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WORKERS PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT IN INDIA: AN EVALUATIVE STUDY**SIDDANNA APCHAND****LECTURER****VIVEKANANDA COLLEGE OF SOCIAL WORK****RAICHUR****MAHESH URUKUNDAPPA****GUEST LECTURER****DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES & RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK****P. G. CENTRE RAICHUR****GULBARGA UNIVERSITY****KALBURGI****DR. RASHMIRANI AGNIHOTRI H.R****POST DOCTORAL FELLOW****DEPARTMENT OF STUDIES & RESEARCH IN SOCIAL WORK****P.G. CENTRE RAICHUR****GULBARGA UNIVERSITY****KALBURGI****ABSTRACT**

This paper is concerned with an investigation of the existing level of Worker Participation in Management Decision making within the industrial environment. The study involved an evaluative study of Sugar Mills in Haryana, TISCO, National Thermal Power Corporation in India. Results show that employees in organizations demonstrate a high interest in participation in the decision making process within their respective work places. However, the actual level of involvement in management decision making demonstrated by the employees was found to be relatively low. Workers' participation in management can be considered as an advanced form of labour- management co-operation. It is a symbol of joint and cordial relationship, which explains the extent of adjustment between the workers and management for the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious environment in the corporation. A main aim of this scheme is to help in increasing production and productivity and sharing the gains of productivity through more effective management and better industrial relations. However, all the attempts made by Government, Employers and other workers towards greater participation of workers' in industrial management have failed to fulfill the objectives for which they were promoted. The study discusses the theoretical aspect of workers' participation in management and gives a practical example of some selected organizations.

KEYWORDS

worker participation, management, industrial management, labour- management, co-operation.

INTRODUCTION

Workers participation implies arrangements designed to involve workers in the enterprises decision making process. This allows for workers' involvement in the initiation, formulation and implementation of decisions within the enterprise. The concept can also be understood in terms of a new approach to industry and society in which people want to be interested with the taking of decisions which have direct bearing on them.

Workers' Participation in Management John Leitch has defined Industrial Democracy as "the organization of any factory or other business institution into a little democratic state with a representative government which shall have both the legislative and executive phases". In the same manner as political democracy has converted subjects into citizens, with right of self-determination and self-government, industrial democracy converts the workers from the mere subjects obeying the orders of the employers, into citizens of the industrial world, with a right to self-determination and self-government, that is, representative participation in making rules and enforcing them. This is known as Workers' Participation in Management, workers' participation in management means giving scope for workers to influence the managerial decision-making process at different levels by various forms in the organization. The principal forms of workers' participation are information sharing, joint consultation, suggestion schemes, etc.

It is a mechanism to facilitate participation of workers in the process of decision-making. It is a power balancing process which recognizes the interest of the party's conflict. But that this can be resolved through negotiations, Workers participation is directed towards the identification of common interests between the two parties and their pursuit through cooperation. This definition has put forth certain points in regards to workers participation. These are:

The participation has to be at different level of management: At the shop floor level; at the department level ;and at the top level.

Participation ensures the willing acceptance of responsibilities by the body of workers .As they become party to decision-making, they have to commit themselves to ensuring implementation.

Participation is conducted through the mechanism of different forms and practices which provide for the association of workers representatives.

DEFINITIONS

According to Keith Davis, "Workers' participation refers to the mental and emotional involvement of a person in a group situation which encourages him to contribute to group goals and share in responsibility of achieving them".

A clear and more comprehensive definition of WPM is given by the International Labour Organization (ILO).According to the ILO:"Workers' participation may, broadly be taken to cover all terms of association of workers and their representatives with the decision-making process, ranging from exchange of information, consultations, decisions and negotiations to more institutionalized forms such as the presence of workers' members on management or supervisory boards or even management by workers themselves".

WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT BEFORE INDEPENDENCE

The workers' participation in management is not a novel and imported idea from outside. It can be dated as far back as 1920 when Mahatma Gandhi suggested participation of workers in management on the ground that workers contributed labour and brains while shareholders contributed money to the enterprise and that both should, therefore, share in its property. He said that there should be a perfect relationship of friendship and cooperation among them. For the unions,

he said that the aim should be to raise the moral and intellectual height of labour and, thus, by sheer merit, make labour master of the means of production instead of the slave that it is. It was at his instance that, in 1920, the workers and the employers in Ahmadabad Textile Industry agreed to settle their disputes by joint discussions and consultations.

Therefore, the Ahmadabad Agreement may be regarded as a milestone in the history of joint consultation i.e. participative management in India. Following this, some works committees were also set up in the Government Printing Presses and Railways. During the same period, such committees were also set up in the Tata Iron and Steel Company, Jamshedpur. Since then, there is no looking back in this direction. While supporting the need for works committees, the Royal Commission on Labour suggested that, to promoting industrial harmony and to avoid misunderstanding and settle disputes, not only works committees be set up, but strong trade unions be developed and labour officers be appointed. Along with the works committee, the Commission also suggested the establishment of a joint machinery to deal with the more general questions, and also to act as an advisory appellate body in respect of disputes which were confined to a single establishment. These recommendations of the Commission bore fruits with the provision of formal statutory machinery under the Bombay Industrial Relations Act, 1946 and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947.

WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT AFTER INDEPENDENCE

In fact, the first major step in the direction of workers' participation in management in India was the enactment of the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 with the dual purpose of prevention and settlement of industrial disputes. The Industrial Policy Resolution, 1948 advocated WPM by suggesting that labour should be in all matters concerning industrial production. Article 43 A of the Constitution of India has provided for WPM in these words:

"The State shall take steps, by suitable legislation, or in any other way, to secure the participation of workers in management of undertakings, establishments or other organizations engaged in an industry".

The First Five-Year Plan and the successive plans emphasized the need for workers' participation in management. For example, the Second Five-Year Plan' stressed the need for WPM in the following words:

"It is necessary in this context that the worker should be made to feel that in his own way he is helping build a progressive state. The creation of industrial democracy, therefore, is a prerequisite for the establishment of a socialist society".

The Government of India set up a 'Study Group on Workers' Participation in Management', in 1956, consisting of representatives of the government, employers, and workers to examine the system of WPM in the UK, Sweden, France, Belgium, West Germany and Yugoslavia and make recommendations for the Indian case.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The central objective of the study is to determine the level of worker participation in management decision making in the specific objective are

1. To ascertain workers level of involvement in the decision making process of then- work places.
2. To establish the general attitude of workers towards worker participation in management decision making.
3. To determine factors which aid or hinder the observed level of participation?
4. To investigate the implications of worker participation to worker and their organizations.
5. To propose suggestions to overcome the encountered lapses.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The present study being carried out by using secondary sources of data collection. It is an evaluative collected from various books, journals and internet sources. The adoption of these tools helped to collect both quantitative and qualitative data.

FORMS OF WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN MANAGEMENT

The forms in which workers can participate in decision making process, varies from organization to organization. This variation may be due to patter of labour – management relations, level of workers involvement, different levels of management, etc. The following are the some famous form of participative management in India –

1. SUGGESTION SCHEME

Under this scheme the employees are motivated to make suggestions for improvement, because they work on grounds which are involved in their daily work life. They can suggest some new method of production or some new ways for particular work. Workers submit their ideas/suggestions in writing to the management which are scrutinized in their absence. Management may give some monetary or/ and non-monetary reward for their suggestions.

2. WORKS COMMITTEE

A works committee has an equal number of representatives of both employers and workers. It meets frequently for discussion on common problems of workers and management, after discussion, joint decision is made. Matters like, wage payment, bonus, training, discipline, etc. are normally discussed in such meetings. Works committees are extremely popular and effective in France and also in England. In India, The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 provides for the setting up of bipartite works committees in industrial establishments employing 100 or more workmen to promote good relations between the employers and workmen. However, the works committees have not proved to be effective in India.

3. JOINT MANAGEMENT COUNCILS

The Joint management council was a voluntary body. These councils will consist of equal number of representatives of workers and management but number of workers representatives will not exceed twelve. The problems related to labour welfare, safety measures, grievances redressal, training, working hours, etc. are discussed in such meetings. The government of India take another step for encouraging workers participation in management. The Industrial Policy Resolution of 1956 and the Second Plan recommendations, a Scheme of Joint Management Councils (JMC) was introduced in 1958. The JMCs were intended to promote cordial relations between managements and workers and build up trust and understanding between them. The criterion for establishing JCMs in any industrial establishment is the unit must employ at least 500 workers.

4. WORKERS DIRECTORS

A scheme of inducting representatives of workers as directors on the boards of management of public enterprises was introduced in 1971. Under this scheme, a workers' representative become the active member of the board of directors. But due the lack of managerial qualities, less uniformity in union members and high infancies on the monetary issues, the decisions of the workers director considered as biased towards management.

5. CO-PARTNERSHIP

Under co-partnership form of participation, workers may purchase the share of the company, they working for. Hence they get voting rights and right of participation the general meetings conducted for shareholders. They can also participate in the management through their elected representatives in the Board of Directors.

6. QUALITY CYCLE

Quality cycle is a voluntarily formed group, working for improvement activities at the work place. It is group of about 10 workers led by the supervisor or the senior worker. They meet about an hour every week to identify, analyses and resolve work related problems. It is comparatively new compact in India and spreading with a fast speed with positive results.

REVIEW STATUS**1. SUGAR MILLS IN HARYANA**

On the perspective of Workers Satisfaction and Involvement it is found that 92% of the workers always suggest something to their supervisor and out of that only 42% suggestions are followed up by their managers. 76% of workers opine that strike is never the method of solving problem. Again out of suggestions given by workers, in the area of welfare are followed 76%, in the areas of Working Environment 13%, Administration 7%, and New Technology 4% are followed.

2. PARTICIPATIVE MANAGEMENT IN TISCO

The Joint Consultative system in TISCO is a three tier set-up consisting of the Joint Department Councils (JDCs) at the base level-one for each major department and combined once for two or more smaller departments. The Joint Works Council (JWC) for the whole organization is at the intermediate level, the Joint Consultative Council of Management (JCCM) constituting the apex body.

3. NATIONAL THERMAL POWER CORPORATION IN INDIA

In the company Periodicity of meetings and forums of participation of Workers is 58%, Trade union leaders 68% Managerial personnel number 51% for monthly. Decision of the forums of participation of workers which are implemented important decision is only 57%. 60% Trade union leaders participate and Managerial personnel for important decision is 48%. Participation of workers relating to policy decisions 19%, the trade union participation is 15% and managerial personnel participate in policy decision 10%. It indicates the ignorance of the industry towards workers participation in management.

REASONS FOR FAILURE OF THE SCHEME OF WORKERS' PARTICIPATION IN INDIA

Being a developing country, India faced so many problems. Its planning section is very good but when it comes to implementation part, the results are not satisfactory. If we talk about the workers participation, it is relatively a new concept in management. There are so many reasons behind the failure of the concept of participation. It varies from organization to organization. It largely depend upon the size of the organization, number of unions formed, management approach towards the participation, employees willingness to participate, educational qualification, lack of uniformity in workers, political influence, etc. But some of the most common and immersing reasons are mention below-

1. The management had not showed great enthusiasm for making participation effective, because they think that the workers had not competent to take decisions. One can be observed that "managers ... do not think that participation will unleash the creative talents of their subordinates. On the contrary, they seem to have a rather low opinion about their subordinates' ability to understand and participate in organizational decision-making."
2. The workers' representative faced the problem of role conflict. On the one hand, he is required to share the managerial responsibility and he has to behave as the leader for workers on the other hand. This creates difficulties in effective participation.
3. This scheme is also not free from political interference. Normally, workers' representatives are active members of some political parties. Many a time, political parties influence the interest of the workers, which brings down the effectiveness of the scheme of participation.
4. In India, more emphases are given to the compensation related issues. Which lead to the conflict between the basic and esteem needs of the workers. Further this adds a point in ineffective management of the scheme.

LIMITATIONS OF PARTICIPATION

- Employee's Participation at all levels will not be Successful. Since technology and organization in today's modern world are so complex that generalized opinion does not work, a specialized opinion does not work, a specialized opinion is required to get the solution.
- Trade union s are also not taking active role in promoting participative management in the industry as they think their significance will get less
- Employers especially in a country like India where the concept of 'Malik and Naukar' is quite prominent in the minds of employers dissuade them to share powers with the worker's representatives.
- Few managers consider this activity just a formality actually it has no relevance or meaning. Role of power works everywhere 'a Might is Right' the one who has power of money, Knowledge skill will always be right as compared to the one who does not.

CONCLUSION

Workers' Participation in Management has assumed great importance these days because it reduces industrial unrest and helps in dispelling employees misunderstanding about the outlook of management in industry. It also influences efficiency in various direct and indirect ways. The management with the help of workers ensures that they are capable of taking fruitful decisions regarding policy making, service conditions, productivity, manufacturing and administration and supervision. Workers' participation provided a channel for communication between workers and management, which in turn had led to the improvement of worker-management relations in the whole enterprise. Better worker-management relations had led to higher productivity. For any scheme of workers' participation to succeed, there must be an effective two-way communication and exchange of information between the management and the workmen.

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