

**EXPLORING EMPLOYEE MORALE AT THE PORT ELIZABETH PLANT OF
CADBURY (SOUTH AFRICA).**

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ABSTRACT

In the current business climate, performance is increasingly determined by how flexibly and effectively companies can utilize their human resources and this in turn, is influenced by employee morale. Morale refers to a state of psychosomatic health marked by an energetic, decisive resolution to achieve a given goal. When morale is low, employees may do what is required but do not have the energy to 'go the extra mile'. The importance of maintaining high morale is thus evident. The following project involved a study of morale in Cadbury's Port Elizabeth plant. Cadbury management was concerned about low morale following a recent merger with Bromor Foods. They thus wanted to assess: the state of current morale; any factors that may be influencing it; indicators of low morale (so that it may be monitored in the future) and finally, ways of addressing any existing morale issues. In order to achieve these aims, the researcher conducted interviews with various people to explore morale issues from employees' perspectives. She then sought confirmation for these views at the organizational level through the use of a survey. Statistical and thematic analyses showed morale to be low for middle managers and revealed a variety of indicators and influencing factors, as well as suggestions for addressing them. Despite the need to boost the sample size with convenience sampling, and thus, reduced representivity, the research was successful in answering the research aims.

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INTRODUCTION

In today's competitive and rapidly changing business environment, employee morale is seen as an increasingly important factor in providing companies with a competitive edge. From its origin in periods of war to its current use in a variety of contexts, the concept of 'morale' has always been linked to that of performance in that it relates to a positive state of mind "marked by an energetic, decisive resolution to achieve a given goal..." (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). It thus refers to confidence in the future and an enthusiasm for the task at hand which, if possessed by an organization's members, would assumedly result in greater efficiency at work. At the same time however, the need for organizations to undergo continual change and to fully utilize human resources in order to maximize productivity may undermine employee morale. The concept is thus of increasing concern to organizations today.

This project involves a study of morale within the Port Elizabeth plant of Cadbury South Africa, following a recent merger with Bromor Foods. Cadbury management was concerned that beneath apparent acceptance of the change lies uncertainty and low morale, which in turn may lead to negative symptoms later on. As such, managers wish to assess the state of current morale and to identify factors that may be lowering morale so that corrective action may be taken if necessary. They also wish to identify indicators or manifestations of poor morale, so that it may be monitored more closely in the future.

The following research study discusses the nature of this project in more detail, and the manner in which it was carried out in attempt to accomplish the research aims. It then presents the results of the study, and accompanying recommendations to Cadbury. Initially however, it is important to provide a context for the study through a review of relevant literature relating to the challenges posed by the current organizational context; the contribution of an Organization Development approach in facilitating change and most importantly, existing knowledge and research relating to morale.

LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 The Current Organizational Context

In order to understand the context of this study, as well as the importance of morale, it is necessary to briefly explore the broader context in which organizations currently exist. According to Kotter (1996), organizations nowadays function within a fast-moving and turbulent environment in which they are expected to compete globally while also managing various localised challenges.

At a broad level, Smither, Houston and McIntyre (1996) note that technological innovations such as faxes, e-mail, and overnight delivery now require managers to make decisions more quickly than ever, and have influenced the development of a global economy. With the resultant widespread competition, “organizations can no longer afford to delay adapting to breakthroughs in technology” (Smither et al., 1996, p. 8). They are under pressure to constantly update their technological resources in line with global trends, but such changes also impact on other levels of the organization, often in unforeseen ways (Howard, 1994). Thus, while adapting in accordance with external technological pressures, organizations also need to manage subsequent internal changes.

Sanzgiri and Gottlieb (1992) note that the advent of a global economy requires organizations to be sensitive to market fluctuations and strategic concerns at a global level, and to adapt accordingly. Due to the resulting need for flexibility, a previous movement toward industry growth has been replaced by one of consolidation (Smither et al., 1996, p. 7), involving experimentation with various organizational structures in order to maximize efficiency. Thus, organizations are now downsizing, merging, unmerging, (Rothwell, Sullivan & McLean, 1995) and de-layering “if only because every relay doubles the noise and cuts the message in half” (Drucker, as cited in Routledge, 2000, p. 3), thereby preventing swift adaptation.

As a result of these structural trends, companies are beginning to rely on increased productivity from fewer workers (Sanzgiri & Gottlieb, 1992) and “business performance is more and more determined by how flexibly and effectively we can use our human resources” (Walters, 1996, p. 3). This in turn, may depend on the state of employee morale, and the extent to which employees are able to adapt and remain positive, motivated and confident in their work.

In addition to these global trends, South African companies also face unique challenges of their own. For example, they are currently attempting to restructure their workforces in alignment with recent Economic Empowerment and Equity laws. The Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act aims to promote “economic transformation in order to enable meaningful participation by black people in the economy” and achieve a “substantial change in the racial composition of ownership and management structures” (Broad-Based Black Economic Empowerment Act, 2004, p. 4). According to these laws, empowerment companies are characterized by 50% black ownership (SA. info reporter, 2005, p. 1). This integration of previously disadvantaged groups may lead to greater opportunities for new perspectives and innovation, but is also likely to foster dissatisfaction in current employees, as well as unexpected changes in organizational culture. In addition to this, managers may face the additional challenge of attending to the needs of a diverse workforce and coordinating the achievement of common goals (Smither, Houston & McIntyre, 1996).

As illustrated in this brief review, it is becoming essential to monitor and motivate an organization’s human resources in the face of various challenges in order to maximize the company’s performance in a competitive world. In this regard, companies often turn to Organization Development (OD) interventions for improving organizational effectiveness, as OD works with both sides of the equation – personal and organizational needs (Hanson & Lubin, 1995). The current study was conducted using the values and assumptions of Organization Development.

1.2 The Nature and Contribution of Organization Development (or OD)

According to French and Bell (as cited in Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 7) OD is defined as “a top-management-supported, long-range effort to improve an organization’s problem-solving and renewal processes, particularly through a more effective and collaborative diagnosis and management of organization culture...with the assistance of a consultant-facilitator and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioural science, including Action Research”. This definition may be explained and expanded upon as follows.

Firstly, although not directly specified in the above definition, OD aims essentially to enhance an organization’s effectiveness. Unlike other management interventions, however, it recognizes people as the cornerstone of an organization’s success, and thus intervenes at the human (rather than technological) level (Smither et al., 1996). By definition an organization is “a structured *social* system consisting of groups and individuals working together to meet some agreed-upon objectives” (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p. 3). Thus organizations are essentially “networks of human relationships” (Routledge, 2000, p. 10) – “they do not exist independently of people, nor can organizational goals be accomplished except by and through people” (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 46). As such, it may be argued that organizational success depends largely on the way in which employees work together. More specifically, OD assumes that organizations function more effectively when people feel comfortable expressing their feelings and dealing openly with conflict, as “conflict... can be very helpful in bringing about change” (Routledge, 2000, p. 11). It assumes that this ‘process’ factor is positively enhanced by a humanistic approach to change that does not “discount, diminish or dehumanize any person or group” (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 33).

As mentioned in the above definition, OD aims to improve an organization’s effectiveness by improving its problem-solving and renewal processes. These processes are essential for survival in a rapidly changing environment, and will determine a company’s ability to compete and prosper (Kotter, 1996). OD thus aims to help companies become ‘learning

organizations' that are able to constantly assess their situations and adapt accordingly (Routledge, 2000).

This requires a distinct role for OD consultants, as they pass on the ability to engage in self-assessment and adaptation by encouraging employee collaboration in defining problems, considering solutions, implementing planned changes and evaluating the effects (Beer, 1980). The resulting transferal of knowledge and skills enables employees to conduct such activities alone in the future, and thus, provides lasting benefit to the organization. Consultants therefore encourage a relationship of relative equality between themselves and the client organization, in which they act more as a 'process facilitator' than as an expert who will solve the client's problems (Schein, 1987).

This approach has a dual purpose in that apart from educating the client, it also serves to foster involvement in and acceptance of the change, without which such change is unlikely to succeed. People often resist change, especially when it is forced upon them, as it is often accompanied by uncertainty and loss (Routledge, 2003, p. 7). They may also question the consultant's ability (as an outsider) to understand and consider all relevant factors in their company, and may thus receive any advice with skepticism. In addition to this, they may feel threatened by the power the consultant holds over them when they have to ask for help, and may therefore be defensive and more inclined to reject or undermine proposed solutions (Schein, 1987). As noted by Hanson and Lubin (1995, p. 34) however, "people will support what they help create" – involvement ensures that appropriate solutions are attained and creates commitment and enthusiasm for implementing change. Thus "everyone should have an opportunity to contribute to – and accept responsibility for - the continuous improvement process" (Routledge, 2000, p. 5). OD assumes that human beings are generally "open to change and that most people need challenge and [psychological] growth in their jobs" (Routledge, 2000, p. 5). It is the manner (or process) in which change is managed that determines its success.

It may be noted that although the definition promotes OD as a means of solving problems to improve effectiveness, a relatively recent trend in OD circles is that of 'appreciative

enquiry'. Murrell (as cited in Routledge, 2000, p. 4) notes "there is only the appreciated world because that is what we choose to pay attention to and so if a better world is desired we should start to pay special attention to the elements of our world which are already better". Thus, rather than focusing exclusively on problem-solving (which often leads to new problems in other subsystems), the organization should also focus on leveraging its strengths in order to create a stronger and more positive culture. This was deemed particularly important at Cadbury, as low morale may have been perpetuated by encouraging a predominant focus on negative issues, and this would have undermined the purpose of the study.

It is evident in the definition that OD attempts to enhance organizational effectiveness through the change and management of an organization's culture. Routledge (2000, p.25) notes that for an OD intervention to be successful, it "must become part of the organization's basic strategic outlook, not just another technique...used to solve short-term performance problems". Kotter (1996) also notes the importance of embedding changes in an organization's culture, as short-term solutions rarely produce lasting results. Instead, new behaviours "are always subject to degradation as soon as the pressures associated with a change effort are removed" (Kotter, 1996, p. 14). Employees and management often lose stamina in adopting the change, and the organization reverts back to its former state. In order to adopt a change into the organization's culture, however, one must address facets that may involve "long-standing, habitual, and ingrained patterns of behaviour" (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 46) and this takes time. Thus, OD is long-range in perspective, and "moves beyond quick and unworkable solutions to complex organizational problems" (Routledge, 2000, p. 5).

On this point, Howard (1994) observes that organizations are open systems containing interdependent subsystems (such as task, goal, social, technological, administrative, strategic and structural subsystems (Hanson & Lubin, 1995)). Changes in one area are therefore likely to affect other areas, often in unforeseen ways, unless all aspects of the system are accounted for and altered accordingly (Freedman & Zackrison, 2001). Thus, the "influence of an OD intervention may not be visible for some time after the

intervention has occurred” (Routledge, 2000, p.11) and quick-fixes are therefore impossible.

Consequently, it is important that OD projects are supported by top management, as, once the consultant leaves the organization, it is usually the managers’ responsibility to ensure that the intervention succeeds (French, Bell & Zawacki, 1994). In addition to this, managers “control an organization’s resources and reward systems and they are often powerful role models in behaviour change” (Routledge, 2000, p. 5). Management support was particularly important in the present study because “when one enters a human system to conduct a diagnosis, an intervention in fact is being made” (Burke, 1987, p. 111). Employees’ “expectations are heightened, uncomfortable concerns are raised, and unresolved issues are surfaced publicly” (Howard, 1994, p. 273). If managers do not act on employee suggestions therefore, there may be “a predictable increase in scepticism and a reduction in trust” (Howard, 1994, p. 273). This may further lower morale in the plant, and make employees more reluctant to engage in future interventions.

1.3 Action Research (AR)

The final characteristic of OD is that it usually makes use of Action Research (or AR) in diagnosing and addressing organizational issues or concerns. Action Research is unique in that “unlike experimental research, which strives to control the environment...so that cause and effect relationships can be established, [it] seeks to find solutions to *real* problems by collaborating with clients in collecting data, feeding back data, and developing action plans for change” (Smither et al., 1996, p. 186). This emphasis on collaboration arose from Lewin’s belief that “human systems could only be understood and changed if one involved the members of the system in the enquiry process” (Coghlan, 2002, p. 62).

According to Rothwell et al. (1995), Action Research may be viewed as either a model, or a process. As a model, it is “a simplified representation of the complex activities that occur in a change effort” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 51), which may serve to guide OD

practitioners in facilitating change. It is, however, also a process, or a “continuous series of events and actions... in which research is followed by change activities, the results of which are fed into further research” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 52). The eight steps in the Action Research model can be briefly described as follows:

1.3.1 Entry, ‘start-up’ and assessment

According to Rothwell et al. (1995, p. 52), in the first stage of AR, a problem is identified or “the need for change in an organization becomes apparent”. A consultant either approaches, or is approached by, the company to assist in facilitating the change (Rothwell et al., 1995). During the ‘start-up’ phase, “the consultant enters the organization and lays the groundwork for the change effort” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 53) by discussing with the client the nature of, and reasons for, the desired change. Once such issues have been clarified, consultant and client may work together to prepare a tentative, flexible, written plan for guiding the intervention (Rothwell et al., 1995). This document should identify the project’s aims, as well as steps that may be taken to achieve these aims, including time frames; desired results, and the resources required (Rothwell et al., 1995).

Having formulated a plan, the next step involves “collecting information about [the]...problem and helping members of the client organization to identify its causes” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 57). The data is then analysed and interpreted, and feed-back is given to key stakeholders and decision-makers in the company. This serves to validate the accuracy of the assessment and allows those involved to ‘own’ the data (Rothwell et al., 1995). Carucci and Tetenbaum (2000, p. 184) state that the way in which feedback is provided may greatly influence the intervention’s success, as “hope is a vital motivator in the change equation. If... staff members are to contribute, they must be optimistic regarding its chance for success”. On the other hand, the consultant may need to surface issues that the client is unwilling to face, or information that they are unwilling to act upon (Burke, 1987). If the consultant is not honest about such issues, their usefulness and ability to help is severely undermined (Carucci & Tetenbaum, 2000). Thus, according to Howard (1994), it is important to balance hope with honesty so that enough discomfort is produced to motivate the client to take appropriate action.

1.3.2 Action planning and intervention

Once the consultant has given feedback to the client, consultant and client may work together to finalise a “corrective-action plan” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 58). This involves brainstorming various solutions and critically assessing their possible consequences, in order to derive a plan that is “concrete, cost-effective, measurable, simple, and sequenced in logical order” (Rothwell et al., 1995, p. 59). This plan may then serve as a guide to the organization in implementing the agreed upon intervention(s).

1.3.3 Evaluation and adoption

The sixth step in action research is evaluation. Rothwell et al. (1995, p. 67), note that it is important to assess the progress of the intervention in order to keep it “on track by allowing for continual improvement and feedback”. As mentioned previously, it is easy for new behaviours to become “subject to degradation as soon as the pressures associated with a change effort are removed” (Kotter, 1996, p. 14). Thus, during the adoption phase, managers and employees attempt to sustain their efforts in order to ensure that the change becomes part of the organization’s culture. The overall results of the intervention are then evaluated before the consultant disengages from the company.

1.3.4 Separation

In this final stage, the consultant decides that his or her further presence in the organization may foster the client’s dependence, and it is therefore appropriate to leave (Rothwell et al., 1995). He or she transfers responsibility for continuing progress to the client, and discusses the circumstances under which further contact may be made.

In the current study, the researcher was unable to carry out all phases of the AR process due to limiting academic time constraints. The project was thus restricted to the first four phases of Action Research (that is, entry, start-up, assessment and action planning) and it was felt that these would be sufficient for achieving the research aims. Once a feedback report had been provided and an appropriate action plan formulated, Cadbury would be responsible for implementing future plans and evaluating the results at their own discretion.

1.4. Morale

In the present study, Cadbury management voiced their concerns about morale in the plant during initial 'entry' and 'start-up' discussions, and this formed the focus of the study. This section will review the literature on morale in order to provide a theoretical basis from which to consider the study's methodology and results, as well as the subsequent recommendations made to Cadbury. From the literature, it appears that there are various divergent viewpoints surrounding the subject of morale, involving mainly its definition and measurement. These issues will be discussed in the following section. It is useful however, to begin with a brief history of the term's origin.

1.4.1 The origins of 'morale'

Tompkins and Jones (1950, p. 156) note that 'morale as a subject of oral and written discussion is historically very recent' and its rise in popularity has been closely linked to the climax of the Industrial Revolution. They contend that the term first appeared in industry when a manufacturer in Manchester, England, found that reducing the hours in a working week brought about "a considerable increase in production and a decrease in the amount of time lost" (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 156). It was not until the outbreak of World War 1 however, that the concept of morale received any serious attention. At this time, unprecedented demands by armies for equipment and accessories prompted the "scientific study of work hours and other conditions of labour likely to produce... maximum output" (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 157). It was recognized that the partial failure of wartime production in the early years of World War 1 were due more to ignorance of the fundamental laws governing human efficiency than to "ignorance of the mechanics of manufacture" (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 157). Thus, "contemporary attention to morale arose from...inquiry into the reasons for industrial fatigue in British factories during 1914 and 1915" (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 157). Morale first appeared in relation to 'efficiency', and has been imperceptibly linked to efficiency ever since.

From here the term was used in reference to soldiers', to describe their spirits and determination to succeed in trying circumstances (Tompkins & Jones, 1950). Perhaps in

connection with this usage, Bayton (1942, p. 150) notes that concern with the problem of morale “only receives attention when the social unit... is placed in a position of insecurity and uncertainty”. This would explain the increasing importance of morale in organizations today, since organizations are currently attempting to maximize *efficiency* and productivity, while their employees face increasing *insecurity* in their jobs. Merrifield’s (1942, p. 423) observation that the single great purpose of morale is to “build bridges from old loyalties to new ones as the pressures of a changing world make such re-adjustments necessary” seems relevant in the context of the present study.

The first book on morale was published in 1918, and from then on, the term has increasingly appeared in the literature, with a noticeable climax in the years surrounding World War II. Interestingly, the first book on morale stated that “Morale is a war word, but its mission will not end with the war” (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 157). Since 1918, the term has become an integral part of effective personal, industrial, and even political relationships” (Tompkins & Jones, 1950, p. 157). Despite its increasing importance and use, however, the term remains surprisingly vague and difficult to define.

1.4.2 Defining morale

Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000, p. 34) note that “those commenting on morale have an intuitive sense that an individual’s morale is ‘high’, or the morale of administrative staff is ‘low’...but it is not a well-defined or precisely measured concept”. It appears that definition and measurement of morale have always been contentious issues. According to Hightower (1944, p. 411), an early book (in 1920) by Hall defined morale as keeping “ourselves, body and soul, and our environment, physical, social, industrial etc., always at the very tip-top of condition”. In this sense, morale implies “the maximum of vitality...getting and keeping at the very centre of the current of creative evolution; and minimizing, destroying or avoiding all checks...and inhibitions to it” (Hightower, 1944, p. 411). This idea is mirrored by Gocke (1945, p. 215) in his statement “morale...is the fitness of the mind for the task at hand”. In both instances, morale denotes tenacity, enthusiasm and determination to achieve a task or goal (with corresponding implications of mental and emotional health), and this remains a defining aspect of morale. As noted by

Hightower (1944, p. 411) however, “this is more like an exhortation than an explanation of a term in common usage”.

One of the main definitional problems with regard to morale is the level or unit in which it occurs. Thus, definitions of morale appear to fall into one of three categories – those which explain morale as an individual phenomenon, those which regard it as a group and individual qualification, and those which explain it as a group characteristic (Hightower, 1944, p. 412).

Morale as an individual characteristic

During the First World War, Hocking wrote that morale “is a measure of one’s disposition to give oneself to the objective at hand” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). Rundquist and Sletto noted that “morale is a person’s confidence in his ability to cope with whatever the future may bring” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412), and Estorick defines morale as “a state of abundant psychosomatic health marked by an energetic, decisive resolution to achieve a given goal...by spirited, unyielding, cooperative, or coordinated efforts in the direction of that goal” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). In relation to *employee* morale, Mosher and Kingsley describe it as “that spirit, that state of mind which expresses itself in enthusiasm, loyalty, cooperation, devotion to duty, and pride in the service” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). These definitions emphasise the close relationship between morale and behavioral manifestations. Finally, Kimball and Young say that morale “relates to the subjective internal state - ideas, attitudes, feelings and emotions – associated with a job, qualified of course by various features of the wider social configuration” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). It is important to note the subjective nature of morale as indicated by these definitions – it is a general feeling or mood which may be difficult to pin-point even when consciously considered, and this makes it difficult to measure.

Morale as an individual or group phenomenon

In the second group of definitions, Park notes that “morale seems to be the ability of an individual or of a society to maintain tension over a period of time; to carry on an action...to completion” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). Similarly, Bain notes that “the measure

of a man's morale is the sacrifice he will make to preserve his personal integrity which is a correlate of his group identification" (Hightower, 1944, p. 413). More recently, Flanagan and Finger (1998, p. 336) note "morale is a group phenomenon but an individual matter. We speak of good morale in a group – meaning that most of the people in the group have a good sense of *esprit*". This view is mirrored in more technical terms by Zeitz (1983, p. 1089), who identifies morale as an emergent collective trait - it can "operate on the individual level but becomes collective when possessed by multiple interacting members".

Morale as a group characteristic

Hightower, in 1944 noted that there were comparatively few writers who define morale as a group characteristic, although morale has increasingly been seen in this light in recent years. Landis states "morale is a...state of mind which is shared by members of the group, a distinctively human motive power which raises the action of the group to its maximum of efficiency" (Hightower, 1944, p. 413). Durant (1941, p. 406), writes that morale "is the relationship of a group to a given end. The end is always set by an authority... [and] the problem of morale then becomes the extent to which... subordinates will also strive to achieve that goal". Finally, Wirth recognizes that "we ascribe morale to a group to the extent that it maintains this steadfastness of purpose, maintains its solidarity, its integrity, and its will to victory even in the face of adversity" (Hightower, 1944, p. 413). This last definition hints at one of the operational components (and underlying theories) of employee morale – the nature of relationships and integration at work.

Thus, in summary, it remains uncertain whether morale is a characteristic of individuals, groups, or both. While recent popular literature seems to accept it as a group phenomenon, recent research remains inconclusive in this regard. Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000, p. 54) found, using modern statistical techniques, that morale is based largely upon individual *perceptions* and "resides primarily at the individual level... However, there is also a meaningful source of group variation" (that is, institutional type). For the purposes of the current study, morale was assumed to exist at both levels and was defined as "the mental or emotional condition of a person or group" (Wordsmyth, 2002, p. 1), "based on factors such as a sense of confidence and usefulness and purpose" (WordReference.com,

2005, p. 1). This definition seemed to best capture the content and meaning of other definitions. Morale may also be identified as a noun, in which case it denotes “the spirit of a group that makes the members want the group to succeed” (WordReference.com, 2005, p. 1).

1.4.3 Distinguishing morale from other concepts

Perhaps due to the lack of clarity in definition and level of analysis, as well as its inseparable link to other concepts, morale is often confused with terms such as job satisfaction, motivation and commitment.

Morale and job satisfaction

In their review of previous morale research Blocker and Richardson (1963) note that many writers use the terms ‘morale’ and ‘job satisfaction’ interchangeably. They argue that “the difference between the two, if any, would appear to be in the more encompassing nature of job satisfaction, whereas morale tends to concern itself... specifically with personnel practices” (Blocker & Richardson, 1963, p. 200). This observation is not made with much conviction however, and Blocker and Richardson (1963, p. 200) conclude that “any division...is bound to be arbitrary and to contain a considerable amount of overlapping”.

Most authors however, especially nowadays, adhere to the conviction that the terms are not synonymous, and cite differences in attempt to define morale. For example, O’Connor (2005) observes that it is easier to define morale by what it is NOT, and morale is not the same as job satisfaction or motivation. Greenberg and Baron (2003, p. 148) define job satisfaction as “*individuals’* positive or negative *attitudes* toward their jobs”. It is thus evident that there are various definitive differences between the two concepts.

One such difference is that, according to O’Connor (2005, p. 1), morale may be seen as the “collective counterpart of job satisfaction” as job satisfaction is specifically an individual phenomenon, while morale may exist on multiple levels. This is supported by Benge and Hickey (Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 36) who state that “morale is the net result of the job satisfaction of employees in a specified group”. Perhaps more importantly, while morale reflects a general *feeling* or *emotional state*, job satisfaction

refers to a more rational *attitude* towards ones job, based on a broader range of factors than those considered most relevant to morale.

It may be inferred, however, that an employee's satisfaction with their job may influence their emotional state (or morale) at work over time. This view is supported by Guba (1958, p. 197), who argues the point based on the assumption that each individual has a limited amount of energy available to them. Guba (1958, p. 198) firstly defines morale as "a predisposition on the part of persons engaged in an enterprise to put forth *extra effort* in the achievement of group goals". He notes that "satisfaction is a function of the degree of congruence between institutional expectations and individual need-dispositions". When these are perfectly congruent, the employee's behavior meets both situational expectations and personal needs, thus ensuring maximum satisfaction. The behavior seems easy and natural to the employee, and uses minimal energy. When the employee's needs are not met through organizational requirements however, they expend considerable psychic energy in achieving the required goals, and while they will achieve goals, they do not have that extra energy to do it with zest, or high morale (Guba, 1958). Thus, satisfaction is required in order to allow for high morale in terms of energy resources. Guba (1958, p. 195) also notes that past satisfactions "predispose the individual toward satisfactory experiences in a new situation, thus increasing the probability of high morale". This seems highly credible, but has been contested by other authors.

For example, Kanter (as cited in Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 36) suggests that "persons could feel reasonably satisfied with the content of a job, but at the same time, frustrated about their potential for growth or mobility within the organization. Thus, their satisfaction could be high and their overall morale low". This promotes the idea that satisfaction and morale are influenced by different underlying factors, and thus may exist in opposing directions. It may be argued however, that if an employee was dissatisfied with *most* aspects of the job, their morale would be unlikely to remain high and thus, Guba's position stands. It depends perhaps on whether one defines job satisfaction as a single-faceted concept (overall satisfaction), in which case satisfaction and morale could not exist in opposite directions, or a multifaceted concept whereby an employee could be

satisfied with some discrete job elements but not others. In the latter case, Kanter's argument may hold some truth.

Morale and motivation

O'Connor (2005, p. 1) also advocates a distinction between morale and motivation, saying that "motivation is just the willingness of employees to work" and this can be bought, but "you can't motivate morale". Motivation is defined as "the set of processes that arouse, direct and maintain human behaviour toward attaining some goal" (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p.190). In these broad terms, pay often motivates achievement of goals, but this does not necessarily imply the existence of high morale. This relationship is clarified by Encarta World English Dictionary (1998, p. 1), which defines morale as "the general level of confidence/ optimism felt by a person or group of people, especially as it affects discipline and motivation". Thus, morale is likely to affect achievement motivation, but the employee may also be motivated by other factors such as pay and this does not necessarily imply the existence of high morale (O'Connor, 2005).

Morale and commitment

Finally, a distinction must be made between 'morale' and 'commitment'. Kanter (as cited in Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 37) notes that different factors again underlie commitment as compared to satisfaction or morale. Commitment, she says, "refers to overall attachment to the organization and is shaped in a major way by opportunity" (Kanter, as cited in Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 37). It is felt that this argument is a little unsatisfactory, as many other authors propose that opportunity for growth and advancement is a major determinant of employee morale. The exact relationship between the two terms and indeed between all above-mentioned terms may best be explained in the following. Johnsrud (as cited in Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 37) explains that "morale represents an 'umbrella' notion that includes, in addition to *satisfaction* with the work environment, such attributes as enthusiasm, *commitment*...willingness to work [or *motivation*], and dedication to common goals". From the definitions explored in the previous section, this appears to be an accurate conception, taking into account the slight differences between terms (mentioned above). Morale is closely intertwined with all of

these concepts, and it is perhaps this fact that makes it so difficult to define, measure, and isolate in terms of its effects on behavior.

1.4.4 The effects/ indicators of morale

One point that is obvious through a study of morale is that, whatever its definition (and this is often vague and unclear), it is inherently linked to efficiency and effort towards goal achievement. This is evident in its very origins, as well as subsequent definitions. One simply has to review the definitions mentioned above to see the prominence of this point. In addition to these, Baynes (as cited in Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser, 2000, p. 37) states that “high morale is manifested when an individual shows determination to do his or her best”. Similarly Westbrook argues that “morale...is significantly related to proficiency and discipline, particularly for those with extremely high or low morale” (Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser, 2000, p. 37). Thus, above all, definitions of morale are inextricably linked to its effects on behavior. One of the reasons for this may be *because* of its vagueness, so many authors, in attempt to find definitional stability, relate it to its more directly observable outputs.

Most authors agree that morale is most important because of its positive or negative manifestations in the workplace. According to Levine (2004), employees who are happy and motivated in their jobs are likely to be more productive and effective than those who are not. They are likely to put more effort into achieving organizational goals, and this in turn increases the company’s competitive ability, which is crucial in today’s business climate. Medalia and Miller (1955) also found that high morale enhances efficiency, which in turn may lead to an increase in morale. On the other hand, low morale manifests itself in various negative ways.

Hamblin, Miller and Wiggins (1961, p. 295) note that “low morale may be reflected in low productivity, high turnover, strikes, and other organizational as well as individual costs”. Rundquist and Sletto “found an extreme amount of discouragement, apathy, cynicism, and anti-social attitudes...are all indications of loss of morale” (Bayton, 1942, p. 150). More specifically, Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000, p. 35) found that

perceptions of specific work issues affect “intermediate social psychological variables such as...morale, [which in turn] affect[s]...organizational turnover”. Low morale may also lead to an increase in unscheduled absences from work, according to the result of a survey by CCH incorporated (Rauch, 2005).

Finally, Guba (1958) found that “subjects ...feel that low morale situations prevent them from being as effective as they might be”. This may relate to Guba’s (1958) theory that employees with low morale will meet the minimum organizational requirements, but will not have the extra energy to ‘go the extra mile’. This idea is supported in *Small Business TurnAround* (2003, p. 1), which states that when there is low morale, “instead of getting in early and staying late, [employees] do just the opposite”. They do the bare minimum required in order to get paid.

As mentioned earlier, morale problems become more prominent in times of uncertainty. Thus many consultants now write about declining morale with regard to the continual change that now characterizes the work life of employees. Kettley (1995, p. 1) states that employees will feel unsettled during organizational change, but “just accepting loss of morale as an inevitable consequence may undermine the very productivity gains intended by the change”. According to Kettley (1995), change can threaten employees’ sense of well-being in many ways. For example, employees may “see the company as having behaved unjustly...feel less secure...[or] lose the belief that their contribution to the business will be rewarded in future” (Kettley, 1995, p. 1). These feelings may then threaten business performance, as workers “can become unduly risk averse and narrowly focused, and therefore less creative and open to change” (Kettley, 1995, p. 1). Other possible outcomes include: “whether employees stay with the organization...achieve organizational or personal goals... are able to adopt new working practices and learn new skills [and] how they respond to customers” (Kettley, 1995, p. 1).

From these observations it is evident that low morale is detrimental to an organization’s ability to compete, survive and succeed in today’s business environment, and managers

thus need to be aware of the factors that influence morale, and know how to monitor, manage and promote them.

1.4.5 Theories relating to morale

According to Baehr and Renck (1958), there are three groups of theories relating to morale. Due to the closeness of the relationship between morale and other concepts, these theories are also assumed to underlie explanations of job satisfaction and motivation. As mentioned previously however, these phenomena are not the same.

Baehr and Renck (1958, p. 159) state that the first approach “developed out of the classical ‘needs psychology’ and includes those theories which stress the *personal determinants* of morale”. In such theories, “‘needs’ are seen as giving rise to ‘drives’ which aim at the satisfaction of these ‘needs’” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 159). A distinction is usually made between basic needs, which have “a physiological substratum such as hunger, thirst, and sex” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 159), and acquired needs, “which are largely social, such as the need to achieve status and self-esteem and the need to affiliate with other people” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 159). It is assumed that when an individual’s personal needs are satisfied, they will have a higher sense of morale. In this sense it is important to note that there has been a recent shift in employee values, and the old ‘economic contract’ (including motivators such as security and pay) is losing relevance (Beer, 1980). Instead, individuals now increasingly seek to fulfil self-actualisation needs such as personal growth, meaningful work and relationships, and increased autonomy (Beer, 1980). It may thus be inferred that these factors are becoming increasingly important in terms of morale.

The second approach suggests a *hierarchy of needs*, the most influential of which is Maslow’s need hierarchy theory. According to this theory, “unless people get their needs met on the job, they are unlikely to function as effectively as possible” (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p. 192). Maslow proposed that “people have five types of needs and that these are activated in a hierarchical manner... [so that] the lowest order need must be fulfilled before the next higher order need is triggered” (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p.

192). Such needs include, from lowest to highest: physiological needs, safety needs, social needs, esteem needs and self-actualisation needs (Greenberg & Baron, 2003). According to the results of a study by Haire and Gottsdanker, the factors that influence morale have a similar hierarchical character (Baehr & Renck, 1958). For example, “‘pay’ appears to be a basic need and when ‘pay’ is satisfactorily ‘higher’ self-actualisation needs become dominant, whereas such needs are eclipsed when the individual’s security is threatened and financial incentives are dominant” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 159).

In a similar vein, Heathfield (2002a, p. 1) recommends two steps in creating high morale – firstly, “stop taking actions that are guaranteed to de-motivate people [and secondly] identify and take the actions that will motivate people”. This appears to reflect Herzberg’s two-factor theory, as it implies that satisfaction (or high morale) and dissatisfaction (or low morale) stem from different sources, rather than from the absence or presence of the same factors (Carrell, Jennings & Heavrin, 1997). Thus, morale may be negatively influenced by unsatisfactory conditions surrounding the job, such as “quality of supervision, pay, company policies, physical working conditions...and job security” (Carrell, et al., 1997, p.137). On the other hand, if these factors are satisfied, morale may only be positively influenced when the correct motivators (such as recognition, promotion opportunities, and chance for personal growth) are also present. In this sense, high morale may be predominantly associated with personnel practices, as advocated by Blocker and Richardson (1963).

Finally, the third branch of theories deal with a social aspect of morale (Baehr & Renck, 1958). In 1927 the Hawthorne studies (see discussion in Greenberg & Baron, 2003) illustrated that “overriding the effect of changes in physical working conditions... upon output were the feelings and sentiments attached to being an integrated part of a special work group” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 160). Some authors attribute high morale almost exclusively to social factors and feelings of attachment. For example, Guba (1958, p. 197) notes that there are only two aspects to morale – a community of goals, and “belongingness or togetherness”. People with high morale have “a sense of identification

with and interest in...fellow workers, supervisors, employers and the company” (Guba, 1958, p. 197).

These theories are very broad in nature (with the exception of the last group) and mainly specify the mechanisms or sequences through which factors interact to influence morale. It is now important to examine the factors themselves that are thought to be most influential in creating high or low morale.

1.4.6 Factors influencing morale

Research or ‘academic’ literature

Much of the research on morale has attempted to define or specify the components or dimensions that comprise ‘morale’. Baehr and Renck’s (1958) factorial studies of employee inventory results identified five basic factors in the structure of employee morale. These include the following:

- 1) Organization and management – this factor deals with “the image of management and the company [as perceived by the employee through interactions with management] in the employee’s mind” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 175). It thus reflects sentiments of “identification with the organization... [and] an evaluation of communication... management’s efficiency, effectiveness, and concern for employee welfare” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 175).
- 2) Immediate supervision – this attitude towards immediate supervision “includes both the human relations aspect and the purely administrative aspects of the supervisor’s job” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 176).
- 3) Material rewards – this deals with “the material rewards the employee gets from... work, both in terms of pay and employee benefits” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 176).
- 4) Fellow employees – this factor deals with the friendliness of fellow employees and their ability to work together as an integrated group (Baehr & Renck, 1958).
- 5) Job satisfaction – according to Baehr and Renck (1958, p. 176), this factor represents “the intrinsic satisfactions associated with actually doing the job and

with the belief that the job is worthwhile and affords opportunities for personal growth and development”.

As mentioned previously, Guba (1958) recognizes only two factors in the structure of morale – communality of goals and social cohesion. Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000) hypothesize that there are three underlying dimensions –

- 1) Institutional regard - involving employees’ sense that they are valued and being treated fairly,
- 2) Quality of work - the impact of satisfying, stimulating and purposeful work on employees, and
- 3) Mutual loyalty – employee’s loyalty to the organization, and their belief that they, and their opinions matter to the organization.

As opposed to mapping out the structural dimensions of morale, a vast number of studies have chosen to focus on a select few aspects that are hypothesized to influence morale. For example, Hamblin, Miller and Wiggins (1961, p. 295) note the highly supported hypothesis that “democratic leadership...increases morale, whereas autocratic leadership which involves centralized decision-making decreases morale”. They then promote the lesser known morale-competence hypothesis, which states that “morale...is a function, partially at least, of the relative technical competence of the leader in coping with the organization’s problems” (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961, p. 295). In other words, “if the leader...with decision-making authority, is less competent than other members, then morale will be low, whereas if he is more competent, morale will be high” (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961, p. 295). The results of their study support this hypothesis on the basis that the curtailment of initiative usually lowers morale, unless the leader is perceived as being relatively more competent than other members, and thus deserving of authority (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961). The importance of the leader as an influence on employee morale is emphasized by Blocker and Richardson (1963, p. 208), who, after reviewing twenty-five years of morale research, conclude that “with virtually the same

environmental factors operating, high or low morale can be induced depending upon the behavior pattern of the chief administrator”.

In another example, Bayton (1942) explores the effect of racial stereotypes on people’s confidence, and thus morale. He notes that individuals are restricted in their enthusiasm for achievement and success by negative propaganda that suggests their inability in this regard. Bayton’s findings may be generalized to reveal the negative effects that other individual’s comments may have on people’s morale, when these comments downplay that person’s ability, or chances of success.

It is interesting to note that while the amount of research on morale has declined since World War II, the amount of popular (or anecdotal) literature written by consultants on the internet about morale has increased up to the present day. This literature is very practical in providing readers with real-life insights (often based on previous research) of the factors that are most important in terms of their effects on morale.

Popular (anecdotal) literature

As suggested previously, morale is influenced more by personnel practices (or higher order needs) than by working conditions and basic needs (such as pay), as long as these basic needs are met at an acceptable level. This view is emphasized in much of the popular literature, as illustrated by the satirical substitution of Maslow’s ‘hierarchy of needs’ with ‘Bob Nelson’s hierarchy of wants’ for improving morale (Nelson, 2005, p. 1). Nelson (2005) presents the following factors or levels in his model, each assumedly representing a higher order need: 1) Purpose and meaning; 2) Trust and respect; 3) Communication and information; 4) Praise and recognition; 5) Autonomy and flexibility; 6) Involvement and encouragement, and 7) Learning, opportunity and growth.

Most consultants suggest similar factors as being most important in creating high morale. For example, SBA Gopher (2002) promotes seven key areas – appreciation; employee involvement; the company’s commitment to its social environment; management concern for employees; management loyalty; the working environment; respect, and attention.

Gish (2005) recommends celebrating accomplishments, management support, management availability to staff, coaching or mentoring, meeting promises or commitments, not pretending to have all of the answers, and maintaining a performance review process. Many similarities may be noted in these suggestions, and the most commonly cited factors may be combined and expanded upon as follows.

1). Purpose and meaning – Levine (2004, p. 1) notes that in order for employees to have high morale, they “need to feel emotionally attached to their work and their employer in positive and uplifted ways”. They need to feel that their jobs are important, have purpose and meaning, and contribute to the company’s overall success (Nelson, 2005). Hefferman (2005, p. 1) states that “the happiest people aren’t those with the most money but those with a sense of purpose – a sense that they are contributing to something bigger than themselves”. It is thus important for organizations to help employees see ‘the bigger picture’ – how their work ties into the company’s objectives. Only then can they be proud of their jobs and of being a member of the organization as a whole” (Nelson, 2005, p. 1). According to Hefferman (2005, p. 1), “the sense of purpose doesn’t have to be grandiose or revolutionary, merely credible and anchored in values”. This factor is central to maintaining morale, as, by definition, morale is based on factors such as a sense of usefulness and *purpose* (WordReference.com, 2005).

2). Management support and respect – The second factor proposed is management support, concern and respect. SBA Gopher (2002, p. 2) states that employees “appreciate help on personal problems, and want the boss to care about them as individuals”. Managers today must thus “invest a significant amount of time in advising, counselling, coaching, training and listening” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 2). Essentially, “employees who are helped to perform will feel better about themselves and the company for which they work” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 2). Staff should also be treated with courtesy, trust and respect at all times, regardless of their position (Nelson, 2005).

3). Communication and information – While communication is always important for providing employees with a sense of direction and for co-coordinating effort towards

common goals (Greenberg & Baron, 2003), it is particularly important during change. Meyerson (2005, p. 1) observes that “when a crisis appears...the traditional incentives a boss can use to motivate employees fly out the window...almost no incentive can pry loose the grip of an atmosphere of uncertainty”. At such times the most vital factor in maintaining morale is communication. According to Kettley (1995, p. 1), “conveying the reasons for... change is central. Employees need to understand the business reason...and how the change will be managed” as this may alleviate uncertainty and allow realistic expectations of the future. After all, morale is based on a sense of confidence in the future, and employees’ confidence can only increase if they are able to accurately anticipate that future.

This highlights the implication that communication should be honest, because “even if [employees] don’t like the truth, they will trust you more for telling it” (Meyerson, 2005, p. 1). Communication should also continue throughout the change process as “breaks in communication are seen as sinister, and lead to rumours” (Kettley, 1995, p. 1). More specifically, breaks in communication leave employees to ruminate on the possible causes, and consequences, of change and often the rumors that arise are worse than the reality of the situation (Kettley, 1995). Employees may believe that they are not being told what to expect because managers want to avoid disclosing bad news, when in fact managers may simply feel that it is not important to say anything. The resulting uncertainty and negativity with regard to the future may further lower morale.

4). Recognition and Appreciation – Perhaps the most important factors for promoting high morale are recognition and appreciation. SBA Gopher (2002, p. 1) notes “research shows that people often leave an employer because they [do not] receive the recognition they want, or feedback on how they are doing”. Nothing may be more debilitating to morale than inadequate recognition for hard work. On the other hand, according to Daniels (2001, p.1), “the best job you will ever have is one where you know how you performed each day and feel appreciated for your accomplishments”. Heathfield (2002b, p. 1) observes that “people who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute”, and “people with positive self-esteem are potentially your best employees”.

The literature cites the following guidelines for providing effective recognition. Firstly, “supervisors should commend progress toward agreed-upon goals in a continual [fair] and consistent manner” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 1). Employees need to feel that “each person who makes the same or a similar contribution has an equal likelihood of receiving recognition” (Heathfield, 2002b, p. 1). At the same time, however, one should ensure that recognition efforts do not become expectations, due to the regularity with which they occur (Heathfield, 2002b). If this happens, then such efforts are no longer a reward, but a habit.

Managers should also be as specific as possible in telling the individual why he or she is receiving recognition, as this will reinforce the desired behaviour (Heathfield, 2002b). He or she should also offer recognition as soon as possible after the event that is being recognized, and should ensure that the form of recognition is motivating to the employee concerned (Heathfield, 2002b). Each individual “has a preference for what he finds rewarding and how that recognition is most effective for him” (Heathfield, 2002b, p. 2). As such, Daniels (2001, p. 1) proposes the use of a ‘survey book’, in which “employees enter ideas about what would be reinforcing to them as a reward for a job well-done”. Some forms of recognition include: money; written notes recognizing efforts (in thank-you cards or in the company newsletter); positive attention from supervisory staff; personal development opportunities; gifts; symbols and awards, and various benefits such as time off (Heathfield, 2002b).

5). Employee involvement and autonomy – The fifth factor in promoting high morale is employee involvement and autonomy. According to SBA Gopher (2002, p. 1), “people want to feel involved in their jobs...they are closest to the work for which they are responsible, and know how it can most effectively be done”. Employees may appreciate “knowing they work for a company with a clear sense of the future – they are even more committed when they help define that future” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 2). This reinforces the OD assumption that “people will support what they help to create” (Hanson and Lubin, 1995, p. 34). Thus, in order to enhance commitment, enthusiasm and confidence,

managers should give staff the autonomy to suggest their own work goals and processes in accordance with their individual abilities (SBA Gopher, 2002).

6). Learning, opportunity and growth – According to the results of an international survey, compensation is not the main reason why people leave their jobs (SBA Gopher, 2002). Instead, they “are hungry for opportunities to grow into their jobs. They crave advancement, both in position and stature, and in responsibility and opportunity” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 1). This supports the OD belief that people are generally “open to change and... need challenge and [psychological] growth in their jobs” (Routledge, 2000, p. 5). Thus, employees should be offered training and other such opportunities, to enable them to develop, succeed and progress in their careers.

7). Relationships at work – Finally, as noted in Maslow’s need hierarchy, individuals “need to be affiliative – to have friends and to be loved and accepted by other people” (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p. 193). Employees are likely to be more loyal, committed, and productive if they are part of a team and enjoy the company of fellow employees (SBA Gopher, 2002). As such, many organizations now encourage regular socialising among employees during time off, by providing facilities (such as pubs or gyms) and organising office parties, family days, or meals (Levine, 2004). This strengthens working relationships within the company, so that people identify themselves as being part of the team and work together more effectively. It also provides an outlet for stress and tension.

These factors are commonly cited in the literature with regard to morale, and business consultants recommend that companies attend to these issues when morale is low (Nelson, 2005; Levine, 2004; Kettley, 2001; Meyerson, 2005, Heathfield, 2002b; and Daniels, 2001). In order to deal with an organization’s morale problems effectively, however, one must first assess the specific causes and then involve employees in suggesting appropriate remedial actions (Levine, 2004). Measuring morale is thus essential in attempting to monitor, maintain, and enhance it in organizations today. As noted by Flanagan and Finger (1998, p. 336) in relation to current management practices, “if you can’t measure it,

you can't manage it". Despite its increasing importance, however, there is still no ideal means of assessing morale.

1.4.7 Measures of morale

From the above review, various difficulties become evident in terms of measuring morale. More specifically, there is disagreement about the exact nature of morale, its level of analysis, relationship to associated concepts, and its underlying structural dimensions. This causes problems in that, in order to accurately measure a phenomenon, one first has to determine exactly what one is wanting to measure.

As mentioned previously, there is disagreement as to whether morale is a characteristic of individuals, groups, or both. Thus, there is uncertainty regarding the level at which morale should be measured. Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000, p. 42) note that there is "a need for greater understanding of how individual-level variables and group-level variables interact with morale to explain [negative consequences such as]...turnover". Past research was unable to make such a distinction, but "newer multilevel data-analytic approaches...now allow the simultaneous investigation of the individual and collective properties of...morale" (Johnsrud, Heck & Rosser, 2000, p. 42) if this is the aim of the research. The current research however, did not intend to make a theoretical study of individual and collective influences. If one wants to study the state of current morale and morale exists at multiple levels, the unit of analysis perhaps becomes less important than the content of what is measured, or the way in which it is measured.

The second problem with measurement lies in the uncertainty about exactly which factors form the underlying structure of morale. Ruch (1941, p. 226) notes that "the effective measurement of morale will require first of all a definition of morale that will specify its... components". The literature proposes various combinations of factors, which were expanded upon in the previous section. There is no specific and commonly accepted list however, and any assumptions are usually based on the researcher's own reading of past literature. In the present case, the study identified what morale involves for Cadbury

employees in particular, and these dimensions were then used as the basis for subsequent surveys.

Finally, and perhaps most importantly, morale has always been a slippery concept to define and is thus described largely in terms of its effects on behavior. Morale has been defined as a state of mind – a general feeling of enthusiasm and determination, and a confidence in one's position, ability and future. It is an emotional state with physiological consequences, and as mentioned previously, is less rational and defined than an attitude, although it is related to various attitudes such as job satisfaction. Morale is thus more about the latent content of the mind (Ruch, 1941) – it may be a seemingly illogical or unconsidered feeling, which is related to many complex and interacting factors. It is thus strongly linked to behavioral manifestations or indicators since it may not be accurately tapped through words. Employees may not be aware of why they feel excited, energized, determined or devoted to their work and even if they did consciously consider possible reasons, these may be difficult to pinpoint (and attempting to do so may reduce clarity rather than promote it), as morale is a general feeling rather than a specific thought. This makes the use of questionnaires difficult, as “the type of question usually used taps only the manifest content of the respondent's mind and leaves largely untouched the latent content” (Ruch, 1941, p. 223).

Ruch (1941) notes four main types of question defects which should be avoided in order to enhance the accuracy of results. These include biasing the answer; exceeding the ability of the respondent to answer accurately; failing to sufficiently determine the direction of the response, and inviting untruthful responses.

According to Ruch (1941, p. 224), morale is “so much a matter of emotion and feeling as well as intellectual appreciation of a situation” that questions containing emotionally tinged names or phrases may bias respondents' answers. In other words, the use of such phrases may produce different results to those that would be attained if such phrases were omitted and one may be accessing irrelevant associations by using such names (Ruch, 1941). Similarly, since “morale is emotional and even rooted in unconscious bias and

repressed mental conflict...direct questioning invites evasion on the part of the respondent and confusion on the part of the investigator” (Ruch, 1941, p. 225). Many questions also fail to capture the intensity of the emotional side – “it is just as important to know how much a person dislikes [something]...as it is to know the mere fact” (Ruch, 1941, p. 226). Finally, according to Ruch (1941, p. 225), “untruthful responses are invited by questions that embarrass the respondent or put him in fear of reprisal”. Ruch (1941) thus concludes that the best ways to measure morale are through the use of indirect situations whereby the purpose of the question is not apparent to the respondent, or by observing actual behavior. Tests of this sort “measure the influence of unconscious motives rather than the socially acceptable manifest content of the mind” (Ruch, 1941, p. 228). Since morale is often defined in terms of its behavioural indicators, the observation of such manifestations would make sense if one wanted to truthfully measure a phenomenon that extends beyond the respondent’s awareness.

Despite the difficulties posed by the use of questionnaires, most researchers and consultants appear to use employee attitude surveys to study morale. These may be insightful if one accepts Guba’s (1958) theory that satisfaction (the attitude) is a necessary predecessor of morale, but they may not truthfully capture employees’ *state of mind*.

At present companies also commonly use indicators such as staff turnover, absenteeism and performance indicators as measures of morale (Kettley, 1995). These are not ideal either however, as they measure negative, irreversible and often costly consequences of poor morale, which should ideally be avoided. The use of such indicators occurs only once the underlying problem has already become critical, and does not allow for pre-emptive action to be taken. Finally, upward feedback is often used as a means of measuring morale, but as illustrated previously, “untruthful responses are invited by questions that embarrass the respondent or put him in fear of reprisal” (Ruch, 1941, p. 225). This issue may become particularly relevant when the respondent is asked to talk to managers directly about such concerns. Thus, it seems that, at present, there is no ideal means of measuring morale and researchers and consultants weigh up the advantages and disadvantages of each technique. Cadbury managers were aware of this deficiency, and

thus proposed a study of behavioral indicators that are associated with high or low morale for future use. The specific situation at Cadbury and the need for the current study will now be explored.

1.5 Cadbury's Context

In order to retain competitive advantage and dominate the South African market for confectionary goods, Cadbury has recently merged with Bromor Foods. According to the two middle managers with whom initial discussions were held, the cultures of the two companies were very different and there appears to be underlying uncertainty regarding the policies and practices of the merged organization. In past years, Cadbury used to be a 'UK gentleman's business' with a strong family-like ethos, and its employees had typically been with the company for many years. Until recently, employees would sing on the production lines, and work late voluntarily. Then, within the past year Bromor, a smaller, more autocratic company, is seen to have taken over the larger organization, and to have introduced various changes. For example, according to one manager, there is now a management attitude that 'head office does the thinking, and employees are paid to obey', despite the fact that Cadbury employees have more relevant work experience and know their jobs. On this note, the manager suggested that employees are likely to be concerned, not so much about retrenchments (as very few people have been retrenched) but about changing jobs within the company after many years of doing the same work.

Perhaps more importantly, a perceived autocratic culture at Bromor may also have had a huge impact on Cadbury workers. For example, workers now have to phone a 0800 number in Johannesburg to lodge a complaint, rather than simply going to the HR department at the plant. One middle manager noted that for those employees with language difficulties, this impersonal communication channel may be problematic as they are used to dealing with problems face-to-face. Finally, there is a new general manager on site, whose approach is very different to that of his predecessor.

Although turnover and absenteeism rates are declining after a recent wellness and incentives program, senior management is thus concerned that this appearance of well-being is being carried over from before the merger. They are worried that, beneath the surface of apparent acceptance and satisfaction (or at least passivity) lies low employee morale, uncertainty about the future, and preparation for seeking other employment (particularly at middle-management level). One manager noted that there appears to be a feeling of underlying discontent as employees no longer stay late, do not seem to be interested in training and development programs, and are content to do the minimum work required in order to be paid.

Cadbury management was thus concerned about measuring employee morale so that corrective action may be taken before low morale manifests itself in negative symptoms, such as increasing absenteeism and turnover. They were skeptical about the sole use of employee climate surveys in this regard, as they feel that such surveys are usually conducted at a central level; the issues identified are always the same, and yet they are never dealt with. If the study was limited to morale at the plant, however, these managers could control the study themselves, and implement resulting suggestions.

Management agreed to provide their support in arranging interviews and surveys with employees, and in return expressed that they would appreciate any information the research could provide about employee morale (relating to the research aims).

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1 Research Aims

As emphasized in the above literature review, high morale is conducive to greater efficiency and productivity at work, as well as a more satisfying work-life for employees. As such, it is becoming increasingly important for organizations to promote and maintain high morale at work in order to reach their maximum competitive ability and thus remain successful in today's turbulent organizational environment. With regard to the above-mentioned changes and reasons for concern by Cadbury management, the aims of this study were to:

- 1) Assess the current state of morale at Cadbury (Port Elizabeth),
- 2) Identify issues that may be causing low morale,
- 3) Identify indicators of low morale, and
- 4) Find ways of addressing any morale issues.

2.2 The 'Reality' to be studied

According to Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser (2000, p. 36), organization "members will react affectively, cognitively and behaviorally in accordance with *their definitions* of organizational situations". This implies that actual conditions in the workplace are less important than the way in which they are perceived by employees, since morale is based on subjective perceptions and impressions of 'reality', rather than 'reality' itself. This takes one into deeper philosophical issues of what is assumed to constitute reality.

The literature on morale seems to prescribe an interpretive paradigm, which would allow the researcher to study the subjective world of employees' individual perceptions. It was also assumed however, that many perceptions would be shared among employees. For example, "the members of [an employee's] immediate work group...may have similar views because of the common experiences they have on the job" (Baehr & Renck, 1958,

p. 162) and these shared views then “tend to be reinforced and maintained by the group” (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 162). Since the current study aimed to assess morale in Cadbury (that is, at an organizational rather than individual level), it is these common perceptions and resulting organizational morale that were targeted. The idea of a shared external reality poses an element of positivism. Both paradigms thus served to guide the study, and will be briefly discussed below.

Firstly, it may be noted that paradigms are “all-encompassing systems of interrelated practice and thinking that define for researchers the nature of their enquiry along three dimensions – ontology, epistemology and methodology” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6). Terre Blanche and Durrheim (1999) note that ontology specifies the nature of reality and what can be known about it, and epistemology denotes the nature of the relationship between researcher and what can be known. Methodology specifies “how the researcher may go about practically studying whatever he or she believes can be known” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6).

2.2.1 The Interpretive paradigm

In these terms, the interpretive paradigm assumes that the “reality to be studied consists of people’s subjective experiences of the external world” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6). In other words, each individual experiences his or her own unique internal reality. Moreover, the researcher is part of that reality through an inter-subjective flow of effects (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999) and should be aware of this, while attempting to understand the subject’s internal world through empathy and engagement. This requires a methodology such as interviewing or participant observation that relies on a subjective relationship built on trust and openness between researcher and subject (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

2.2.2 The Positivist paradigm

The positivist paradigm, on the other hand, assumes that “there is a stable and unchanging external reality (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 6), which exists “independent of our thinking about it” (Bill Trochim’s Centre for Social Research Methods, 1996, p. 2).

People's thoughts and beliefs also exist objectively as individuals are able to access their mental states and report them directly to the researcher (Hughes, 1980). In terms of epistemology, the "existence of the external world is made known to us by its action on our senses" (Hughes, 1980, p. 21) and the researcher's role is thus to merely report such information in neutral and objective language (Hughes, 1980). Positivist methodologies (such as survey questionnaires), usually rely on controlling and manipulating 'reality' (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999).

2.3 Planning

The first stage in the research was one of entry and planning in terms of the Action Research model. The researcher (accompanied by an Organization Development consultant) had two initial meetings with two of Cadbury's middle managers to discuss the project. In these meetings Cadbury management explained the company's context, including the changes that have recently occurred, and expressed the need to know how employees were feeling; to be able to take corrective action if morale was found to be low, and to monitor the situation more closely in the future. These discussions informed the research goals identified above, and then focused on the form the project should take in order to reach these aims.

Management were interested in studying morale from employees' perspectives and it was thus considered appropriate to conduct the study in two phases. The first phase would involve semi-structured qualitative interviews to explore Cadbury employees' perceptions of morale (in relation to the research aims), and the second – a survey, to assess the degree to which these perceptions were shared among other employees. This would allow for a Cadbury-specific view of morale, while also providing Cadbury management with useful information at the organizational level.

2.4 Interviews

2.4.1 Designing the interview guide

Conducting a literature review and identifying important aspects

Having determined the project's goals, the researcher conducted a review of existing literature on morale, focusing specifically on literature relating to the four research aims (as provided in chapter 1). This review enabled the researcher to become more familiar with the topic, and to identify the prominent factors that were associated with each aim according to the literature. For example, determining the state of current morale would first require a definition of what morale involves. The various definitions in the literature pointed out aspects such as confidence in the future; the motivation to achieve beyond minimal requirements and emotional attachment to one's work and colleagues. Such aspects could then be used as prompts during interviews to stimulate discussion about morale if, or where, necessary. As such, the researcher was able to develop questions relating to the research aims that fully covered the content area of existing literature, thereby enhancing the study's content validity (Arksey & Knight, 1999). The researcher also referred to an existing survey on morale (Meyerson, 2005) as a guideline for basic content areas that are useful to a study of morale (namely: employee relationships; communication; fulfilment; appreciation and recognition; employee input and involvement, and personal and professional growth).

Forming an interview guide

Having conducted this in-depth research, the researcher read some literature about conducting qualitative interviews (Arksey & Knight, 1999; Kvale, 1996 and Taylor & Bogdan, 1998), and used these guidelines as the basis for developing an appropriate interview guide. She was aware of the need to put aside the literature now that she had acquired some background knowledge, and to focus on accessing *employees'* own views regarding the research aims. The questions developed from reading the literature were thus categorised into a few broad content areas relating to the project's aims, and to Cadbury's specific context. These included: the effects of recent changes; employee spirit or mood;

view of the future; achievement motivation; appreciation and recognition; employee input or involvement; work relationships, and fulfilment or the meaningfulness of work. The researcher then developed each broad theme into one or two simple open-ended questions (for example, 'Can you tell me about the recent changes that have taken place in Cadbury?') in order to allow the participant to express what was most important to him or her. Some 'catch phrases' from previously-developed questions were retained as appropriate prompts within each theme, in case the informant had little to say. In line with the fourth research aim, a general question was also included at the end asking employees for any suggestions about what, if anything, could be done to improve the mood at work.

For all questions, the researcher was aware of using simple and unambiguous language so that all employees (including those with possible language concerns) would understand them. Managers had warned that all employees could speak English at a basic level but that it was a second language for some. Thus, while it was unnecessary to engage the services of a translator, it would be advisable to use simple language with interviewees.

This brief interview guide was given to a Research Psychologist for review, as well as the HR Director at Cadbury, to ensure its appropriateness for achieving the research aims (and thus its validity). It was felt that as long as questions remained open-ended and new leads were followed effectively, the interview guide would be appropriate.

2.4.2 Ensuring informed consent

In addition to the brief interview guide, the researcher also prepared an information page to give to potential participants (Appendix A). According to Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 68), when employees know that the 'boss' has given permission for the study, they may "feel under pressure... to give consent and be involved. At the same time, they might be suspicious... that the information will be "fed back to management and used against the best interests of either the individual employee or the workforce as a whole" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 68). As a result, "any information they provide [may] be a formal and guarded account" (Arksey & Knight, 1999, p. 68). The researcher was very aware of this

possible dynamic, especially since HR staff would, of necessity, be arranging interviews with potential participants.

The information page thus informed employees that while HR management may know who is taking part in interviews, participants would only be asked questions in broad terms (for example, 'how do you think employees feel about Cadbury's future?') and the interviews would only be used to identify themes on which to base a survey. Thus, it would not be necessary to provide identifying information about participants in a report to the company at the end of the study. In addition to this, only the researcher and a research assistant (who would take notes for analysis purposes) would have access to raw data and these notes would be stored for a short period, and then deleted after analysis.

Finally, the information page served to inform employees of the researcher's identity; the reason for and nature of the project; who would benefit from the findings; who could take part in the study and what would be involved if they did. Employees were asked by HR staff if they would mind participating, but were able to decline if they had any reservations and participation was thus voluntary.

2.4.3 Sampling and participants

Potential interviewees were randomly selected from various positions in the plant (including two factory workers; two artisans and engineering support staff, two junior managers, two middle-level managers and two general staff). It was felt that such a sample would allow the researcher to understand all relevant perspectives (Arksey & Knight, 1999) in relation to the research aims, and gain sufficient information on which to base a survey. These employees were given the information leaflet, informed about the study and asked if they would mind participating. Thirteen people agreed to do so, but in the end only nine interviews were held, mostly due to an unfortunate delay in starting the interviews. The nine interviewees included a packer, senior operator, HR assistant, production scheduler, production manager, maintenance fitter, two refinement operators and one team manager. As a result, the researcher was still able to tap at least one person's perspective from each relevant position in the plant.

2.4.4 Data collection

Face-to-face interviews were held with individual employees over a period of two consecutive days, in a small, quiet, and informal meeting room at the plant. Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 52) note that “validity is enhanced by interviewing techniques that build rapport, trust and openness and which give informants scope to express the way they see things”. Thus, the researcher tried to create an informal and comfortable atmosphere by introducing herself and the research assistant (who would take notes during the interviews), explaining the need to take notes and reiterating the purpose (and confidentiality) of the interviews. Participants appeared very relaxed talking to two young female students from outside the company, and it may be speculated that a different relationship may have developed with different interviewers. Informed consent was ensured by asking interviewees to sign a consent form if they were satisfied with the conduct of all aspects mentioned therein (Appendix B).

The interviews began with one or two general questions in order to further relax employees, and stimulate open discussion. This was largely successful, and often resulted in the need for relatively few additional questions on the researchers’ part. Depending on what was said, the researcher used appropriate prompts from the interview guide where necessary, and followed up on interesting or unexpected information, without leading the respondent in any way. When the researcher or research assistant was unsure of what an interviewee was saying, she asked for clarification and checked that her interpretations made sense to the participant. It was beneficial having an assistant present, as she could critique the researcher’s interview style, follow up on insights that the researcher may have missed and generally add a second viewpoint to that of the researcher.

Interviews lasted approximately thirty minutes each, and this enabled sufficient exploration of employees’ views while being concise enough to retain their interest and to avoid imposing on their work. At the end of each interview the researchers thanked the interviewee for their time and confirmed what would happen next.

2.4.5 Data analysis

As noted by Taylor and Bogdan (1998, p.141), “data collection and analysis go hand in hand”. Thus, as the interviews progressed, the researcher and research assistant became aware of common themes that appeared to be significant to employees. The researchers had time to discuss these in-between interviews, and began to hypothesise about possible links between themes as well as reasons for some of the employees’ views. For example, one employee noted that promotions are apparently based on merit, but that such claims were superficial. Others stated that employees are told about future changes in the company, but that managers never ‘lay all their cards on the table’. Such comments seemed to illustrate a lack of honest and open communication on the part of management, and resulting mistrust and uncertainty in employees. The researcher made notes of, and brainstormed, such insights as they developed, checked the accuracy of hypotheses in later interviews and thus began to analyse the meaning of the data while interviews progressed.

Once all interviews were finished, the researcher and research assistant went through the interview notes, clarified any uncertainties (in terms of the assistant’s short-hand) and discussed differing interpretations of employees’ intended meanings in order to reach consensus. The researcher then conducted a basic thematic analysis on the data.

According to Taylor and Bogdan (1998), thematic analysis involves first becoming familiar with the data (by reading, and recording insights and interpretations as they emerge) and then identifying recurring themes. Having become familiar with the data during interviews and through multiple readings, the researcher then began to “work out what the organising principles are that ‘naturally’ underlie the material” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 141). She thus broke the data down into meaningful ‘bits’ of information (including words, phrases or sentences) and colour-coded similar bits, grouping them into appropriate categories or themes based on the nature of their similarity. When a unit of data did not fit into an existing theme, a new theme was created to accommodate it and all subsequent similar ‘bits’ were marked with the same colour. During this process the researcher often reconsidered the appropriate placing of information, and altered theme headings to better capture the phrases they contained. She

also attempted to find an optimal level of complexity, in which there were not too many themes (which would complicate and lengthen the survey) but also not too few (so that no important information was lost).

The researcher then grouped together similar phrases within each theme, and formed appropriate sub-themes. For example under the theme 'state of current morale', the researcher found sub-themes of declining morale over the years; job insecurity; no change in mood since the merger, and opposingly - contentment at work (Appendix C). These sub-themes would later be captured as possible responses to survey questions based on the main theme of current morale.

Once all of the data had been summarised, grouped and regrouped into appropriate themes and sub themes, the researcher was aware of the main issues and of how various themes linked up. For example, the researcher noted that while HR staff seemed to think that employees do not make enough effort to go for training, employees believed that training does not help them to advance. Instead, they believed that any positions are 'already filled' because outsiders are selected and promoted over current employees, and those with formal qualifications are selected over those with experience and training on the job. Thus, themes of training linked to those of advancement opportunities, and selection criteria. This observation may have been very important in explaining lowered morale in the plant (if such was the case) as many employees are quite old and thus, not interested in beginning a formal qualification (as noted by one or two interviewees).

The researcher kept in mind the research goals while inducing themes, and ensured that all themes and sub-themes were instrumental in achieving these aims. Based on these themes, the researcher was then able to develop a survey questionnaire to assess the degree to which interviewees' perspectives were commonly shared in the plant.

2.5 Surveys

2.5.1 Designing the survey questionnaire

Forming statements

During the second phase of research, the researcher developed questions based on themes (and sub-themes), in order to determine whether other employees agreed with these views. Since the researcher's aim was simply to "lead respondents to express agreement or disagreement with an explicit point of view" (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, p. 254), closed-ended questions were considered most appropriate. These were presented in statement form and respondents were "offered a set of answers and asked to choose the one that most closely represents their view" (Frankfort-Nachmias & Nachmias, 1996, p. 253).

Capturing 'morale'

The researcher thus converted all of the questions into statement form, such as 'I enjoy working at Cadbury' (Appendix D), ensuring (by a review of the interview notes) that all statements reflected the interviewee's intended meaning. She then reviewed the statements (especially questions 18, 22 and 23 (Appendix D)) in light of Ruch's (1941) insights about measuring morale, to ensure that the questions would capture 'morale' as accurately as possible. The main concern was not about whether morale should be measured at the group or individual level, or its underlying dimensions, but about capturing the emotional feeling rather than rational attitudes. During interviews, the researcher noticed that interviewees found it easier to talk about morale at a more general level – when asked how the *interviewee* was feeling at work, satisfactions and dissatisfactions were expressed rather than an overall mood. When asked about the mood at work (in general) however, responses seemed to relate more to 'morale'. This finding supported Ruch's (1941) view that since "morale is emotional and even rooted in unconscious bias and repressed mental conflict...direct questioning invites evasion on the part of the respondent and confusion on the part of the investigator" (Ruch, 1941, p. 225). Thus, in asking about the state of current morale, the researcher asked about 'the mood or morale at work' rather than

presenting the statement 'my mood or morale is positive'. The latter statement may have invited too much consideration, and a socially acceptable response, so it was felt that the researcher's method gave more honest and instinctive views. Similarly, the researcher avoided mentioning emotionally tinged names or phrases (such as names of managers) and was aware of creating positively as well as negatively phrased statements, so that employees' perceptions of the company were not influenced in any way through the study. It was felt that these insights increased the validity of the study overall.

Developing a rating scale

The researcher then developed an appropriate rating scale to reflect possible responses (usually Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Neutral, Agree and Strongly Agree). As mentioned earlier, morale "is so much a matter of emotion and feeling, as well as an intellectual appreciation of a situation...[that] it is just as important to know *how much* a person dislikes [something]...as it is to know the mere fact" (Ruch, 1941, p. 226). Thus, questions were phrased to not only capture facts (such as, 'managers keep their word when they promise something') but also respondents' subjective feelings about these facts. As such, the survey question relating to the above example was phrased "I *trust* that if managers or supervisors promise something, they will keep their word" (Appendix D). In addition to this, the commonly used Likert scale seemed appropriate in most instances as it would show *how much* employees agreed or disagreed with a statement, not just the mere fact that they agreed or disagreed. The neutral category was included in order to cater for those employees who might feel truly indifferent with regard to a statement, as such feelings might also be indicative of the state of morale (and other research aims).

In addition to this type of rating scale, a 'Never, Sometimes, Mostly, Always' scale was used for some statements that questioned occurrence of the feeling rather than its intensity. For example, it seemed inappropriate to ask employees to agree or disagree with the statement that managers communicate honestly and openly about changes (Appendix D), as managers may communicate honestly sometimes, but not always. The 'agree or disagree' rating scale would thus cause confusion for respondents.

Finally, there were a few instances whereby a more detailed and specific response set was required in order to fully capture the theme and sub-themes being queried. For example, when asked about the effects of the recent merger on morale, interviewees' responses varied from "it has not affected us directly", to responses such as "some people in my team lost their jobs" or "some people had to move to Johannesburg". The extent to which other employees felt these effects could thus best be assessed by posing sub-themes (such as the responses mentioned above) as possible answers to a question, and ask employees to tick the most relevant response. Examples of this may be seen in questions 8; 23; 25 and 42 (Appendix D). It may be noted that explicit instructions were provided in the body of the questionnaire where questions deviated from the normal format, and general instructions were provided at the beginning of the questionnaire. This would ensure that respondents knew how to answer questions correctly and thus, enhanced the validity of the survey.

Adding a demographics section

The researcher then added an open-ended demographics section, requiring seemingly relevant personal characteristics such as 'position or job title', 'length of service', 'age', and 'gender' (with an optional 'race' category). It was felt that these demographics would allow the researcher to pin-point differing perspectives in important groups (for example, factory workers may feel that their efforts are appreciated while general workers do not). From interviews (and from initial talks with management) it was also felt that age and length of service would be important factors, as some employees felt that they had worked at Cadbury for many years and that this was no longer recognised, or that they used to be happier working at Cadbury than they are today.

Reviewing the questionnaire

Once the researcher had developed the initial set of questions, she removed any questions that were not entirely appropriate for answering the research aims. Interviewees had provided suggestions for improving morale (in line with the fourth research aim) and the researcher had initially listed each important suggestion with an accompanying Likert scale. In order to cut down the questionnaire to a manageable length, however, it was felt

that these questions should be omitted in preference for a single open-ended (optional) question at the end asking “what, if anything, do you think could be done to improve morale?” (Appendix D). In addition to any responses gained from this question, the researcher would be able to derive appropriate recommendations from responses to the rest of the questionnaire, as well as interviewees’ suggestions.

The researcher then gave the survey questionnaire to the research assistant and Organization Development consultant for review. This served to highlight any ambiguities in the wording of questions, as well as any language that could be further simplified for those with lower levels of English literacy. It also assisted the researcher in removing questions that were very similar, and in ensuring that all of the questions would be appropriate for achieving the research aims. This greatly enhanced the validity and reliability of the research instrument. The final questionnaire consisted of 69 questions (including the demographic questions and one contingency question), which enabled the researcher to assess all of the research aims. The response time required was thus shortened as much as possible so as to increase the response rate without losing important information.

The questionnaire was then sent to Cadbury management for review, along with an information page (Appendix D) similar to that given to interview candidates. This information page was again worded in a friendly and informal tone, and introduced the researcher and the project. It also specified reasons for filling out the questionnaire and instructions on how to do so, including the fact that respondents should contact HR staff if they required someone to translate it into their home language for them. No respondents required assistance with translation, but some did benefit from having the questions read to them by the researcher (as will be discussed later). The information page asked respondents to fill out the questionnaire and place it in a sealed box provided in the canteen. The researcher would then come and fetch this box in one week’s time. Potential participants were once again assured of anonymity and confidentiality, as only the researcher would have access to the completed questionnaires, and due to the size of the

sample and the lack of identifying information required, it would be impossible to link individual identities to any answers provided.

2.5.2 Sampling and participants

The researcher decided that it was important to access all relevant perspectives with regard to the research aims, and thus determined to use a stratified sampling technique. It was noted that there are one thousand and thirty employees in the plant, of which 850 are factory workers; 40 are artisans and support staff; 40 are junior managers; 30 are middle or senior managers and 70 are general workers. As such, a thirty percent sample size would be ideal for ensuring relatively large sub-groups and thus, confidentiality. In order to ensure that the results could be generalised to the organization as a whole, potential respondents were randomly selected from lists of employees in each position. The initial target sample thus included 255 factory workers; 12 artisans and support staff; 12 junior managers; 9 middle or senior managers, and 21 general staff, giving a total of 309 employees.

It is noted that this large sample target was not met in the end (as shall be discussed in the following section), and convenience sampling was also used to boost the sample base. More specifically, the researcher sat in the canteen for two consecutive days and provided raffle tickets (for various prizes including a small radio) to passing employees who took the time to fill in a questionnaire. This may have meant that the sample was not as representative of the population as it would otherwise have been, but apart from factory workers (from whom a 10% sample was still attained) the samples acquired from each position were larger than expected. Thus, all relevant views were still tapped. As noted by Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 59), “practicalities whittle away the best research intentions” and good research is that which represents “the best response to a problem in particular circumstances which are never, ever, ideal”. This phenomenon also revealed useful insight into one factor that seemed to be lowering morale in the plant - that is, the perception that ‘managers do not act on their word’.

2.5.3 Data collection

Cadbury printed out and distributed five hundred copies of the final survey and cover page to employees selected through stratified random sampling techniques. The additional two hundred surveys were included in attempt to cater for expected non-response rate, so that the researcher would hopefully attain the desired 309 employee sample. The researcher left a sealed box in the canteen, in which employees could place their completed surveys. She returned to Port Elizabeth one week later to check on the rate of response, but only fifty-five surveys had been returned. The box was thus replaced in the canteen for an additional week and employees were reminded to fill in their survey questionnaires. An additional thirty-five surveys were received.

In a final attempt to encourage employees to participate, Cadbury management offered various prizes which would be raffled to those who filled in surveys. The researcher sat in the canteen for two consecutive days encouraging those who passed by to complete a questionnaire. Each survey was numbered in consecutive order and each respondent was then given a ticket showing their survey number and the researcher's signature (so that tickets could not be replicated). Since the canteen is visited by most employees at some time during the course of the day, this was a relatively successful attempt (and allowed for responses from employees in a variety of positions). Some respondents (especially older ones) agreed to fill out the survey if the researcher would read out the questions and answers to them. For each of these employees, the researcher emphasised that their responses would remain confidential and that honesty was important if the results were to be used for improvements in the plant. This was considered important in case respondents gave inaccurate and socially acceptable responses to please the researcher. Interestingly, some respondents declined to fill out the survey, saying that results are never acted upon by management. Others had not heard about the survey but were willing to take part. In all, the researcher received a total of one hundred and sixty-seven completed surveys, including those that were attained in the first two weeks.

2.5.4 Data analysis

Once it was obvious that no more surveys were going to be received, the researcher removed the box from the canteen and statistically analysed the results. This involved entering demographic information and survey questions as variables (in columns), and the individual responses to these questions as cases (in rows) on a STATISTICA spreadsheet. In entering the variables, text labels were given to each possible response. For example, for positively phrased statements the following text labels were given: 'Strongly Disagree = 1', 'Disagree= 2', 'Neutral= 3', 'Agree= 4', and 'Strongly Agree= 5', or alternatively, 'Never= 1' and 'Always= 4'. The highest value (that is, 4 or 5) was always given to the most positive response, and the lowest value to the most negative response. It is thus noted that for negatively phrased questions (such as questions 7 and 19 in Appendix D), 'Strongly Disagree' was the most positive answer and was thus awarded the maximum value, while 'Strongly Agree' was the most negative response and was given a text label of 1.

The researcher then entered the numbers corresponding to an individual's responses along each row, so that when typed, these numbers showed participants' actual responses (such as 'Strongly Agree'). Demographic information and questions with unusual response sets (for example, questions 8 and 23, Appendix D) were arbitrarily awarded consecutive number values, unless responses could again be numbered in terms of an increasingly positive view.

The data were then cleaned by constructing frequency histograms of each variable to check for the existence of impossible or outlying values. For example, if the question allowed only 5 possible answers, an entry of 6 on the histogram would indicate an error, and the researcher would review the raw data to correct the mistake. Histograms or frequency tables would also reveal any missing values, and the researcher could check that such values really were not filled in on the survey sheet, rather than being an error on the researcher's part during data entry.

Once all data were cleaned and correct frequency histograms constructed, the researcher attempted to “describe the data by investigating the distribution of scores on each variable, and by determining whether the scores on different variables are related to each other” (Terre Blanche & Durrheim, 1999, p. 101). Such an investigation allowed the researcher to distinguish the extent to which respondents agreed or disagreed with particular statements, and thus whether they agreed in general with what interviewees had said about morale in the plant.

Since the purpose of the survey was to find support for interview findings at the broader organizational level, the researcher systematically went through the interview findings and looked at related histograms of employees’ responses. Where variables were thought to relate to other variables (as suggested by the interview findings), she cross-tabulated them in order to provide greater insight into the data. For example, she cross-tabulated question 30 with question 22 – ‘the morale at work is positive’ so as to determine whether this delay in fixing problems was associated with morale. In line with the second research aim, all factors raised during interviews that were thought to influence morale were cross-tabulated with questions 18, 22 and 23, in order to determine the validity of such hypotheses. Many variables were also cross-tabulated with demographic variables such as position and tenure, in order to more accurately identify the perceptions and concerns of specific groups. This would allow any interventions to be more focussed in nature.

When the results were of particular interest and where the assumptions of the Chi-square test were met, the researcher checked the significance of associations against a 0.05 alpha value, and noted the direction of those that were significant. She sometimes recoded data in the spreadsheet to combine certain categories where expected frequencies were too small. Thus, ‘strongly agree’ and ‘strongly disagree’ were sometimes integrated into the categories ‘agree’ and ‘disagree’ respectively, in order to allow for Chi-square assumptions to be met. These tests were especially important in identifying the factors that had a significant association with morale (in light of the second research aim), although other factors may still have had a small effect. The statistical findings were then presented in the same format as the qualitative findings, for ease of comparison.

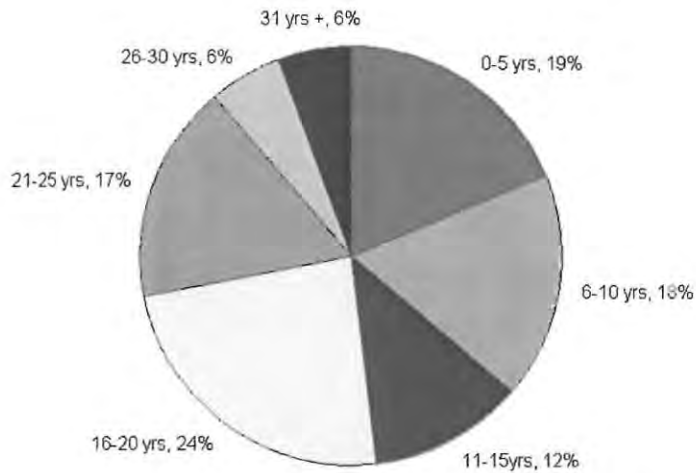
Once all of the qualitative findings had been explored in the quantitative data, (as well as new insights that arose), the researcher compared the quantitative findings to qualitative ones in order to clarify where they differed from or supported one another. She also highlighted *significant* associations between ‘influencing factors’ and morale, as these would form a main focus for further discussion. The researcher then constructed a feedback report to Cadbury management consisting of a brief context for the study (including research aims); methodology; a summary of the main findings and an appendix containing the suggestions provided by employees for improving morale.

She provided feedback to the two middle managers who had assisted during the planning phase, and encouraged discussion about the results and the study overall. The report would then be made available to any interested employees, especially those who had participated in the study in some way.

3. RESULTS

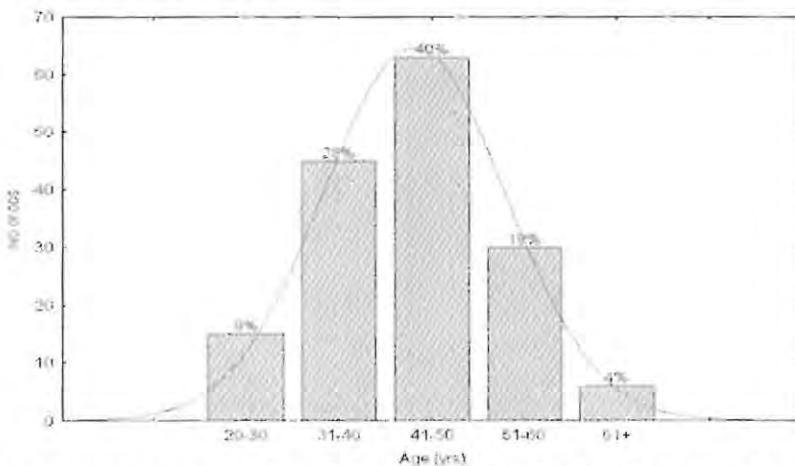
3.1 Demographic constituents of respondents

Figure 1 Length of tenure



As illustrated in Figure 1, many employees have worked at Cadbury for a large proportion of their lives. More than half of the respondents have been with the company for 16 years or more and 12% have worked there for more than 26 years. On the other hand, only 19% of respondents have been there for 0-5 years, and 30% for 6-15 years.

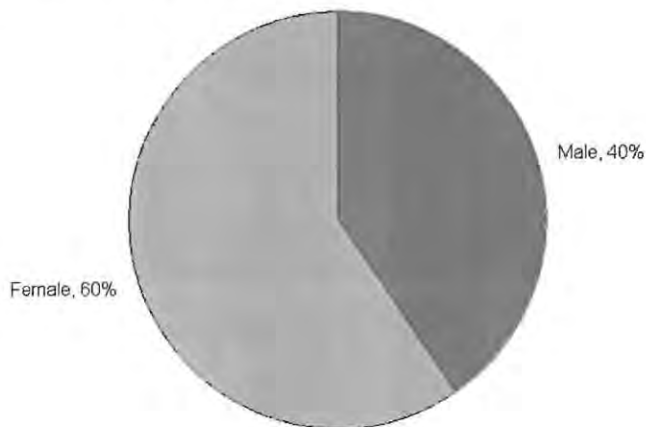
Figure 2 Age of respondents



Another characteristic of the sample is that it illustrates a typically older workforce – nearly half (40%) of the respondents were 41-50 years old, 19% were 51-60 years, and 4% were beyond usual retirement age (see Figure 2). Only 9% were 21-30 years old.



Figure 3 Gender of participants



As evident in Figure 3, 60% of the respondents were female and 40% were male.

Figure 4 Position of respondents

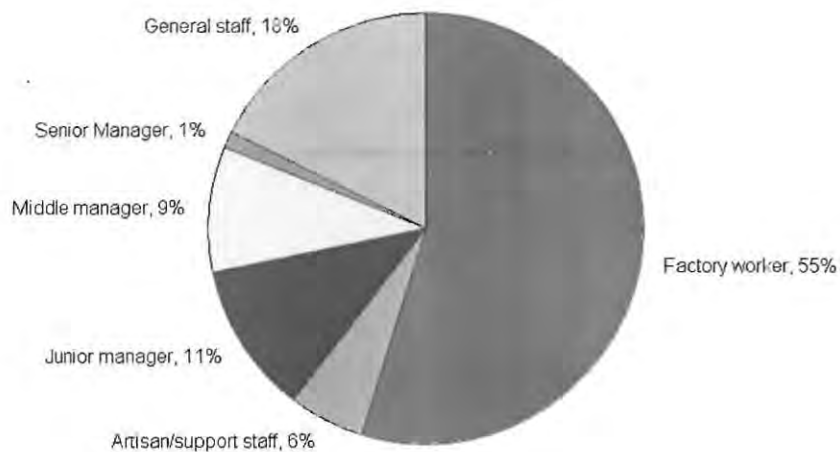


Figure 4 shows that most (that is, 55%) of the respondents were factory workers (including machine operators, sorters, packers and wrappers). 18% were general (office) staff; 6% were artisans or support staff (including fitters and maintenance staff) and 11% were junior managers (including line managers, team managers, technicians, and supervisors). 9% were middle managers (including engineers, accountants, technical managers, quality managers etc) and 1% were senior managers.

3.2 Qualitative Results

The following section presents the interview findings. These were very helpful in providing initial insights relating to the research aims, and the information derived was used as the basis for subsequent surveys.

3.2.1 The state of current morale

Employees' responses regarding the mood at work could be divided into four inter-related themes. Some said that morale is at rock bottom; others said that it has declined over the years; some said that there has been no change since the merger, and others noted that morale was low around the time of the merger but is now positive again. Overall, responses were generally negative or, at best, indicative of recent improvement.

In relation to the first theme, a few interviewees felt that 'morale is at rock bottom', or that the general mood at work is low. Many said that they used to be much happier working at Cadbury in past years, but that their 'happy days in Cadbury are gone'. Contrary to managers' beliefs however, this trend of low (and decreasing) morale appeared to have little relationship to the merger and corresponding changes. Rather, many employees felt that morale was 'down' from before the merger, and that there has been little or no change in mood since then. Morale has simply been declining over the years, but many people could not account for this. One employee noted 'they give with one hand and take with the other', and another posed insecurity about 'newcomers' as a possible reason. Such possibilities will be explored later.

On the other hand, those who were more optimistic about morale said that it was initially low after the merger, but that people are settling down and 'getting back into the flow of things' now - it is a case of 'adapt or die'. In addition to this, one or two said that the mood is mainly positive although it naturally fluctuates depending on circumstances. A recent drumming exercise may have boosted morale considerably.

It must be noted that despite perceptions of decreasing morale, most employees enjoy working at Cadbury, even if not to the same extent that they did in the past. A few people mentioned with pride that they were part of 'the Cadbury family' and felt that they have helped build the company up to what it is today (although they have little to show for this). Most employees were also optimistic and said that the company is 'heading in the right direction' and has 'a bright future'. A few employees expressed excitement about being part of Cadbury's future because they felt that it has a vision and is now competing internationally. Some people however, felt that while the company is growing financially, employee morale is 'going down the drain', and one person felt that the company is generally deteriorating.

3.2.2 Factors that may be influencing morale

It is difficult to isolate the state of morale from employees' perceptions of various aspects of their working environment, since peoples' perceptions of work factors may illustrate (and influence) their morale. When asked about possible reasons for the above-mentioned views, employees spoke about the following factors that they felt were influencing morale.

The Bromor merger and recent changes

Firstly, as mentioned previously, the recent merger may have influenced morale and made people more insecure, if only temporarily. It seems that employees were affected to different degrees and in different ways by the merger, depending on their positions. Those on the production floor felt that it had not affected them, while employees in other positions appear to have lost their jobs, or have had to move to Johannesburg. This resulted in the loss of some work relationships for those who remain, and this may have lowered morale initially. Apparently many of the best fitters took packages and left, and the remaining ones are 'not as competent'. Furthermore, there was apparently 'no consequences for the standard of their work' in that their performance goes largely unremarked. This results in an increased work-load for remaining fitters and engineering support staff, who are still paid the same salary. It also means that those on production lines sometimes have to wait for an hour or two at the beginning and end of each day, and this delays production.

Another concern involved the new four day work shift. The employees concerned were mainly negative about this change as they felt that it results in less time off work and creates budgeting problems. More specifically, their pay dates are more irregular and no longer coincide with deadlines for paying loans. Those in higher positions however, mostly felt that the change is beneficial to employees as it gives them more time away from work. A few employees also felt negative about the new system of phoning Johannesburg with a complaint, because although employees are assisted in lodging such complaints, the process takes much longer.

Perhaps more importantly, employees' reacted differently with regard to the new general manager, although all agreed that 'he is less of a people person' than his predecessor. Most employees felt slightly disappointed about his style, noting that they hardly ever see him (some people do not even know who he is), and that 'he is not the type of person to greet employees'. People appeared to feel that, while they did not expect him to see them personally, 'he needs to be more involved', 'to know what's going on' and to be interested and approachable. One employee noted that while the previous manager conducted regular checks and rewarded good performance based on reports, the new manager conducts checks at random intervals to 'catch people doing the right things'. The two managers thus have very different management styles. While some employees felt that this change has made no difference in their work lives, a few were positive about the new manager's 'ability to lead the company' and empathised with his need to build support.

Finally, a few employees were very positive about the introduction of new machinery (specifically the binderline) and felt that this has improved efficiency and production. On the other hand, such innovations have also meant an increased workload for some and thus, a more tiring day. As a result, there is less bonding among employees and less singing on the production lines, but this was accepted as being a necessary change.

Working conditions and wages

Employees raised various concerns about wages, and about their working conditions. Perhaps most importantly, many employees were concerned about poor increases and

about their salaries in general, noting that there is a disparity between inflation and pay. Others noted that they are now 'paid the same amount for doing more work' since the merger. In terms of fairness, one employee stated that the last 'straight increase' was given in 1992, and since then salary (among fitters and electricians especially) is largely determined by one's prominence in certain social cliques. Those who make themselves known outside of work (and put others down through gossip) are likely to receive higher raises, although the system is 'apparently' based on merit. It was felt that the resulting salary differences compound over the years and cannot be rectified in any fair way, which is de-motivating.

As for working conditions, employees on the production line (and at team-management level) mentioned that too much routine in their jobs becomes tiring. One or two employees also expressed concern about their safety at work due to the lay-out of the plant. For example, some workers have to take machine parts downstairs for cleaning, but cannot use their hands on the step railings and are concerned about slipping or falling. Another employee noted that some people are working in a very hot environment because the ventilation system is ineffective in Crumb Tower.

In this regard, a few employees noted that it takes a long time before problems are addressed (for example, leaking water and a broken lift), and that they do not have sufficient equipment to do their jobs effectively. Most prominently, employees in various positions stated that they are now under greater pressure and time demands at work. The working environment used to be more relaxed and employees enjoyed work and would 'work late voluntarily'. Now there is a greater emphasis on production (as opposed to people), and employees are required to work faster and to concentrate more, which is tiring. It appears that this is the main reason why employees no longer work late voluntarily or sing on the production lines – they do only what is necessary because this minimum standard is more demanding than it was previously.

Finally, a few employees mentioned dissatisfaction with the recent wellness program, mainly relating to issues of trust - employees are called in if they go 'off sick more than

three times' and notes from external doctors are not trusted. One employee noted that they were not consulted before the wellness program was implemented.

Communication and information

Many of the employees felt that there is a lack of honesty and openness about changes in the company – 'managers never lay all their cards on the table'. As noted by one employee, 'they play mos hide 'n seek!' Employees want managers to be honest with them about what is happening - even if the news is bad, they want to be 'included as part of the team'. A lack of honesty and openness was seen to create suspicion and mistrust.

There also appeared to be a little concern about forums for communication. More specifically, it is questionable whether certain communication channels (such as 'Roadshows' and monthly team briefs) still exist. One employee felt that these channels inform people of what is happening, while another felt that they no longer occur. Thus, some people on the shop floor feel that they are ill-informed about progress, and of what is expected of them, while those with computers were thought to be better informed. Communication for factory-workers seems to currently take place mainly via pre-shift meetings (which are seen as beneficial), union representatives, notice-boards and team-managers, but according to interviewees, these channels are perhaps insufficient. Salaried employees are also given performance reviews once or twice a year, but even these may be postponed.

Finally, some employees noted that they have been informed about change, but one mentioned that such information usually consists of how change will affect the company and is more long-term in focus. This employee wanted more information about how changes would affect them directly (for example, 'the Crunchie line is being discontinued, what will happen [to employees]?') and also, information that is more short-term in focus ('we need to know what will affect us tomorrow, not what will happen in two years time'). Bottom-up communication was also felt to be important with regard to change, and some employees expressed the desire to be more involved in what happens within the company.

One very important finding was that employees feel their requests (and management's promises) are not met. As noted by some employees, 'they do not stick to what they say' with regard to morning meetings, managers keep promising change 'like [that] the water leak will be fixed', and promises about training are not met. Team managers on the other hand may feel that they 'tell employees one thing one day, and then have to change it the next due to orders from above' – a 'breakdown in communication [thus] causes inconsistency, and creates mistrust in employees'.

Perceptions of leadership

Employees' perceptions of the new General Manager have already been explored. In terms of management in general, the predominant perception was that employees 'are just a number' and 'bosses don't care about you as people' - 'money is the bottom line'. Apparently weekly feedback from the production manager is impersonal, 'using team-managers as a go-between'. It seems that, overall, employees would appreciate more involvement from managers other than team-leaders – as noted by one interviewee, employees only have contact with team managers. It was also felt that line managers bring in new rules and then soon leave, resulting in inconsistency and unrealistic expectations. One employee stated that these managers need to collaborate with each other to maintain some consistency, otherwise rules become meaningless and de-motivating. Related to this is the perception that new line managers have nothing new to teach their subordinates – experienced employees end up teaching those 'above' them who are better-educated but know nothing of the job. Moreover, these new managers often do not listen to more experienced employees and 'mess things up'.

Learning opportunity and growth

A major factor that seemed to be influencing morale was pessimism about one's chances of advancing in the company and moreover, about job security. Most employees felt that outsiders are promoted above current employees, and that those with higher formal qualifications are promoted above those with experience on the job. Even if employees make use of training opportunities (which they felt are readily available), they felt that such training is not considered when it comes to promotion, and is thus pointless. It is

likely that employees were referring here to development opportunities, as opposed to training per se, which usually aims to fill gaps in skills. These interviewees seemed to feel that they could not advance at work due to such factors, and those with older qualifications found this frustrating as their 'outdated' qualifications are no longer recognised. On the other hand, personnel staff felt that employees do not really make use of training opportunities and 'then wonder why they are overlooked for promotion'. This appears to illustrate a cycle of misunderstanding.

With regard to training, there was the perception that more time needs to be spent understanding employees' needs so that *appropriate* training is given. There was also the feeling that there is little time for training, because if one person goes for training, others have to stay and do more work in order to compensate. Finally, it was noted that the study benefits are a positive source of motivation – 'it's all the add-ons that help!'

Appreciation and recognition

Many employees felt that there is insufficient recognition and appreciation, especially in relation to employees' experience. One person mentioned that the managers who used to recognise employees' contributions have now left the company. Another noted that if targets are met too early, employees are laid off for a week and this is de-motivating, while a third person felt that 'employees are generally spoilt'.

There appeared to be two levels of recognition – 'shining stars are recognised' for saving the company money or increasing productivity, and the incentive scheme rewards production teams for reaching Key Performance Indicator (KPI) standards. Employees generally felt that this incentive scheme motivates them to reach targets, but one stated that teams do not pull together as they should because of differences in individual performance. If one team member is absent or does not work well, the whole team suffers. Thus, individual rewards should also be given, so that there is some competition within lines and there are 'no slackers'. Engineering staff also suggested basing their incentive potential solely on the line they work on as, at present, they only receive 25% of the normal line incentive when it reaches targets. Thus, four lines need to reach the incentive targets

before they receive the full 100% bonus and there is the feeling that they have little control over their ability to be rewarded. A few people mentioned that there is no one recognition structure that is followed, and there is the need for some consistency in this regard.

While a few employees noted the importance of monetary recognition, many noted that 'it's not always about the money' and suggested simple gestures such as positive feedback, free meals, certificates, or having one's name on the board. This was surprising, as interviews were relatively unstructured and employees mentioned this of their own accord.

Relationships at work

The final factor that was mentioned as having an impact on morale was relationships, and this was felt to be very positive. Employees mentioned that there is good team-work (not competitive) and general warmth and friendliness among co-workers – 'we all help each other, that's what makes it great'. There appear to be 'after-hour socials, and the familiarity and personal involvement has remained unchanged' since the merger. There were however, felt to be slightly strained relationships between Cadbury and Bromor employees – a 'feeling of them and us'.

3.2.3 Indicators of morale

The most common response when asked about indicators of low morale was that 'you can feel the vibe' – 'employees come to work to do their job [and 'get paid'], nothing less, nothing more – they are not willing to go the extra mile'. Work is no longer pleasurable – 'you don't feel like thinking, like of how to improve – there's no attempt to use initiative or give extra input, don't stress yourself because there's no appreciation'.

Some employees noted that negative attitudes may show a lack of morale, and others said you can see it in employees' faces. Many noted desire to leave the company (for example, looking forward to retirement, or looking for another job) as an indicator. Employees are also likely to 'get mad and talk-talk' about their dissatisfactions, or may voice their complaints to supervisors or managers. Low morale may lead to 'stand-offs', or negative behaviour, possibly depending on the cause of low morale. For example, 'if you're always

told you're bad, then why not be bad', and with degrading treatment, 'you get offended and treat superiors in the same way'. Finally, it was generally agreed that low morale leads to a decrease in productivity.

3.2.4 Ways to improve morale

This section includes suggestions given during interviews as well as those provided in the optional qualitative section at the end of the survey (see Appendix E on page 136). The suggestions given in the survey were especially enlightening regarding previous comments, and raised new (and possibly deeper) issues that were not voiced in interviews. This may have been because people had more time for consideration, because more views were attained or because they felt comfortable being more truthful due to increased anonymity.

Wages, job security and recruitment opportunities

A couple of employees requested better increases as a way to improve morale - people were willing to work hard for better pay as shown by the comment 'give people training so they can earn more money'. Another noted 'please for once look and see that people are not just numbers and that they are human beings and have the same expense as all. Even ourselves are cheated out of the perks of life'. While one fitter suggested 'doing away with merit increases and putting all on the same salary', another suggested that managers 'recognize good work by giving individuals an increase based on merit, not the same as everyone else'. This discrepancy of opinion among fitters and electricians may require further investigation.

It seems that employees are also willing to work hard for greater job security – some people have been temporary staff members for many years and 'long to be employed more permanently'. One suggestion was thus to 'train existing casuals or temps, so that they can also apply for permanent positions' and to 'treat temps and permanent staff equally'. Many employees also wanted greater opportunity for recruitment or advancement, as illustrated by the following - 'employment should be advertised on the board...Don't [bring] them in through a friend and at the end of the day the job gets advertised and the

person in charge knows who he will be giving the job to. Don't let us go through the whole process and then you know who you will give the job to'. Employees thus want transparent recruitment and promotion processes that enable internal employees to be fairly considered. Finally, one employee suggested that 'the company start recognizing the people inside the factory who've got qualifications. Those people need to be developed by the company they are working for, because if the company is not prepared, who is going to give those people a chance.' Thus, employees expressed the need to be valued by the company, to be given some security, and to be given the opportunity to grow and advance in their jobs.

Fairness and consistency of treatment and benefits

People also requested 'fairness and consistency' with regard to treatment and benefits – specifically, 'more transparency in the company. Employees on the same level to be treated the same. Equal benefits within levels'. One employee noted that disparities in benefits are grossly evident, for example, 'Cadbury (confectionary) do not receive equitable benefits (car, petrol, maintenance) versus the beverage employees'. This perception of unfairness may lower morale and should be addressed.

Address negative management attitudes towards employees

Perhaps even more importantly, employees want to be treated with respect. One employee suggested 'get rid of racism – be fair to all and watch language when talking to employees', and another noted that 'people will give [their] whole input if they see managers...We really work hard and will appreciate if they try to be more fair in every way (racism)'. It appears that young line managers are particularly to blame, and 'must change their attitude towards each other and the workers, and stop being racist.'

Employees also felt that managers sometimes treat them as if they are stupid – 'the new manager think we are illiterate' and some managers are 'rude'. Suggestions for improving morale thus involved addressing these issues. For example, 'managers must stop shouting at the workers when they are talking to them – we must understand each other in a good manner', and 'managers to change their attitudes – some of them discussing your personal

problems in the meetings.’ Managers must also ‘stop having their favourite employees because if employees are friends with managers they do what they want when they want and that disturbs other workers, so they don’t perform well’. Managers should thus treat all employees equally and with respect.

Enhancing communication between managers and staff

In terms of downward communication, the prevailing feeling was that there needs to be more interaction, as well as honest and open communication, between management (other than just team-managers) and staff. Suggestions for improving morale included ‘managers to be more honest to employees’ and ‘open and free dialogue between employees and managers’. Another employee suggested ‘communication and appreciation – we have good people working for Cadbury’. In particular, some employees suggested ‘team building with managers’ and one requested meetings in which employees and managers can share information, mutual expectations and possible solutions for problems. This would help to increase employees’ trust and respect, which this employee felt has been lost through ‘perceived secrecy’.

Employees also seemed eager to be involved in making decisions and to be able to make a difference in the company. Suggestions included ‘involve employees in all decisions – give [them] the opportunity to show their worth’, and ‘include the workforce in decision-making. Ask for advice – there are people out there who knows more’. They want to be able to voice their ideas, and for their suggestions to be implemented. One person aptly suggested implementing feasible suggestions and giving recognition for ideas implemented. One or two employees suggested increasing communication between employees by creating a forum in which to ‘talk out our hearts, how you feel about other employees’ and ‘talk about problems’. Finally, one employee commented that management should ‘be aware of employee’s expectations and personal circumstances, and involve people when making decisions that directly affect people’s lives’. This employee noted that the move to Johannesburg could have been avoided, but the Woodmead site was chosen because senior managers could afford to make a home there and they did not consider that other employees might not be able to do so (see Appendix E).

Acknowledgement, appreciation and recognition

As suggested above, appreciation and recognition is important to employees - 'everybody loves to be appreciated and validated...an improvement here will go a long way.' In interviews, employees also felt that managers need to acknowledge achievements or successes - 'it doesn't have to be in a big way', and also for them to show respect and appreciation for employees in small ways, such as 'just saying hi, how are you?' One idea for recognising employees was to show appreciation for the best department once every three months, by giving them t-shirts, or allowing employees to anonymously nominate the person they think is doing the best in their job (and why). The winner would then receive a small reward, such as having their name on the notice board, receiving a voucher, money or a certificate.

Communication and co-ordination between different levels of management

Perhaps one of the most insightful and important issues that was revealed in survey comments and interviews, was the need for better communication, co-ordination and support among the different levels of management. There appear to be power issues at stake, as middle managers may feel that senior managers undermine their authority and this lowers morale. This was evident in a comment addressing the way in which HR at Head office dealt with a recent 'e-mail abuse debacle - 'it smacks of certain senior individuals trying to assert their authority over the local factory management, and it has completely undermined the authority of factory management'. This individual noted 'senior management...must stop taking plant management for a bunch of fools - there are very experienced, capable and well-qualified managers at the factory who need to be supported and not continually undermined!!!' Other middle managers suggested 'more transparency from senior management. More empowerment for managers, less imposed obstacles, less dictatorship', and 'to have honest and transparent communication from senior level to next level of management'.

It seems that this trend is evident throughout the management structure, as team managers also expressed the view that they often have to retract what they tell employees because of later decision changes higher up. Thus, each level may undermine the authority of those

below them, which reinforces employees' perceptions of inconsistency and decreases their faith in management. As noted by one employee 'there is no consistency in anything Cadbury does'. These comments may be seen to suggest the need for greater communication, co-ordination and support between different levels of management, as this would dissolve inconsistencies that are apparent to employees in general. One employee suggested having 'information-sharing sessions' with the Managing Director, as was habitual with the previous MD. Another employee suggested bringing 'top brass (directors) back to PE. It will remove uncertainty within the company. Managers of Cadbury cover their backs at any cost/ expense of workers.'

Other suggestions

Finally, employees noted that requests or complaints should be acknowledged and dealt with promptly, and that more challenge and diversity should be introduced into some people's work (for example allowing for rotation among line workers). One employee overheard the researcher asking another respondent to be honest in her responses, and this respondent commented that she had answered 'neutral' throughout the questionnaire because 'nothing is ever done about survey results anyway' – her suggestion was to provide employees with feedback, and to act on the results of such studies.

3.3 Quantitative Results

3.3.1 The state of current morale

Figure 5 'The mood at work is positive'

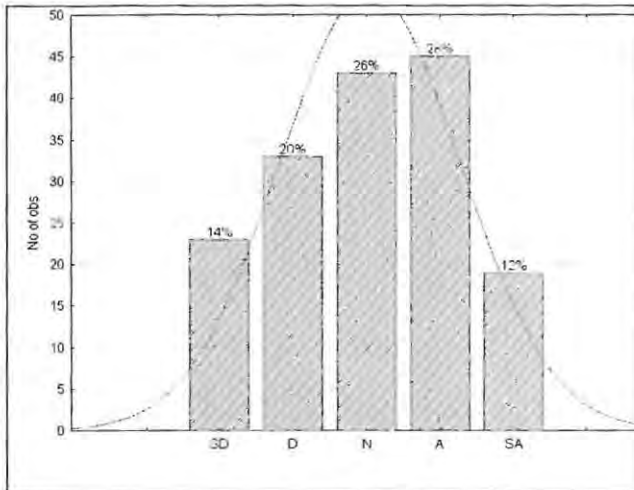
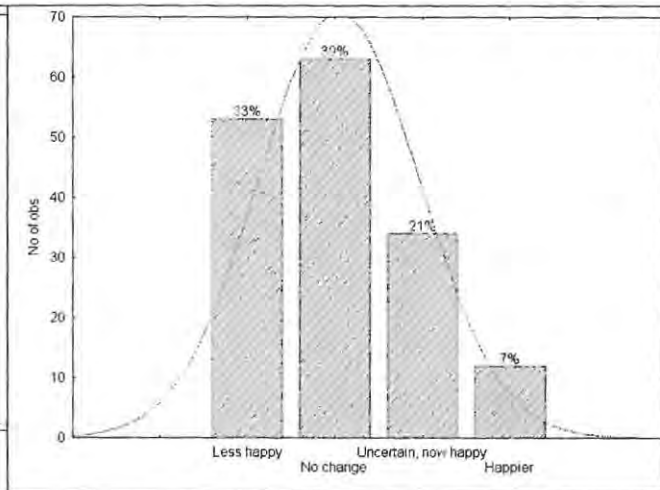


Figure 6 Morale since the merger



Employees were relatively divided in their opinions about the mood or morale at work – Figure 5 shows that overall, 40% agreed or strongly agreed, 26% were ‘neutral’ and 34% disagreed or strongly disagreed with question 22. Cross-tabulations indicated that while factory workers tended to be the most positive, junior managers and general staff were fairly neutral, and middle and senior managers (as well as artisans and support staff) were most negative about morale. In terms of morale since the merger, the most common response (39%) was that there has been no change in morale thus confirming qualitative findings, but many respondents also said that morale has declined (33%) since then (see Figure 6). More specifically, factory workers and artisans generally felt that there has been no change; general workers said that morale was low but is increasing again, and the vast majority of middle and senior managers felt that the mood at work is now less happy. These were, however, trends rather than significant associations.

Possible reasons for this view of decreased morale since the merger will be explored in the following section. It may be noted however, that with an alpha level of 0.05, there was a significant association between perceptions of current morale and morale since the merger

(χ^2 (6, N = 159) = 35.52, p = .00). 52% of those who were positive about morale felt that there had been no change since the merger, while 57% of those who were negative about morale felt that it had declined since then. It seems therefore, that, contrary to qualitative findings, perceptions of lowered morale were largely related to the merger.

Figure 7 'I enjoy working at Cadbury'

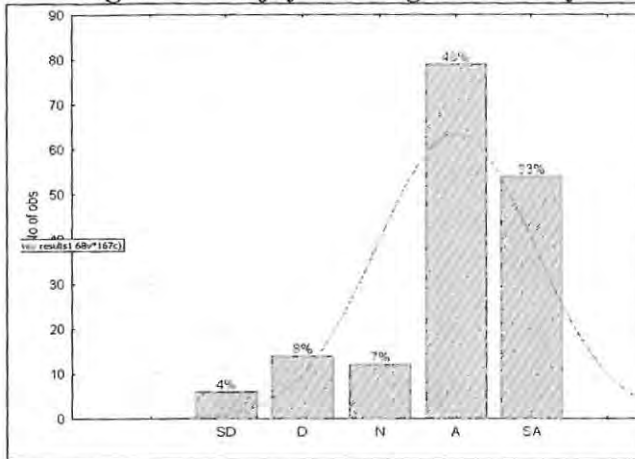
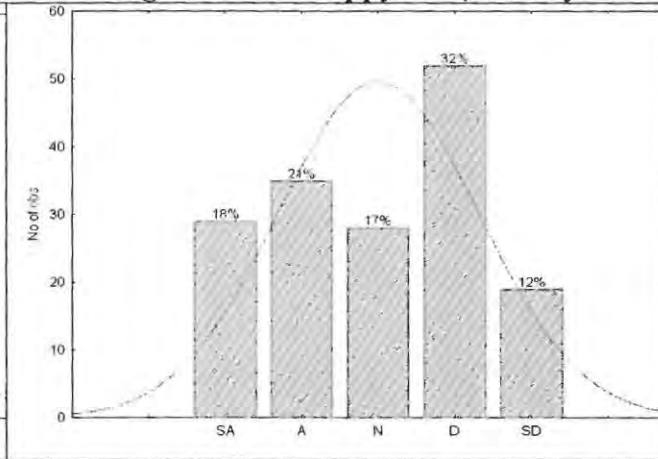


Figure 8 'Was happy here, not anymore'



Despite some of the above-mentioned perceptions of low morale, almost all employees (that is, 81%) enjoy working at Cadbury, and of these, one third strongly agreed (see Figure 7). Employees were more divided in their responses to the statement 'I used to be happy working here, but not anymore' (Figure 8), as 44% disagreed, and 39% agreed. It seems that those who have worked for the company for more than 26 years were more likely to feel this way, but no significant relationships were established.

Figure 9 'Cadbury's future is bright'

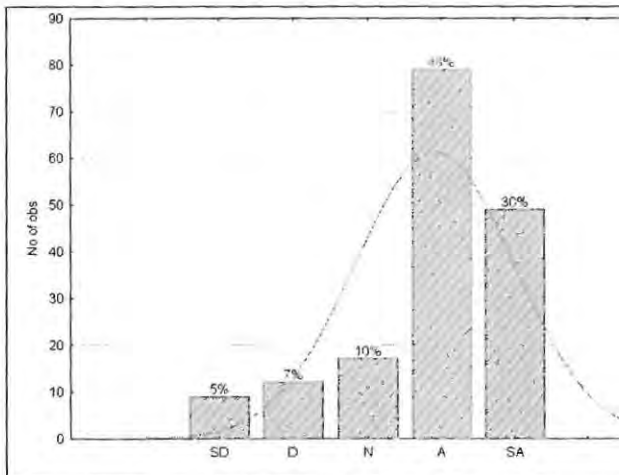
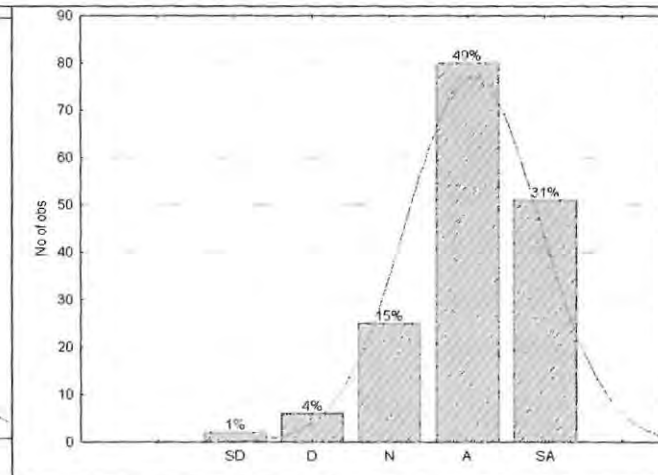


Figure 10 Excited to be part of Cadbury's future



Finally, 79% of employees felt that they have helped to build the company up to what it is today, and most (that is, 78%) felt that the company has a bright future (Figure 9). The vast majority of respondents (80%) were excited to be part of Cadbury's future (Figure 10), and this factor was significantly associated with morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 160) = 14.39, p = .00$). Thus, 75% of those who were not excited to be part of Cadbury's future said morale was low, while 91% of those who said morale is high were excited to be part of Cadbury's future.

3.3.2 Factors influencing morale

The Bromor merger and recent changes

While it is evident that one third of participants felt morale has declined since the merger, most (that is, 64%) felt that people in their positions had not been directly affected by it (see Figure 11). Furthermore, cross-tabulations showed that the way in which people's positions were affected had no significant bearing on perceptions of decreased morale. Despite this, 60% of those who said that people in their positions had had to move felt that morale has declined since the merger.

Figure 11 Effects of the merger

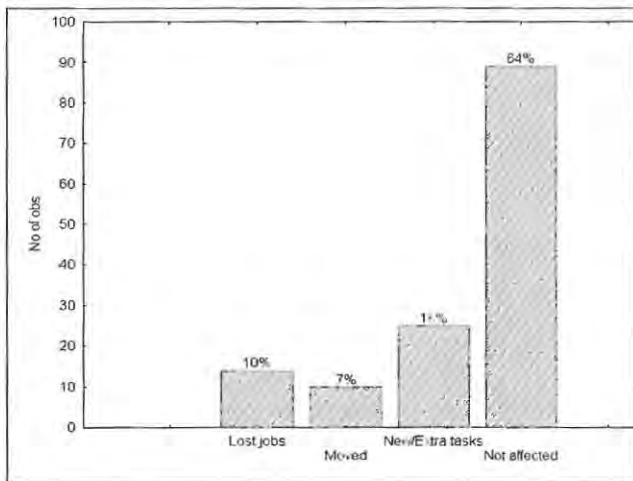
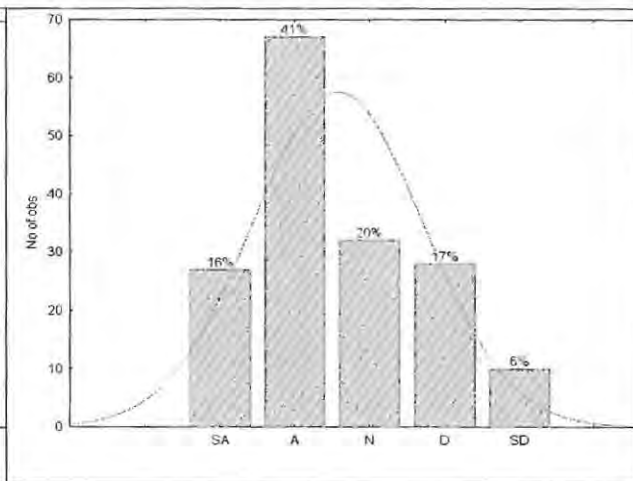


Figure 12 Worried about change



Survey data revealed that while employees were divided in their concern about retrenchment (40% agreed, 39% disagreed and 21% were neutral), 57% of employees

were worried about possible changes in their jobs (Figure 12). Although not significant, 83% of those whose positions had been most vulnerable to retrenchment were worried about change, 60% of those whose positions were vulnerable to relocation were worried, and only 55% of those who were not directly affected were worried. Thus, while the majority of employees in general were concerned about changes in their jobs, this did seem to increase with the extent to which their positions had been affected by the merger. Moreover, concern about change was not significantly related to perceptions of morale since the merger, although a higher percentage of respondents (71%) who felt morale had declined also expressed concern about change, than those who felt morale had stayed the same (52%) or had improved (42%).

On the other hand, concern about changes in one's job was significantly related to perceptions of morale in general (χ^2 (4, N = 161) = 18.77, p = .00). Thus, 70% of respondents who said morale is low agreed that they were concerned about possible changes in their jobs, as compared to 48% of those who said morale is high. While the merger may have heightened people's concern about change therefore, this concern appears to be a more constant factor that influences morale.

It seems that the most common response to the statement 'too few staff around me affects my ability to do my job well' was 'disagree' (36%), and 75% of employees said that they have sufficient supervision (Figure 13). On the other hand, 16% strongly agreed that there are too few staff around them, and this significantly influenced morale - χ^2 (4, N = 161) = 13.74, p = .01. Those who were negative or neutral about morale were generally divided in their perceptions about sufficiency of staff, but the majority of those who were positive about morale disagreed that there is a staff shortage. In light of qualitative concerns, it may be important to investigate this need, especially among artisans and their supervisory structures, as well as junior managers.

Figure 13 'I have enough supervision'

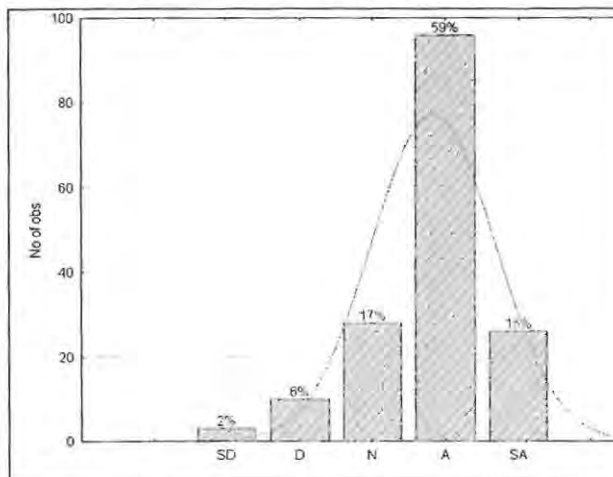
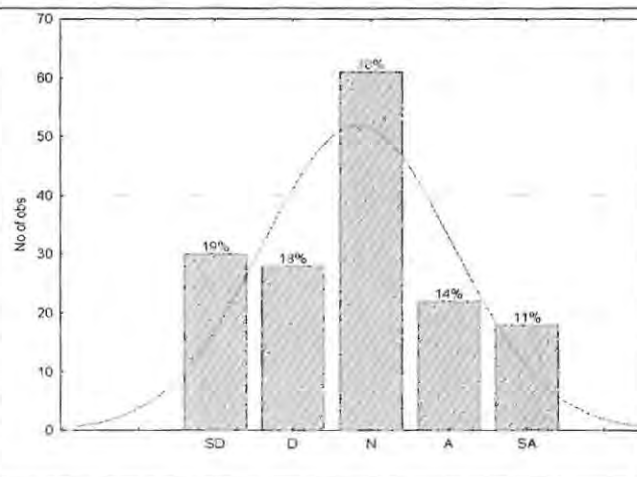


Figure 14 'I prefer the 4-day work shift'



As indicated in Figure 14, many people (38%) were neutral about the introduction of the 4-day work shift, probably because it only affects certain employees. Of those who did express a directed opinion, the majority saw the change in a negative light. From cross-tabulations it appears that factory workers, junior managers and middle managers contributed most to this negative trend, while 56% of artisans and support staff were highly supportive of the change.

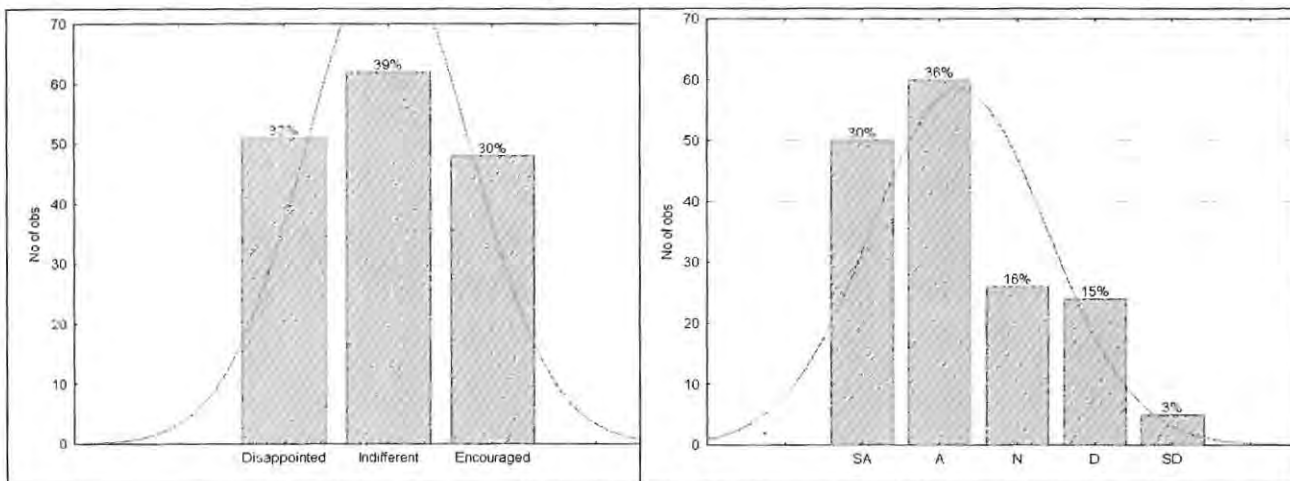
More importantly, there is a significant correlation between employee's perceptions of morale since the merger and their feelings about recent changes in management ($\chi^2(6, N=157) = 39.99, p = .00$). Most (or 56%) of employees who felt that morale has declined since the merger said they were disappointed with recent changes in management. 57% who said that there has been no change in morale since the merger were indifferent about these changes, and 82% of employees who were optimistic about morale since the merger were encouraged by the change in management. Thus, perceptions of new management were significantly related to morale since the merger, especially as a positive influence for those who were optimistic about such change.

It may be noted that, while most employees (66%) felt that they have less contact with higher management than they did in the past (Figure 16), a greater percentage (80%) of those who were disappointed by the change of management expressed this view,

compared to only 54% of those who were encouraged ($\chi^2(4, N = 160) = 11.08, p = .02$). Employees who were neutral about having less contact with management most commonly said they were encouraged by the change, and 52% of those who felt they still have the same amount of contact with management were indifferent to it. These figures explain why an almost equal number of respondents were encouraged by the change (30%) as they were disappointed (32%) by it (see Figure 15).

Figure 15 Feelings about changes in top mgt

Figure 16 'Less contact with higher mgt'



Thus, the findings show that generally, people who were disappointed by the change in management may have felt this way at least partially because they felt that they now have less contact with higher management. On the other hand, those who were neutral about having less contact with higher management were encouraged by the change. This latter finding may be explained by the possibility that, as long as people were neutral about having less contact with higher management, they may have been optimistic due to positive perceptions of the new leader's technical ability to lead the company to success. This was illustrated by a significant association between employees' feelings about the change in management and their perceptions of the company's future – $\chi^2(4, N = 161) = 32.23, p = .00$. Although most employees felt that Cadbury has a bright future despite varying perceptions of new management, 94% of those who were *encouraged* by the change felt that Cadbury has a bright future (as compared to only 53% of those who were

disappointed). Alternatively, 81% of those who felt that Cadbury does not have a bright future were disappointed by the recent change in management.

Working conditions and wages

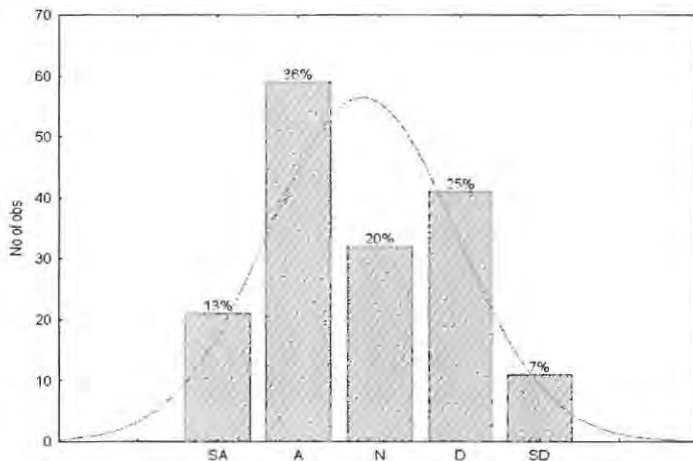
Unfortunately, during interviews the researcher attained the perception that basic increases had stopped in 1992, and thus, did not include this as an option in the survey. The findings in relation to pay may thus have been a little inaccurate, as 5% of respondents entered this option themselves and more employees may have selected it if offered the choice. Nevertheless, most respondents (65%) said that what they earn depends on merit, while 15% said that it depends on whether they are friendly to the right people and another 15% - on whether they tell managers how well they are doing. 84% of those who thought the pay system was fair said that it was based on merit, and 73% of those who said that pay was based on relationships with the right people felt that the system was unfair. Moreover, perceptions of unfairness were significantly related to perceptions of low morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 156) = 11.51, p = .02$), since 55% of those who felt that the pay system is fair said that morale was positive, while the most common response from those who felt the pay system is unfair was that morale is low (46%).

In terms of conditions, while 69% agreed that they were comfortable at work, 20% disagreed with this, and discomfort for these employees had a significant negative influence on morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 160) = 14.22, p = .01$). Thus, 54% of those who were uncomfortable at work felt that morale is low, while 84% of those who felt morale is high were comfortable. It seems that 53% of complaints involved uncomfortable temperatures at work, and such complaints were mainly made by factory workers. Another 11% of those who complained noted that there is too much routine in their jobs (mainly junior managers and factory workers).

The qualitative perception that it takes a long time to fix problems was confirmed in the survey, as 48% of respondents agreed, 26% were neutral and 27% disagreed with this statement. Furthermore, this perception had a significant association with morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 162) = 13.04, p = .01$). Those who said that morale is positive were more divided in

their views, but the majority (59%) of those of those who said morale is low agreed with this statement. On the other hand, most employees (66%) were satisfied that they had sufficient equipment to do their jobs effectively. The 23% who disagreed were mostly factory workers and artisans and support staff.

Figure 17 – ‘I feel that my workload is increasing’

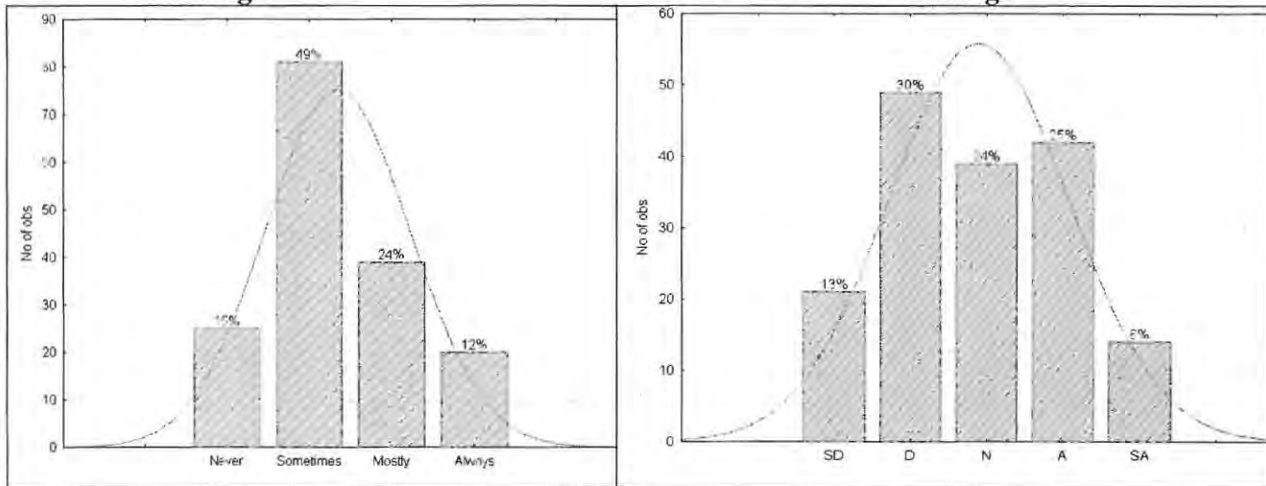


As illustrated in Figure 17, nearly half of the respondents (that is, 49%) felt that their workload is increasing, 20% were neutral about this, and 32% disagreed to some extent. Interestingly, 66% of males felt that their workload had increased while only 40% of females felt the same way. There was a significant association between perceptions of increased workload and the feeling that employees used to be happier working at Cadbury in the past ($\chi^2(4, N = 162) = 29.05, p = .00$). Thus, 67% of those who said they were happier in the past agreed that their workload has increased and 45% of those who disagreed that they were happier in the past felt that their workload had not increased. Although not significant, 63% of those who *disagreed* that current morale is positive felt that their workload is increasing.

Finally, most of the respondents (or 56%) agreed that the wellness program is a good incentive, 17% were neutral and 27% disagreed (of which, 11% felt strongly about it). Contrary to qualitative comments therefore, this program is generally seen in a positive light.

Communication and information

Figure 18 Honest & open communication about change **Figure 19 –‘Happy with communication about change’**



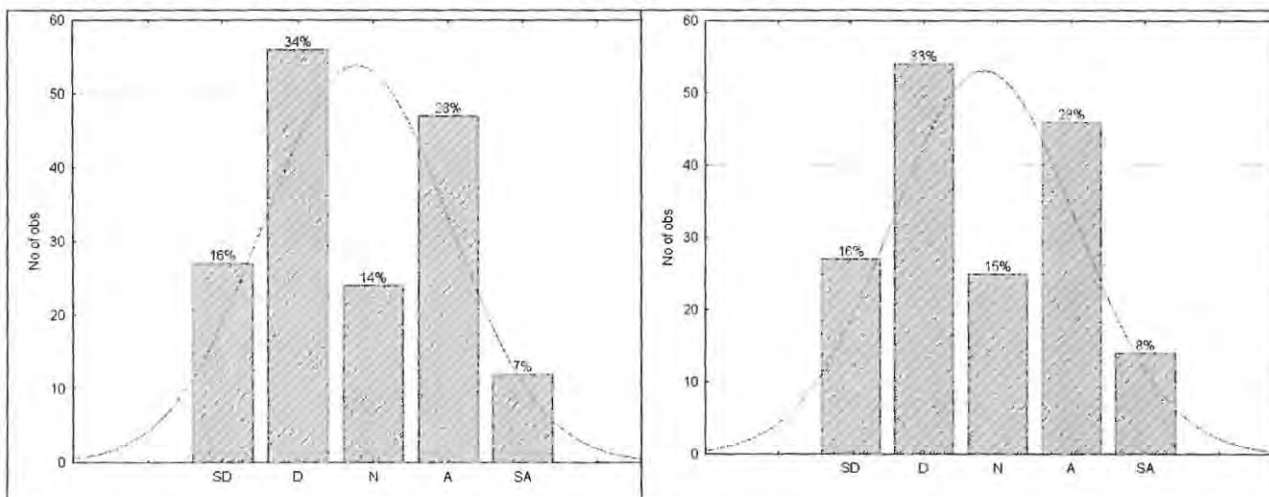
As illustrated in Figure 18, the most common response to the statement ‘Management communicate honestly and openly about change’ was ‘sometimes’, as 49% of respondents selected this answer. 12% (involving mainly factory workers) said that management always communicates honestly and openly about change, and 15% (including mainly middle managers and general staff) said that they never do. This had a significant influence on morale ($\chi^2(6, N = 162) = 24.85, p = .00$), as 60% of those who said managers are never honest about change said that morale is low, while 75% of those who felt that managers are ‘always’ honest about change agreed that morale is high. For middle and senior managers therefore, this poses a significant negative influence on morale.

Figure 19 indicates more varied feelings regarding satisfaction with the communication employees receive about change. While 43% of employees expressed dissatisfaction, 24% were neutral and 34% were satisfied. Moreover, employees’ feelings of satisfaction were significantly associated to morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 162) = 48.87, p = .00$), as 73% of the respondents who said morale is low were dissatisfied. Satisfaction with communication about change was also significantly related to morale since the merger ($\chi^2(6, N = 160) = 33.50, p = .00$). Thus, 50% of those who were dissatisfied said that the mood at work is less happy since the merger, while 54% of those who were happy with communication

said that there has been no change in morale since then. As opposed to the qualitative belief that shop floor employees (with no access to computers) may be less satisfied with the communication they receive about change, it is in fact middle managers who were most dissatisfied, followed by general staff and junior and senior managers. This seems to support the qualitative comments suggesting poor communication and co-ordination between management levels. Although no significant association was found, 73% of middle managers were unhappy with the communication they receive about change.

Figure 20 'How changes will affect company.'

Figure 21 'How changes will affect me'

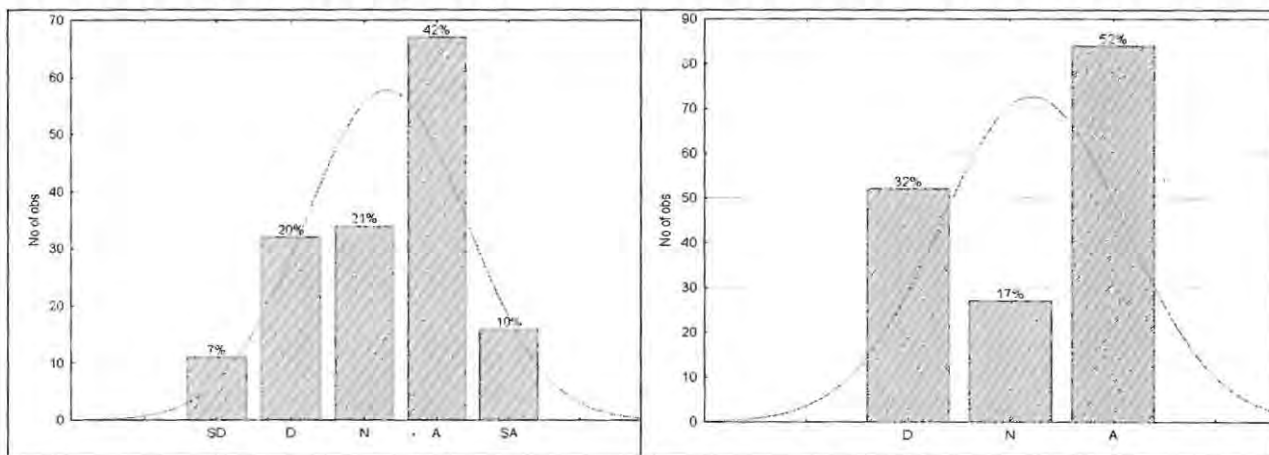


As illustrated in the above two graphs, the most common response to questions 12 and 13 were 'disagree' (34% and 33% respectively). On the other hand, 28% of respondents felt that they were given sufficient information about how changes will affect the company, as well as themselves. While factory workers, and artisans and support staff seemed more divided in their responses to the first question (Figure 20), middle management, general staff, junior management and senior management were all largely dissatisfied. In terms of the second question (Figure 21), 73% of middle management and 57% of general staff were dissatisfied. People in other positions were generally more divided in their views.

In relation to feedback, 57% of employees were satisfied that they receive sufficient feedback about their performance to enable them to do their jobs effectively, and only 34% were dissatisfied. Such perceptions did significantly influence morale however (χ^2 (4,

N = 161) = 19.36, p = .00), as 50% of those who were dissatisfied said that morale is low, while 48% who were satisfied said that morale is positive. It appears that while most people were generally satisfied with feedback, 67% of middle managers disagreed, as did 43% of general staff. Junior and senior managers thus seemed to receive insufficient communication about change, but sufficient feedback about their performance. Middle managers and general workers were dissatisfied with both.

Figure 22 Enough opportunity for upward input **Figure 23 Involved in decisions that affect me**



In contrast to the qualitative findings, Figure 22 shows that most respondents (52%) felt that there is enough opportunity for input from employees to managers, while only 27% disagreed with this statement. Furthermore, while factory workers, artisans and junior managers mainly felt there is sufficient opportunity, senior managers, general staff and middle managers disagreed. Such perceptions were again significantly associated with morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 157) = 34.75, p = .00$). Thus, 60% of those who felt that they do not have sufficient opportunity said that morale is low and 76% of those who said morale is high agreed with the statement. Most employees (that is 52%) across all positions also felt that their supervisors involve them in making decisions that affect them, and this was positively associated with morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 160) = 19.31, p = .00$).

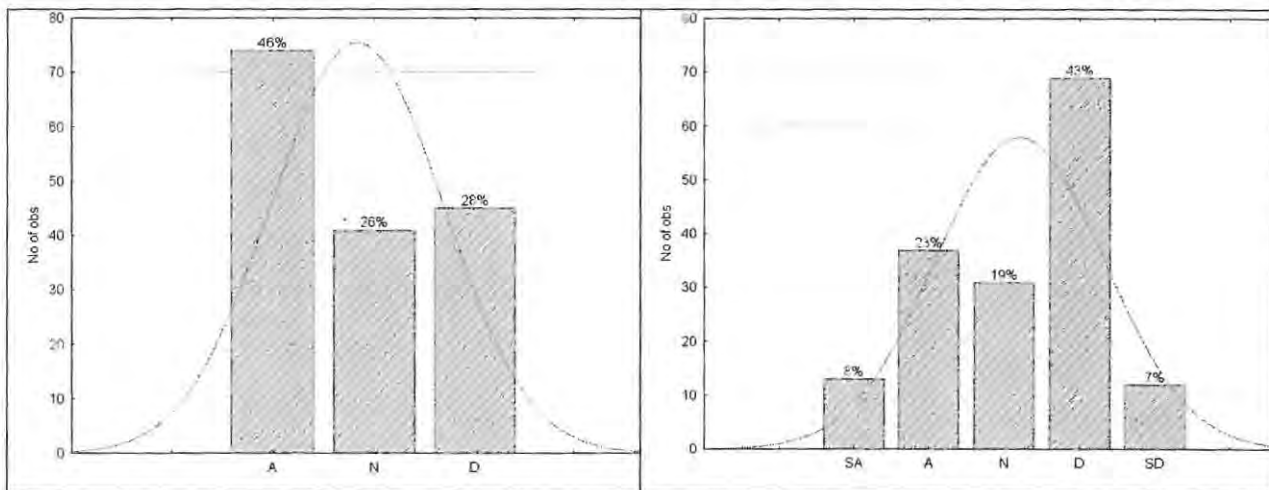
A final aspect of communication that is significantly influencing morale is the perception that managers do not act on what they say ($\chi^2(4, N = 159) = 14.15, p = .00$). While employees were relatively divided in their views about this, (41% felt that managers or

supervisors do not 'keep their word' and 38% felt that they do), such perceptions were found to influence morale. Thus 58% of respondents who said that morale is low disagreed with the statement, and 52% of those who were optimistic about morale agreed.

Perceptions of leadership

Contrary to the findings suggested by qualitative data, it seems that most employees (51%) felt that managers do care about their employees, 23% were neutral and 26% disagreed. General staff and middle managers seemed most negative in this regard. This factor significantly influenced morale ($\chi^2 (4, N = 160) = 26.63, p = .00$) in that 76% of those who were positive about morale felt that managers care about their employees.

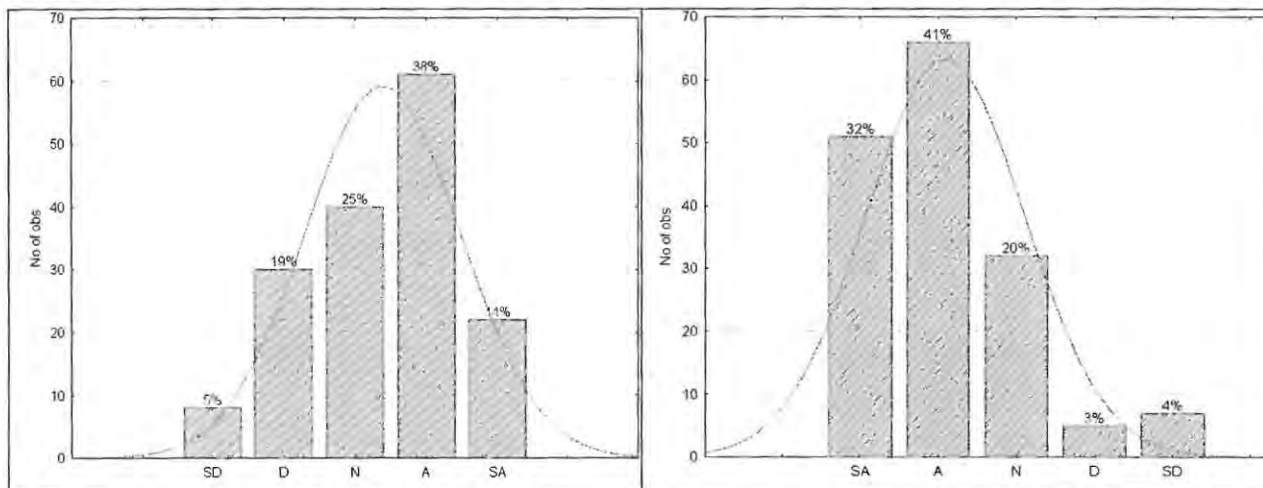
Figure 24 'Line managers change rules then leave' Figure 25 'Often have to teach superiors'



In addition to this, survey data supported qualitative findings that line managers often come in, change the rules and then soon leave, since the most common answer in this regard was 'agree' – 46% (Figure 24). This mainly affected factory workers, but seemed to have little effect on morale. On the other hand, 50% of employees disagreed with qualitative comments that those with more experience often need to teach their (more qualified) superiors how to do their jobs. Only 31% agreed in this regard, and most of these were factory workers. This too had no influence on morale.

Learning, opportunity and growth

Figure 26 – Excited about advancement opportunities **Figure 27 Qualifications over experience'**

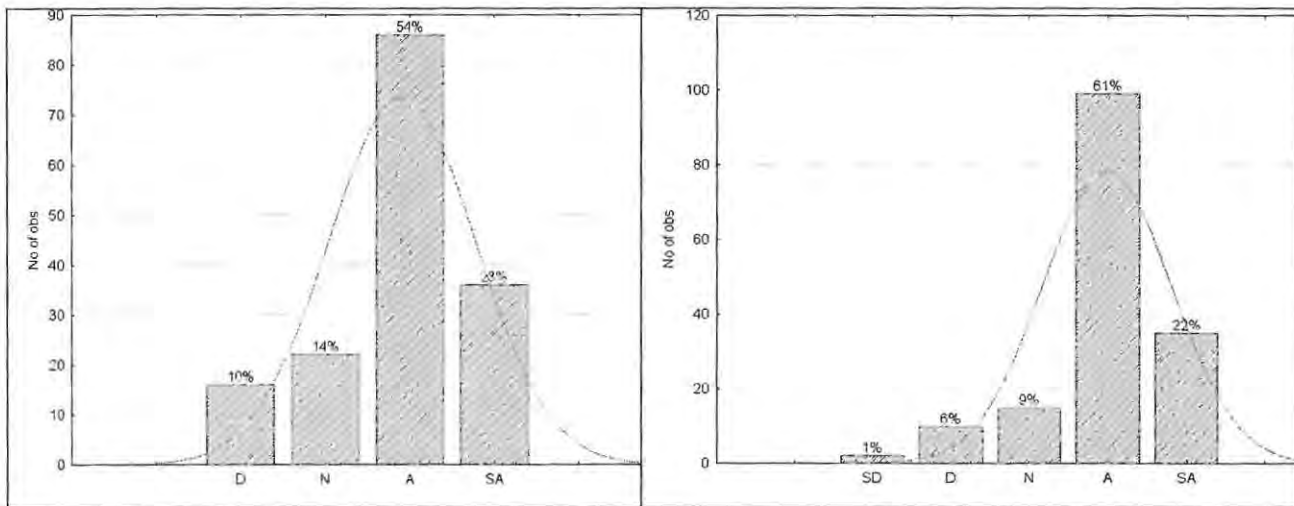


Contrary to qualitative findings, it appears that most (52%) of respondents were excited about their chances of advancing in the company, and only 24% were not. 53% of middle managers were not excited about their chances to advance, and some general staff and factory workers felt the same way (although the majority response in these two groups was still positive).

In support of qualitative results, the vast majority of respondents (73%) felt that those with higher formal qualifications are promoted above those with experience, and 57% felt that people are appointed from outside the company rather than promoted from within. It may be noted however, that these two factors were not significantly associated with employees' perceptions of their advancement opportunities, and had no significant influence on perceptions of morale. On the other hand, the way people felt about their advancement opportunities was significantly related to perceptions of morale - $\chi^2(4, N = 158) = 16.68, p = .00$. Thus, 49% of those who were unhappy about their chances to advance said that morale was low, while 52% of those who were excited about advancement said that morale is positive.

Figure 28 'Training would help me advance'

Figure 29 'I can do training if I want to'



Also contrary to qualitative findings, survey responses showed that most people (77%) believe training would help them to advance in the company (Figure 28), and 83% agreed that they can do training extra if they want to (Figure 29). This may explain the positive outlook regarding advancement opportunities, as employees may perceive an element of control in terms of their ability to advance. 90% of those who felt that training can help them to advance believed they could do extra training as desired. It is noted however, that 47% of participants felt that managers assesses their training needs but do not follow through with the required training, compared to 31% of respondents who disagreed with this statement. This perception had a significant association with morale ($\chi^2(4, N = 158) = 14.73, p = .005$), as 60% of those who disagreed had a positive view of morale, while 55% of those who said morale is low agreed with this. This may have been because such perceptions had a significant influence on how people felt about their advancement opportunities ($\chi^2(4, N = 158) = 13.44, p = .01$).

Appreciation and recognition

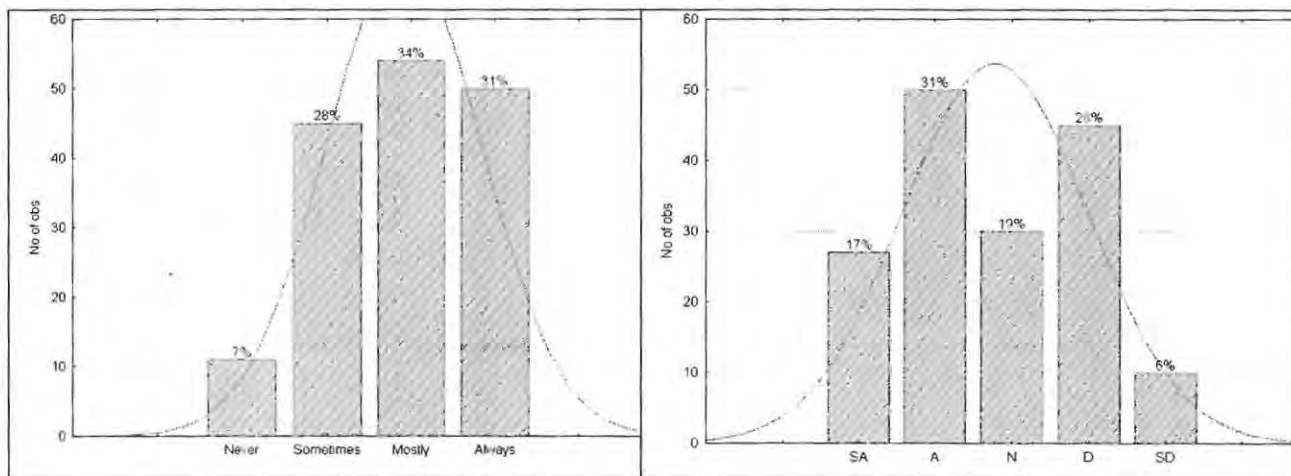
Although qualitative comments indicated that employees are insufficiently appreciated and recognised, 34% of respondent felt that they are 'mostly' recognised for good work, and 31% answered 'always' (Figure 30). Almost all (that is 92%) of respondents felt that knowing their efforts are appreciated motivates them to do well, and there was a significant relationship between perceptions of one's appreciation and perceptions of

morale - $\chi^2(6, N = 157) = 32.29, p = .00$. Thus, 52% of those who felt that they are always appreciated for good work said that morale is positive.

On the other hand, many people felt that their knowledge of the job (or experience) is insufficiently appreciated, although opinions were relatively divided on this matter (Figure 31). Overall, 48% of respondents agreed, and 34% disagreed - 19% were neutral. Most of those who felt that their experience is not appreciated were older employees (41-60 years) and those who have been with the company for more than 6 years. This factor had no *significant* bearing on perceptions of morale.

Figure 30 I feel appreciated when I work well

Figure 31 'My experience is not appreciated'



Opinions were also relatively divided about the statement 'Cadbury recognises and rewards individual performance', although the most common response was agreement (48%). Positive perceptions of this did appear to coincide with perceptions of high morale, but no significant associations were found. Most (that is, 64%) also agreed that the incentive scheme motivates them to reach targets. Only artisans and support staff were truly divided on this point, possibly showing support for the qualitative perception that they have little control over their potential for reward. Perhaps more importantly, 70% of participants felt that they know what they need to do in order to be rewarded, thus suggesting the existence of a set reward system (contrary to qualitative findings). Whether

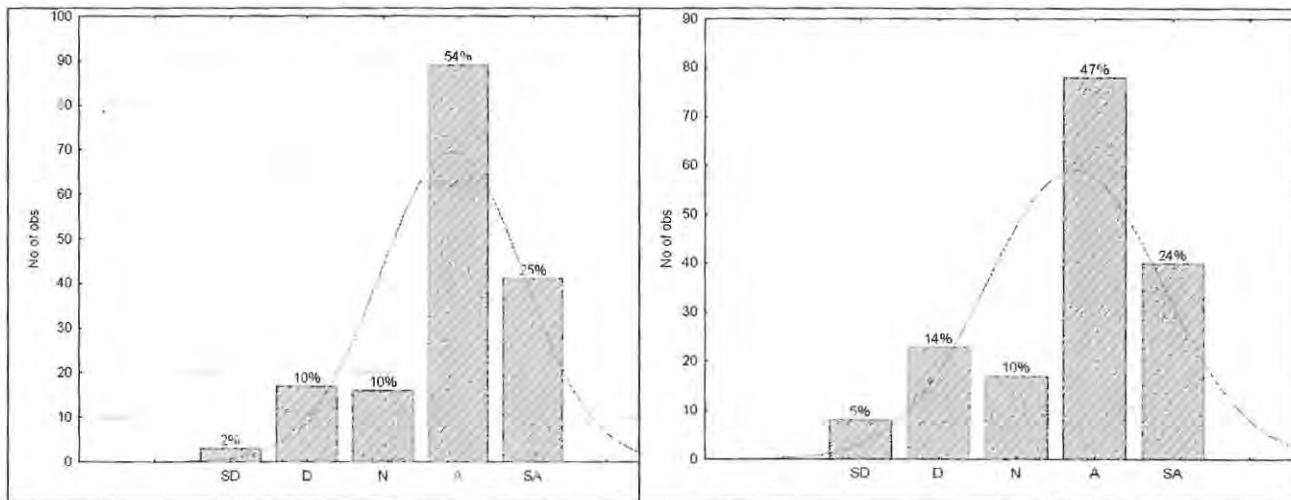
equitable rewards are prescribed for such behaviours was another matter that was unfortunately omitted.

Finally, the vast majority of respondents agreed (53%) or strongly agreed (26%) that recognition is not always about money – it can also involve rewards such as food vouchers or t-shirts.

Relationships at work.

As illustrated in Figure 32 below, possibly the most positive aspect of Cadbury’s working environment is employee relationships. 79% of respondents felt that the people they work with are friendly and helpful, and a further 74% said that they have a good relationship with their supervisors (despite qualitative comments about rude managers).

Figure 32 ‘People I work with are friendly and helpful’. Figure 33 ‘We are a Cadbury family’.



71% of employees also agreed with an interviewee’s comment that ‘we are a Cadbury family’ (Figure 33), and of these, almost a quarter of respondents strongly agreed. It seemed that these positive relationships have a significant impact on perceptions of morale ($\chi^2 (4, N = 162) = 21.97, p = .00$), since 94% of those who felt that morale is positive agreed that the people they work with are friendly and helpful. Only 64% of those who thought morale is low felt the same way.

Lastly, respondents most commonly selected 'neutral' (36%) in response to the statement 'Cadbury and Bromor employees get along well together', although more people agreed than disagreed. This factor seems to have had a significant influence on morale since the merger ($\chi^2(6, N = 161) = 23.65, p = .00$), as 63% of those who felt Cadbury and Bromor employees do not get along said that morale has declined, and 58% of those who say morale has improved felt that Cadbury and Bromor employees do get on well. It seems that more senior managers (who may have more contact with Bromor employees) were more negative about Cadbury-Bromor relationships.

3.3.3 Indicators of morale

Statistical support for the ideas suggested during interviews about indicators of low morale could be easily attained. This section will briefly present the quantitative findings.

Table 1

Indicators of Morale – 'When People are Upset they...'

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Do only what's expected	23%	52%	12%	9%	4%
Want to leave	19%	36%	19%	17%	9%
Spread rumours	20%	51%	14%	10%	4%
Voice complaints	14%	52%	17%	14%	3%
Go on strike	9%	21%	28%	31%	12%
Look unhappy	25%	52%	13%	5%	6%
Productivity declines	21%	42%	18%	12%	6%

As illustrated by Table 1, most (that is 75%) of the respondents agreed that when there is low morale, people do only what is expected, nothing more. Similarly, 71% of respondents felt that employees talk to fellow workers about their complaints (or 'spread rumours'). 77% said that one can tell when there is low morale because employees look unhappy, and 66% agreed that employees voice their complaints to managers. Interestingly, middle managers and senior managers disagreed more with this latter

statement than those in other positions did, although this finding may have been due to chance.

There was slightly less agreement about the more extreme reactions (that is, wanting to leave, going on strike and declining productivity). More specifically, 61% of participants felt that productivity declines when morale is low and 55% agreed or strongly agreed that employees want to leave the company in such circumstances. Factory workers and senior managers expressed less agreement that employees may want to leave, although these statistics again were not significant. Finally, 43% of respondents said that employees do not strike when morale is low, 28% were neutral about this, and only 30% agreed (Table 1). Junior managers were the only group in which the majority of respondents expressed agreement with this statement. In conclusion then, survey respondents agreed with all indicators of low morale suggested by interviewees, with the exception of striking. It would have been interesting to explore the reasons behind this anomaly.

4. DISCUSSION

As may be seen by the results, some very interesting and useful information was found in terms of the research aims. In the following chapter, these results will be summarised and discussed in relation to the literature on morale (provided in chapter 1). This chapter will then discuss the feedback that was given to Cadbury management, the future use of these findings, and Cadbury's perceptions of the study's success. The first research aim to be discussed is indicators of low morale.

4.1 Indicators of low morale

4.1.1 'People will do only what is expected'

According to the majority of respondents, when there is low morale people will do only what is expected. Interviewees said that 'you can feel the vibe' – 'employees come to work to do their job [and 'get paid'], nothing less, nothing more – they are not willing to go the extra mile'. This seems to echo Guba's (1958) theory that employees with low morale will meet the minimum organizational requirements, but will not have the energy to do more. More specifically, when organizational goals and personal needs are aligned, the employee will use minimal psychic energy in meeting goals, while at the same time ensuring maximum satisfaction. On the other hand, when there is no such alignment, the employee uses considerable energy in achieving goals and does not have the extra resources to do it with zest, or high morale (Guba, 1958). Thus, when employees' personal needs (for recognition and growth etc) are not being satisfied through the achievement of work goals, they will expend considerable psychic energy in achieving these goals. There will be no personal motivation to do anything but the bare minimum. As noted by *Small Business TurnAround* (2003, p. 1), when there is low morale, "instead of getting in early and staying late, [employees] do just the opposite". They do the bare minimum required in order to get paid.

This behavior was one that first alerted managers to the possibility of there being low morale in the factory – they noticed that employees no longer work late voluntarily or sing

on the production lines. According to the present study's findings however, this factor was related more to the introduction of new machinery and a resultant increase in workload, than to low morale. Management may however benefit from casually monitoring employees' voluntary input (or effort) as an ongoing indicator of the state of morale. As a measure of comparison, it may be useful to note that "high morale is manifested when an individual shows determination to do his or her best" (Baynes, as cited in Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser, 2000, p. 37).

4.1.2 'You can see it in people's faces and behavior'

77% of respondents agreed that when morale is low, 'you can see it in people's faces' – 'they look unhappy'. Low morale may affect employees' sense of well-being in many ways, and this is likely to show outwardly in their facial expressions. In addition to this, a few people noted that negative behaviour by employees may indicate low morale, possibly depending on the cause of low morale. For example, 'if you're always told you're bad, then why not be bad' and with degrading treatment, 'you get offended and treat superiors in the same way'. This seems to show a point where employees are fed-up and no longer care about the social norms governing hierarchical relationships in an organization. Rundquist and Sletto similarly "found an extreme amount of discouragement, apathy, cynicism, and anti-social attitudes...are all indications of loss of morale" (Bayton, 1942, p. 150). Managers may thus be aware of such outward manifestations, and evaluate whether they are indicative of low morale.

4.1.3 'They talk about it to other employees, or to managers'

71% of employees agreed that when people are unhappy, they will talk about it to other employees (or spread rumours). More noticeable, is that employees may ask to talk to managers about their complaints (although a slightly lower percentage of respondents agreed with this idea). Managers should thus be aware of rumours, and should question themselves as to whether the complaints put forward in meetings show low morale, or simply temporary obstacles to job satisfaction (which, if allowed to persist, may impact on morale).

4.1.4 'Productivity declines'

61% of employees agreed that productivity declines when morale is low. This may be explained by the fact that people do only what is necessary to meet minimum standards, rather than 'going the extra mile'. This finding is consistent with the findings of previous research by Hamblin, Miller and Wiggins (1961). Managers should thus be aware of any unexplained decreases in productivity as a possible manifestation of low morale.

4.1.5 Employees want to leave the organization'

In comparison to the above response rates, it is interesting that only 55% of employees agreed that people want to leave the organization when morale is low. Factory workers and senior management expressed less agreement with this statement than those in other positions, although this may have been due to chance. On the other hand, it is possible that senior managers are reluctant to sacrifice their senior position in the company, and factory workers' responses may have been tempered by a relatively high unemployment rate in South Africa (particularly affecting those with less formal skills). This hypothesis may provide an interesting basis for further research in the South African context. Contrary to management's concerns however, middle managers did not express noticeably higher agreement in this regard than other groups. In general, desire to leave the company (especially 'looking forward to retirement' for Cadbury employees) may be indicative of low morale (as noted by Johnsrud, Heck and Rosser, (2000)).

4.1.6 'Strikes'

Finally, the most common response to the statement 'they may go on strike' was disagreement. It seems that the last strike occurred many years ago, and employees did not seem to think that such action was likely to happen again anytime soon. This appears to be a Cadbury-specific finding, as other researchers (such as Hamblin, Miller and Wiggins (1961)) mentioned this as a common indicator of low morale. The fact that some employees agreed with this statement suggests that it may be a possible indicator of low morale in the rare instance that such action does occur. In the meantime however, this is not a very useful indicator for regularly monitoring morale. Rather, a lack of energy,

enthusiasm and effort, as well as facial and behavioral expressions may be the most useful indicators for regularly monitoring morale at present.

4.2 The state of current morale

In terms of the state of current morale, the findings showed that employees were relatively divided in their views, but factory workers tended to be the most positive, junior managers and general staff were mainly neutral, and middle and senior managers mostly felt that morale is low. This supports management's initial insights, as the managers present at start-up discussions noted that there seems to be low employee morale, and preparation for seeking other employment *particularly at middle-management level*.

More specifically, the employees who felt that morale is positive generally seemed to feel that there has been no change in mood since the merger, while most of those said that morale is low (the majority of whom were middle and senior managers) felt that it has declined since then. Thus, it seems that perceptions of low morale at the organizational level were significantly related to the recent merger with Bromor Foods. This supports Kettley's (1995) view that employees are likely to feel unsettled during change, and that a loss of morale may be inevitable. After all, morale refers to the emotional condition of a person or group "based on a sense of confidence and usefulness and purpose" (WordReference.com, 2005, p. 1) and one's confidence is likely to be challenged during times of change when uncertainty is raised.

On a smaller scale, some people felt that morale was initially low after the merger, but that people are 'getting back into the swing of things' now and very few felt that morale has improved since the merger. Despite these findings linking morale to the merger, the prominent feeling among interviewees that morale has simply been declining over the years and is unrelated to the merger, cannot be ignored. Possible reasons for all of these views will be explored in the following section.

As noted in chapter 1, morale is closely linked to job satisfaction in that it may be “the collective counterpart of job satisfaction” (O’Connor, 2005, p. 1), and an employee’s job satisfaction may influence their morale at work over time (Guba, 1958). The findings show that the vast majority of employees enjoy working at Cadbury, although 39% felt that they used to be happier in the past. This latter perception was significantly associated to perceptions of increased pressure at work – employees used to enjoy a more relaxed environment and would sing on the production lines and work late voluntarily. Now, due to an increased workload and the need for greater concentration, they do only what is necessary since this minimum standard is more demanding than it used to be. According to Guba’s (1958) argument, it is possible that a more relaxed environment met employees’ needs for enjoyment of their work and since this satisfaction has been removed, they still meet goals, but with less enthusiasm and energy than they did previously. This change was accepted however, as being a necessary one, and whether or not people were happier in the past, most employees enjoy working for the company. Job satisfaction may thus provide a positive foundation for morale.

Finally, most employees felt that they have helped build the company up to what it is today, feel that it has a bright future, and are excited to be part of that future. This factor had a significant positive effect on morale, since morale “is a person’s confidence in his ability to cope with whatever the future may bring” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412), or a state of mind “based on factors such as a sense of *confidence* [in the future]...usefulness and purpose” (WordReference.com, 2005, p. 1).

In summary then, employees enjoy working at Cadbury (although possibly less so than in the past), but were divided in their views of current morale. Most of those who felt morale is low said that it has declined since the merger, and middle and senior managers were most negative about morale. A few did mention that morale has been declining over the past few years and has little relation to the merger. Despite these generally negative views of morale, employees felt a sense of ownership in the company’s future and were excited about being part of it. This was positively associated with morale.

4.3 Factors that may be influencing morale

As indicated in chapter 2, the second aim of the research was to identify any factors that were *influencing morale*, so that corrective action could be taken if necessary. During interviews, people raised many issues that they felt were influencing morale, but as shown in chapter 3, not all of these factors were *significantly* associated with morale. It may be adduced that those that were shown to have a significant relationship to morale were the most obvious influencing factors, and the most important in terms of the second research aim. Other concerns may have had a minor effect on morale, but this was not significant enough to cause any concern at present. They may suggest lesser, and possibly temporary sources of dissatisfaction however, and as suggested by Guba (1958), an employee's satisfaction may influence their morale over time. It is thus possible that such dissatisfactions may later influence morale if left unaddressed. As such, these factors will be included in the following discussion, and were included in the feedback report to Cadbury management to be dealt with at their discretion.

4.3.1 The merger and associated changes

Since perceptions of low morale were significantly associated to perceptions that morale has declined since the merger, it is perhaps first useful to explore possible factors associated with the merger that may have influenced low morale.

Contrary to the qualitative findings, the results of the survey conducted indicated that the degree to which employees' positions were affected by the merger had no significant influence on their perceptions of morale. Most employees felt that people in their positions had not been directly affected by the merger, and it may have been due to chance that a slightly higher percentage of those whose positions were most affected (in terms of relocation and retrenchment) said that morale had declined. People were generally unconcerned about retrenchment, but most were worried that there may be future changes in their jobs. Although those whose positions had been most affected by the merger were slightly more worried than the others however, all were largely concerned. This factor thus had little to do with the merger and is a more constant threat to morale in general.

On the other hand, employees' satisfaction with the communication they receive about change was significantly related to morale since the merger. Thus, most of those who were dissatisfied with communication said that the mood at work is less happy since the merger, while the majority of those who were happy with communication said that there has been no change in morale since then. As noted by Meyerson (2005, p. 1), during change, "the traditional incentives a boss can use to motivate employees fly out the window...almost no incentive can pry loose the grip of an atmosphere of uncertainty". At such times the most vital factor in maintaining morale is communication. Sufficient communication may alleviate uncertainty and allow employees to prepare themselves for the future. Thus, people who were satisfied with the communication they received about change mostly felt that morale had not changed since the merger.

Possibly the most important finding in this section was that people's perceptions of morale since the merger were significantly associated with their perceptions of the new general manager. Most of those who felt that morale has declined were disappointed with the change in management, while 82% of those who said morale has improved were 'encouraged' by it. This supports Blocker and Richardson's view (1963, p. 208), that "with virtually the same environmental factors operating, high or low morale can be induced depending upon the behavior pattern of the chief administrator".

In the present case, qualitative comments showed that people see the new MD as 'less of a people person' than his predecessor - they hardly ever see him and some people do not even know who he is. Most respondents agreed that they now have less contact with higher management, and those who were disappointed by the change felt disappointed largely because of this perception. As noted by SBA Gopher (2002, p. 2), employees "want the boss to care about them as individuals", and many qualitative comments showed employees' desire for more involvement from managers other than their team leaders.

On the other hand, most of those who were neutral about having less contact with higher management were encouraged by the change. This may be explained by the possibility that, as long as people were neutral about having less contact with management, they may

have been optimistic due to positive perceptions of the new manager's ability to lead the company to success. This was shown by the fact that a significantly higher percentage of those who were encouraged by the change in management felt that Cadbury has a bright future (as compared to those who were disappointed).

Finally, a few minor issues included the following. Firstly, although most people were satisfied that there are sufficient staff to enable them to do their jobs effectively, artisans and support staff disagreed and this was seen to affect their morale. One noted that some of the best fitters took packages and left after the merger and there are no consequences for the work standard of those who remain. There is thus a shortage of fitters and this means that line workers often have delays at the beginning and end of each day. Similarly, most employees who were affected by the 4-day work shift see it in a negative light (except for artisans and support staff), as they believe it results in less time off work and creates budgeting problems due to more irregular pay dates. Many also found it difficult (or at least slow) having to direct complaints to Johannesburg. These latter two issues were only minor dissatisfactions however, and had no real influence on morale.

4.3.2 Working conditions and wages

In addition to the above-mentioned perception that there are sometimes too few employees available, various other concerns were expressed with regard to working conditions (and wages). Many employees were concerned about poor pay increases in the past few years, and about their earning potential in general. Also, while most employees felt that pay is based on merit and that this is a fair system, 15% felt that it is based on 'whether you are friendly to the right people' and said that this was unfair. For those employees who felt that the pay system was unfair (mainly including artisans and support staff), such perceptions had a negative influence on morale.

Similarly, most employees were comfortable at work, but discomfort had a significant effect on morale for the 20% who were not comfortable. Those who expressed discomfort mentioned extreme temperatures in the factory, too much routine in their work (especially for factory workers and junior managers) and safety concerns. People also generally felt

that it takes a long time to fix problems, and this had a significant relationship to perceptions of low morale.

Thus, such perceptions only affected a minority of the respondents (with the exception of the view that problems take a long time to fix), but had a significant negative influence on morale for those concerned. As noted by Baehr and Renck (1958), the factors influencing morale may exist in a hierarchy of needs similar to Maslow's need hierarchy. Thus, factors such as "pay" appears to be a basic need and when 'pay' is satisfactorily 'higher' self-actualisation needs become dominant" (Baehr & Renck, 1958, p. 159). For employees who mentioned the above concerns therefore, factors such as recognition and appreciation may not be given such priority (and thus may not be so important for influencing morale) until basic needs such as pay, comfort and safety are satisfied. Alternatively, in terms of Herzberg's hygiene theory, morale may be negatively influenced by unsatisfactory conditions surrounding the job, such as "quality of supervision, pay...physical working conditions...and job security" (Carrell, et al., 1997, p.137). On the other hand, if these factors are satisfied, morale may only be positively influenced when the correct motivators (such as recognition and opportunity for personal growth) are also present. Dealing with these basic sources of dissatisfaction would thus be important in order to promote high morale (Heathfield, 2002a).

4.3.3 Communication and information

As noted previously, concern about possible changes in one's work was significantly related to low morale in general (rather than to morale since the merger). One possible reason for this was that, as noted by a middle manager during planning, employees have typically spent many years doing the same work and may be comfortable in their routine. Although the reasons for this concern were not explored further however, the views posed by interviewees (that too much routine is tiring and that they would like to be skilled for multiple tasks) seem to contradict this view. An alternative explanation is that such concern was significantly associated to dissatisfaction with the communication employees receive about change.

Although employees were divided in their views, people most commonly said that managers only sometimes communicate honestly and openly about change, and such perceptions were significantly related to morale. People felt that managers generally 'do not lay all of their cards on the table' and this 'creates suspicion and mistrust in employees'. Holding back information about change may increase wariness about the real nature of change and prevent employees from being able to accurately anticipate the future (Meyerson, 2005). This in turn may decrease their confidence in the future and thus, their morale.

More specifically, interviews suggested that certain communication channels may be dissolving (such as 'roadshows' and monthly team-briefs) and therefore, that those on the shop floor without computers may be less satisfied with communication than office staff. Surprisingly, however, surveys revealed the opposite to be true. 73% of middle managers were dissatisfied with the communication they receive about change, and other management levels (as well as general staff) were less satisfied than factory workers. This suggested the existence of communication issues between the different management levels, but that despite this, managers try to keep factory workers informed. Thus, employees at all levels (but particularly middle and senior management) would like to be given more honest and open communication about change. A few factory workers and general staff noted that they want to be included as 'part of the team' and know what is happening, even if the news is bad. According to Meyerson (2005, p. 1) "even if [employees] don't like the truth, they will trust you more for telling it".

Conveying "the reasons for... change [thus] is central. Employees need to understand the business reason...and how the change will be managed" (Kettley, 1995, p. 1). In general employees felt that they do not receive sufficient communication about how change will affect the company, or about how it will affect them in their jobs. Possibly due to a lack of explanations, one employee felt that 'the Johannesburg move could have been avoided' and that managers did not consider employees' financial circumstances when they made this decision.

Related to the above comment was the idea that employees would also like to be more involved in making decisions that affect their work lives. Most respondents felt there is enough opportunity for them to give such input, but 27% of respondents disagreed and this had a significant negative influence on their morale. This finding supports the hypothesis that “democratic leadership... increases morale, whereas autocratic leadership which involves centralized decision-making decreases [it]” (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961, p. 295). Several comments showed that people “want to feel involved in their jobs...they are closest to the work for which they are responsible, and know how it can most effectively be done” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 1). Employees wanted to feel that they could make a difference and contribute “to something bigger than themselves” (Hefferman, 2005, p. 1). This was seen in comments such as ‘involve employees in all decision – give [them] the opportunity to show their worth’.

Finally, most employees felt that they receive sufficient feedback to enable them to do their jobs effectively, and this is a very positive point - people want to feel that what they do is noticed. On the other hand, this factor was significantly (and negatively) associated with low morale for those who disagreed (including mainly middle managers, and to a lesser extent, general staff). According to SBA Gopher (2002, p. 1), employees do not usually leave their jobs because of pay, rather “research shows that people often leave an employer because they [do not] receive the recognition they want, or feedback on how they are doing”.

4.3.4 Perceptions of management in general

Perhaps the most important finding of the study relates to the above-mentioned lack of communication and co-ordination between different levels of management. It appears that this trend was accompanied by feelings of disempowerment in managers, and the perception by many employees that managers do not keep their word. Thus, junior managers felt that they often make promises to employees that they cannot keep due to later decision-changes higher up, and employees treat management’s promises with suspicion and mistrust. This lack of confidence in management’s word had a significant

negative influence on morale, thus supporting the importance Gish (2005) places on 'meeting promises and commitments' for boosting morale.

Similarly, middle managers expressed frustration that their authority is continually undermined by senior management, noting that 'senior management...must stop taking plant management for a bunch of fools – there are very experienced, capable and well-qualified managers at the factory who need to be supported and not continually undermined!!!' Another middle manager noted the need for 'more empowerment for managers, less imposed obstacles, less dictatorship'. This lack of clarity and respect regarding boundaries of authority may be a major source of de-motivation for middle managers, although such issues were insufficiently explored in this study. As noted by Nelson (2005), people need to feel that their jobs are important, have purpose and meaning, and contribute to the company's overall success. They also need "challenge and [psychological] growth in their jobs" (Routledge, 2000, p. 5), as well as the feeling that they can contribute to something greater than themselves (Hefferman, 2005). Since decision-making may form a large part of managers' jobs, it is hypothesised that undermining their authority may deprive them of these satisfactions and thus, lower morale.

On a positive note and contrary to qualitative findings, survey responses illustrated that most employees felt that managers do care about their employees, and this was significantly related to high morale. As noted by SBA Gopher (2002, p. 2), employees "appreciate help on personal problems, and want the boss to care about them as individuals".

Finally, there were a few concerns regarding line managers, but none were significantly associated with morale. For example, factory workers felt that line managers come in, change the rules and then soon leave, which creates inconsistency and makes rules seem meaningless. Many also felt that they often have to teach their (more qualified) superiors how to do their jobs (which should negatively influence morale according the morale-competence hypothesis (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961)). Finally, a few survey comments expressed the view that some line managers are rude to employees and are prone to making racist comments. Bayton (1942) notes that individuals are restricted in

their enthusiasm for achievement and success by negative propaganda that suggests their inability in this regard. Although these factors were not significantly related to morale, and employees felt that managers in general care about their employees (above), staff should be treated with courtesy and respect at all times, regardless of their position (Nelson, 2005).

4.3.5 Appreciation and recognition

Another positive influence on morale is seen in the fact that, despite some qualitative comments suggesting otherwise, most employees felt that they are 'mostly' or 'always' recognized for good work. This feeling was significantly related to morale, and 92% felt that knowing their work is appreciated motivates them to do well. As noted by Heathfield (2002b, p. 1), "people who feel appreciated are more positive about themselves and their ability to contribute" and "people with positive self-esteem are potentially your best employees". This was therefore a very positive finding. On the other hand, many respondents (48%) felt that their *experience* is insufficiently appreciated, although this had no significant influence on morale. Most of those who felt this way were older than 41 years and had been with the company for more than six years.

It appears that recognition exists at two levels – the individual and group level. Although employees were divided about whether individuals are recognized, the most common answer was agreement. In addition to this, most employees felt that the incentive scheme motivates them to reach targets at the group level, but artisans and support staff felt that they have little control over their potential for reward. Since they only receive 25% of the incentive amount when their line reaches target, four lines have to reach targets before they receive the full incentive. This inadequate recognition was felt to be a little demotivating.

Another positive point was that, contrary to interview findings, most employees knew what they needed to do in order to be rewarded thus indicating the existence of a set reward system. It is important that "supervisors...commend progress toward agreed-upon goals in a continual and consistent manner" (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 1) in order for such

recognition to be motivating. Employees need to feel that “each person who makes the same or a similar contribution has an equal likelihood of receiving recognition” (Heathfield, 2002b, p. 1). While recognition may be fairly consistent however, many survey comments did reveal perceptions of *inequitable* reward (especially among beverage and confectionary employees), and unfortunately this new finding could not be explored further due to time constraints.

It is noted that most employees felt that recognition ‘is not always about money’. According to Heathfield (2002b), other forms of recognition include: written notes recognizing efforts (in thank-you cards or in the company newsletter), positive attention from supervisory staff, personal development opportunities, gifts, symbols and awards, and various benefits such as time off. Ensuring equitable reward becomes difficult, as recognition must be motivating in order to be effective, and each individual “has a preference for what he finds rewarding...” (Heathfield, 2002b, p. 2). Thus, giving the same rewards to all employees for the same effort may motivate some but not others. It may be useful therefore to provide a survey book in which “employees enter ideas about what would be reinforcing to them [within reason] as a reward for a job well-done” (Daniels, 2001, p. 1).

4.3.6 Learning, opportunity and growth

Qualitative findings suggested a possible despondency regarding opportunities for advancement. In particular, 73% of employees felt that those with formal qualifications were promoted above those with experience, and 57% felt that people were appointed from outside the company rather than promoted from within. It appears however, that contrary to expectations, these two factors did *not* significantly influence employees’ perceptions of their advancement opportunities, or their morale. Rather, approximately half of the survey respondents were excited about their chances of advancing, and only a quarter were not (including the majority of middle managers).

This finding may relate to the fact that 77% of respondents felt that training (or development) may help them to advance and that they could do extra training as desired.

While some interviewees felt that training is not considered in terms of promotions, most people perceived an element of control over their ability to advance. On the other hand, 47% of respondents felt that managers assess their training needs but then do not carry through with training, and this negatively influenced morale. It is important to note that general despondency about promotion opportunities (for the 25% who did feel this way) also significantly influenced perceptions of low morale. This relates to the fact that people “are hungry for opportunities to grow into their jobs. They crave advancement, both in position and stature, and in responsibility and opportunity” (SBA Gopher, 2002, p. 1). It is important that they feel they can develop, succeed and progress in their careers, otherwise morale may be low. Thus, any incorrect perceptions that ‘training does not count when it comes to promotions’ should be rectified.

4.3.7 Relationships at work

Finally, perhaps the most positive influence on morale at present was work relationships – the vast majority of employees felt that their co-workers are friendly and helpful, and many people considered themselves part of the ‘Cadbury family’. Most people also felt that they have a good relationship with their supervisor (despite a few comments that some managers treat staff as if they are illiterate, or are rude to them). As suggested in the literature (Guba, 1958), this strong sense of social cohesion had a significant positive influence on morale. According to Maslow’s Hierarchy of needs, individuals “need to be affiliative – to have friends and to be loved and accepted by other people” (Greenberg & Baron, 2003, p. 193). Furthermore, employees are likely to be more loyal, committed, and productive if they are part of a team and enjoy the company of fellow employees (SBA Gopher, 2002). This factor is therefore a great strength in Cadbury, and its positive influence may have served to counteract some of the other concerns employees have recently felt – as noted by one employee, ‘we all help each other, that’s what makes it great’.

On the other hand, it appears that the relationship between Bromor and Cadbury employees is still a little strained. When presented with the statement ‘Cadbury and Bromor employees get along well together’, the most common response was ‘neutral’, although slightly more respondents agreed than disagreed. More importantly, this factor

was significantly associated with perceptions of morale – most of those who said morale has improved agreed with this statement, while most of those who disagreed said that morale has declined. It seems that the majority of those who were negative about Cadbury-Bromor relations were middle and senior managers – the people who are likely to have the most contact with Bromor employees.

4.3.8 Reflection on the above factors

A few points become obvious in relation to the above-mentioned factors. Firstly, as suggested by one manager during initial start-up discussions, middle managers (and to a lesser degree, senior managers and general staff) perceived morale to be low. Middle managers were also noticeably the most negative about many of the factors that were suggested as having an influence on morale. It thus appears that morale is a problem particularly for this group, and to a lesser extent, for senior managers and general staff. It is likely that the major source of dissatisfaction for middle managers may be one that was relatively unexplored in the study – a perceived lack of communication, co-ordination and support between different management levels. There were many factors that were shown to have a significant association with morale for this group though (including a perceived inability to advance), and the relative importance of such factors in influencing morale should be determined. It is possible that, as opposed to many factors influencing morale, low morale (due to a few major concerns) may have caused middle managers to see many aspects of their environment in a negative light. After all, low morale influences one's mood at work and the enthusiasm and optimism one has for achieving their tasks. The root causes of low morale among middle management should be further explored.

A second observation is that there are many instances in which the concerns raised in relation to morale during interviews did not pose a problem at the organizational level (since most respondents were positive). They did, however, negatively influence morale for the few respondents who expressed concern (for example, perceptions of fair pay among artisans and support staff). Such factors thus need to be addressed for these groups who expressed concern in order to improve organizational morale.

Finally, not all of the issues identified had a significant relationship with morale, even for the employees most affected. As mentioned previously, these may present minor sources of dissatisfaction at present, but not enough to influence morale. Such factors included: dissatisfaction with the four day shift; having to direct complaints to Johannesburg; line managers bringing in new rules and creating inconsistency; employees having to sometimes teach their superiors; 'rude managers', insufficient appreciation of experience, and the perception that those with formal qualifications are promoted above those with experience, and that people are promoted from outside rather than being promoted from within.

On the other hand, those factors that were significantly related to morale included the following (as categorised into Baehr and Renck's five 'underlying factors of morale'):

- 1) Organization and management – In terms of the image employees have of management and the organization: satisfaction with communication (especially in terms of honesty and openness); sufficiency of feedback; opportunity for input (and involvement in decision-making); perceptions of new management; promises not being met, and the perception that managers care about employees.
- 2) Immediate supervision – No factors were found to be significant here.
- 3) Material rewards – In terms of the rewards the employee gets from work, the only factor that had a significant relationship with morale was perceptions of unfairness in relation to pay.
- 4) 'Fellow employees' – Perceptions that co-workers are friendly had a significant influence on morale, as did negative perceptions of Cadbury-Bromor relations.
- 5) Job satisfaction - Finally, in terms of the intrinsic satisfactions associated with doing the job, factors raised included the following: concern about change; too few staff; comfort at work; delays in fixing problems; recognition and appreciation, and perceptions of advancement opportunities.

4.4 Ways of addressing morale issues

The fourth research aim involved finding ways of addressing any existing morale issues. Taking the above-mentioned factors into account, and based on employees' suggestions, the following ideas seemed pertinent.

4.4.1 Explore reasons for low morale among middle managers

Since this group seemed to be most negative with regard to morale, it would be important to first explore the root causes for low morale among middle managers. As mentioned previously, low morale was related to a variety of issues, but it is questionable whether these issues were all contributing to low morale, or whether low morale caused middle managers to be more negative in their responses to many of the proposed 'influencing factors'. It may thus be useful to hold focus groups with middle managers and to explore the root causes of low morale so that they may be addressed. This is particularly important because, as noted by Hamblin, Miller and Wiggins (1961, p. 295), "low morale may be reflected in low productivity, high turnover, strikes, and other organizational as well as individual costs". It is likely that poor communication, co-ordination and support between the different management levels presents a major source of de-motivation at present.

4.4.2 Increase communication and co-ordination between management levels

Middle managers' suggestions in this regard included the idea that 'managers at the factory... need to be supported and not continually undermined'; 'more empowerment for managers, less imposed obstacles, less dictatorship' and 'honest and transparent communication from senior level to the next level of management'. Addressing this issue may also address employee perceptions that 'there is no consistency in anything Cadbury does', as well as their mistrust that managers will act on what they say.

As noted by Routledge (2000, p. 11), organizations function more effectively when people feel comfortable expressing their feelings, and in dealing openly with conflict, as "conflict... can be very helpful in bringing about change". It may thus be useful to conduct team-building exercises between management levels, in which managers explore and honestly

discuss the underlying tensions that currently prevent effective communication, co-ordination and support between levels. This may highlight various misunderstandings that could be corrected through discussion (for example, the perception that senior managers perceive middle managers at the plant as 'a bunch of fools'). They may then need to come to an understanding of the boundaries of authority between levels, and agree to respect those boundaries. This intervention would only be effective if managers are completely honest about possibly difficult issues, and if such issues are adequately resolved (rather than ignored) to the satisfaction of all concerned.

4.4.3 Communication and involvement between management and staff

Once communication issues between management levels have been addressed and there is a greater flow of communication between levels regarding change, managers may be in a position to communicate more honestly with employees about change. Managers should then ensure that there is 'open and free dialogue between employees and managers', and that they explain not only the benefits of change to the company, but also how it will affect employees in their jobs. This improvement in communication would enable employees to be more prepared for future change and may dispel much of the current concern employees feel about possible change in their jobs. Junior managers would also be better able to 'keep their word' once poor co-ordination between management levels is addressed, and as long as they are aware of making only realistic promises, this may resolve employees' current mistrust of management's 'word'.

In addition to this, managers should be aware of the fact that employees are eager to be involved in making decisions that affect their work lives – many have been with Cadbury for many years and they want to be able to make a difference in the company. It may be beneficial therefore, for managers to communicate honestly with employees about company needs (especially where such decisions involve employees' work) and to provide them with a suggestion box. As proposed by one employee, the company could then implement feasible suggestions, and give recognition for ideas implemented. As noted in the above discussion, such recognition would not need to be monetary in nature – it could simply involve something as small as a food voucher, or a note from higher managers.

Managers should also be aware of the importance of making employees feel like valued members of the company, through simple actions such as greeting them in the corridors and not making racial comments, treating employees as if they were illiterate, or being rude (especially for line managers).

The decline in morale due to disappointment in the recent change of management would probably improve vastly if the new MD were to walk around the plant at regular intervals, greet employees, and show his interest in 'what is happening'. In general, employees would appreciate more 'involvement from managers other than [just] their team leaders'.

4.4.4 Addressing issues relating to working conditions and wages

As mentioned in chapter 4, dissatisfactions with the basic aspects of one's working environment may negatively influence morale and overshadow the importance of 'higher order' factors that usually promote high morale. Many of these issues were restricted to people in certain positions or locations within the plant and interventions can thus be more narrowly focused. In general, managers should attempt to ensure that problems are fixed more promptly than they have been in the past (especially those that influence employees' comfort at work or their ability to do their jobs effectively). They should also be aware of making employees as comfortable as possible (for example, fixing the ventilation system in Crumb tower so that the working environment is not so hot), and of finding ways to address the safety concerns of those who carry machine parts up and down stairs for cleaning.

It would be beneficial for HR to recruit additional fitters in order to address the perceived staff gap and to avoid delays in production at the beginning and end of each day. They should also clarify issues of fair payment with artisans and support staff, and attempt to address this concern accordingly. Some people in this group felt that increases should be based on straight increases rather than one's relationship with the 'the right people' (or 'merit'), while another felt that pay should be based more on merit than a straight increase. These perceptions require further clarification before they can be addressed.

4.4.5 Appreciation, recognition and advancement opportunities

Finally, the reasons for pessimism among middle managers about their advancement opportunities should be further explored, so that such perceptions (or the obstacles that enforced them) may then be addressed. In this regard, the assessment of training needs should be followed by the required training, otherwise this may pose another instance of management not keeping their word. It may also be useful to investigate whether employees do perceive rewards to be inequitable (for example, between beverage and confectionary employees), as suggested by a few qualitative survey comments. If such is the case, it may be advantageous to introduce a 'survey book' in which employees list their preferred type of reward (within appropriate cost boundaries). After all, rewards are not effective if they do not motivate.

Management may also consider the feasibility of basing artisans and support staff's incentive potential only on the line they work on, so that they are given more control over their ability to be rewarded. Alternatively, they should explain to artisans their reasoning for the current mode of reward in this group.

4.4.6 Final considerations

Finally, although such aspects were not significantly associated with morale, management should be aware of dissatisfaction relating to the perception that people are appointed from outside the company rather than promoted from within, and that those with formal qualifications are promoted above those with experience. Cadbury employees have typically been with the company for many years and have thus had a huge amount of experience on the job. It may therefore be de-motivating to see people being hired as their superiors when these outsiders are less able to do the job than they are. It may be more fair to employees if promotions are based on their potential to learn and develop, rather than formal qualifications (which may not be affordable for many employees).

4.5 Providing feedback to Cadbury

Having explored in depth all findings relating to the research aims, the researcher wrote a brief feedback report summarising the aims of the study; methodology; the main findings, and an appendix of employee's suggestions for improving morale. Although the researcher was aware that the above suggestions would be beneficial for addressing morale issues, she was hesitant to prescribe recommendations to management, as this approach would be unlikely to result in appropriate action. As mentioned in chapter 1, the client is likely to question the consultant's ability (as an outsider) to understand and consider all relevant factors in their company, and may thus receive any 'advice' with scepticism. In addition to this, they may feel threatened by the power the consultant holds over them when they have to ask for help, and may therefore be defensive and more inclined to reject or undermine proposed solutions (Schein, 1987). The researcher therefore chose to present employee's suggestions in the feedback report and simply highlight those that seemed most important in terms of the survey results. This would hopefully lend more credibility to suggestions, as employees are 'insiders' and have the authority of knowledge on the hidden factors and dynamics of their organization.

Feedback was considered an important aspect of this research, as the manner in which feedback was given would influence management's commitment to act on the results. As noted by Burke (1987, p. 111) "when one enters a human system to conduct a diagnosis, an intervention in fact is being made". Employees' "expectations are heightened, uncomfortable concerns are raised [such as possible co-ordination problems between management levels], and unresolved issues are surfaced publicly" (Howard, 1994, p. 273). If managers do not act on employee suggestions therefore, there may be "a predictable increase in scepticism and a reduction in trust" (Howard, 1994, p. 273). This dynamic was of particular concern in the present case, as employees were already reluctant to fill out surveys due to the perception that results are not acted on.

Since the study was conducted at a local level, managers would now have the authority to act as they saw fit. At a very basic level, it would be important for them to provide

feedback about the results to employees and acknowledge what, if any, further action would be taken. Failure to do so may increase employees' scepticism and mistrust, and make them even more reluctant to engage in future interventions. On the other hand, honestly and openly acknowledging results, and 'keeping their word' regarding any proposed action may be a very positive intervention in itself. The researcher thus attempted to motivate these minimal actions by management in her feedback to them.

Carucci and Tetenbaum (2000, p. 184) note that the way in which feedback is provided may greatly influence the intervention's success, as "hope is a vital motivator in the change equation. If... staff members are to contribute, they must be optimistic regarding its chance for success". The consultant may need to surface issues that the client is unwilling to act upon (Burke, 1987). If the consultant downplays such issues however, their usefulness and ability to help is severely undermined (Carucci & Tetenbaum, 2000). According to Howard (1994), it is thus important to balance hope with honesty, so that sufficient discomfort is produced to motivate the client to take appropriate action. As such, the findings were presented in an honest and direct manner, using employees' own words wherever possible. The researcher emphasised the importance of acknowledging and acting on results, and then summarized the main findings, ending with positive factors that enhance employee morale.

Once the researcher had provided management with the feedback report, she sought their views of the findings, the study, and its success. Managers appreciated the information provided and agreed with the perceived importance of acting on results. The study was seen as beneficial and insightful in terms of morale.

5. CONCLUSIONS, LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter will briefly review the nature of, and reasons for, the research project and discuss the extent to which relevant information was attained regarding the four research aims. It will then briefly explore the value of the study in terms of its methodological strengths and limitations, and conclude with possible avenues for further research.

5.1 The context of, and reasons for, the research

As illustrated in chapter 1, morale is an increasingly important concept in organizations today. All organizations now exist within a turbulent and competitive environment in which they “can no longer afford to delay adapting to breakthroughs in technology” in order to compete and survive. With similar technological resources therefore, “business performance is more and more determined by how flexibly and effectively we can use our human resources” (Walters, 1996, p. 3). Organizations are essentially “networks of human relationships” (Routledge, 2000, p. 10) and their goals cannot “be accomplished except by and through people” (Hanson & Lubin, 1995, p. 46). Thus, business success is largely dependent on the way in which people work together to achieve goals and this, in turn, is influenced by employee morale.

High morale may be described as “a state of abundant psychosomatic health marked by an energetic, decisive resolution to achieve a given goal...” (Hightower, 1944, p. 412). As such, high employee morale may enhance a company’s performance capacity and thus, their competitive ability. Although organizational goals may still be reached when morale is low, employees may lack the extra energy and enthusiasm that allows them to ‘go the extra mile’ (Guba, 1958). In addition to this, low morale may have various negative symptoms, such as increased absenteeism and turnover, and decreased productivity (Hamblin, Miller & Wiggins, 1961). The importance of promoting and maintaining morale in companies today is thus evident.

At the same time, however, today's business environment poses many threats to morale. For example, as mentioned in chapter 1, in a globalised economy, organizations need to be sensitive to their external environment and adapt accordingly (Sanzgiri & Gottlieb, 1992). This leads to the need for constant change, including alterations to organizational structure, which create turbulence and uncertainty in employees' lives. As noted by Kettley (1995, p. 1), employees will feel unsettled during change, but "just accepting loss of morale as an inevitable consequence may undermine the very productivity gains intended by the change".

This provided a context for the current study. Cadbury had recently undergone a merger with Bromor Foods in order to dominate the South African market for confectionary goods. This led to a variety of changes in the plant, including a new General Manager, alterations in some people's jobs, and the influence of a more autocratic culture (for example, people now have to phone Johannesburg in order to lodge a complaint). Although there had been a decrease in absenteeism and an increase in production due to a recent wellness and incentives program, managers were concerned that beneath apparent acceptance of the changes lay low employee morale, and possibly even plans to seek alternative employment. Managers thus wished to study morale within the company, identify any factors that may be affecting it, and identify indicators of low morale so that it could be monitored more closely in the future. They also wanted to find ways of addressing morale issues if the need for such action was obvious. These goals formed the aims of the current study.

5.2 The relevance of information provided for answering the research aims

As seen in chapter 4, very useful and insightful information was attained regarding the four research aims. More specifically, it was found that employees are relatively divided in their views of morale at present, but that middle managers (and to a lesser extent senior managers and general staff) were most negative in this regard. It was also found that perceptions of low morale were significantly associated with perceptions of decreased

morale since the merger, while those who were more positive about morale said that there has been no change since the merger. In light of the second aim, various factors were identified (for different positions) as having a significant influence on morale, and suggestions for improving morale based on these insights were then discussed (in terms of the fourth aim). Finally, in addressing the third research aim, various indicators of morale were identified and explored in relation to the literature. Although these included indicators such as increased turnover (which are not viable for *monitoring* morale due to their irreversible and costly nature), many revealed useful indicators that can be used by managers in the future to monitor morale.

The research was thus felt to have been successful in achieving the research aims, and was able to provide Cadbury management with insightful information regarding morale at the plant. These managers agreed with the importance of providing employees with feedback about the survey findings and decided to take some corrective actions to improve morale based on employees' suggestions.

In the following section, the methodological strengths and limitations of the study will be explored in order to assess the study's validity, and to discuss possible avenues for further research.

5.3 Methodological limitations

5.3.1 Response rate

Perhaps the most obvious limitation in terms of methodology was that the researcher did not attain the desired sample size (of 309 randomly selected respondents), and had to boost the sample using convenience methods, which may have decreased the representivity of the results. This limitation was not felt to lower the study's value in any meaningful way however, for the following reasons. Firstly, although only 167 completed surveys were collected out of the desired 309, this still ensured a standard 10% sample size, since there are 1030 employees in the Port Elizabeth plant. A thirty percent sample size had only been planned in order to cater for anonymity issues among smaller

subgroups, and these did not pose a problem. Thus, the sample was still an acceptable size despite a lower response rate than initially planned.

In terms of representivity, random sampling was used for half of the sample, and convenience sampling then took place in the canteen which is visited by most employees at some stage during the day. Employees thus had a relatively equal chance of being asked to fill in the survey, and employees from a wide variety of positions (and other demographic groups) were sampled, including 87 factory workers; 9 artisans and support staff; 18 junior managers; 15 middle managers; 2 senior managers, and 28 general staff. In comparison to the desired 255 factory workers; 12 artisans and support staff, 12 junior managers; 9 middle or senior managers, and 21 general staff, only the factory-worker subgroup was much smaller than planned, and even then it constituted more than 10% of the factory workers in the plant. Thus, the researcher was still able to attain substantial information from all relevant perspectives in the plant.

Finally, even if the results cannot be said to be strictly representative of the population due to the partial use of non-random sampling methods, the findings are still likely to show great insight into employees' views throughout the organization as a whole. The sample was large enough and sufficiently covered relevant sub-groups to be *largely* representative of employees' opinions. While the precise statistics may have been slightly different if random sampling had been used throughout, therefore, the broad trends identified are likely to remain unchanged.

In addition to this, the fact that employees were reluctant to fill in surveys provided insight into an important dynamic within the organization – namely that employees feel such surveys are a waste of time because managers do not acknowledge or act on the results. This, to employees, may constitute another instance of 'managers not acting on their word', a factor which was significantly related to morale in the sample. The researcher thus became aware of the importance of managers acknowledging and acting on the current results in order to avoid reinforcing this view and further increasing employees' reluctance to take part in future research. As noted by Arksey and Knight (1999, p. 59),

“practicalities whittle away the best research intentions” and good research is that which represents “the best response to a problem in particular circumstances which are never, ever, ideal”. The researcher felt that the inability to ensure complete representivity did not sacrifice the value of the findings in any meaningful way, and introduced an important dynamic in itself.

5.3.2 Duplicates

A very minor issue arose when respondents realized that they would receive a raffle ticket in exchange for filling out a survey, as one or two people came back on the second day wanting to fill out the survey again. The researcher recognized these people from the previous day however and said that she only required one completed survey from each person. It is very unlikely that any duplicates were received and this factor therefore did not influence the results in any way.

5.3.3 Perceptions of ‘pay’

Finally, it was unfortunate that during interviews the researcher obtained the perception that employees had last received a straight increase in 1992, as she therefore did not include this option when asking about the basis of employees’ salaries (question 25, Appendix D). 5% of respondents entered this option on the survey sheets themselves and more people may have selected it if it had been included as a possible response. The researcher thus acknowledged that responses to this question may not be entirely accurate and only treated this finding as a peripheral insight.

5.4 Methodological Strengths

5.4.1 Cadbury-specific views at an organizational level

Despite the above limitations, the research was generally seen to successfully achieve the research aims (as mentioned previously). It was able to provide information about morale at the organizational level from a Cadbury-specific perspective. This was valuable in that it provided information about organizational morale (and its ‘influencing factors’) that was specifically *relevant* and meaningful to Cadbury, rather than simply applying the literature

to Cadbury's case. As such, the information was likely to be more accurate, and any subsequent interventions may be more appropriate for addressing Cadbury-specific issues (such as perceptions of management's failure to 'keep their word'). Managers also gained insight into indicators of low morale in Cadbury employees as suggested by the employees themselves. These are therefore likely to be more attuned to the employees, and may be of greater value.

5.4.2 Construct and content validity

Although the study was broached from a Cadbury perspective, the researcher ensured that it covered all of the aspects relevant to a study of morale (as suggested by previous research on the topic), thereby enhancing content validity. These included aspects such as mood; confidence in the future and motivation to 'go the extra mile' etcetera, which were explored from Cadbury employees' views. This ensured that the research fully measured 'morale'.

In addition to this, Ruch's (1941) insights about measuring morale were very useful, especially considering the imprecise nature of the concept and resultant difficulties with measurement. Due to such insights, the researcher was aware of capturing perceptions of the general mood and not only specific and more considered satisfactions or dissatisfactions at work. By taking account of Ruch's (1941) advice, she thus avoided mentioning emotionally tinged names and direct questions during data collection that could invite confusion on the participant's part (see chapter 2). It was thus felt that the interviews and surveys gave relatively accurate and valid information regarding morale.

5.4.3 Measurement validity

The study's validity was also likely to have been enhanced by the fact that both the interview guide and survey questionnaire were reviewed by an Organization Development consultant and Research Psychologist, as well as Cadbury's HR Director. This served to ensure the measure's relevance, and appropriateness (in terms of content, language complexity, rating scale and other such issues) for achieving the research aims.

5.4.4 Honest information

One of the most successful aspects of the research may have been the apparent honesty and openness with which interviewees (and survey respondents) shared their views, and the trust and rapport that developed with most employees. It was felt that this may be at least partially attributable to the fact that the researcher and research assistant were young female students from outside the company and employees were thus relatively comfortable confiding in them. The interviews therefore produced a vast amount of insightful and relevant information regarding the research aims, on which subsequent surveys could be based. This information provided a solid foundation for the rest of the study.

5.4.5 Degree of focus

A final strength of the study was that the results were fairly focused in nature. For example, morale was identified as being problematic particularly for middle managers, and to a lesser extent senior managers and general staff. In addition to this, it was ascertained that certain factors often had an influence on morale only for those in certain positions. Thus, any corrective actions could be targeted more directly at those for whom they posed a concern.

5.5 The value of the study

In summary, the main limitation to the study was reluctance by employees to take part in the survey. This dynamic did not prevent the research from providing useful and insightful information about morale however, and in itself illustrated an important source of low morale. Although the researcher initially had a few concerns about measuring a concept that seemed to defy definition, the end result was considered fairly successful in this regard. Perhaps most importantly, Cadbury managers were given greater insight into morale at the plant, and could use such information to the benefit of employees. Overall, this was a very intriguing and enjoyable study, and enabled the researcher to further develop her skills with regard to organizational research.

5.6 Possible avenues for further research

For Cadbury, there may be the need to further investigate a few factors that arose in the qualitative section of the survey and which could not be explored in the current study. These included perceptions of inequitable reward (for example between confectionary and beverage employees) and suggestions of poor co-ordination, communication and support between management levels. Since the latter aspect may present a major source of low morale for middle managers, this factor in particular is of great importance. It would also be interesting to assess the reason for middle management's negative perceptions of their advancement opportunities, as this may pose another root cause of low morale.

In terms of research on morale in general, there appears to be comparatively little recent research on morale since the surge of literature surrounding World War II. Most recent literature appears to consist of 'popular literature' by business consultants rather than research per se. There also seems to be relatively little research on morale in the South African context, despite a great deal of research on job satisfaction. In particular, as noted by Cadbury, there is no convenient means of measuring or monitoring morale on a regular basis, and relevant research in this area may be very useful to organizations. Finally, it may be interesting to study various aspects of morale (including its indicators) in South African organizations, as these may be slightly different to those suggested in first world countries. For example, it may be hypothesized that indicators such as increased turnover may not be as prevalent in a third world country where the employment rate is high, as they are in the First World.

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APPENDIX A

INFORMATION ABOUT MORALE RESEARCH

Hi. My name is Michelle Wolfaardt and I'm a Research Psychology Masters student at Rhodes University, specializing in organization research and development. I am aware that there have been some changes in Cadbury in the past year, and managers in the plant would like to know how employees are feeling about the changes and about work in general. This is important, because a positive environment benefits both employees and the company, but managers can't help create such an environment if they don't know how things are going.

In order to find out about employee morale, I would like to talk to about 13 people from different parts of the plant for about 30 minutes each. This will involve just talking about a few themes (such as your views of the changes and the general mood at work), and will not ask for very personal information. The study is not about **you** as a person, but about the general feeling and mood at work, so it cannot reflect badly on yourself in any way. The information you provide will be used to develop a survey, which will check whether most employees also share your views on these matters. There is no need to use any identifying information in my report to the company at the end of the study. They will only be told about broad trends, so what you say will not be linked back to you. Any suggestions you can make will be considered for use in the plant.

I will have a research assistant just taking notes of what is said so that I can remember it and include common themes (from all of the interviews) in the survey. Once I have created the survey, these notes will be thrown away. If you would like feedback on the results of the study, please let me know during the interview, and this can be provided! The aim of the project is to improve your experience of work at Cadbury, even if it is already very positive. It doesn't matter what work you do, I would really appreciate your input.

Thanks very much,

Michelle Wolfaardt.

APPENDIX B

RHODES UNIVERSITY DEPARTMENT
OF PSYCHOLOGY

AGREEMENT

BETWEEN STUDENT RESEARCHER
AND RESEARCH PARTICIPANT

Updated 15 August 2005

I agree to participate in the research project of Michelle Wolfaardt (researcher's name) on morale in Cadbury South Africa's Port Elizabeth plant.

I understand that:

1. The researcher is a student conducting the research as part of the requirements for a Master's degree at Rhodes University.
2. The researcher is interested in finding out about the state of employee morale at Cadbury; indicators of poor morale; factors influencing possible low morale, and ways of improving morale at the plant.
3. My participation will involve taking part in an interview, which will take about 30 minutes during working hours.
4. In the interview I will be asked to answer fairly general questions about morale in the plant and will be invited to express my opinion of how it may be improved.
5. I am able to have any questions that I do not understand translated into my own first language or to be explained to me so that I understand, and to ask for such assistance at any time.
6. I am invited to voice any concerns I have about my participation in the study and to have these addressed to my satisfaction.
7. I am free to withdraw from the study at any time, but I commit myself to full participation unless unusual circumstances occur, or I have concerns about participating which I did not originally anticipate.
8. The report on the project may contain information about my own experiences, attitudes and behaviours, but that the report will be designed in such a way that I will not be able to be identified personally by the reader.

Signed on (Date) _____

Participant _____

Researcher _____

Witness _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW THEMES

State of current morale

- People previously 'enjoyed working here, but not anymore'.
- They are possibly insecure and uncertain about their jobs.
- Morale is low and declining.
- Morale is still down from before the merger and there has been no change since then.
- One year ago morale was low because of the Bromor integration, but everyone is 'back into the flow of things now'.
- A recent drumming exercise has boosted morale and increased productivity.
- The majority of people are satisfied, but some are not.

Cadbury's future

- It looks positive now, but initially this was not the case.
- The company is growing financially and its future looks bright, but morale is low.
- Cadbury is competing internationally now and has a vision, which is exciting.
- There has been a reduction of waste, and an increase in productivity.
- One person said 'you can see the company going down in all possible ways over the past '8 years.
- Negative – but there is 'hope that things pick up'.

Changes and their effect

- 1) The 4-day shift results in less time off work, and creates budgeting difficulties.
 - Employees actually benefit - they now have more time off.
- 2) There is an emphasis on formal qualifications rather than experience – 'they want better qualified employees'.
- 3) The binder-line has resulted in greater efficiency and productivity.
- 4) Having to direct complaints to Johannesburg takes longer, although illiterate employees are assisted with this process.

5) The Bromor merger was unnerving.

- There is rivalry between Bromor and Cadbury employees.
- There is a more autocratic culture now.
- Friendships were disrupted

Who was affected?

- People on the production floor felt that 'the changes haven't affected [them] directly'.
- Maintenance staff was reduced, so remaining employees take on extra work for the same pay.
- Many of the best fitters took packages and left. The remaining ones are incompetent and there are no consequences for the standard of their work. This results in an increased workload for engineers and an inability to reach targets.
- Factory workers said that a shortage of fitters causes waiting for the first and last two hours of each day.
- The management structure was affected by relocations.
- Some administrative employees lost their jobs.
- There has been a re-assignment of tasks.
- The rules and rewards for Cadbury and Bromor employees are different.

Communication

- Management are never totally honest and open about changes - 'they play mos hide 'n seek'.
- People want to be told what is happening and 'included as part of the team', even if the news is bad.
- Interaction between management and staff has declined – there used to be monthly team briefs, and 'road shows' every 6 months, but not anymore. One person felt that these forums still exist.
- People on the shop floor (without computers) may be less well-informed.
- Communication mainly occurs via union representatives, notice boards, and team managers.
- Pre-shift meetings with outgoing shifts are beneficial.

- There needs to be greater opportunity for upward communication from employees to managers.
- Managers do not listen to staff.
- Managers do not 'stick to what they say' - 'they say the water leak will be fixed, but it never is'.
- Requests are not met, and neither are promises with regard to training.
- Employees are informed of changes, but want to know the possible outcomes of change for themselves, not just company targets and reasons for the change. For example, 'the Crunchie line is being discontinued – what will happen if line goes down?' They also want 'to know things that affect [them] each day, not what will happen in 2 years time'.
- 'A breakdown in communication causes inconsistency and creates mistrust in employees'
- 'Team managers tell employees one thing one day, and then have to change it the next day due to orders from above' – 'there is no consistency in anything Cadbury does'.

Unhappy with finances

- Employees are generally dissatisfied with their wages.
- Some employees are paid the same for doing more work.
- 'Pay increases are getting less', and there is a disparity between inflation and salary.
- There are salary differences among fitters and electricians because those who are prominent in certain social groups and 'skinner' about others are given higher raises. The last straight increase was given in 1992, and it is now based on a 'merit increase' system. This compounds to make big difference in salary over the years and there is no fair way to correct it, which is de-motivating.

Working conditions

- Too much routine for packers and team managers is tiring.
- There is insufficient equipment (for example, cleaning equipment), and the company is slow to fix problems (for example, a water leak and broken lift in Crumb tower).

- Some employees have to work in a hot environment and the ventilation system ineffective.
- One employee was concerned about personal safety due to the layout of the plant - cleaners have to take machine parts downstairs but cannot use their hands on the stair rail, which is dangerous.
- There is now an increased workload and greater demands on workers (in terms of speed and concentration) – it is no longer a relaxed working environment.
- This results in neglect of some work and difficulties in meeting deadlines. It also means that, whereas employees voluntarily worked longer hours previously, they are now more tired. Work is more ‘production based, not people based’ now.

Sick leave

- With the recent wellness program, it is difficult to call in sick because people are called in if absent more than three times.
- There is no trust – a Cadbury doctor re-examines people if they give a note from an external doctor.
- The wellness program was implemented without approval or input from workers.

Line-managers/ supervisors

- They have nothing new to teach their subordinates.
- Experienced employees are teaching those ‘above’ them who are ‘better educated’ but know nothing of the job.
- They do not listen to recommendations from experienced employees and mess ‘everything up’.
- They bring in new rules and then soon leave. They need to collaborate and maintain some consistency, otherwise rules become meaningless and de-motivating.

Leadership

- There is the need for more technicians, as fitters have no supervision on night shifts.
- There is no personal contact or reciprocity.
- ‘[Bosses] don’t care about employees [as people], money is the bottom line’.

New general manager

- Many employees felt that they hardly see the new General Manager – ‘some people don’t even know who he is’. He is not the type of person to greet staff and employees ‘mind this’.
- He is ‘less of a people person’ than his predecessor.
- He has a different management style – ‘Andre did more constant checks on how things are going [and gave positive reinforcement or criticism based on reports] – Ian does spot checks to catch people doing the right things’.
- Employees do not expect him to come see them personally, but want him to ‘know what’s going on and be interested and approachable’.
- He is still adapting and needs to build up his support structure.
- Everyone has good qualities – he lets you get down to work and he ‘seems like a nice chap’.
- ‘It makes no difference’ to some peoples’ work lives.
- The change may be positive for company, but employees see new management as ‘the people who are on a mission’ – there are new rules and the perception that they want to get rid of staff.

Recognition & appreciation

Amount of recognition

- There is no recognition of experience and knowledge gained on the job.
- Employees need appreciation from management – it was felt that the people who showed appreciation have now left.
- Mutual respect and appreciation creates a sense of purpose and importance.
- Performance appraisals keep being delayed.
- Line workers are laid off for the week if they reach targets too soon – this is demotivating.
- Generally, ‘employees are spoilt’.

Who is recognized?

- ‘Shining stars’ are recognized for saving the company money, or for increasing productivity.
- ‘You need to go the extra mile... be seen and heard... loudly!’

- The incentive scheme hopefully energizes production staff at the team level.

Incentive scheme as motivator

- The incentive scheme is based on Key Performance Indicators, thus making employees aware of productivity targets.
- Engineering staff get only 25% of the line incentive when their line meets targets. They thus felt that they have little control over their potential to be rewarded, and suggested that the incentive be based only on the line they work on.
- Incentives are received monthly, based on a scoring system. This does increase motivation, but people do not pull together because of differences in individual performance. There also needs to be an individual reward, so that there is competition between line members, and 'no slackers'.

Inconsistency of rewards

- There is no set recognition structure that is followed, which results in inconsistency.
- This may be lowering morale for fitters.
- One's ability to do the job is not reflected in one's pay.

Type of rewards required

- We are mentioned for hard work, but there is no financial reward.
- 'It's not always about the money', 'we just need positive reinforcement' such as feedback, meal vouchers, certificates, or having one's name on the board.

Feedback

- Feedback is given during pre-shift meetings and on a monthly basis according to KPI results. Salaried employees are also given performance reviews once or twice a year.
- Employees need feedback, especially on the shop floor.
- 'Feedback from production manager on a weekly basis is impersonal' – team managers act as the 'go-between'.

Opportunities for promotion

- 'There are training programs to enroll in, but few get involved – they don't take the initiative, but then make a fuss when overlooked for promotion'.
- There are no opportunities for advancement.

- Training is not considered - managers already know who will get the job.
- People are recruited from outside rather than promoted from within.
- People with better qualifications are promoted above internal staff with more experience.
- Many experienced employees are still temps – better qualified people get permanent positions, but do not know how to do the work.
- The minimal requirements are qualifications, but experience does count a little.
- Old qualifications are not recognized.
- There are opportunities for advancement.
- Promotions are apparently according to merit, but it is based on ‘if they like your face’. Those who ‘socialize and badmouth others get promoted – those who are badmouthed get remembered in a negative light and suffer at promotion time’.

Training

- There is not enough time for training – when one person goes, others have to stay to do the work.
- Managers need to first clarify what training is needed so that appropriate training is provided.
- Promises about training are not met – one employee was assessed and given a training plan, but no training followed.
- Employees want training in three or four different jobs so that they can multi-task and assist when one person is absent.
- There are lots of training opportunities at Cadbury – employees must show initiative.
- Study programs and bursaries for employees’ children are a good source of motivation – ‘it’s all the little add-ons that do help’.

Input / autonomy

- Decisions are made by management – they do not involve employees in making decisions that will affect them.
- ‘You want to know you’ve had some valuable input in what happens’.
- Managers do not act on employees’ suggestions.

- One or two said that their supervisor is open to suggestions and that they have some control over their work.

Relationships

- There used to be more bonding, camaraderie and cooperation between employees. For example, they would have a prayer before work in the mornings.
- There is good team work - 'we all help each other, that's what makes it great'
- There is friendliness, familiarity and warmth among employees - 'A Cadbury family'.
- There is a sense of 'them and us' between Cadbury and Bromor employees, and little interaction between the two.
- Employees need more support from, and interaction with, management – 'only team managers have contact with employees'

Employee loyalty and commitment

- Some workers felt that they have helped to build the business up to what it is today – they have been there for a long time but have nothing to show for their service.
- People are willing to work hard to make the targets – they are 'willing go the extra mile'.

Indicators of low morale

- 'You can feel the vibe – employees come to work to do their job [and get paid], nothing less, nothing more, they are not willing to go the extra mile'. Work 'is no longer pleasurable'.
- There is a lack of motivation - people 'don't feel like thinking' and there is no attempt to use initiative, or 'give extra input'.
- Employees get bored and frustrated.
- Negative attitudes show low morale.
- Employees with low morale want to leave the company – for example, they may look forward to retiring, or want to leave and work elsewhere.
- People spread rumours - they "just get mad and talk-talk".
- They voice their complaints to managers.

- There may be 'stand-offs' (or strikes).
- Negative behavior may show low morale - 'if you're always told you're bad, then why not be bad' and with degrading treatment, 'you get offended and treat superiors in a similar way'.
- It is visible in individual employee's faces.
- Productivity decreases.

Ways to boost morale

- Make work fun – the fun element is important (e.g. laugh, crack jokes)
- Identify causes of low morale and try to work it out.
- Ensure fairness and the equal treatment of employees.
- Take the time to interact with employees – for example, have team building weekends, share information and mutual expectations, as well as possible solutions to problems.
- Clarify the purpose, vision and goals.
- Increase people's trust – 'their trust and respect has been lost through perceived secrecy'.
- A 'lack of response to requests lowers morale – respond and act on it!'
- Managers and supervisors should increase opportunities for two way communication.
- 'Aims, goals and financials are not as important as the people side'.
- Employees 'need [managers] to just acknowledge achievement or success, it doesn't need to be in a big way'. For example, managers could acknowledge the best department by giving t-shirts every three months. Alternatively, they could allow employees to nominate the person they think is doing the best in their job and the winner then receives a small reward.
- In order for employees to do their jobs happily, they need to know they are respected and appreciated – 'a greeting is important, just for managers to say hi, how are you doing?'
- Allow for rotation – working on the same line for too long is not healthy.
- Allow for improved skills and experience.

APPENDIX D

Survey on Morale

Hi. My name is Michelle Wolfaardt and I am a Research Psychology Masters student at Rhodes University. I am aware that Cadbury has had some changes in the past 2 years, and managers in the plant would like to know how you are feeling about the changes. They would also like to know how you are feeling about work in general, as they want to ensure that there is a positive working environment. I am thus looking at what the mood is like at work, and what factors are affecting it. I have done interviews with some of your fellow employees, and have designed this survey based on what they said.

Please would you take the time to answer **all** of the questions **honestly** and accurately. What you say will help management to understand how you feel, and how they can make Cadbury a better place to work. I would appreciate it if you would place your completed survey into the sealed box provided, by **Friday 30th September**. I will then fetch the box on Monday.

The questionnaire is completely confidential and anonymous - it is not possible to establish your identity through your answers. Participation is voluntary and much appreciated. The survey findings will be made available to you at the end of the study if you are interested.

Thanks very much for your time!

Michelle Wolfaardt.

MORALE SURVEY

Instructions

Please take the time to answer these questions truthfully. Where there are boxes (or spaces), tick the answer that best suits how you feel.

Demographics

(Please note: this information will not be seen by anyone at Cadbury, but it is important for my analysis and recommendations). Please **write** your answers in the spaces provided.

- 1) Position/ job title: _____ 2) Length of service: _____
 3) Age: _____ 4) Gender: _____
 5) Race (optional): _____

Changes

- 6) I prefer the 4-day on 4-day-off shift to what we had before

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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- 7) I find it difficult having to direct my complaints to Johannesburg

Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
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- 8) How have people in **YOUR** position (eg Packer) been affected by the merger?
Tick the answer(s) that is (are) most appropriate to you:

- _____ 1) It has not affected us directly
 _____ 2) Some people in my team had to move to Johannesburg
 _____ 3) Some people in my team lost their jobs
 _____ 4) We have had to take on new/ extra tasks

- 9) I feel that the wellness program is a good incentive

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Communication

- 10) Managers communicate honestly and openly about changes in the company

Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
-------	-----------	--------	--------

- 11) I am happy with the communication I receive about change

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

12) I am given enough information about how changes will affect **the company**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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13) I am given enough information about how changes will affect **me in my job**

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

14) General communication is mainly downwards – from managers to staff

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

15) I receive sufficient feedback about how I am doing, so that I can do my job effectively

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

16) There is enough opportunity for input from employees to managers

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

17) I trust that if managers/ supervisors promise something, they will keep their word

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

State of current morale

18) I enjoy working at Cadbury

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

19) I used to be happy working here, but not anymore

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

20) I am worried about losing my job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

21) I am worried that there might be changes in my job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

22) The mood/ morale at work is happy/ positive

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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23) The mood/ morale at work since the merger: (please **tick ONE** of the following):

- 1) Has not changed at all
- 2) Is more happy
- 3) Is more unhappy
- 4) Was uncertain, but is happier now

24) I have helped build the company up to what it is now

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Wages and Conditions

25) Within my position, what I earn depends on: (tick ONE answer only):

- _____ 1) How well I do my job (merit)
_____ 2) If I am friendly with the 'right people'
_____ 3) If I make managers aware of how well I am doing (by telling them)

26) This pay system is fair/ reasonable

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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27) I am comfortable (physically) at work

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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28) If you said you are **NOT** comfortable at work (answered disagree to 27)), tick an answer below.
If you answered Neutral or Agree to 27), **DO NOT answer this question - go on to 29):**

- I feel: _____ 1) Tired in my job because there is too much routine
_____ 2) Concerned about my safety at work
_____ 3) That the temperature around me is uncomfortable
_____ 4) Other (please specify) _____
-

29) I have all the equipment I need to do my job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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30) It takes a long time to fix problems (e.g. broken pipes etc)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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31) I feel that my workload is increasing

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

32) Too few staff around me affects my ability to do my job well

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Managers/ supervisors

33) I often have to show those above me how to do their job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

34) New line managers change the rules, and then soon leave

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

35) My direct supervisor/ manager listens to what I say

Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
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36) My manager involves me in making decisions that affects me

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

37) I feel that managers care about their employees

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

38) I feel that I have enough supervision

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

39) I know what is expected of me in my job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

40) I am happier in my job when I know what is expected of me

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

41) I feel that employees have less contact with higher management than they did in the past

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

42) How do you feel about the changes in top management? (Tick the 1 most appropriate answer)

- 1) Indifferent
- 2) Encouraged
- 3) Disappointed

Cadbury's future

43) I think that Cadbury's future is bright (in terms of its' continuing success)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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44) I am excited about being part of Cadbury's future

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Relationships

45) The people I work with are friendly and helpful

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

46) We are 'A Cadbury family'

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

47) Cadbury and Bromor employees get on well together

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

48) I have a good relationship with my immediate manager/supervisor

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Recognition and appreciation

49) I feel that my knowledge of the job (i.e. my experience) is not appreciated

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

50) I feel appreciated when I work well

Never	Sometimes	Mostly	Always
-------	-----------	--------	--------

51) Knowing that my efforts are appreciated would make me want to do well

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

52) Cadbury recognizes and rewards individual performance

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

53) The incentive scheme motivates me to reach KPI targets

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

54) I know what I need to do to get rewarded / recognized

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

55) Recognition is not always about money – (e.g. it can involve food vouchers, t-shirts/ praise)

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Opportunities for promotion

56) People are appointed from outside the company, rather than promoted from within it

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

57) People with higher qualifications are promoted above those with experience on the job

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

58) I am excited about my chances of advancing in the company

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

59) Training would help me to advance in the company

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

60) I can do extra training if I want to

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

61) Managers assess what kind of training I need, but do not give me the training

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
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Indicators of low morale

When people are upset:

62) They do only what is expected, nothing more

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

63) They want to leave the company

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

64) They spread rumours/ talk about it to other employees

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

65) They voice their complaints to managers/ supervisors

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

66) They may go on strike

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

67) They look unhappy

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

68) Productivity goes down

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
-------------------	----------	---------	-------	----------------

Ways to boost morale

69) What (if anything) do you think could be done to improve the mood/ morale at work?

Thank you for your time!

APPENDIX E

RESPONSES TO QUALITATIVE SURVEY QUESTION (Question 69)

- Increase salary.
- Give people training so they can earn more money
- Give better increases. Job security (x3)
- Do away with merit increases and put all on the same salary
- (Fitter) – recognize good work by giving individuals an increase based on merit, not same as everyone else. – (Talk with fitters and electricians about wages!!)
- Train existing casuals or temps, so that they can also apply for permanent positions
- ‘Fairness, no favoritism, discrimination. Employment should be advertised on the board, even if it is temporary. Don’t employ people without advertising by bringing them in through a friend and at the end of the day the job gets advertised and the person in charge knows who he will be giving the job to. Don’t let us go through the whole process and then you know who you will give the job to’. (x3)
- Vacancies should be filled internally. More family days as a company’
- ‘Encourage respect amongst employees, encourage the high flyers in teams to study and equip themselves’
- ‘The company must start recognizing the people inside the factory who’ve got qualifications. Those people need to be developed by the company they are working for, because if the company is not prepared, who is going to give those people a chance.’

Fair treatment

- Give all employees a fair chance in company activities – especially casuals – they long to be employed more permanently.
- Treat temps and permanent staff equally

- Get rid of racism – be fair to all, and watch language when talking to employees.
- ‘People will give whole input if they see managers’. ‘We really work hard and will appreciate if they try to be more fair in every way’. (racism)
- Equal opportunities for all races

- 'Younger line managers must change their attitudes towards each other and the workers, and stop being racist.'
- 'Managers must stop shouting at the workers when they are talking to them – we must understand each other in a good manner'.
- 'Talk to rude managers'
- 'Managers to change their attitudes – some of them discussing your personal problems in the meetings.'
- New manager think we are illiterate.
- Don't base treatment of employees on gossip or other employee's complaints.
- 'Managers should stop having their favourite employees because if employees are friends with managers they do what they want when they want + that disturbs other workers, so they don't perform well. They don't care about production'.
- Equal treatment and rewards to be the same for people in the same team from mgt
- More transparency in the company. Employees on the same level to be treated the same. Equal benefits within levels. Fairness and consistency.
- Ensure fairness with benefits. Disparities are evident (grossly) – Cadbury (confectionary) do not receive equitable benefits (car, petrol, maintenance) versus the beverage employees. We are one company but do not share the same benefits.
- 'Please for once look and see that people are not just numbers and that they are human beings and have the same expense as all. Even ourselves are cheated out of the perks of life. Equal pay for equal work and give praise where praise is due, and recognizing people for what they are'.
- 'Demonstrate fairness and consistency.
- Managers to be more honest to employees
- Open and free dialogue between employees and managers
- Communication and appreciation – 'we have good people working for Cadbury'
- Everybody loves to be appreciated and validated. I think an improvement here will go a long way.'

- More communication and understanding of workers
- 'Make changes known to everybody – more communication
- Praise for attendance, more communication between top management and employees.
- More interaction between mgt and employees
- We used to have information-sharing sessions with the previous MD, not with this one – should have (team manager)
- Team building with managers (x3). And a thank you when you reach a goal or do a good job.
- Training of team was supposed to take place
- 'More truthful and timely communication from top management'

- 'Give employees room to suggest'.
- 'Implementing suggestions and group activities'
- 'Involve employees in all decisions – give employees the opportunity to show their worth – let them share ideas with each other'
- 'Include the workforce in decision-making. Ask for advice – there are people out there who knows more'.
- Let people voice their ideas
- Freedom to make decisions that affect the area in your control. Feedback sessions

- Communicate and talk about problems. Start shifts with a prayer.
- Have a meeting once a week held by someone in charge –'where we can talk out our hearts, how you feel about other employees'.

- No reward really, and no guidelines. 'Reason for being neutral – how investigation goes. They don't practice what they preach, need feedback from survey and action!'
- '1)create opportunities to learn new skills 2) listen and react quickly to complaints 3) implement feasible suggestions and give recognition for ideas implemented 4) create a clear vision of future plans and involve all stakeholders'.
- 'Senior management (at head office) must stop taking plant management for a bunch of fools – there are very experienced, capable and well-qualified managers at

the factory who need to be supported and not continually undermined!!! Recent e-mail abuse debacle is a case in point – the appalling manner in which this entire matter has been handled from Head Office HR is shocking!!! It smacks of certain senior individuals trying to assert their authority over the local factory management, and it has completely undermined the authority of factory management. This single debacle has had a devastating effect on morale at the factory and will be felt for years to come. Senior management is going to have to do some serious damage control to rectify the situation.’

- ‘More transparency from senior management. More empowerment for managers, less imposed obstacles, less dictatorship.’
- ‘To have honest and transparent communication from senior level to next level of management. To give all management on the same level the same and equal benefits (e.g. Fuel, insurance, car allowances)’
- Better communication, clarification of roles etc, more empathy from top management.
- ‘No hidden agendas from management, pay market-related salaries and have more social events.’

- ‘Cadbury PE is the mother company – bring top brass (directors) back to PE. It will remove uncertainty within the company. Managers of Cadbury cover their backs at any cost/ expense of workers.’

- The company should be aware of employee’s expectations, personal circumstances and involve people when making decisions that directly affect people’s lives. It is not always the profit motive that should drive the company. Senior management and directors should put the company first and not themselves when making decisions. The JHB move could have been avoided seeing that Cadbury UK is selling off their beverages business worldwide, so there was no reason to disrupt employees’ lives who currently work for Cadbury (i.e. confectionary business in PE). The Woodmead site (as Headcount) was chosen solely because senior management or directors can afford to buy their homes in that area and not considering that other employees might not afford to do so.

