowest level employee? Please select one.
- ☐ 2 or less
  - ☐ 3-4
  - ☐ 5-6
  - ☐ 7-8
  - ☐ 9 or more
30. What is the approximate percentage of white collar workers (administrative/management; professional; office/clerical support) and the approximate percentage of blue collar workers (technical; production/service; maintenance) at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%]
- ☐ White collar
  - ☐ Blue collar

31. What is the approximate percentage of line workers and staff workers at your corporation? Please write in percentages. [The percentages should sum to 100%]

\_\_\_\_ Line personnel  
\_\_\_\_ Staff personnel

32. What is the approximate number of different official job titles in your corporation? For example; Chief executive officer, President, Vice-President, Executive Director, on down to the lowest level employee. Please check one.

\_\_\_\_ 1-5  
\_\_\_\_ 6-10  
\_\_\_\_ 11-15  
\_\_\_\_ 16-20  
\_\_\_\_ 21-25  
\_\_\_\_ 26-30  
\_\_\_\_ More than 30

33. What is the approximate number of major sub-units (divisions, sections, etc.) within your corporation? Please check one.

\_\_\_\_ 1-5  
\_\_\_\_ 6-10  
\_\_\_\_ 11-15  
\_\_\_\_ 16-20  
\_\_\_\_ More than 20

Thanks for your help! Please drop the completed questionnaire in the mail. We've provided an envelope for your convenience!

THIS PROJECT IS UNDERTAKEN WITH THE ASSISTANCE OF  
THE SCHOOL OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS AND ADMINISTRATION,  
WESTERN MICHIGAN UNIVERSITY

Roger J. Shoemaker  
Principal Investigator

## Appendix C

### Code Book

<u>Column (s)</u>	<u>Item#</u>	<u>Variable Label</u>	<u>Variable Values</u>
1 -3	-	compnum	(101-604)
4 - 9	-	empnumb	(250-999999)
10	1a	incmrk1	(1-6)
11	1a	maxpro1	(1-6)
12	1a	manqua1	(1-6)
13	1a	valuem1	(1-6)
14	1a	qualse1	(1-6)
15	1a	servso1	(1-6)
16-17	1b	incmrk2	(01-50) no ans=99
18-19	1b	maxpro2	(01-50) no ans=99
20-21	1b	manqua2	(01-50) no ans=99
22-23	1b	valuem2	(01-50) no ans=99
24-25	1b	qualse2	(01-50) no ans=99
26-27	1b	servso2	(01-50) no ans=99
28	2a	disabin	1 = yes, 2 = no
29	2a	medicin	1 = yes, 2 = no
30	2a	dentaln	1 = yes, 2 = no
31	2a	penspla	1 = yes, 2 = no
32	2a	matchin	1 = yes, 2 = no
33	2a	wagesa1	1 = yes, 2 = no
34	2a	earlyre	1 = yes, 2 = no
35	2a	lifeins	1 = yes, 2 = no
36	2a	materle	1 = yes, 2 = no
37	2a	paterle	1 = yes, 2 = no
38	2a	affirma	1 = yes, 2 = no

39	2a	adoptle	1 = yes, 2 = no
40	2a	safetyp	1 = yes, 2 = no
41	2a	safetye	1 = yes, 2 = no
42	2a	safetys	1 = yes, 2 = no
43	2a	sicklea	1 = yes, 2 = no
44-45	2b	totpolc	(01-15) ertw elim.
46	3	corpfl1	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
47	4	corpfl2	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
48	5	corpfl3	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
49	6	retain1	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
50	7	jobwkac	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
51	8	retain2	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
52	9	central (final decisions)	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree



53	10	centra2 (follow orders)	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
54	11	corpert	1 = Rejected 2 = Not favorable 3 = Not adopted 4 = Favorable 5 = Not implement 6 = Implemented
55	12a	bluepro	1 = yes, 2 = no
56	12a	whitpro	1 = yes, 2 = no
57	12a	jobacco	1 = yes, 2 = no
58	12a	corpres	1 = yes, 2 = no
59	12a	technol	1 = yes, 2 = no
60	12a	incprem	1 = yes, 2 = no
61	12a	saferem	1 = yes, 2 = no
62	12a	safecon	1 = yes, 2 = no
63	12a	liabilt	1 = yes, 2 = no
64	12a	workcom	1 = yes, 2 = no
65	12a	highabs	1 = yes, 2 = no
66	12a	jobclas	1 = yes, 2 = no
67	12a	lessacc	1 = yes, 2 = no
68-69	12b	totcons (total consequences)	(00 - 13)
70	13	unionre	1 = yes, 2 = no
71	14	unionin	1=Very interested 2=Interested 3=Rarely interest 4=Disinterested 8=No union
72	15	uninter	1 = yes, 2 = no, 8 = no union

73	16	unionco	1 = Mute 2 = Discussion 3 = Req. develop 4 = Has policy 5 = Don't know 8 = No union
74	17	hierar1	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
75	18	sysru11	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
76	19	syspro1	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
77	20	promoel	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
78	21	sysru12	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
79	22	syspro2	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
80	23	promoe2	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
81	24	hierar2	1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false

82	25	syspro3		1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
83	26	promoe3		1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
84	27	hierar3		1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
85	28	sysrul3		1 =Definitely true 2 =Partially true 3 =Undecided 4 =Partially false 5=Definitely false
86	29	orgshap		1 = 2 or less 2 = 3 - 4 3 = 5 - 6 4 = 7 - 8 5 = 9 or more
87-88	30a	whiteco	(org. complexity)	00 - 99
89-90	30b	bluecol	(org. complexity)	00 - 99
91-92	31a	lineper	(org. complexity)	00 - 99
93-94	31b	staffpe	(org. complexity)	00 - 99
95	32	jobtitl	(org. complexity)	1 = 1 - 5 2 = 6 - 10 3 = 11 - 15 4 = 16 - 20 5 = 21 - 25 6 = 26 - 30 7 = More than 30
96	33	subunit	(org. complexity)	1 = 1 - 5 2 = 6 - 10 3 = 11 - 15 4 = 16 - 20 5 = More than 20

97	5	corpfl4	(replaces corpfl3, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
98	8	retain3	(replaces retain2, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Strongly Agree 2 = Agree 3 = Disagree 4 = Strongly Disagree
99	20	promoe4	(replaces promoel, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Definitely true 2 = Partially true 3 = Undecided 4 = Partially false 5 = Definitely false
100	22	syspro4	(replaces syspro2, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Definitely true 2 = Partially true 3 = Undecided 4 = Partially false 5 = Definitely false
101	27	hierar4	(replaces hierar3, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Definitely true 2 = Partially true 3 = Undecided 4 = Partially false 5 = Definitely false
102	28	sysrul4	(replaces sysrul3, orig. ans. reversed, changed to positive)	1 = Definitely true 2 = Partially true 3 = Undecided 4 = Partially false 5 = Definitely false
103	12c	negcons	(total neg. consequences, no respondent exceeded 9)	(0-9)
104	12d	poscons	(total pos. consequences)	(0-3)
105		sizecom	(company size collapsed)	1 = 250-349 2 = 350-449 3 = 450-649 4 = 650-999 5 = 1000-114000

**Appendix D**  
**Descriptive Findings Tables**

Table 1  
Corporate Flexibility

	Freq.	%
This corporation can be described as flexible and continually adapting to change.		
Strongly agree	104	41.9
Agree	128	51.6
Disagree	16	6.5
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.4 <u>SD</u> = .6    Skewness = -.33		
This corporation is always searching for fresh, new ways of looking at problems.		
Strongly agree	92	37.1
Agree	137	55.2
Disagree	19	7.7
Strongly disagree	0	0
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.3 <u>SD</u> = .6    Skewness = -.23		
Attempts at innovation are usually rejected here.		
Strongly agree	1	0.4
Agree	15	6.0
Disagree	172	69.4
Strongly disagree	60	24.2
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 1.8 <u>SD</u> = .6    Skewness = .04		

Table 2  
Personnel Principles

	Freq.	%
This corporation feels it is more desirable to retain experienced personnel than to hire new employees.		
Strongly agree	87	35.1
Agree	130	52.4
Disagree	25	10.1
Strongly disagree	6	2.4
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.2 <u>SD</u> = .7    Skewness = -.72		
This corporation feels it is more desirable to make job and work place accommodations for old employees than to hire and train new personnel.		
Strongly agree	24	9.7
Agree	145	58.5
Disagree	76	30.6
Strongly disagree	3	1.2
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 2.8 <u>SD</u> = .6    Skewness = -.06		
This corporation feels it is more desirable to hire and train new personnel than to retrain old employees.		
Strongly agree	2	0.8
Agree	26	10.5
Disagree	183	73.8
Strongly disagree	37	14.9
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 2.0 <u>SD</u> = .5    Skewness = .29		

Table 3  
Centralization

	Freq.	%
In this corporation, the power of final decision can always be traced to the same few people.		
Strongly agree	76	30.6
Agree	123	49.6
Disagree	44	17.7
Strongly disagree	5	2.0
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.1 <u>SD</u> = .7     Skewness = -.44		
The main function of members in this corporation is to follow orders that come down through channels.		
Strongly agree	35	14.1
Agree	68	27.4
Disagree	127	51.2
Strongly disagree	18	7.3
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 2.5 <u>SD</u> = .8     Skewness = .42		



Table 4  
Hierarchy of Authority

	Freq.	%
17. Everyone has a specific job to do.		
Definitely true	122	49.2
Partially true	104	41.9
Undecided	4	1.6
Partially false	11	4.4
Definitely false	7	2.8
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 4.3 <u>SD</u> = .9    Skewness = -1.85		
24. When a person finishes a piece of work, it is always passed to the same person.		
Definitely true	23	9.3
Partially true	43	17.3
Undecided	46	18.5
Partially false	53	21.4
Definitely false	83	33.5
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 2.5 <u>SD</u> = 1.4    Skewness = .42		
27. Most jobs have something new happening every day.		
Definitely true	26	10.5
Partially true	123	49.6
Undecided	17	6.9
Partially false	53	21.4
Definitely false	29	11.7
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.3 <u>SD</u> = 1.2    Skewness = -.54		

Table 5  
System of Rules

	Freq.	%
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18. The corporation has a manual of rules and regulations.		
Definitely true	139	56.0
Partially true	80	32.3
Undecided	6	2.4
Partially false	12	4.8
Definitely false	11	4.4
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 4.3 <u>SD</u> = 1.0     Skewness = -1.85		
21. The employees are constantly being checked up on for rule violations.		
Definitely true	14	5.6
Partially true	47	19.0
Undecided	16	6.5
Partially false	57	23.0
Definitely false	114	46.0
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 2.2 <u>SD</u> = 1.3     Skewness = .78		
28. Most people here make their own job rules.		
Definitely true	1	0.4
Partially true	40	16.1
Undecided	9	3.6
Partially false	62	25.0
Definitely false	136	54.8
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 1.8 <u>SD</u> = 1.1     Skewness = 1.14		
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Table 6  
System of Procedures

	Freq.	%
19. Whatever situation arises, we have procedures to follow in dealing with it.		
Definitely true	50	20.2
Partially true	141	56.9
Undecided	6	2.4
Partially false	31	12.5
Definitely false	20	8.1
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.7 <u>SD</u> = 1.2     Skewness = -1.08		
22. Employees are often left to their own judgment as to how to handle problems.		
Definitely true	29	11.7
Partially true	132	53.2
Undecided	14	5.6
Partially false	35	14.1
Definitely false	38	15.3
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.3 <u>SD</u> = 1.3     Skewness = -.72		
25. Going through the proper channels is constantly stressed.		
Definitely true	70	28.2
Partially true	104	41.9
Undecided	17	6.9
Partially false	39	15.7
Definitely false	18	7.3
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.7 <u>SD</u> = 1.2     Skewness = -.80		

Table 7  
Promotion and Selection for Employment

	Freq.	%
20. In order to get a promotion, you have to "know somebody."		
Definitely true	5	2.0
Partially true	30	12.1
Undecided	14	5.6
Partially false	47	19.0
Definitely false	152	61.3
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 1.7 <u>SD</u> = 1.1      Skewness = 1.36		
23. Applicants must be qualified before they are hired here.		
Definitely true	105	42.3
Partially true	100	40.3
Undecided	8	3.2
Partially false	22	8.9
Definitely false	13	5.2
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 4.1 <u>SD</u> = 1.1      Skewness = -1.36		
26. The corporation keeps a record of everyone's job performance.		
Definitely true	91	36.7
Partially true	110	44.4
Undecided	3	1.2
Partially false	24	9.7
Definitely false	20	8.1
Total	248	100.0
Mean = 3.9 <u>SD</u> = 1.2      Skewness = -1.24		

Table 8  
Hierarchy of Authority Scale

Scale value	Freq.	%
3	1	0.4
4	2	0.8
5	5	2.0
6	8	3.2
7	30	12.1
8	46	18.5
9	37	14.9
10	47	19.0
11	26	10.5
12	21	8.5
13	7	2.8
14	4	1.6
15	14	5.6
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 9.5    SD = 2.4    Possible range = 3-15    Minimum = 3  
 Maximum = 15    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .38    Skewness = .40

Table 9  
System of Rules Scale

Scale value	Freq.	%
4	4	1.6
5	4	1.6
6	6	2.4
7	16	6.5
8	14	5.6
9	20	8.1
10	46	18.5
11	65	26.2
12	17	6.9
13	21	8.5
14	22	8.9
15	13	5.2
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 10.6    SD = 2.4    Possible range = 3-15    Minimum = 4  
 Maximum = 15    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .46    Skewness = -.35

Table 10  
System of Procedures Scale

Scale value	Freq.	%
3	3	1.2
4	2	0.8
5	7	2.8
6	11	4.4
7	19	7.7
8	32	12.9
9	23	9.3
10	57	23.0
11	27	10.9
12	19	7.7
13	9	3.6
14	16	6.5
15	23	9.3
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 10.1    SD = 2.8    Possible range = 3-15    Minimum = 3  
 Maximum = 15    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .61    Skewness = .03

Table 11  
Promotion and Selection for Employment Scale

Scale value	Freq.	%
5	2	0.8
6	4	1.6
7	2	0.8
8	10	4.0
9	7	2.8
10	19	7.7
11	44	17.7
12	30	12.1
13	49	19.8
14	44	17.7
15	37	14.9
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 12.2    SD = 2.2    Possible range = 3-15    Minimum = 5  
 Maximum = 15    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .22    Skewness = -.88



Table 12  
Bureaucracy Scale

Scale value	Freq.	%
24	1	0.4
25	0	0.0
26	0	0.0
27	0	0.0
28	3	1.2
29	2	0.8
30	2	0.8
31	1	0.4
32	7	2.8
33	3	1.2
34	4	1.6
35	10	4.0
36	14	5.6
37	9	3.6
38	14	5.6
39	14	5.6
40	16	6.5
41	12	4.8
42	24	9.7
43	15	6.0
44	18	7.3
45	9	3.6
46	11	4.4
47	9	3.6
48	10	4.0
49	10	4.0
50	3	1.2
51	3	1.2
52	5	2.0
53	1	0.4
54	2	0.8
55	0	0.0
56	4	1.6
57	1	0.4
58	3	1.2
59	2	0.8
60	6	2.4
Total	248	100.0

Mean = 42.4     $SD = 6.8$     Possible range = 3-60    Minimum = 24  
Maximum = 60    Cronbach's standardized alpha = .69    Skewness = .45

Appendix E  
Research Protocol Clearance by the Human Subjects  
Institutional Review Board



Western Michigan University  
Kalamazoo, Michigan 49008-3899

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*Human Subjects  
Institutional Review Board*

TO: Roger J. Shoemaker  
FROM: Ellen Page-Robin, Chair *LR*  
RE: Research Protocol  
DATE: November 14, 1988

This letter will serve as confirmation that your research protocol, "Employer Resistance Toward Early Return to Work," has been approved as exempt by the HSIRB.

If you have any further questions, please contact me at 387-2647.

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