

TO WORLD PEACE & PROSPERITY.

(i)

WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT IN ZAMBIA

EVOLUTION, ESSENTIAL FEATURES, CONSTRAINTS AND

POTENTIAL

A Dissertation

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By

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(ii)

I, Mataa Mwiya do hereby solemnly declare that this dissertation or any part of it has not been submitted for a degree to the University of Zambia or to any other University or institution.

Signed: 

Date:

ABSTRACT

This study provides first, a descriptive analysis, of participation through works councils. Secondly the study provides a survey of the level of, constraints on, and potential for, workers' participation in practice.

The study was conducted in eleven enterprises in Lusaka from May to October, 1978 plus a six weeks' study tour of the Central and Copperbelt Provinces. The methodology framework of the study includes literature review, use of official documents, questionnaires and interviews.

The study reveals that workers' participation was introduced in Zambia for both ideological and pragmatic reasons. Because of the ideological commitments to the philosophy of humanism, the ruling party (UNIP) and the Government initially wanted a radical type of workers' participation somewhat modelled after the Yugoslav system of self-management. However, the employers and the

socio-economic conditions prevailing in Zambia during the 1969-71 period (when the legislative process was underway), suggested caution and put pressure on the Government to finally adopt a moderate model of workers' participation similar to the West German Scheme of Works Councils.

The evaluation of workers' participation in practice demonstrates that workers are rarely informed, consulted and involved in co-decision to the extent envisioned by Part VII of the Industrial Relations Act. The main constraints on participation according to the study are; unfavourable management attitudes, inadequate support from Government and other institutions for participation, legal complexities and contradictions, and irrelevance of the type of issues discussed in Council meetings to workers' immediate interests.

Unfavourable management attitudes are caused by the managers' ideas about participation. Most managers think that participation negated corporate autonomy, has no immediate value, and is an unwanted bother. Such negative attitudes frustrate the rank and file and curtail the level of workers'

participation in management. The problem of legal complexities involves the existence of a veritable maze of work rules, regulations, articles of labour, and company legislation beyond the workers' control. The problem of inadequate government support stems from lack of resources. This problem has affected the seriousness with which workers' participation has been taken by both employees and employers and has delayed the consolidation of participation.

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(viii)

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CHAPTER I

Introduction.

The Research Problem

This dissertation seeks to provide firstly, an analysis of the essential features and the reasons for introducing workers' participation in management. Secondly, the dissertation deals with the problem of how workers' participation was introduced and institutionalised in Zambia. And thirdly it also provides a preliminary evaluation of the extent to which Zambian workers have actually gained effective participation in the management of their industries. Fourthly, the dissertation provides a preliminary enquiry and assessment of some of the problems encountered in the implementation of workers' participation. In particular the dissertation examines the influence of