MANCHESTER
1824

The University
of Manchester

Centre for Organisations In Development

Institute for Development Policy and Management
School of Environment and Development

Organisations in Development Working Papers – No. 6/ 2011

Employee Participation in INGOs in Kenya: A Middle Way?

Carol Brunt and Willy McCourt

Centre for Organisations in Development

Working Paper Series

No. 6/2011

Employee Participation in INGOs in Kenya: A Middle Way?

Carol Brunt and Willy McCourt

ISBN: 978-1-905469-27-7

The Centre for Organisations in Development (COD) working papers series is a first-hand outlet for research output of COD members and associates. It includes papers presented at conferences, first drafts of papers intended for submission in journals and other reports from ongoing or completed research projects. The series provides an opportunity to expose ideas to debate which are intended for subsequent publication.

Series Editor
Dr Nahee Kang – nahee.kang@manchester.ac.uk

Published by
Centre for Organisations in Development (COD)
Institute for Development Policy and Management (IDPM)
School of Environment and Development (SED)
The University of Manchester
Arthur Lewis Building,
Manchester, M13 9PL, UK
http://www.manchester.ac.uk/cod

EMPLOYEE PARTICIPATION IN INGOs IN KENYA: A MIDDLE WAY?

Carol Brunt and Willy McCourt[1]

Abstract

We present findings from a study of employee participation in seven International NGOs (INGOs) operating in Kenya. The inherent constraints of hierarchy and the need to accommodate a range of stakeholder interests imposed an only moderately high ceiling on the degree of participation even in this propitious environment, while being headquartered in a liberal market economy, the low salience of trade unions among employees and individual management styles meant that some of the agencies fell short even of that ceiling. Our study suggests, contrary to the normative aspirations of both the HR and International Development (ID) literatures, that codetermination and employee control are undesirable as well as unrealistic goals. On the other hand, a consultation style of participation was appropriate to the seven INGOs, and may also be in other sectors and countries.

Keywords: International development; Kenya; NGOs; participation; voice.

[1] Corresponding authors: Carol Brunt, (Doctoral Candidate) and Dr. Willy McCourt, at the Institute for Development Policy & Management, School of Environment and Development, University of Manchester, Arthur Lewis Building, Oxford Road, M13 9PL, UK; carol.brunt@postgrad.manchester.ac.uk and willy.mccourt@manchester.ac.uk

Introduction

In 2009, the UK Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, Lord Mandelson declared in a report commissioned by his department that

> *'We all know intuitively ... that only organisations that truly engage and inspire their employees produce world-class levels of innovation, productivity and performance' (quoted in MacLeod and Clarke, 2009: 1)*.

And when Baringa Partners, a management consultancy company, won the UK Best Workplace Award for the second year running in 2011, their managing partner attributed the success to maintaining

> *'a cultural energy rooted in a sense of pride, fairness and involvement. Despite our rapid growth (35% in the previous year), people still feel that they can influence the direction of the company' (quoted in Finn, 2011: 8).*

Yet such powerful convictions fly in the face of longstanding academic scepticism about employee involvement. For Strauss (2006), worker participation is a volatile phenomenon which, having experienced three waves of popularity since World War Two, is currently in a trough (see also Cox *et al.*, 2006).[i] For Argyris (1998: 105), another veteran observer, employee empowerment programmes (a 'third-wave' initiative in Strauss's terms) are 'the emperor's new clothes' because 'the change programs that could create high levels of ... empowerment do not yet exist.' Yet like Mandelson and Mansour, Strauss and Argyris continue to advocate participation. Despite the ebbs and flows, the belief stubbornly persists.

This paper seeks to advance our understanding of employee participation in two ways. First, it reports empirical findings from a sector which has a major impact on global wellbeing: the development sector and in particular the International Non-Government Organizations (INGOs) which have their bases in industrialized countries but operate mostly in developing countries. We shall see that their distinctive approach to participation offers instructive comparisons with the mainly for-profit private companies in industrialized countries which have been the venue for most of the participation studies in the HR literature.

Second, our paper brings together two widely separated discourses for the first time: in HR and international development, the latter dealing respectively with the participation of employees and of development programme beneficiaries (whom we define as the *communities and individuals for which development agencies provide services or act as advocates*). It will surprise some readers of *IJHRM* to learn that we owe the term 'voice', which in recent years has largely overtaken 'participation' in the HR literature, to the international development literature through Hirschman's (1970) analysis of goods transport on Nigerian railways (Dundon *et al.*, 2004: 1151). As Wilkinson and Fay (2011: 66) remark, 'scholars (of participation) from diverse traditions often know relatively little of the research that has been done in other areas.' Since the HR literature on voice is as little known to development scholars and practitioners as vice-versa, there is the opportunity for HR scholarship to make a reciprocal contribution to international development, one of the outstanding challenges in contemporary public policy.

Our study questions are:

1. What are the styles of employee participation in INGOs operating in Kenya?
2. How should we understand them?
3. What do we learn from the case study about the potential and limits of employee participation?

INGOs in international development

Increasingly over the past 30 years, INGOs have facilitated aid distribution through delivery of personal services in poor countries. INGOs have also used service delivery as a toehold to facilitate broader objectives of local institution–building and community empowerment (Bratton 1989). From the 1980s onwards, they have been favoured by official donor agencies such as the World Bank and the UK's Department for International Development (DFID), who have seen them as flexible, cost-effective and reliable (Hyden 1983). In 2009 17.3% (US 2.1 billion) of international humanitarian assistance was channeled through NGOs, a two per cent increase over 2008 (Global Humanitarian Assistance, 2011).

Employee participation

Definition, degrees and forms

'Voice' was Hirschman's solution to the conundrum of how to improve the performance of an organization when the economic stimulus of customer exit was unavailable or ineffective. His notion became influential in international development, notably in the development across all three continents of the South of 'citizen report cards' for the performance of public services across all three continents of the South (Paul, 1992; World Bank, 2004). It was imported into the industrial relations literature by Freeman (1980). Identifying it with collective bargaining between unions and employers, he found that it reduced staff turnover - 'exit' in Hirschman's terms. It was 'the exit-voice tradeoff' which prompted him to adopt Hirschman's neologism.

Freeman's sense was true to Hirschman's original usage. However, voice in the HR discourse has turned into a weak version of participation: 'how employees are able to have a say regarding work activities and decision making issues within the organization in which they work' (Wilkinson and Fay, 2011: 65), contrasting with G. Wood (2010: 554) view that 'participation' connotes that workers' views are acted on by management, and not merely voiced (see also Strauss, 2006). We will focus on the 'decision making issues': the extent to which employees can 'influence the direction of the company,' as Baringa's managing partner put it. Noting that writers like Wilkinson and Wood use participation and voice interchangeably in different articles, we will mostly prefer the older term, and treat voice, along with its engagement and involvement cognates, as effective synonyms.

Nevertheless, the distinction between *degrees* of participation remains important, and we adopt Wilkinson *et al.*'s (2010) 'escalator of participation' as our working model (see Figure One below). We note that it has a managerial flavour in comparison with the six forms of participation which Poole (1992) identified in an industrial relations (IR) context: shop-floor programmes, trade union action, works councils, co-determination, producer co-operatives and workers' self-management.

We will also be concerned with the distinction between 'indirect participation', where workers are represented by an independent intermediary (typically a trade union, though other representative structures are possible); and 'direct participation', where management initiates its own communication with employees.

There is some overlap between the *forms* of participation in organizational practice and in international development. Both practices loosely grouped under the heading of empowerment (Argyris, 1998; Luttrell *et al 20*09: 21) and partnership (Ackers and Payne, 1998; Fowler 2000). These, and also some distinctive forms of participation, are discussed in World Bank (1996).

Rationales

Efficiency has been the predominant rationale for participation in the organizational literature. 'Staff perform best when they are involved in decisions that affect them,' declares the Code of Practice produced by People in Aid (2003: 14), an agency with a remit for HR in the INGO sector. Participation has been argued to promote efficiency, firstly by giving employers access to crucial knowledge that employees hold: that is a central tenet of so-called 'high performance work systems' (Wood and de Menezes, 2008); and secondly through its effect on motivation, tapping into 'organizational citizenship behaviour' (OCB).

There are reports in both the organizational and the ID literature literatures (Finsterbusch and Van Wicklin, 1987); Isham *et al.*, 1995) of participation improving performance. But the organizational literature has notoriously failed to establish a secure causal relationship, right up to the present (S. Wood, 2010). For example, while there is strong evidence of an association between 'organizational citizenship behaviour' and organizational performance (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2009), it is perhaps less impressive when we reflect on the element of tautology: it is not surprising that behaviour defined by its impact on organizational performance does indeed improve performance. In consequence, much of the impetus behind participation initiatives has come from normative rather than efficiency concerns. Building on Wilkinson and Fay's (2011) four theoretical paradigms of participation (one of the taxonomies we referred to earlier), we identify three rationales in addition to the efficiency rationale (Table One).[ii]

Rationale	**Wilkinson and Fay paradigms**	**View of employees**	**Relevant literature**
Efficiency	HRM OB	Instrumental to organization objectives	Organization and management
Ethical		Kantian subjects	Business ethics
Political	Industrial democracy	Democratic citizens	Political science
Industrial relations	Industrial relations	Collective bargainers	Industrial relations

Table 1 *Rationales for participation*

An *ethical* view of employees as autonomous Kantian subjects[iii] entails 'a vast democratization of the workplace,' and puts participation on a par with efficiency as an organizational objective (Bowie, 1999: 102; Budd, 2004). A *political* view of organizations accords workers a democratic right to participate: 'If democracy is justified in governing the state, then it must also be justified in governing economic enterprises' (Dahl, 1985: 111). These rationales have had a practical impact in the creation of employee-owned trusts like the UK's John Lewis Partnership (Bradley and Estrin, 1992) and in the emergence of works councils in Germany, which ultimately led to the European Information and Consultation of Employees Regulations (2004), which require large employers in the EU to set up a similar elected participation structure when their workers request it (Davies, 2009; Gollan and Wilkinson, 2007; Müller-Jentsch, 2008). They have also led to the classic *industrial relations* rationale: participation designed to benefit workers' pay and conditions. IR writers like Freeman and Strauss have explicitly viewed collective bargaining as participation's only valid form.

These normative rationales are even stronger in the ID and related literatures – 'very few think … participation is a bad thing' (Birch, 2007: 145) - with the major difference that they are mostly apply to 'beneficiaries', not employees, about whose participation the ID literature has relatively little to say (though see Fowler 1997; and Suzuki 1998). For the development economist Amartya Sen (1999), participation is the process aspect of freedom. Since Sen equates freedom with development itself, participation in this view does not merely enhance development but is part of what constitutes it (see also Cortina, 2007: 11). With the ethical rationale augmented by a political one, in which development beneficiaries are conceived as citizens who should be ''makers and shapers' rather than 'users and choosers' of interventions … designed by others' (Cornwall, 2000; Gaventa, 2004: 29), we find participation framed as a human right in the UN's 1986 Declaration of the Right to Development, and in so-called rights-based approaches to development (Hamm, 2001).

The converging normative orientation of the HR and ID literatures is reflected in the remarkably similar way they present participation visually (Figure One).[iv]

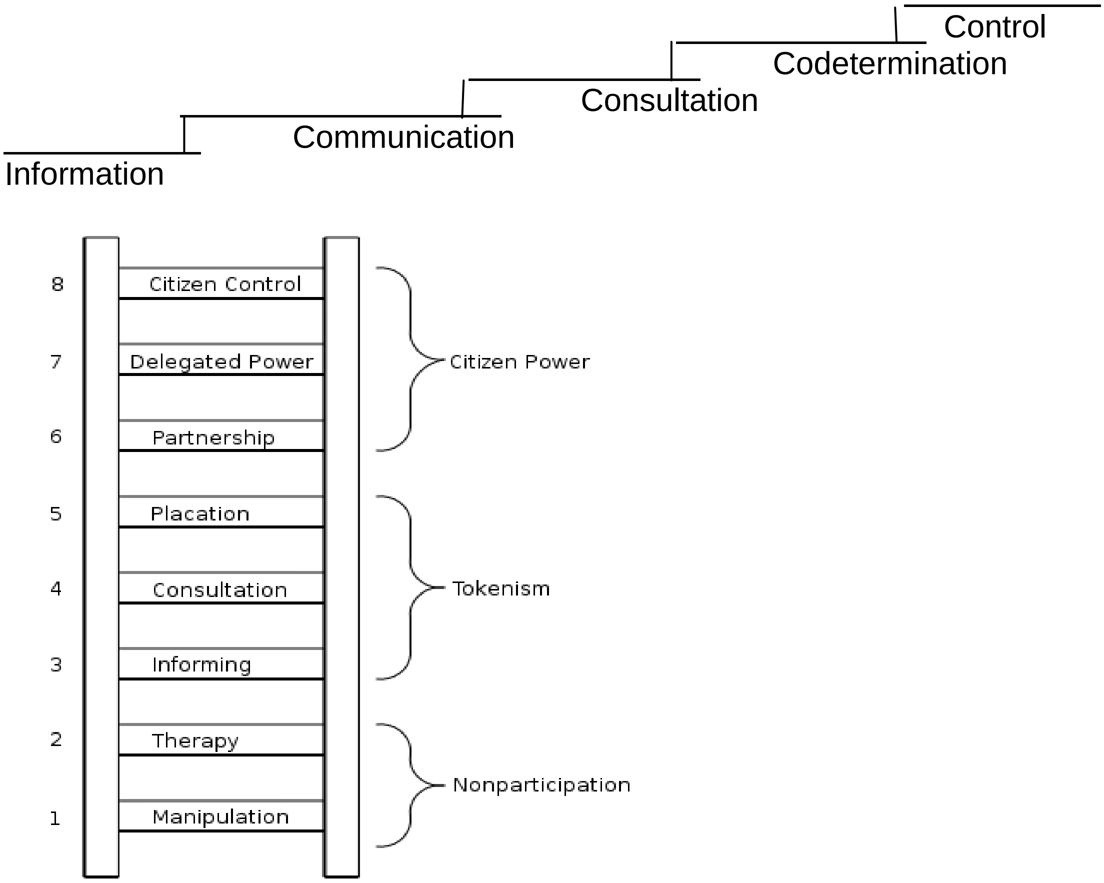

Figure 1 *Wilkinson's escalator and Arnstein's ladder*

Gareth Morgan (1986) taught us to take such metaphors seriously. Notice how the employee control is the escalator's implied destination, while all the ladder rungs below ‘partnership’ are dismissed as ‘tokenism’ or worse. The top of the escalator/ladder is implicitly the destination which we should aspire to reach.

Constraints

In this and the following section we review some relevant constraints and contingencies which are summarized in Table Two.

LEVEL[v]	CONSTRAINTS
Organizational	Hierarchy; competing stakeholders
	CONTINGENCIES
International	Varieties of capitalism; home and host country effects
National	Government stance; employee bargaining power; national culture
Organizational	Organizational policies; financial pressures; management style, inhibiting or facilitating voice

Table 2 *Constraints and contingencies*

We suggest that two inherent constraints operate in a non-contingent way across organizations. The first is *hierarchy*. In principle, organizations can exist without a hierarchy, but very few manage to. As well as figuring in Weber's classic model of bureaucracy, a modern justification is that hierarchy, as a technology for minimizing transaction costs, explains why organizations exist in the first place, as a superior alternative to a market in which every individual contracts freely with everyone else (this is Coase's insight). Organizations which forego a formal hierarchy must find another way of minimizing transaction costs. They must also find a formal way of supplying the leadership function, failing which they are likely to acquire an informal one - an organizational application of Michels' 'iron law of oligarchy'. And such an informal leadership may be insidious, because it is outside the legal and procedural checks which trade unions prize as a bulwark against arbitrary authority.

The 'iron law' appears to apply every bit as much to employee-owned companies as to conventional ones. The UK's celebrated John Lewis Partnership has a chief executive who appoints managers, and also his successor, in the conventional way (Bradley and Estrin, 1992). Managers in Spain's equally celebrated, and successful, Mondragon Co-operative are elected rather than appointed, but they still constitute a recognizable hierarchy and exercise conventional authority over staff (Lutz, 1997; see also Prasnikar, 1996).

The second constraint is the need to balance competing *stakeholder interests*. An organization's stakeholders are individuals or groups who can affect or are affected by what the organization does. They can be categorized in terms of power, legitimacy and urgency (Freeman, 1984; Mitchell *et al.*, 1997). As such, they clearly include owners, managers and workers, and, additionally and significantly, some groups outside the organization about which the HR and IR literatures have had relatively little to say.

We can appreciate the stakeholder model's radical implication for worker participation by relating it to Fox's (1974) well-known 'frames of reference'. Fox's 'pluralist' frame of reference attempted to legitimize trade unions (and other groups within organizations), in contrast with what Fox called the 'unitary' frame of reference in which management is the sole legitimate guardian of the organization's interests. The stakeholder model effectively accepts Fox's view - employees clearly fall within the stakeholder definition - but goes further, requiring employees to make room for some external groups.

It is true that management as well as employees have to make room for these stakeholders. But doing so strengthens management's position in one important respect. Consider external stakeholders' position, outside the organization with no formal purchase upon it. They are not owners or managers, nor a trade union with bargaining rights. Hence it falls to management, by default, to represent their interests, and balance them against those of the internal stakeholders, including employees.

Thus this aspect of stakeholder management is unfavourable to the employee interest. For as Kerr and Caimando (2004: 86) point out,

> *'Management retains its authority … by representing the interests of stakeholders in general, not the interests of organization members in particular. From the stakeholder perspective … too much democracy - i.e. too much representation of employee interests - must inevitably come at the expense of the organization's other stakeholders.'*

So while the stakeholder model is 'pluralist' in legitimizing the employee interest, it also legitimizes new external interests which it becomes management's job to interpret and represent. It dilutes management's authority in one way, but strengthens it in another: management can use external stakeholders as an argument for rejecting a claim by employees.

Contingencies

Case studies like ours provide an insight into the contingencies which mark participation in different workplaces. At the *international level*, indirect forms of participation – 'extensive participatory rights ... linked closely to strong overarching unions' – are more prevalent in co-ordinated market economies like Germany and Sweden than in liberal market economies like Australia and the US (Brewster *et al.*, 2007; Thelen, 2001: 102). The special case of multinational corporations (MNCs) is also relevant to us. Muller-Carmen *et al.* (2001) find a 'home country effect' when an MNC operates in a country with weaker economic institutions and the home country employment norms prevail. A 'host country effect' occurs when things are the other way round.

At the *national level*, developing countries like Kenya have a dualistic economic structure by definition, with large informal and subsistence agriculture sectors and a small formal economy, and the latter further segmented between multinational corporations and indigenous firms which are often family-based (Siddique, 1989; G. Wood, 2010). In Kenya's formal economy where unions operate, the government's stance has been to 'choreograph' the union movement to facilitate employers (Kamoche *et al.*, 2004: 95). With the economy growing at less than 5% per annum over the last decade even after two previous decades of stagnation, while population growth has been at roughly 2.6%, and with a consequent unemployment rate estimated at over 30% in April 2011, workers' bargaining power is weak.

Union membership was at 4.3% in 1999, and employers are under little pressure from their workers to grant the right to participate; for Nyambegera *et al.* (2001: 133), its existence is merely theoretical. This may be reinforced in African countries like Kenya by high 'power distance': a cultural tendency to defer to authority, and an expectation that leaders will adopt a paternal management style (Blunt and Jones, 1997; Hofstede, 2010; Jackson, 2002).

Employees in Kenya's agricultural sector who experienced little opportunity to participate felt little frustration because they never expected to participate (Mulinge and Mueller, 1998); in marked contrast with their counterparts in 12 UK organizations, who were demotivated by lack of influence over company decisions (Purcell *et al*., 2003).

At the *organizational* level, participation may be squeezed out by financial pressure on the organization (Cunningham and Hyman, 1999; Humphreys and Hoque, 2007), so that management should arguably drive through any necessary retrenchment before embarking on strategizing and development activities, including participation and 'empowerment' (Argyris, 1998; Arogyaswamy *et al.*, 1995). Also, management style affects participation. Hirschman (1976) himself observed that exercising voice may result in either reprisals or rewards: respective examples are punishment of whistle-blowers and rewards for organizational citizenship behaviour are an example of the latter (Near and Miceli, 1986; Podsakoff *et al.*, 2009; Van Dyne, 1998). Since workers are more likely to speak up when managers show they are listening, employee voice is a delicate plant that managers need to nurture (Detert and Burris, 2007; Morrison and Milliken, 2003).

Methodology

We report a case study of INGOs operating in Kenya, anonymized as Agencies A to G. As Strauss (2006: 796) notes, case studies have the potential to get into the 'little black box, the intervening variables between participation and its outcomes.' The case method requires care in generalizing from the case, and thus in answering our study question 3 (Eisenhardt, 1989).

Kenya's capital, Nairobi, as a transportation hub hosts the regional offices of some of the world's largest INGOs, such as Oxfam International, CARE International and World Vision. By 2007, there were roughly 4500 national and international NGOs operating in Kenya, four times as many as in 1997. The sector makes a significant contribution to the Kenyan economy, employing

291,000 full-time equivalent employees compared with roughly 677,000 for the entire Kenyan public sector. (Kanyinga *et al.* 2007).

We sampled at least one of each of the three major NGO types (Clark, 1991): '*relief and welfare agencies*', whose raison d'être is emergency relief; '*public service contractors*', which are funded by donors to implement their programmes; and '*popular development agencies*', which work with Southern agencies to promote social development and grassroots democracy. All the NGOs sampled are international in scope, with headquarters in either North America or Europe (one agency had moved its operating base to Nairobi).

Data Collection and Analysis

Data was collected in the first half of 2011. As well as reviewing agency documents, we recorded and transcribed 39 semi-structured individual interviews: 28 with senior managers at the case agencies, including country directors and assistant directors and HR managers; five with operational officers and elected staff representatives; and six with staff of other organizations which interact with the case agencies.

We have borrowed the process tracing method from political science, where it is used to understand political events 'in the round' when they are marked by multiple interacting variables (George and Bennett, 2005).[vi] We used it to throw light on agencies' actual, as opposed to formal, priorities by asking interviewees to recall recent important management decisions, the process by which they were made and the actors involved in them.

Although we agree with Strauss (2006) that adding survey data strengthens a case research design, we were unable to administer the employee survey instrument which we developed in part due to pressure of work in the INGOs at the time of our research (caused mainly by the tragic influx of refugees from neighbouring Somalia in the first half of 2011). We draw instead on existing employee surveys for three of the agencies, and on interviews with line staff in three agencies, elected staff representatives in two agencies and an officer in an external body which exists to promote HR practice in INGOs. We also draw on existing beneficiary survey data for two agencies.

Employee participation: findings

The funding chain and the internal hierarchy

In this section we begin with a feature which in different degrees is common ground for all the agencies, before listing findings for the individual agencies. As is increasingly the case in this sector (Wallace, 2006), Kenya's INGOs typically[vii] do business through a lengthy chain.

Donor agency → INGO → implementing 'partner'[viii] →beneficiaries

Figure 2 *The INGO funding chain*

They receive a great deal of their money from official donor agencies, as we noted at the start of the article. Their institutional imperative to maximize funding has been argued to militate against beneficiary participation (Anderson, 2001; Fowler and Biekart, 1996). Moreover in keeping with current development thinking, six of the INGOs used local 'partners' to implement some or all of their programmes: indigenous NGOs which may have a better understanding of complex local relations (Marcussen 1996; see also Kanyinga, 1995 for Kenya).

In addition, INGOs' hierarchies constitute an internal chain, so to speak. They are governed by Boards of trustees, a standard governance structure which is reflected in Kenya's official Non-Governmental Organizations Co-ordination Regulations (1992). In C, staff *'can't take on grants without … clearance because at the end of the day it's the international trustees that are responsible.'*[ix] Trustees are usually co-opted, although they are elected by the members in one INGO which is a membership organization.

Summary data

All the INGOs had a conventional management structure at the time of our study, similar to the John Lewis Partnership and Mondragon in this respect, their activities informed by strategic plans and procedures for monitoring and evaluating them. Likewise, all of them had a grievance procedure and a designated HR manager (all were Kenyan nationals, making them the most senior Kenyan staff in at least three of the agencies), and they held regular staff meetings. Table Three summarizes other relevant features.

Agency	**A**	**B**	**C**	**D**	**E**	**F**	**G**
NGO type (Clark, 1991)	Public service contractor	Popular develp't agency	Popular develp't agency	Public service contractor	Relief & welfare agency	Public service contractor	Relief & welfare
HQ country economy*	LME	CME	(HQ in Kenya)	LME	LME	LME	CME
Style of delivery	Direct and via partners	Via partners	Via partners	Via partners	Direct and via partners	Direct and via partners	Direct
Levels in hierarchy	6	3	4	5	4	5	5
Union*	X	✓	X	✓	X	✓	✓
Staff council (or similar)	X	✓	X	Elected reps on some cttees	X	X	Elected reps
Employee surveys	✓	✓	X	✓	X	✓	X

*   CME/LME = co-ordinated/liberal market economy.[x]
** Home country staff only in all cases.

Table 3 *Summary data on case agencies*

None of the agencies was unionized in Kenya, although four of them recognized a trade union in their home countries. Agencies B and G had formal elected structures. Apart from conventional staff meetings, only employee surveys among the popular forms of direct participation in industrialized countries had taken root.

Employee participation practice

Due to pressure of space, we now provide a narrative description of the style of participation in four only of our case agencies. We will draw on data from the remaining three agencies in later sections.

Strategic planning in **Agency A** crystallized in its Five-Year Plan, on which staff were formally consulted. Yet one agency manager dismissed it in colourful language, adding that *'staff aren't going to be able to tell you … what is in (it).'* Real priorities were informal. Instead ‘initiatives’ cascaded from HQ: *'all (HQ) advisers have initiatives. At one point we came to 14 initiatives, (only) four of them were in the country strategic plan.'* And it was HQ advisers who initiated one of the biggest recent management decisions, the shift from a congeries of piecemeal projects to a coherent programme based on an analysis of national development priorities, a shift which has its origin in international development theory and practice. One manager who was personally committed to the initiative still observed that *'it makes sense to piggyback on a process that is being mandatorily implemented.'*

However, HQ and its *'academic'* advisors – they tended to confront country staff with the perceived deficiency of their conceptual frameworks – were just one of the interests which managers had to balance. Once again there were donors (*‘we need to watch the money … (and) some of our donors also have ‘academics’’*). On the other hand, staff appeared not to be a significant interest group. They were not consulted on the shift to programme mode. And when one of A’s regional teams in a majority Muslim area *‘completely rejected’* work with women and girls, a new programme priority, a manager commented:

> *‘They’re going to lose … Frankly, HQ will come in at some point (and say) … we don’t agree … We respect your position, so maybe the time has come … when your contract finishes and we have to change staff. That’s the power relations … Some people will never make the shift and they’ll be left by the roadside.’*

Bearing in mind that most staff were on short-term contracts, field managers’ insistence on talking about pay and job security when a senior manager tried to engage with them on the shift to programme mode is perhaps understandable, even though personally disappointing for the manager.

Managers also had discretion over how they involved beneficiaries, the other main stakeholder.

> *'You are formally required to say that you have met (beneficiaries). Often this is demonstrated through little human interest stories, or community member X said blah blah blah. Staff from … head office … won't come and check, there is no annexing, no naming of names … If I say it's happening, generally they won't question it.'*

In fact the Agency's HQ generally *'allows a lot of local decision making.'* However, according to two managers this was largely confined to *'a few decision-makers at the top;'* A was *'pseudo-participatory,'* said one of them. A third manager's oblique comment was that:

> *'The … senior leadership really does make a big difference in how open leadership is to listening to people … The culture in Kenya is that you don't raise your voice to staff. If I do it in front of other people, than I'm really causing a problem. … You begin to get a culture of … people not wanting to communicate.'*

Thus when the Agency's drivers were unhappy about the sudden withdrawal of a benefit, their only recourse was to their immediate supervisors and the HR manager. With informal communication appearing to be weak, and with staff meetings the only formal mechanism available for staff to express their views, it is perhaps not surprising that only 41% of respondents in the Agency's own employee survey felt that they could influence decisions that affect them.

Agency C, having decided that it should *'empower people in the South'* moved its global HQ from Europe to Nairobi and resolved to *'move away from the command principle to a much more participatory and information-coming-from-the-bottom (approach).'* So when country-based staff pointed out the ironic contradiction that the new approach was presenting them with a fait accompli, the eight African country managers were given the job of fleshing out the new organization structure. But the job got bogged down, with restructuring becoming an end in itself. And

> *'(in a) funding environment (that) was becoming increasingly results-based … (the) donors ran riot. They basically said: what is going on? This is total madness! We have given you our money to give us results and you are telling us about empowering people. We have had enough of this.'*

Very mindful that *'(donor) governments want short-term results that they can show to their electorates,'* the Board dismissed first the director, and then all the country managers, and reverted in its new African base to more conventional strategic planning and management. It introduced performance management, expecting its new country managers to *'operate within common policies'* and ensure *'minimum standards'* of work.

However, since C retained partnership working as a *'fundamental value,'* it invited beneficiaries and also donors to what was intended to be C's first annual review and planning workshop in late 2010. The agency's own staff were in a minority, so to the extent that the workshop informed agency policy (it concluded with 'propositions' rather than recommendations), the effect of involving other stakeholders was to dilute the staff input.

The workshop was C's only formal mechanism for staff input into policy. Although C had a staff association, it operated mainly as a welfare body: members' dues were used for modest purposes such as buying baskets of fruit for staff who fell ill. With limited communication between staff and management that existed only *'to some extent, to be honest, to some extent: people are human beings'* - as in A, HR became a default conduit for staff concerns and also sometimes for management to inform staff, a 'man in the middle' HR role (Thomason, 1976).

Agency D was little different from A in its formal structures, which two of its managers found to be weaker than at other aid agencies where they had worked. There was no staff association, and a union only at headquarters. However, tracing the process used to deal with what was by common consent the biggest recent management issue, the sharp decline in D's funding which followed the global financial crisis of 2007/8 and which resulted in some compulsory redundancies, disclosed vigorous informal participation, albeit within strict limits.

Retrenchment was initiated by the Agency's HQ, which indicated the savings that would be needed (in relation to local discretion, *'the red line … is in budgetary control more than anything else'*). But in contrast to the view in the literature that retrenchment should be driven through over employees' heads, management allowed a staff representative group to produce its own retrenchment priorities. Results were mixed. On one hand, HQ overrode a request from the Kenya country office to protect the staff benefits package in order to avoid a disproportionate impact on African staff, who tend to have larger families; on the other, the Chief Executive backed down on a post that he personally wanted to retain. Management rejected the request for an increase in annual leave to offset the impending pay cut (*'we didn't think the Governing Body would buy it, and we didn't think the public would buy it'*), but conceded a half-day increase for one year only.

At country level, the Kenya country director asked the HR manager to consult staff on a proposal to reduce costs by abolishing a 'thirteenth month' bonus (the 'man in the middle' role again). The HR manager duly fed back staff's objections in some detail (for instance, the impact on staff's ability to pay their children's school fees). But the country director went ahead anyway, arguing that the bonus was an anachronism, as it had been introduced to compensate for the absence of a pension scheme, something which D now had.

In addition, staff had two representatives of their own on the *ad hoc* country strategy steering committee. The country director in turn sat on the global strategy steering committee – appointed, not elected, but seeing it as *'my job … to get the views of the other country directors, to keep them informed as to what was happening.'*

The Agency's mixture of direct and indirect participation (indirect insofar as staff had some autonomy to choose representatives, albeit on *ad hoc* groups) created a style of participation which had elements of 'codetermination' in terms of Wilkinson's escalator, but with management keeping the last word. It applied equally to D's relationship with its local NGO partners:

> *'We are reasonably clear that our job is to get programmes done. The means to get it done is the partners … We debated this … Is our role to build capacity of partners, to enable them … or is it to make vulnerable people less vulnerable? …* 'We are in an organization that is about vulnerability' *… is the argument that won in the end and that is what we do.'*

Managers appreciated the Agency's informal approach – *'I feel structures are there to be smashed or worked around!'* - but conceded that its effectiveness depended on the personality of the country director and *'how they open up the playing field to everybody.'* Nevertheless, it was supported by both staff and partners in externally conducted surveys. 76% of employees felt that they could influence decisions (as against 41% in A), and the Agency had the fifth-highest satisfaction rating from its partners out of 25 INGOs.

Our interviewees justified D's participation style in several ways. Programme staff as well as management needed '*enough room to operate ... if there are good ideas they will be given the capacity to go and work on (them).'* A programme officer corroborated this: *'management … always act on my recommendation.'* Despite Kenya's *'colonial hangover … (local) staff have been empowered to demand to participate,'* as a Kenyan manager remarked. On the other hand, *'If you get stuck in participation, people see it as fumbling. Senior management is leadership ... There's a transaction cost in participation ... paralysis by analysis.'* Most fundamentally, senior staff - *'very passionate people'* – saw themselves as the guardians of the Agency's mission to help vulnerable people, and the final arbiters of different stakeholders' views: *'We* *listen to staff, but we have to triangulate. We're there to get people out of extreme poverty.'*

Although we have characterized **Agency F** as a 'public service contractor', it has a major relief and welfare role in Kenya. Our Agency interviewees identified three major issues: a management restructuring, and the linked problems of high turnover and absenteeism. The restructuring was initiated by the country director as a response to the growth of the country programme in 2009/10. The country director adopted G's generic restructuring blueprint for 'operational fragile states' following discussion with HQ: *'It was pretty unilateral.'* However, the CD convened an ad hoc meeting of *'every staff member, all the cleaners and everyone*. … *(The CD) explained … the model … (and) … more or less said, 'This is what we are doing, any comments, got a problem with it?' And everyone was like, no.'*

The Agency's partners' role in the restructuring was *'probably zero,'* and as for beneficiaries, *'No, no way in the world.'* Even the HQ input was on the country office's terms: *'Deciding how to structure the area offices … we ignored (HQ), we totally pushed back with them.'*

As well as ignoring HQ, and turning now to the absenteeism issue, the senior management team - *'reasonably strong managers at this level'* - did not hesitate to reduce field staff's entitlement to R&R from every eight to every ten weeks, even though

> *'There was murder about that in the field: we were not consulted, this just came out of nowhere, dah dah dah dah dah. And you just think: hmmm, did we make a good decision? Was that well thought through?*

Perhaps it wasn't; one manager said that on reflection, the absenteeism problem was caused not by the frequency of R&R entitlement but by local managers' failure to prevent its abuse. Thus reducing its frequency would punish compliant staff for abuses by their deviant colleagues. Moreover, with R&R after eight weeks the standard entitlement among INGOs working in similar relief environments, there was the danger that staff would express their dissatisfaction *'in terms of resignations,'* exacerbating turnover, G's other perceived problem and inadvertently providing a graphic illustration of Freeman's 'exit-voice trade-off'.

As readers may have guessed, F had no formal employee participation channel outside its line management structure and staff meetings. Thus when a Nairobi-based manager tried to engage field staff on global strategy, as with their counterpart in A, the meeting was swamped by staff venting more immediate concerns. Granted, there was evidence that the informal channels were open. For example, the senior management team acted on representations from both staff and beneficiaries by dismissing one area manager who had had a previous warning; they duly felt vindicated when they received positive feedback about the manager's replacement. However, as in D, placing the emphasis on informal communication also placed a weight on the shoulders of management (including the HR 'man in the middle', through whom staff channeled their complaints, for instance about the outcome of a job evaluation exercise). One interviewee admired a previous country director's *'amazing communication skills.'* But that country director had moved on; and *'we are constantly getting the feeling that staff don't have a clue what is going on because the area managers are not (communicating).'*

Indirect participation: Staff councils and representatives

As noted in Table 3, two of the agencies had indirect representation structures. B had a very well established structure of global, regional and national councils, although its status had been downgraded from executive to advisory in 2007, when the Agency severed its link with its national government. B's council successfully persuaded management to introduce a Cost of Living Allowance after a five-year war of attrition, although its attempt to introduce separation pay for employees who had had a series of short-term contracts *'failed completely because … we didn't have a solid legislative background … Where the laws are weak, then the bargaining power is weak of the country council.'*

Despite the firm formal structure, an operational officer who had worked for B in two other countries said that the council *'depends on … individual leadership style'*: more participatory or, in the case of *'a top-down (country director who came) from the private sector,'* less*;* and also on *'culture difference*': when he asked a senior manager why the management style in Kenya was less participatory, the manager replied, *'This is Kenya.'* Still, the staff representative whom we interviewed said that *'the consultative open process encourages me to stay with the organization … If you look at the people that originally started working with (B), we are looking at those retiring from (it).'*

G's HR manual mandated two elected staff representatives for every country. However, across the globe this was more honoured in the breach than the observance, and in Kenya making it happen was the country director's personal initiative. One of the representatives reported increasing the payment to drivers for mobile phone airtime and getting management to contribute to a staff outing as achievements, both the result of lobbying the country director. These are relatively modest achievements, however the representative was generally positive about the initiative, and contrasted G favourably with another INGO where they had previously worked: '*Here is good, management listens.'*

Discussion: explaining participation styles

The styles of participation (study question 1)

Our research methods cannot reveal significant statistical correlations, both because we have used a qualitative design and because in quantitative language, ours is an N=7 study. However, there is some suggestive patterning in our findings, which we depict in terms of Wilkinson's 'escalator' in Figure 2. The three 'before and after' plots reflect B's global downgrading of its country councils from executive to advisory in 2007; C's reversion to conventional top-down strategic planning, albeit with some consultation, after dismissing its country managers; and G's recent activation of a staff representative mechanism.

Agency	Information	Communication	Consultation	Codetermination	Control
A	X				
B			X (time 2)	X (time 1)	
C		X (time 2)		X (time 1)	
D			X		
E	X				
F		X			
G		X (time 1)	X (time 2)		

Figure 3 *Degrees of participation at case agencies*

It is very striking that all the agencies fell short of the nirvana of employee or citizen/beneficiary control, with some convergence on 'consultation' (B from higher up the 'escalator', G from lower down). B and C had had forms of codetermination, as we saw. But both had retreated, with even formal consultation at C now confined to its annual Learning Forum. Recall that our agencies provided a very favourable environment for participation. They were not run for profit - no shareholders clamouring for a dividend - and they were shot through with a development rhetoric which venerates participation.

Explaining the styles (study question 2)

We suggest that the two constraints we identified earlier, hierarchy and stakeholders, explain why the agencies ascended no higher than the consultation step/rung. C tested the theory of employee control almost to destruction. Putting the county managers in charge of the pivotal restructuring led to an inward-looking emphasis on process at the expense of results until donors sounded the alarm. In reaction, C used orthodox performance management to reassert hierarchical control.

In doing so, C was merely falling in line with its agency counterparts. The consistent pattern was that while staff might propose (cf. the ‘propositions’ from C’s review and planning workshop), management would dispose. This was in part because management saw itself as the guardians of the organization's mission, a unitarist view that Fox would have recognized. The manager at D put their and their colleagues' interpretation of the needs of 'the vulnerable' above the views of D's partners, even though in ID doctrine, partners are closer to beneficiaries than INGOs can ever be. It was also in part because of the influence of stakeholders. The donor influence was transmitted along the funding chain, as interviewees in two agencies pointed out. *'What (beneficiaries) expect from us, we may not be able to achieve because we might not get something from the donors.' 'Over time, the country office will grow and contract depending on the donor environment.'*

Donors, Boards of trustees and HQ at A (*'because (HQ) has the resources'*) were stakeholders who had 'power' in terms of Mitchell *et al.*'s stakeholder model, constraining management and employees alike. Their power was not uniform. Unlike A, G's Kenya office (and also F's: see above) was able to make HQ dance to its tune:

> *'Headquarters … did not want a country programme in Kenya. It was the last Country Director who … said: the needs are there … I am going to go and expand and I am going to find the money for it. For 3 years (it) was not recognized by our Headquarters, they never visited … It is like once you push the idea forward, they say: you guys raise the money, we are not going to have anything to do with it. They leave it to you.'*

Across the agencies, it was up to management to guard the interests of stakeholders who had 'legitimacy' rather than 'power': in particular, beneficiaries, partners and the Government of Kenya. Agency F invited a government ministry to take part in project planning, monitoring and evaluation, and C invited stakeholders to its review and planning workshop. in the lapidary remark of a manager at D, *'We listen to staff, but we have to triangulate.'* Triangulation is a complex business. Cornwall (2000: 35) observes that 'it remains entirely unclear how the participation of this rather unwieldy collection of (stakeholders) might actually be managed.' But an interviewee described how E did it when it produced its Five-Year Plan in a quite straightforward way. It began by reviewing Kenya government policies, its own global strategy and its performance in the previous Plan period. Then it sounded out donors and its own staff in meetings and workshops. Finally, *'(The Senior Management Team) did a synthesis … the four of us analyzed, and when we needed to 'wordsmith' it, they all … said: who is the only native English speaker here? It was me!'*

Notice how participation was confined to *'decision-forming, not decision-making'*, in words that a manager at D used to describe D's stakeholder process.

However, the hierarchy and stakeholder constraints do not explain why four of the agencies stopped short even of the consultation step/rung. Why was that? We suggest three additional reasons.

1. The relationship between the style of participation and *the CME/LME dimension* (Table Three). Both agencies with headquarters in a CME had an indirect participation structure; none of the four agencies based in an LME did. This *'home country effect'* is consistent with Thelen's picture of relatively strong indirect participation in the CMEs.

2. A *host country effect* in relation to trade unions. In Kenya, none of the agencies recognized a union. Clearly, the four agencies which recognized a union at home were not hostile to unions in principle, and Kenya's Labour Relations Act (2007) requires employers to recognize a union where a majority of employees request it. But in a high-power distance country where only 4.3% of workers are unionized, employees appeared not to see the need, with one of them commenting that *'what INGOs offer is vastly superior to what ordinary trade union members (in other organizations) have.'*[xi]

3. *Management style*, whose influence was most marked when formal procedures such as strategic planning and staff councils were loose enough to give managers room to manoeuvre. That was the case in A, whose strategic plan was derided by managers, who operated from the top down, and in D, whose country director chose to manage more

consultatively, using *ad hoc* structures. These varying discretionary styles had the motivational effects that the literature suggests: chilling at A, where '*you begin to get a culture of … people not wanting to communicate,'* and nurturing at D: *'people have been empowered to demand … to have a say … Actually most people do actively give feedback.'* In terms of access to employee knowledge, we saw how F's arbitrary decision on R&R misconstrued the problem and risked exacerbating the problem of high turnover which already existed.

Conclusion: a middle way?

Our research design has enabled us to view participation in the round. In an almost uniquely propitious setting, none of the seven agencies rose any higher on the escalator/ladder than 'consultation'. This was dictated by their conventional hierarchies and the need to *'triangulate'* the views of their stakeholders (their Boards, management and staff; donors; partners; beneficiaries; and the government of Kenya). To put it in the homely terms of the manager at E, participation processes, however elaborate, inevitably culminated in a *'native English speaker'* or some other delegate wielding the strategic pen on behalf of the management team.

Consultation can degenerate into Arnstein's tokenism, as the *'little human interest stories'* at A demonstrate. The motivation and knowledge advantages of participation, and its positive relationship with low turnover, which Freeman identified and which F's experience corroborates, show why tokenism is worth avoiding, if only in terms of an efficiency rationale. Our findings suggest that indirect representation and management style are bulwarks against tokenism. Their limitations are well known: management can subvert representative structures if employees are not vigilant or determined, and management style is liable to change when a top manager moves on (as at F). Nor are they in free variation with agencies' other characteristics. We have seen that CMEs provide a more favourable base for indirect representation, and Brewster *et al.* have indicated that that is likely to remain the case for some time to come.

With indirect representation, the onus is on employees to demand it, including union recognition if they wish (Kenyan employees did not so wish, though other indirect participation structures were a partial substitute in two agencies), and on managers to recognize the advantages of a staff council or similar structure, as G's country director did. With management style, managers may opt for participation because it offers possible efficiency gains (the evidence is inconclusive, as we saw); a collective channel for staff concerns so that managers are not 'swamped' by those concerns when they try to engage staff on programme issues; and the advantage of practising what they preach about 'empowerment' etc., and harmonizing the way they relate to their stakeholders, and to staff and beneficiaries most of all.

The latter remarks apply specifically to INGOs. What have we learnt about employee participation in general (our third and final study question)? Our findings suggest that full co-determination and employee control, the implied common destination of Wilkinson's, Arnstein's and Poole's participation models, are unrealistic. If INGOs have not achieved them, it seems utopian to expect them elsewhere. More to the point, we suggest that they are undesirable. More to the point, our findings suggest, contrary to the implications of both the HR and ID normative literatures, that the top of the escalator/ladder is not the best place to be.[xii]

However, our findings equally suggest that consultation, at the mid-point in all three models is realistic (works councils in Poole's model roughly corresponds to consultation in our case agencies' practice). The transaction cost is modest as long as organizations avoid getting *'stuck in participation'* or *'lost in processes,'* as one agency manager warned. The experience of Agency D suggests that consultation can be appropriate even when the policy under discussion is the need to make cuts, despite the contrary view of the turnaround literature. The remarkable confluence of the HR and ID participation discourses perhaps represents an incoming tide of participation in modern society as a whole. In an age of corporate social responsibility, companies must be mindful of ethical and political as well as efficiency rationales.

We conclude that consultation is a middle way towards which organizations should aspire to the extent that their 'paths' and their managers' dispositions and skills allow (and the latter are somewhat amenable to training). We venture to hold up agencies B and D, headquartered respectively in a CME and an LME, as role models of formal and informal participation. It has not escaped our notice that their practice on the African continent is closely compatible with the European Information and Consultation Regulations, whose wisdom organizations in other economic sectors and legislators in other continents may now care to emulate, especially if (and harking back to Ramsay's analysis) employees show that they want to have a say in where their organizations are going.

REFERENCES

Ackers, P. and Payne, J. (1998) 'British trade unions and social partnership: Rhetoric, reality and strategy', *International Journal of Human Resource Management 9: 529-50.*

Anderson, M. (2001) 'Aid: a mixed blessing' in Eade, D. and Ligteringen, E. (eds), *Debating Development: NGOs and the Future*, Oxford: Stylus Publishing, 292-99.

Argyris, C. (1998) 'Empowerment: The emperor's new clothes', *Harvard Business Review*, May-June: 98-105.

Arnstein, S. (1969) 'A ladder of citizen participation', *Journal of the American Institute of Planners*, 35, 4: 216-24.

Arogyaswamy, K., Barker, V. and Yasai-Ardekani, M. (1995) 'Firm turnarounds: An integrative two-stage model', *Journal of Management Studies,* 32: 493-525.

Birch, A. (2007) *The concepts and theories of modern democracy*, Abingdon: Routledge.

Blunt, P. and Jones, M. (1997) 'Exploring the limits of Western leadership theory in East Asia and Africa', *Personnel Review*, 26, 1/2: 6-23.

Bowie, N. (1999) *Business ethics: A Kantian perspective*, Malden, Mass: Blackwell.

Bradley, K. and S. Estrin (1992) 'Profit sharing in the British retail trade sector: The relative performance of the John Lewis Partnership', *Journal of Industrial Economics*, 40, 3: 291-304.

Bratton, M. (1989) 'The Politics of Government-NGO Relations in Africa', *World Development*, 17: 569-87.

Brewster, C., Croucher, R., Wood, G. and Brookes, M. (2007) 'Collective and individual voice: Convergence in Europe', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18: 1246-62.

Budd, J. (2004) *Employment with a human face: Balancing effiency, equity, and voice*, Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.

Clark, J. (1991) *Democratizing Development: The Role of Voluntary Organizations*, West Hartford, Conn: Kumarian.

Cortina, A. 2007. *Development Ethics: A Road to Peace*. Kellogg Institute for International Studies Working Paper No. 339. http://kellogg.nd.edu/publications/workingpapers/WPS/339.pdf.

Cornwall, A. (2000) *Beneficiary, consumer, citizen: Perspectives on participation for poverty reduction*, Stockholm: Sida.

Cox, A., Zagelmeyer, S. and Marchington, M. (2006) 'Embedding employee involvement and participation at work', *Human Resource Management Journal*, 16, 3: 250–67.

Cunningham, I. and Hyman, J. (1999) 'The poverty of empowerment? A critical case study', *Personnel Review*, 28, 3: 192-207.

Dahl, R. (1985) *A preface to economic democracy*, Cambridge: Polity.

Dahl, R. (1961) *Who governs? Democracy and power in an American city*, New Haven: Yale University Press.

Davies, W. (2009) *Reinventing the firm*, London: Demos.

Detert, J. and Burris, E. (2007) 'Leadership behavior and employee voice: Is the door really open?'**,** *Academy of Management Journal*, 50: 869-84.

Detert, J. and Edmondson, A. (2011) 'Implicit voice theories: Taken-for-granted rules of self-censorship at workk', *Academy of Management Journal*, 54: 461-88.

Dundon, T., Wilkinson, A., Marchington, M. and Ackers, P. (2004) 'The meanings and purpose of employee voice', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15: 1149-70.

Edwards, M. and Hulme, D. (eds) (1996), *Non-Governmental Organizations: Performance and accountability – Beyond the magic bullet*, London: Save the Children.

Eisenhardt, M. (1989) 'Building theories from case study research', *Academy of Management Review*, 14: 532-50.

Farndale, E., Van Ruiten, J., Kelliher, C. and Hope-Hailey, V. (2011) 'The influence of perceived employee voice on organizational commitment: An exchange perspective', *Human Resource Management*, 50, 1: 113-29.

Finn, W. (2011) 'The winner: Baringa Partners', in Great Place to Work *Best workplaces 2011*, London: Redactive, 8-9.

Finsterbusch, K. and Van Wicklin III, W. (1987) 'Contribution of beneficiary participation to development project effectiveness', *Public Administration and Development*, 7: l-23.

Ford, J., Schmitt, N., Schechtman, S., Hults, B. and Doherty, M. (1989) **'**Process tracing methods: Contributions, problems, and neglected research questions', Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes, 43, 1: 75-117.

Fowler, A. (2000) 'Beyond Partnership: Getting real about NGO Relationships in the aid system' *IDS Bulletin*, 31, 3, 1-11.

Fowler, A. (1997) *Striking a balance: A guide to enhancing the effectiveness of non-governmental organizations in international development*, London: Earthscan.

Fowler, A. and K. Biekart (1996) 'Do Private Agencies Really Make a Difference?', in Sogge, D., Biekart, K. and Saxby, J. (eds), *Compassion and calculation – The business of private foreign aid*, London: Pluto.

Fox, A. (1974) *Beyond contract: Work, power and trust relations*, London: Faber.

Freeman, R. (1980) 'The exit-voice tradeoff in the labor market: Unionism, job tenure, quits, and separations', *Quarterly Journal of Economics*, 94: 643-73.

Freeman, R.E. (1984) *Strategic management: A stakeholder approach*, Boston: Pitman.

Frontera Group (2007) *Motivating staff and volunteers working in NGOs in the South*, www.peopleinaid.org/pool/files/pubs/motivating-staff-and-volunteers-working-in-ngos-in-the-south.pdf.

Gaventa, J. (2004) 'Towards participatory governance: Assessing the transformative possibilities', in Hickey, S. and Mohan, G. (eds) *Participation: From tyranny to transformation?*, London: Zed, 25-41.

George, A. and Bennett, A. (2005) *Case studies and theory development in the social sciences*, Cambridge Mass: MIT Press.

Global Humanitarian Assistance (2011) *GHA report*, Wells, Somerset: Global Humanitarian Assistance.

Gollan, P. and Wilkinson, A. (2007) 'Implication of the EU Information and Consultation Directive and the Regulations in the UK – prospects for the future of employee representation', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18: 1145-58.

Hall, P. and Soskice, D. (2001) 'Introduction', in Hall and Soskice (eds) *Varieties of capitalism: The institutional foundations of competitive advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1-68.

Hamm, B. (2001) 'A human rights approach to development', *Human Rights Quarterly*, 23: 1005–31.

Hirschman, A. (1976) 'Some uses of the exit-voice approach - Discussion', *American Economic Review*, 66: 386-91.

Hirschman, A. (1970) *Exit, voice and loyalty*, Cambridge MA: Harvard University Press.

Humphreys, M. and K. Hoque (2007) 'Have the lecturers lost their voice? Involvement and participation in the devolved Further Education sector', *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18: 1199-1213.

Hyden, G. (1983) *No shortcuts to progress: African development management in perspective,* London: Heinemann.

Isham, J., D. Narayan and L. Pritchett (1995) 'Does participation improve performance? Establishing causality with subjective data', *World Bank Economic Review*, 9: 175-200.

Jackson, T. (2002) ‘Reframing human resource management in Africa: A cross-cultural perspective’, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 13: 998-1018.

Kamoche, K., Nyambegera, S. and Mulinge, M. (2004) ‘HRM in Kenya’ in Kamoche, K. *et al.* (eds) *Managing human resources in Africa*, London: Routledge, 87-102.

Kanyinga, K. (1995) ‘The politics of development space in Kenya’ in Semboja, J. and Therkildsen, O. (eds) *Service provision under stress in East Africa*, Copenhagen: Centre for Development Research.

Kanyinga, K., Mitullah, W. and Njagi, S. (2007) *The non-profit sector in Kenya: Size, scope and financing*, Nairobi: University of Nairobi Institute for Development Studies.

Kerr, J. and Caimano, V. (2004) ‘The limits of organizational democracy’, *Academy of Management Executive*, 18, 3: 81-97.

Luttrell, C., Quiroz, S. *et al*. (2009) ‘Understanding and operationalizing empowerment’, ODI Working Paper No. 308, www.odi.org.uk/resources/download/4525.pdf.

Lutz, M. (1997) 'The Mondragon co-operative complex: An application of Kantian ethics to social economics', *International Journal of Social Economics*, 24: 1404-21.

MacLeod, D. and N. Clarke (2009) *Engaging for success: Enhancing performance through employee engagement - A report to Government*, London: HMSO.

Marchington, M., Wilkinson, A., Ackers, P. and Goodman, J. (1993) ‘The influence of managerial relations on waves of employee involvement’, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 31: 553-76.

Marcussen, H. (1996) ‘NGOs, the state and civil society’ *Review of African Political Economy*, 69: 405-23.

Mitchell*,* R., Agle, B. and Wood, D. (1997) ‘Toward a theory of stakeholder identification and salience: Defining the principle of who and what really counts’, *Academy of Management Review*, 22: 853-86.

Morgan, G. (1986) *Images of organization*, London: Sage.

Morrison, E. and Milliken, F. (2003) 'Speaking up and remaining silent: The dynamics of voice and silence in organizations', *Journal of Management Studies*, 40: 1353-8.

Mulinge, Munyae and Charles W. Mueller (1998) ‘Employee Satisfaction in Developing Countries: The Case of Kenya’, *World Development*, 26: 2181-99.

Muller-Carmen, M., Almond, P., Gunnigle, P., Quintanilla, J. and Tempel, A. (2001) 'Between home and host country: Multinationals and employment relations in Europe', *Industrial Relations Journal*, 32: 435-48.

Müller-Jentsch, W. (2008) ‘Industrial democracy: Historical development and current challenges’, *Management Revue*, 19, 4: 260-73.

Near, J. and Miceli, M. (1986) 'Retaliation against whistle blowers: Predictors and effects', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71: 137-45.

Nyambegera S., Daniels, K. and Sparrow, P. (2001) 'Why fit doesn't always matter: The impact of HRM and cultural fit on job involvement of Kenyan employees', *Applied Psychology: An International Review*, 50: 109-40.

Olson-Buchanan, J. and Boswell, W. (2002) 'The role of employee loyalty and formality in voicing discontent', *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 87: 1167–74.

Paul, S. (1992) ‘Accountability in public services: Exit, voice and control’, *World Development*, 20: 1047-60.

People in Aid (2003) *People in Aid Code of Good Practice in the management and support of aid personnel*, http://www.peopleinaid.org/pool/files/code/code-en.pdf.

Podsakoff, N., Whiting, S., Podsakoff, P. and Blume, B. (2009) ‘Individual- and organizational-level consequences of Organizational Citizenship Behaviors: A meta-analysis’, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 94: 122-41.

Poole, M. (1992) ‘Industrial democracy’, in Széll, G. (Ed.) *Concise encyclopedia of participation and co-management*, New York: de Gruyter, 429-39.

Popper, K. (1989). ‘Kant’s critique and cosmology’, in Popper, K. *Conjectures and refutations: The growth of scientific knowledge,* London: Routledge, 175-83.

Prasnikar, J. (1996) ‘Participation and self-management in developing countries’, in Pagano, U. and Rowthorn, R. (eds), *Democracy and efficiency in the economic enterprise*, London: Routledge, 269-305.

Purcell, J., Kinnie, N., Hutchison, S., Rayton, B. and Swart, J. (2003) *Understanding the people and performance link: Unlocking the black box*. Bath: School of Management, University of Bath.

Ramsay, H. (1977) ‘Cycles of control: Workers’ participation in sociological and historial perspective’, *Sociology*, 11: 481-506.

Sen, A. (1999) *Development as freedom*, New York: Anchor.

Siddique, S. (1989) 'Industrial relations in a Third World setting', *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 31: 385-401.

Strauss, G. (2006) 'Worker participation - some under-considered issues', *Industrial Relations*, 45: 778-803.

Suzuki, N. (1998) *Inside NGOs: Learning to manage conflicts between headquarters and field offices*, Warwickshire: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Thelen, K. (2001) 'Varieties of labor politics in the developed democracies', in Hall, P. and Soskice, D. (eds) *Varieties of capitalism: The institutional foundations of competitive advantage*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 71-103.

Thomason, G. (1976) *A textbook of personnel management*, London: IPM.

Van Dyne, L. and LePine, J. (1998) 'Helping and Voice extra-role behaviors: Evidence of construct and predictive validity', *Academy of Management Journal*, 41: 108-19.

Wallace, T. (2006) *The aid chain: Coercion and commitment in development NGOs,* London: Intermediate Technology Publications.

Wilkinson, A. and Fay, C. (2011) 'Guest editors’ note: New times for employee voice?', *Human Resource Management*, 50, 1: 65-74.

Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P., Marchington, M. and Lewin, D. (2010) ‘Conceptualizing employee participation in organizations’, in Wilkinson, A., Gollan, P., Marchington, M. and Lewin, D. (eds) *The Oxford handbook of participation*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 3-25.

Wood, G. (2010) ‘Employee participation in developing and emerging countries’, in Wilkinson *et al.*, *op cit.,* 552-69.

Wood, S. (2010) ‘High involvement management and performance’, in Wilkinson *et al.*, *op cit.,* 407-26.

Wood, S. and de Menezes, L. (2008) ‘Comparing perspectives on high involvement management and organizational performance across the British economy’, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 19: 639-83.

World Bank (2004). *World Development Report 2004: Making services work for poor people*, New York: Oxford University Press.

World Bank (1996) *World Bank participation sourcebook*, Washington DC: World Bank.

NOTES

[i] Marchington *et al.* (1993) and Ramsay (1977) also identify waves of enthusiasm for participation. Ramsay, taking a long view, argues that they represent employers' grudging reactions to employees' periodic surges in worker militancy.

[ii] Wilkinson and Fay build in their turn on Dundon *et al.*'s (2004: 1152) earlier taxonomy of meanings of employee voice.

[iii] Kant's relevant maxim, in Popper's (1989a: 182) paraphrase, is 'Always regard every man as an end in himself, and never use him merely as a means to your ends.'

[iv] We speculate that the similarity is because in both cases we are dealing with a collaborative but unequal relationship. Since such a relationship is anomalous in the light of the current norm of fundamental human equality, rationales must be advanced and regulations put in place to deal with the anomaly.

[v] Individual-level contingencies are outside the scope of this article. See Detert and Edmondson (2011); Farndale *et al.* (2011); and Olson-Buchanan and Boswell (2002).

[vi] As far as we know, process tracing has been used in organization studies up to now only to assess how individuals make decisions, not organizations: see Ford *et al.* (1989).

[vii] The donor and partner 'links' are absent where INGOs use their own funds and (see Table Three) where they implement their programmes directly.

[viii] We use the term 'partner' to refer to the indigenous NGOs which INGOs increasingly use to deliver their programmes.

[ix] We follow the convention of italicizing direct quotations from our interviewees.

[x] Among the large OECD nations, co-ordinated market economies as per Hall and Soskice (2001: 19-20) are Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, Germany, Japan, the Netherlands, Norway and Switzerland; liberal market economies are Australia, Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, the UK and the USA.

[xi] There was no straightforward host country effect in terms of national culture in our findings, where there was a complex interplay of national, sub-national and organizational cultures. *Pace* Blunt and Jones and others, this perhaps refutes any essentialist view of 'Kenyan culture' influencing agencies' behaviour.

[xii] We remind readers that our scope is confined to management, not ownership. We reiterate that even employee-owned companies tend to operate hierarchically, However, we note Ramsay's (1977: 498) final sentence: 'The whole political-economic environment will have ... to be transformed if a genuine industrial democracy is to prevail.' There is indeed something unsatisfactory about INGOs which operate in developing countries but which are accountable to Boards and donors in the North - as more thoughtful INGO staff would be the first to recognize (Edwards and Hulme, 1996).