Employee volunteer self-regulation and strengthening employee political representation

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ABSTRACT

This article offers an in-depth study of self-regulation of a bank's employee volunteers as a modality of organizational control from the late 1970s onwards. It also seeks to discuss the affinity between these methodical and intentional organizational practices and other parallel formative events in the sphere of the bank's industrial relationships.

The paper is based on a case study in a privately-owned Israeli bank, from its establishment in 1935 until the late 1970s. Research data was collected using semi-structured interviews and archive material, including dozens of bank bulletins published from 1964 onwards.

The article follows the transformation in the self of the bank's employee, from a passive object of generous workplace health, education, and financial aid welfare programs – established together with the bank itself – to an autonomous and competitive individual who, from the late 1970s onwards, was required to initiate, plan, and participate in community volunteering, to advance bank sales.

The article also demonstrates that organizational control of the employee's self-intensified parallel to greater political status and importance of employee representation during the 1970s.

The study challenges positivistic managerial literature that avoids discussing social repercussions of managerial practices of self-construction for volunteering employees. Furthermore, the study raises questions for further research about the nature of the link between corporate volunteering and issues concerning labor relations, such as acceptance or resistance by employees and their representatives of managerial control of self.

Keywords: Employee volunteering, self-regulation, normative managerial discourse, employee representation, industrial relations, welfare capitalism

INTRODUCTION

This paper is based on a case study focused on corporate volunteerism that came into being in the late 1970s in a privately owned Israeli bank, founded by a Jewish immigrant from Thessaloniki to Palestine during the British Mandatory era. From the bank's establishment in 1935, the founder engaged in extensive philanthropic activity with the employees and the community, drawing on a long tradition of charitable giving. For many years employees had been seen as recipients of generous workplace welfare programs within the fields of health, education, and financial support for needy employees, whereas employee volunteering initiatives for the community as part of marketing campaigns were first launched at the bank during the late 1970s, to increase sales of bank services and employee identification with the bank and its goals. All this occurred many years before the emergence of current business models of CSR (corporate social responsibility) and corporate volunteering.

In recent years, there has been broad practical interest in employee voluntary activities. Such corporate programs have turned into the primary medium for implementing and displaying CSR, and of developing and maintaining a corporate image of "good citizenship," in many parts of the Western world (Grant, 2012; Rodell, 2013). For example, 92% of the large corporations in the USA and one third in England, support employee volunteer programs (Walsh, 2012).

In addition, scholarly attention has recently been increasingly focused on employee volunteering, primarily on the managerial literature that discusses the issue from an instrumental and utilitarian aspect and the advantages of volunteering initiatives for the business. These studies focus research attention on the motives of human resources in the business to invest their energies, time, and talents in volunteering for the community (Caligiuri *et al.*, 2013; Grant, 2012; Rodell, 2013).

While the brunt of the responsibility for company's social activities has been transferred to individuals in the organization, since the 1980s corporate volunteer programs have become measurable and manageable

through human resources practices such as training, recruitment, and rewarding employee volunteers (Ferreira *et al.*, 2012; Pajo and Lee, 2011).

Managerial literature focusing on human resources as promoting CSR has produced an abundance of studies that discuss the question of employee motivation for volunteering, and the factors that maintain this behavior in the long-term. These studies claim that examining the psychological needs motivating employees to invest their time and talents in community projects is of great theoretical and applied value, considering material rewards such as money and employment security are irrelevant as motivators in the case of volunteering employees (Grube and Piliavin, 2000). This is because the majority of the organizations do not offer material recompense to their employees for volunteering (Basil *et al.*, 2009; Do Paço and Nave, 2013; Pajo and Lee, 2011).

According to studies on employee motivation and volunteering the primary motive for volunteering is philanthropy, which is related to employees' altruism and desire to help others. Philanthropic motives add to the satisfaction of the volunteer employees' experience (Do Paço and Nave, 2013; Pajo and Lee, 2011).

These studies also demonstrate that volunteering employees' motivation, satisfaction, and identification with the organization are greater than those of the non-volunteering employees (Mozes *et al.*, 2011), and that supportive and positive perspectives of volunteering employees regarding corporate volunteering programs caused them to feel pride and satisfaction (Ferreira *et al*., 2012; Jones, 2010). On the applied level – these studies show that to strengthen the employees' self-worth and improve their importance, volunteering requires nurturing and enrichment using a volunteer training system, to adjust it to volunteer needs (Do Paço and Nave, 2013; Ferreira *et al*., 2012; Grant, 2012; Rodell, 2013).

Some studies discussed organizational factors and practices that lead the employee to internalize the self of a volunteer, as well as benefits gained by the business (Grant, 2012; Penner, 2002). These studies, inspired by models of selfhood and role identity developed by advocates of the symbolic interactionist approach, claimed that since a person's self-perception derives from other people's expectations, an individual's internalization of significant others' expectations will be the best possible predictor of their identification with the volunteering role. Therefore, managers and colleagues' expectations from the volunteering employee are of great significance in shaping identity. Another important factor in predicting volunteering intentions is the individual's previous experiences with similar activities (Grube and Piliavin, 2000; Lee *et al.*, 1999). It has, therefore, been claimed that the organization management should exert social pressure on new volunteers to keep on volunteering, since continuing will ensure employee identification with the volunteer role and willingness to participate in similar future activities (Grube and Piliavin, 2000; Penner, 2002).

If so, managerial studies demonstrate that even when there is interest in the effect of corporate volunteerism on the employee's subjective experiences, such as meaning at the workplace, motivation, or satisfaction, the volunteerism is examined in the context of these feelings, for the commercial benefit of the organization (McCallum *et al.*, 2013; Basil *et al.*, 2009).

Conversely, the current study proposes critical examination of employee volunteering as part of a managerial control mechanism constructing the employee's "self" or identity. Despite increasingly noticeable recent theoretical and empirical activity concerning the link between organizational control and identity regulation (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Casey, 1995; Fleming and Sturdy, 2009), it is still necessary to perform an in-depth study of the process of self-construction and identity regulation as a modality of organizational control (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002). Moreover, no empirical in-depth studies exist demonstrating the self-construction process of corporate community volunteers.

With the aim of filling the lacuna in the literature, the current article seeks to demonstrate the transformation in the self of the bank's employees from the passive objects of a generous welfare strategy to autonomous and competitive individuals who were required, from the late 1970s, to initiate, plan, and participate in voluntary activities for the community so as to advance bank sales.

The article also demonstrates that the organizational control of the employee's self-intensified in parallel with increasing political status and importance of the bank's employee representation during the 1970s. In this context this paper seeks to discuss whether any link exists between parallel events which occurred primarily

during 1970s: regulation of the employee's self as proactive and autonomous individuals who were expected to initiate voluntary activities, and increasing employee political representation.

To reinforce the argument that corporate volunteering serves as a form of managerial control, a short review of the historical development of the employee's self in normative managerial discourse, which emerged towards the end of the nineteenth century, will first be presented.

SELF-REGULATION AS MECHANISM OF ORGANIZATIONAL CONTROL

The critical discourse of recent years has included growing interest in the question of a link between self-construction or identity regulation and organizational control (Alvesson, 2010; Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Fleming and Sturdy, 2009).

The unique contribution of these critical studies is their reflexive discussion of deliberate managerial attempts to blur the distinction between employee's self and organizational identity, and how such attempts affect the way employees experienced their identity (Casey, 1995; Hochschild, 1983; Kunda, 1995).

There have been attempts made at psyche control of the employee through identity regulation techniques since the early industrial age, but they became more thorough and sophisticated during the final decades of the twentieth century (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002). Ideas and techniques for molding employee identity are anchored in normative managerial discourse which has evolved since the nineteenth century (Barley and Kunda, 1992). When managerial thinking first emerged, employment was seen as limiting employee freedom to achieve self-fulfillment, and, therefore, the techniques developed by employers for controlling productive subjects focused on creating conditions to supply the employees' existential needs (Rose, 1990).

Welfare capitalism, that began during the late nineteenth century in the industrial cities of the USA, was based on a paternalistic approach in which employers believed that commitment towards their employees by aiding them in such areas as health, education, and housing, would help create a loyal workforce, and contribute to easing employer-employee tensions (Fones-Wolf, 1986; Shenhav, 2002). Beyond this, by making use of welfare capitalism practices, employers sought to cope with the negative effects of mass production, such as high employee turnover, employee absences, and wanton destruction of equipment and buildings that caused great damage to employers (Fones-Wolf, 1986).

How successful welfare capitalism is in creating a disciplined, obedient, and loyal workforce is subject to disagreement in the literature. Some argue that employers used managerial practices with the aim of controlling the employee's emotions, behavior, and cognitions, in a manner that negated the need for external supervision (Barley and Kunda, 1992; Shenhav, 2002), such as by integrating a metaphor of "family" in the organizational culture (Stanger, 2000). Others claim that workers did not always blindly accept managerial policy in the factories where workplace welfare programs were implemented. Employee loyalty in these factories reflected the mutual agreement of the employees and employer, achieved by cooperation between them (De Grazia, 1981; Fones-Wolf, 1986; Zahavi, 1983). Other studies show that welfare capitalism did not necessarily lead to the desired harmony between capital and work. Sometimes, it was precisely in those workplaces where generous employee welfare had been instituted that employees expressed opposition that eventually led to their unionization, contrary to management wishes (Hillard, 2003). Even in factories with labor unions, the welfare programs implemented by the management did not always succeed in placating the suspicions and hostility of the trade union leaders (Fones-Wolf, 1986).

There is disagreement within the literature regarding the extent of the influence of welfare capitalism. Some researchers eulogized it by arguing that the USA economic collapse of the 1930s put an end to it (Brody, 1980). Others argue that it continued through the eras of economic collapse and the Second World War, and became unprecedentedly stronger during the post-war period (Fones-Wolf, 1986; Jacoby, 1997). There are researchers who view the human relations approach that clearly dominated the managerial discourse after the First World War as an expression of managers' renewed interest in normative and practical control of employee welfare (Barley and Kunda, 1992).

The rhetoric used by executives to justify human relations practices was, however, different to welfare capitalist rhetoric (Barley and Kunda, 1992; Guillén, 1994). From the welfare capitalist perspective, the company's employees belonged to a social collective whose welfare was to be promoted. However, the human

relations approach, drawing on ideas from industrial psychology, argued that employees are viewed as individuals with social and psychological needs that can be estimated and measured to increase employee supervision and motivation. And the workplace is perceived as a central conduit for achieving the employee's needs, wishes, and aspirations (Rose, 1990; Shenhav, 2002).

Since the 1970s, interest has renewed in the formation of the subject, as seen in ideas advanced by the movement for the quality of working life. Its adherents favored promoting values of equality, quality, efficiency, and creativity, using rational assessment and evaluation techniques of the employees' achievements and contribution to advancing company goals. These ideas contributed to enhancing the image of the employee as an autonomous individual, committed to, and responsible for, quality of work (Rose, 1990).

The psychological image of the employee as an autonomous individual motivated by self-fulfillment, whose self can be managed through assessment and evaluation techniques, was reinforced still further in the managerial discourse regarding organizational culture. This approach was inspired by Japanese managerial culture and was based on the image of the Japanese worker, who achieves self-fulfillment by feudally belonging to the organization and merging with organizational culture (Kunda, 1995).

The approach promoted including individual employees in autonomous working teams, and arousing team enthusiasm by encouraging innovation and excellence. The new managerial discourse, emphasizing team work, quality awareness, flexibility, and quality circles, wished to bridge between the individual's desire for autonomy, creativity, and responsibility, and a robust corporate culture, based on a collective initiative (Rose, 1990).

Since the 1980s, with managerial discourse increasingly emphasizing management through cultural symbols, empirical and conceptual discussion has been awakened regarding self-regulation emanating from normative managerial control (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002).

Despite the contribution it has made, the literature on identity regulation has so far neglected the links between both identity regulation and corporate voluntarism, and between corporate voluntarism and industrial relations issues. I will attempt to fill this gap in the literature by discussing these two subjects in the latter section of the article.

METHODOLOGY

The goal of the article is studying the development of employee self over several decades. The need for ample and varied data over a long period requires thorough familiarity with the bank, its activities, and the various players, and necessitates the use of case study methodology to enable thorough research of the issue in a particular social context (Eisenhardt, 1989).

We conformed with the tradition of grounded theory (Strauss, 1987; Strauss and Corbin, 1998) regarding design and analysis. Research data was collected using semi-structured interviews and archive material. The article is based on twelve interviews with retirees, long-time employees, and a senior manager, as well as the grandson of the bank's founder who was appointed VP Marketing and Publicity and a member of the board of directors in the late 1970s. Six of the interviewees were appointed members of the employee representation that strengthened during the 1970s.

One was a member in the first employee association that was established in 1947, and two more interviewees were employee welfare committee members during the 1950s and 1960s, in addition to their other bank roles. Two of the interviewees served as full time committee members during the 1970s, and one was a committee member from the early 1980s.

Archival materials, particularly the bank bulletins – published from the early 1960s at the management's behest – were analyzed methodologically, so as to improve the analysis and compare the information gathered from the interviews. The article is based on empirical data from around 80 bulletins.

The bulletins serve as a prism, through which the connection between development of managerial discourse at the bank and the gradual change in the employee's self can be critically examined. Methodological analysis demonstrated that the management utilized the bulletins as a tool for shaping the employee's self. The bulletins sometimes served as a primary channel for disseminating the employees' working life and

volunteering experiences, but those worker stories and narratives mainly represented managerial expectations from the employee, and were aimed at creating strong identification with the "ideal" employee constructed by the management. However, interviews of employee representatives also enable us to become familiar with the voices of the employees who opposed the bank's managerial strategy.

In later chapters, the paper will briefly examine the development of the employee's self-concept from being the object of workplace welfare strategy to a community volunteer. In addition, it will seek to anchor the term "the self" of the volunteering bank employee in the context of the development of work relations at the bank. During the 1970s, with the consolidation of employee volunteering programs, there were formative events at the bank that changed the employment situation of the bank employees. These events enable the understanding of the self-construction of the worker in a broader social context, and in relation to the historic circumstances under which they were consolidated (Watson, 2008).

The proximity of the events raises several questions: Is there a link between the political intensification of employee representation at this time and the managerial attempts to form a loyal and obedient employee self as part of welfare capitalism? Or is there a connection between managerial efforts to shape the role of the volunteering employee, and employee opposition to employment policy during those years? Discussion of work relations at the bank allows a reflexive examination of the employees' reaction to the bank's managerial policy, and in that context, questioning what employment conditions were opposed by the workers and their representatives, and their authentic attitude – rather than the one reflected in the bulletins, that paints an idealistic picture of corporate volunteering initiatives led by the management.

WELFARE CAPITALISM AND STRENGTHENING OF EMPLOYEE REPRESENTATION

From the mid-1950s until the end of the 1970s, the bank experienced enormous economic growth. However, conditions of employment were not improved by the mid-1970s, and salaries for the devoted bank employees who had contributed to its development were lower than other banks by dozens of percentage points. Employees were given a basic salary without social benefits for overtime, vacation days, night hours, and a split working day.

The accepted managerial ethos from the beginning of the private bank was paternalistic, meaning the management believed it should concern itself with the needs of the employees and their families such as social welfare, health, education, and leisure. The bank financed the employees' health expenses from the late 1940s. From the early 1960s, the bank granted financial aid for high school studies for the employees' children, and for higher education too from the late 1970s. The area of employees' academic studies and education was relatively developed in the bank over the years. Employee training included courses with professional training or focusing on imparting knowledge not directly connected with the job position (such as learning languages). The bank also financed higher education for employees, particularly those at management or senior level. Salary practices, such as an extra annual salary (13th salary) were already implemented during the 1940s to compensate the employees for the lack of overtime payment. Over the years, the workers were given loans with favorable terms, and grants from bank funds for personal and familial needs, and the bank also recruited employees' children with disabilities – who had difficulty in finding work – for simple office jobs.

The managers drew their ethical commitment to the welfare of the bank employees and their families from the philanthropic tradition of the owners, who had been involved with philanthropy and public activities for decades. Like wealthy people in the USA who had implemented welfare programs for ethical or religious considerations, combined with their own interests (Jacoby, 1998), it is reasonable to assume that the bank management believed that concern for the employees' welfare would help create an industrious and loyal workforce (Fones-Wolf, 1986; Shenhav, 2002). The social welfare programs were seen by the employees, particularly those with seniority, as an expression of goodwill on behalf of the employers, as noted in an interview by a pensioner who had worked in the bank since 1939: "the bank's attitude was paternal, patriarchal; we knew the bank's family would help us." The bank employees' view of the employers as a concerned benefactor contributed to the depoliticization of work relations at the bank, at least until the 1970s.

In the late 1930s, the Histadrut Haovdim (the largest workers' representative union in Israel) demanded of the management to have the dozens of bank employees join the union. In response, the management established an independent employee association, primarily comprised of veteran employees, and thereby succeeded in temporarily pushing off the Histadrut and restoring the peace.

The independent employee association was viewed by the employees and management as a body appointed for mediation between the growing number of workers and the bank management. Employees that encountered personal or family crises would turn to the bank management through the members of the employee association to receive financial help. In this way, the employee representatives became ambassadors of the management in implementing welfare policies, and helped intensify the image of the bank owners as kindly benefactors. This pattern of unionization is similar to that of workers' unions that were founded in the early twentieth century in the USA, at the initiative of corporate management. These unions were rarely involved in financial issues connected with improving salaries and working conditions, but instead, their representatives who headed welfare programs initiated by the management, mainly dealt with complaints by employees who felt they had been discriminated against (Nelson, 1982).

The bank's unprecedented growth during the 1960s paradoxically strengthened the standing of the employee association. The 65 employees represented by the first employee association, grew to 2200 employees by the late 1960s. This situation made it difficult for the management to thwart the Histadrut's repeated attempts to earn the mandate of representing the bank's employees. At the end of the 1960s, the first agreement with the Histadrut's banking employee division was signed. However, the bank employees' wages did not change significantly.

Studies demonstrate that a policy of employee welfare did not necessarily succeed in allaying the long-term suspicions and enmity of trade union leaders in the USA. Sometimes, paradoxically, it was precisely in those firms with welfare programs that employees experienced dissatisfaction that led to strikes (Hillard, 2003; Nelson, 1982). Likewise, after decades of industrial peace in the bank, there was a sharp U-turn in work relations in the early 1970s. The elected employee representatives were seen as rebels, since they were determined to advance employee salary conditions and employment rights at any price, and also ensure those conditions rights were anchored in an admissible employment law. The representatives also expressed disgust with the paternalistic ethos of the bank in work relations, and were among those who described the bank as "feudal". The committee chairman described the CEO of the bank as a patron, "We didn't want him to give us pennies. He coined the phrase, 'I will worry about you. I know what is good for you.' And I thought I was old enough to know what was good for me." An employee who served as committee secretary during the early 1970s adds, "Until then, they had just made gestures, but we wanted rights." This referred to the low salaries then paid at the bank, and the lack of worker rights, such as the right to a hearing or protection for workers. The employees' representatives testified in interviews that they encountered cases in which workers were dismissed on the whim of a manager or client. They also reported the hesitation to complain by women who had been sexually harassed, and inferior employment rights for women.

In 1974, after protracted discussions accompanied by a lack of agreement between the representatives of the management and the employees, worker rights were anchored in a constitution that is still used for settling employment relations at the bank. The employees' representatives did not recoil from threatening industrial disputes and striking or taking industrial action every time their demands were not met. These organizational steps had far-reaching effects, since they positioned the employee association as a body with authority and political power regarding employment relations at the bank, from then until now.

Over time, the employee welfare committee was successful in appropriating more and more of the welfare, leisure, and cultural activities – some of which had been previously provided by the management. As in USA corporations that implemented employee welfare policies, this process contributed to strengthening the position of the committee and class solidarity among the workers (Fones-Wolf, 1986). This paper argues that parallel to the committee's political-economic status becoming stronger and the reduction in the bank management's part in the welfare programs, there have been changes in the way the employee is controlled.

THE AUTONOMIC AND COMPETITIVE VOLUNTEER SELF AND THE COMMUNITY

In accordance with Rose's (1990) argument it can be claimed that from the 1960s onwards through marketing campaigns, the management began to acknowledge that the ability to control employee psyche is the most crucial factor in business success. The marketing campaigns initiated by the management during this period were accompanied by managerial messages intended to motivate the employee to sell the bank's services through his own psychological needs for self-fulfillment, ambitiousness, and creativity.

During the late 1970s the management publicized a new marketing campaign in the bank's bulletin. This campaign marked a turning point in the management's attitude to the employee's self and the techniques needed to regulate his or her identity.

As in earlier marketing campaigns, each employee was required to enlist all his creative abilities and energies so as to expand the bank's clientele, by selling its services in competition with his colleagues at his own and other branches. However, in contrast to previous campaigns, this time the management encouraged him to do so through community volunteering.

In an interview, the director of the publicity department responsible for the volunteering activity related which managerial messages were transmitted to employees to justify their community involvement: "Your involvement must include more than just banking services. Just as you may volunteer as private individuals, you should also volunteer as bank employees in the particular organization chosen by your branch manager."

The manager expresses arguments that were voiced during that time in the bank management, that emphasized the critical importance of the mutual relationship between the bank as a profitable commercial body and the community in which it operated, and the ethical obligation of the employee to volunteer in the community, as someone working in an organization "that is of great communal importance" [quote from the director of the publicity department].

However, the employee's self was constructed in the managerial discourse at the bank, not only as an ethical "self" committed to the community, but also as an autonomous individual able to manage and supervise himself.

In this way the management "empowerment" rhetoric encouraged employees to initiate unique ideas for community involvement, plan and produce volunteer events, and estimate their financial cost. Some of the activities, such as concerts, lectures on banking, exhibitions by local artists, and charitable activities, were held at the branches. And some of the charitable activities took place at other locations. Bank employees celebrated the holidays with new immigrants, nursing home residents, hospital patients, and other disadvantaged populations. During such community events that were generally held in the evenings after banking hours, the branch employees would offer banking advisory services to the participants, and were even expected to sign up new clients for bank accounts and programs without being paid for their work. They were also asked to provide refreshments, including preparing and bringing homemade food. Thus the management wished to motivate employees to sell bank services by combining initiatives and creativity with a target for productivity.

The management also strove to create a subject who would be motivated to sell by using rational assessment and evaluation of his or her campaign achievements, comparing them with the objective indices it had determined. It therefore created a competitive environment between employees at the same and different branches, by rewarding individual and group achievements arising from the volunteering activities.

The managerial rhetoric accompanying the volunteering activity emphasized, alongside meritocratic messages highlighting personal achievements, the contribution of teamwork to maximizing the emotional and instrumental advantages of the volunteering activity. The managerial discourse at the bank, like normative managerial ideas, sought to bridge the gap between the self-established as a competitive individual and the self-participating in autonomous work striving to improve product quality and work experience (Rose, 1990).

It would seem that the managerial justification for corporate volunteering in the community influenced many employees. According to accounts by managers in the publicity department responsible for organizing the community programs, employee involvement initiatives quickly multiplied to the unprecedented size of hundreds of annual activities throughout the branches. The employees who initially viewed the volunteering activity as an additional burden beyond that of their work at the bank, gradually harnessed themselves to it, until

the publicity personel sometimes noted that they were forced to restrain the employees' enthusiasm and the requirements of the budget that the workers used for the various volunteer activities.

UNIONIZED WORKERS AND EMPLOYEE VOLUNTEERING

It would have been reasonable to assume that with the formation of an assertive employee association during the 1970s, its representatives would have expressed opposition to corporate volunteering outside working hours, and, at the very least, viewed the new managerial demands as a threat to employee welfare. But that is not what happened. The representatives never expressed opposition to the employee volunteering activities initiated by the management. While employee welfare and salary management policies were a source of disagreement between the workers and management, marketing campaigns including volunteering initiatives, were considered outside the jurisdiction of the employee welfare committee. As proof, the employee representatives never demanded of the management to pay the employees for their hours of volunteerism, and even opposed such moves. It would seem that their opposition derived from political reasons. Managerial rewards according to criteria for volunteering activity could create differentiation in employee salaries that was not directly linked to work agreements that were controlled by the committee.

In addition, community initiatives including corporate volunteering were seen by many of the employees as an expression of the continuation of the philanthropic tradition instilled by the bank owners, and were therefore identified as an ethical and socially prestigious value and were viewed as highly legitimate at the bank. This claim can explain not only the employee association's revolutionary support of the managerial initiatives for corporate volunteering, but also its contribution to the establishment of the role of the volunteering employee.

From the 1960s, and particularly the 1970s, onwards, the employee association executed its own community programs that were financed by employees' donations (in cash, or by deducting vacation days from the payslip). Employees were also recruited for volunteering activities initiated by their representatives, in addition to those run by the management. The community activities at the initiative of the employee welfare committee were usually of a nationalistic nature, although, to a lesser extent, there were also projects connected with education, health, and helping the disadvantaged. The initiatives were sporadic, and since their funding was dependent on employee donations, they enjoyed smaller budgets than those of the management. From the late 1970s onwards, the employees were subject to double expectations for community involvement, by both management and their own representatives in the employee welfare committee.

DISCUSSION

This article presents a study of employee volunteering as a mechanism of organizational control using employee self-construction. To this end, the paper examines the gradual transformation of the bank employee self, from an object of generous welfare strategy beginning with the bank's establishment, to an autonomous and competitive individual required (from the late 1970s) to initiate voluntary activities in the community promoting bank sales.

As part of the welfare capitalism practices, the management concerned itself with providing the employees' basic requirements, so as to earn their loyalty to the bank and its goals. Towards the end of the 1970s, using practices identified with late normative managerial approaches, the bank management attempted to control the volunteering employee's self by recruiting his psychological needs for achievement and competition to promote the bank's economic interests. Thus, the protection given to the employee during the era of "welfare capitalism" at the bank was gradually replaced by ever-increasing demands on the "self" of the volunteering employee.

The corporate volunteering projects were presented by the managers as marketing programs intended to increase bank sales and employee motivation. Despite the fact that these initiatives required the employees' physical, mental, and emotional efforts, outside working hours, and without pay, they did not arouse the opposition of the employees' representatives. In contrast, the welfare policy initiated by the management from when the bank was first established, regarding health, education, and social welfare, aroused the antagonism of

the representatives, leading, during the 1970s, to the unionization of the employees that strove to raise salaries and regulate employee rights. Like previous studies, this article demonstrates that generous employee welfare policies did not lessen the opposition of the workers and their representatives, nor did it prevent their unionization (Hillard, 2003; Nelson, 1982).

We have also argued that during the 1970s, managerial control of the employee volunteer's self-intensified, parallel to the better political position of employee representation at that time.

Although there has been increasing noticeable theoretical and empirical activity in recent years regarding the question of a connection between organizational control and employee identity formation or self-construction (Alvesson and Willmott, 2002; Casey, 1995; Fleming and Sturdy, 2009), there are no studies that empirically study the questions: Is there a connection between managerial control that constructs the volunteering employee self as an autonomous individual, and the worker union to improve their employment conditions? Are employee volunteering community projects likely to contribute to the depoliticization of work relations, or perhaps these are two spheres that drew each other out? The case of the bank demonstrates that corporate volunteering programs were created in parallel to formative events in work relations that led to the strengthening of the employee association's political status. When the management succeeded in introducing the volunteering programs as a marketing practice, meaning as a field independent of work relations, despite the harm to the volunteering employees' welfare, it was able to shape the employee's self in line with its goals. Paradoxically, it was precisely its efforts to improve working conditions through employee welfare practices that aroused the opposition of the employee association and brought about conflicts between the sides, eventually leading to the employee association enjoying greater power.

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