SOCIAL MOVEMENT TRADE UNIONISM: AN INVESTIGATION OF WORKERS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE CONGRESS OF SOUTH AFRICAN TRADE UNIONS AND THE ZIMBABWE CONGRESS OF TRADE UNIONS PRACTICES ON ELECTION AND LIVING WAGE ISSUES.

BY

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DECLARATION STATEMENT

I declare that, *"Social Movement Trade Unionism: An investigation of Workers'* *Perceptions of the Congress of South African Trade Union and the Zimbabwe Congress* *of Trade Union Practices on Election and Living Wage Issues"* is my own work and that all the sources I have used or quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

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Signature

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Date

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Acknowledgements

Last but not least, I thank Mrs Lynnette Festus for her untiring administrative support right from the time of my admission to completion of this thesis.

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Dedication

I dedicate this work and give special thanks to my best friend and wife, Nomuhle Masiya. I also dedicate this work to my daughters, Ruvarashe Sizalokuhle Sikhethabahle, Chiedza and Ayamakomborero Matifadzaishe.

ABSTRACT

This study investigates workers' perceptions of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) practices on elections and living wage issues from a social movement perspective from the Apartheid (South Africa) and Unilateral Declaration of Independence (Zimbabwe) eras to 2009. The trade union social movement perspective refers to labour movements that develop a socio-political character, and concern themselves not only with workplace issues but with broad social and political issues. A study of COSATU and ZCTU practices in South Africa and Zimbabwe at this time in the field of social movements is consistent with current calls for a conceptual shift, away from looking for invariant causes and effects to looking for mechanisms and processes that occur in many different kinds of movements and that lead to different outcomes depending on the specific contexts within which they occur. The study draws insights from social movement unionsm theory to understand mechanisms and processes pursued by COSATU and ZCTU in seeking to influence policy outcomes. This study used a qualitative approach and a case study strategy. In the study, questionnaire and in-depth interview responses were drawn from COSATU secretariat, two affiliates, the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) and National Union of Mine Workers (NUM). Questionnaire and in-depth responses were also drawn from the ZCTU secretariat, two affiliates, the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GPWUZ) and the Zimbabwe Urban Municipal Workers Union (ZUMWU). The objective was to gain insights from a broad cross-section of union members – blue-collar workers, professionals, state or semi state institution workers and ordinarily low income farm workers. The study concludes that workers' perceptions of the two labour social movements is that they can influence changes in the political system (through elections) as a means to securing living wages

by engaging in five practices, namely, disruption mechanisms, public preference mechanisms, political access mechanisms, judicial mechanisms and international access mechanisms. However, while the study noted that workers perceive COSATU and ZCTU practices as essential in influencing elections and living wage issues, the popularity of the mechanisms was lower in Zimbabwe where workers often face persecution. In South Africa, utilisation of these practices is also affected by the less militant public sector affiliates and non- standard forms of work such as subcontracting, casualisation, informalisation, externalisation and the ballooning informal sector. Given these problems, social movement trade unionism remains a viable means of representing the interests of the working poor. Establishment of these challenges leads to areas of possible further research such as how the unions can effectively represent the unorganised workers of the informal sector. A broader research on the impact of the exponential growth of non-standard forms of work is also relevant at this time in the two countries.
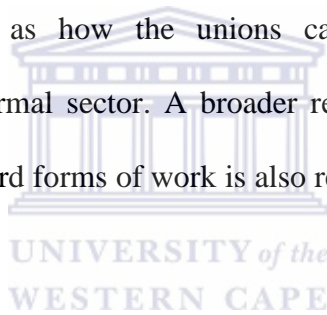
Key words: Elections, Living Wage, Social Movement Unionism, South Africa, Zimbabwe

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFL-CIO	American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations
AIPPA	Access to Protection of Privacy Act
ANC	African National Congress
BSA	Broadcasting Services Act
CEC	Central executive Committee
COPE	Congress of the People
COSATU	Congress of South African Trade Unions
DA	Democratic Alliance
DENOSA	Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa
DFID	Department for International Development
DP	Democratic Party
ESAP	Economic Structural Adjustment Programme
FEDUSA	Federation of South African Trade Unions
FFATU	Federation of Free African Trade Unions
FFYNDP	First Five Year National Development Plan
FOSATU	Federation of South African trade unions
FRELIMO	Mozambique Liberation Front
GAPWUZ	General Agriculture & Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe
GEAR	Growth, Employment and Redistribution
GHS	General Housing Survey
HSRC	Human Sciences Research Council

ICEM	International Union of Chemical, Energy and Mine Workers
ICESCR	International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights
ICFTU	International Confederation of Free Trade Unions
IES	Income and Expenditure Survey
IFP	Inkatha Freedom Party
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ITUC	International Trade union Congress
ITS	International Trade union Secretariat
IUF	International Union of Food Workers
LOMA	Law and Order Maintenance Act
LRA	Labour Relations Act
MDC	Movement for Democratic Change
MERP	Millennium Economic Recovery Plan
MOSOP	Movement for the Survival of the Ogoni People
MP	Member of Parliament
MPLA	Popular Movement for the Liberation of Angola
NACTU	National Council of Trade Unions
NATUC	National African Trade union Congress
NCA	National Constitutional Assembly
NDR	National Democratic Revolution
NECC	National Education Crisis Committee
NEDLAC	National Economic Development and Labour Council
NEDPP	National Economic Development Priority Program

NEHAWU	National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union
NERP	National Economic Revival Plan
NNP	New National Party
NSM	New Social Movements
NUM	National Union of Mine Workers
NUMSA	National Union of Met alworkers of South Africa
NUNW	National Union of Namibian Workers
OATUU	Organisation for African Trade union Unity
OCHA	Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs
OSM	Old Social Movements
PASS	Poverty Assessment Survey Study
POSA	Public Order and Security Act
RDP	Reconstruction and Development Programme
SACP	South Africa Communist Party
SACTU	South African Congress of Trade Unions
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SALDRU	Southern Africa Development Labour Research Unit
SAMWU	South African Municipal Workers' Union
SANCO	South Africa National Civic Organisation
SAPA	South African Press Association
SATUCC	Southern African Trade Unions Coordination Council
SMO	Social Movement Organisations
SRATUC	Southern Rhodesian African Trade union Congress
StasSA	Statistics South Africa
SWAPO	South West African People's Organisation

TNDP	Transitional National Development Plan
UDF	United Democratic Front
UDI	Unilateral Declaration of Independence
UDM	United Democratic Movement
UN	United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
	Union
WOZA	Women of Zimbabwe Arise
ZANU PF	Zimbabwe African National Union – Patriotic Front
ZCTU	Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions
ZIMPREST	Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation
ZUCWU	Zimbabwe Urban Councils Workers' Union
ZUM	Zimbabwe Unity Movement
ZUPCO	Zimbabwe United Passengers Company

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0   Introduction

This study investigates perceptions of the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) practices on elections (making public leadership choices through voting) as a means to secure a living wage (a fair and decent level of income and conditions of work that enable a respectable standard of living) from a social movement unionism perspective. The term "practices" is used here to refer to mechanisms that the unions use to influence elections and living wage issues. In social movement unionism, union struggles go beyond the workplace and adopt a socio-political character in pursuit of workers' interests. The study focuses on the period between the Apartheid (South Africa) and Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) (Zimbabwe) eras and 2009. The study concludes that the perception of COSATU and ZCTU members is that unions can influence elections and living wage issues. Elections within and outside election years and can be used to secure living wage demands by actively applying five practices namely, disruption mechanisms (protests, demonstrations, strikes, sit ins, boycotts), public preference mechanisms (public opinion mobilisation), political access mechanisms (overlapping membership, alliances with political parties or factions of political parties, taking up positions in politics and public institutions), judicial mechanisms (litigation) and international access mechanisms (transnational networks and membership).

A study of COSATU and ZCTU practices at this time in the field of social movements is consistent with current calls for a conceptual shift, away from looking for invariant causes and effects to looking for mechanisms and processes that occur in many different kinds of movements and that lead to different outcomes depending on the specific contexts within which they occur (Tilly, et al, 2001; Oliver, et al, 2003). Further, the

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study was precipitated by the fact that, in the two countries and the region limited research exists on the study of labour as a form of social movement activity. Social movement studies have mainly focused on the activities of land, rural, human and women rights movements and accords the primary activities of labour unions to shared workplace based experiences as being central to explaining their collective capacity to struggle (Siedman, 1994). Where studies have focused on labour as social movements, less attention has been paid to a consolidated discussion of their practices.

This study picks only two aspects where broader social movement union activity is involved – election and living wage issues. Elections in this context, is used to refer to the participation of every adult citizen on a non-discriminatory basis in periodic and genuine selection or standing for a public leadership position to secure authority to govern a country (Goodwin-Gill, 2006). The study recognises that influencing elections through social movement unionism does not only occur during an election year but even during the periods (years) before and after elections.

Living wage in this study refers to a fair and decent level of income as well as conditions of work and maximum hours of work that enable a respectable standard of living (Shelburne, 1999). However, in the course of history the definition of and how to calculate a "living wage" has been contentious (Shelburne, 1999; Brenner, 2002) leading to unending calls for living wages irrespective of any adjustments made. According to Shelburne (1999), living wage has been defined in different ways. It is a term used to define what has also been called a "fair and decent" level of income. However there is no agreed definition of what constitutes "fair and decent" as well. It is assumed though that it is a level of wage that would enable workers to meet their "basic needs."

Unfortunately again there is no agreed upon definition of what specifically "basic needs" are nor is there an agreed upon methodology to determine basic needs.

There are a number of U.N. and, ILO declarations and conventions concerning the right of a worker to receive an adequate wage. However these do not provide specific definition of what that wage should be or how it should be determined. Article 7 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) states that remuneration has to be adequate to provide workers with a decent living for themselves and their families. This is linked to Article 112 of the Covenant. Article 112 provides for a right to adequate food, clothing, and housing. Furthermore, Article 7 is strengthened by the ILO Convention No. 131 on Minimum Wage Fixing (1970). This calls on signatory member states to implement minimum wage mechanisms at a national level. Unfortunately the concept of a minimum wage itself in most instances does not provide for a decent living. Further, it is neither always up to date nor enforced effectively.
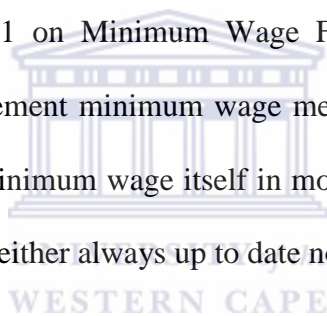
In its 10-year review in 2003, the South Africa government referred to what it termed a "social wage" which also reflects the definitional span of a living wage. A social wage covers social grants and the provision of services such as education, transport, local amenities, health and housing. The SA government argued that decent work covered earned income as well as living conditions of workers.

However, this study is not about how to calculate a level that can be agreed as living wage. It is about what practices COSATU and ZCTU trade union social movements have used to influence elections and living wage issues. As such for purposes of this study, key features of what may be identified in a living wage are outlined. A living wage must enable workers to meet "basic needs" that not only include mere physical

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subsistence but also covers social needs that would allow a household a comfortable and decent standard of living.

Therefore, a living wage should provide a nutritious diet, safe drinking water, suitable housing, energy, transPortation, clothing, health care, child care, education, savings for long term purchases and emergencies, some discretionary income as well as conditions of work and maximum hours of work (Shelburne, 1999).

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the agenda of the thesis by providing a brief background and context to COSATU and ZCTU practices on election and living wage issues. Further, the chapter outlines the research problem, objectives of the study and the theoretical framework. The outline of subsequent chapters is given at the end of the chapter.
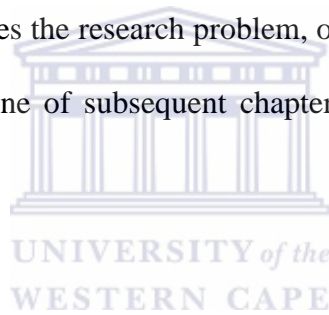
1.1 Background and Context

Social movement trade unionism in South Africa and Zimbabwe originated from an oppressive political, legislative and employer management system that denied workers a living wage and their various employment rights (such as collective bargaining, joining trade unions, changing employers, and freedom of movement) (Ross, 2008). After making workplace demands for improvement in workplace conditions and failing to secure significant gains, labour recognised that the wage system in place was in fact sustained by the existing segregatory political system (Siedman, 1994). They noted that changing the political system could be a solution to gaining workplace rights including a living wage.

1.1.1   The Era of Minority Regimes in South Africa and Zimbabwe

During the era of white minority regimes, trade union practices were largely played under very constraining social circumstances. The state was used to dispossess the majority of their land and regiment them into propertyless workers. Acts, such as the Glen Grey Act of 1894 and the 1913 Native Land Act in South Africa (Bhengu, n.d); the Land Apportionment Act of 1930 and the Land Tenure Act of 1969 in Rhodesia (Global Crisis Solutions, 2004) spiralled land dispossession. Complemented by various taxes instituted by the two minority regimes these became the catalyst for pushing African men into seeking low wage labour. A system of migrant labour was established, tied to ensuring a constantly moving, propertyless body of labour between the reserves and the towns, bound by a system of low wages (van Schoor, 1951). Thus an exploited working class was developed in these countries. The state programmes and policies to build this labour were politically supported by business (Sapa, 1997). According to Siedman (1994:116),

> *"There is little disagreement that the South African state actively promoted capitalist development: the state's intervention in the economy consistently supported capital accumulation. Successive administrations not only gave white settlers Africans' land but repressed African resistance and created an African labour supply for white-owned enterprises."*

Hence discriminatory and oppressive practices at firm level were also very common, and a huge sign of complicity (Nattrass, 1999). Nattrass further notes that business built compounds, barely paid minimum wages and endorsed state repression of workers. In fact Sachikonye (1990) argues that the state formulated and administered labour legislation on behalf of capital. The state was a white state that protected interests of mainly white capital. Both set on a proletarianisation process not only in the two countries but in Southern Africa and Africa in general – pushing peasants from land to poor wage labour. Proletarianisation set to transform the peasantry into wage workers,

by establishing state and capital relations that created a constantly moving poorly waged labour that abolished its ties to the land and rendering it "free" to sell its labour-power (Beckman and Sachikonye, 2001). Tied to creating the poor waged labour was a rural subsistence production that was embedded in female care labour that lowered the daily and intergenerational costs of African waged labour (Britwum, 2012).

Growing resentment with poor wages led to instabilities (for example strikes for higher pay; absenteeism, feigning sickness, desertion) in the workplace (Austin, 1975). In response, the minority white state instituted pieces of legislation that further suppressed the workers, again with the complicity of white capital. The South African minority regime for example promulgated the Native Labour Regulations Act of 1911 and the Natives Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act of 1953. These prohibited strikes by Africans and did not recognise African trade unions (Budeli, 2009). The Wage Act of 1925 and the Wage Amendment Act of 1930 provided for the unilateral determination of wages and working conditions for black workers (Bhengu, n.d.). The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1924 and the Industrial Conciliation Act 36 of 1937 were promulgated to curb industrial action and regulate strikes and lockouts but excluded the black majority from being defined as employees and therefore they could not benefit from it (Jordaan and Ukpere, 2011). The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1956 segregated trade unions and instituted job reservations. The Bantu Labour Regulations Act of 1973 set up employer-initiated committees for the prevention and settlements of disputes between black employees and their employers, with little if any bargaining power for the workers (see Act 70 of 1973). The Labour Relations Act 28 of 1956 which was further amended in 1982, 1983, 1984, 1988 and 1991 facilitated improvement of labour

relations following incessant demands by black workers, but fell far short of facilitating the awarding of living wage by employers.

In the then Rhodesia, the minority regime, moulded its legislative pieces along the same lines of its big brother, South Africa. Labour policy was guided by the Compulsory Native Labour Act of 1943 and the Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, whereupon the black majority were not defined as employees and therefore could not organise or be party to any forum that determined employment conditions (Ncube, 2000). According to Ncube (2000), it was not until the late 1950s, that labour unions consolidated but were used as forums for control and not for protection of workers' rights. Black trade unions were not entitled to free bargaining for wage adjustments and the right to strike was effectively removed under successive legislative amendments of the Industrial Conciliation Act. The Africans Registration and Identification Act of 1957 penalised any African who entered the service of another employer while under an existing contract. While, under the African Labour Regulations Act, any black worker who without lawful cause deserted or absented himself from his place of employment or failed to carry out the terms of his contract was liable to criminal prosecution (see for example, Austin, 1975). Punishments under the African Juveniles Employment Act included whipping for defaulting juveniles. All these pieces of legislation safeguarded the payment of low wages.

The lessons drawn from the chronology of these pieces of legislation that ensured starvation wages for majority workers is that it was driven by the state with full collaboration from business or capital as stated by Sachikonye (1990:2) who posits that during this era,

> "*State laws and the related institutions must be construed as responses to the imperatives of capital to broaden its productive capacity and scope to reproduce itself. They were, therefore, necessary conditions for its accumulation and reproduction*".

Even at the minimum, Siedman (1994:114) points out that "employers were almost as reluctant as the state to grant black workers independent channels of expression". The state and private sector thus acted in collusion. It is because of this realisation that labour concluded that workplace conditions such as living wages could not be attained without changing the political system. This is aptly summed up by COSATU's forerunner, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), which argued that,
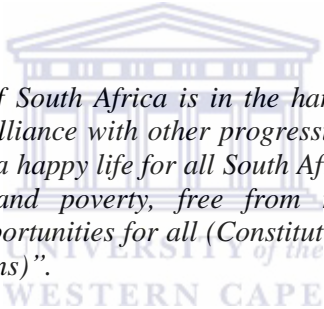
> "*There is a Zulu saying that if you are pricked by a thorn you also have to use a thorn to get it out. Workers are oppressed by political action; they must take political action in reply (COSATU President's Article on the ANC Centenary, January 2012)*".

Subsequently, the trade union movements in the two countries, including COSATU and ZCTU assumed a socio-political character or social movement unionism that they have today. Siedman (1994:28-29) posits that COSATU adopted social movement unionism whereupon,

> "*shop-floor organisations, originally formed by semi-skilled industrial workers to press employers on wages and working conditions, began to articulate broader working-class demands in conjunction with community groups in poor neighbourhoods. Unions supported emergent urban social movements, focusing on the distribution of resources and stamping urban demands and popular opposition with a distinct class character. Through their interaction with working class community groups, they helped shape the discourse of a broad opposition, redefining political demands to make working-class inclusion a basic goal*".

Therefore fighting both in the workplace and national politics led the movements to join forces with other social movements and liberation movements to push for the overthrow of the minority political system (Pillay, 2006).

As a result social movement trade unionism became central to the democratisation process in South Africa and Zimbabwe, facilitating the creation and maintenance of democratic institutions, democratic rule, and the dismantling of apartheid and authoritarianism to facilitate free elections as solution to determining a government that was expected to support a living wage. For example, prior to COSATU's formation, some of the far reaching episodes of resistance of apartheid political and wage system were speared by unions such as the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU). Founders of SACTU argued that its actions were precipitated by the prevailing political climate that promoted the policy and practice of racial discrimination as well as legislative pieces such as the Industrial Conciliation Act (Ncube, 1985). The Union contended that,

> *"The future of the people of South Africa is in the hands of the workers. Only the working class, in alliance with other progressive minded sections of the community, can build a happy life for all South Africans, a life free of unemployment, insecurity and poverty, free from racial hatred and oppression, a life of vast opportunities for all (Constitution of the Congress of South African Trade Unions)".*

Subsequently, SACTU mobilised against the Industrial Conciliation Amendment Bill which sought to demarcate jobs for different racial groups. It also entered a political alliance with the ANC. The ANC stated that workers constituted the frontline of the struggle and thus SACTU called ANC members to become organisers in the factories, on the farms and in the mines (Monroe, 1984) in the quest for political change. SACTU also networked with the International Trade Union Congress (ITUC) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). Subsequently, the SACTU-ANC alliance took part in a number of activities before SACTU was banned. These included bus boycotts and stay-at-homes as well as potato and cigarette boycotts. It embarked on numerous strikes before it was eventually forced to go underground by 1960.

The Durban strikes of January and February 1973 also constituted a defining moment in South African labour history. Sixty one thousand workers went on strike over low wages. This temporary mass action of the workers turned into a permanent trade union movement that became very powerful following years of nascent trade unionism under the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) that came into being after (SACTU) and the Federation of Free African Trade Unions (FFATU) disintegrated in the 1960's. The Durban strikes gave birth to powerful industrial unions such as NUMSA, SACTWU, CEPPWAWU and SATAWU. These later became affiliates of the Congress of South African trade unions (COSATU).

After SACTU was forced underground, a series of factory based strikes occurred culminating in the famous 1973 Durban Strikes that saw workers' wages in some instances being increased by up to 17% (Sithole, 2007). Given that these strikes were economistic (workplace focus) and at factory level or led by specific industrial unions, they appeared to vindicate the arguments against SACTU's political movement unionism. However, the Durban Strikes still set the tone for federation trade union revival following the retreat of SACTU, albeit an economistic (or workerist) federation.

This resulted in the formation of the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) on 20 April 1979. FOSATU was a mainly black national federation which emphasised engaging employers at the point of production (NUMSA, 2009). NUMSA (2009) points out that FOSATU resisted affiliation with political parties and community groups due to the repressive political environment of its time. According to Friedman (1987), FOSATU unions argued that political participation would divert their energies

from factory struggles and workers had different interests to other black groups and could not pursue them in political alliance with non-workers.

However by the early to mid-1980s, many of the unions involved in the 1973 strikes that stayed away from joining FOSATU were questioning its arms-length relation to politics as they favoured a more social union approach (Visser, 2003). Therefore the seeds of social movement unionism that had been initiated by SACTU's political unionism in the 1950s continued to simmer among a large number of trade union groups (mainly community based) that did not join FOSATU. According to Sithole (2007:230-31), these trade unions 'were more focused on direct involvement in broader political struggles than those that came together to form FOSATU. They stressed the inseparability of the shop-floor struggles from broader political campaigns against apartheid'. These included the South African Allied Workers' Union (SAAWU), the Motor Assemblies and Components Union of South Africa (MACWUSA) and the General Allied Workers Union (GAWU). Unions favouring a social movement approach generally had either worked with SACTU before it went underground or had maintained links with its exiled leadership (Kraak, 1993).

The continued existence of both economistic (workerist) and social movement ideas within the trade union movement culminated in negotiations to establish a broad focused trade union federation. This federation would utilise a social movement approach that incorporated workerist principles. A series of negotiations led to the dissolution of FOSATU and the establishment of a full-fledged social movement trade union, the Congress of South African Trade Unions in 1985. COSATU emerged as a leading challenger of workplace exploitation and apartheid rule.

1.1.2   Post Liberation Era in South Africa and Zimbabwe

In the post liberation era, the line of thought adopted by the two social movement trade unions remained similar to that adopted during the colonial and apartheid eras. They still believed that exerting influence on the political system particularly through elections would enable workers to gain a living wage.

Pursuant to its social movement character, COSATU networked with other social movements and notably entered an alliance with the ANC, which it hoped would support worker friendly policies such as a living wage upon winning national elections. This alliance came against a background of the country successfully shacking off the shackles of apartheid to emerge as a fledgling democracy. Nearly two decades into majority rule, South Africa's democracy has consolidated and deepened.
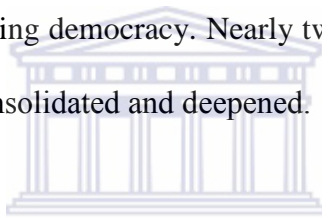
Unfortunately, the gains on the democratic front have not been complimented by higher standards of living, which the majority of workers expected at the onset of universal democracy. The Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) that had been pushed onto the ANC election manifesto by COSATU in 1994 was dumped by the government within two years of its pronouncement (Mckinely and Veriava, 2005:8-9). For the labour constituency, the RDP had sought to create jobs and a living wage, address the inequalities of apartheid and provide for basic needs (RDP, White Paper, 1994; Peet, 2002:70). However, the ANC government introduced a neo-liberal focused development policy, the Growth, Equity and Redistribution Strategy (GEAR) in place of the RDP policy in 1996. Despite the noble objectives of GEAR, massive job losses, casualisation of jobs, and low wages continued to affect the working poor and their families (McKinley, 2004). The challenges that the South African economy continued to

face and pressure from COSATU resulted in the internal leadership changes of the ANC in 2007 and the election of Jacob Zuma as state president in 2009.

On the other hand, Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980. The extent of its democracy has been debated over the last three decades. However there seems to emerge a consensus that in the last ten years, Zimbabwe has grown into an authoritarian state characterised by serious repression of social movements such as the ZCTU.

As in the case of South Africa, at independence Zimbabwe's economy was almost entirely owned and managed by a white minority regime (Jenkins, 1997:581). On the other hand, among the black majority, high unemployment went hand in hand with poor wages, which were up to ten times lower than that of their white counterparts (Mothibe, 1996).
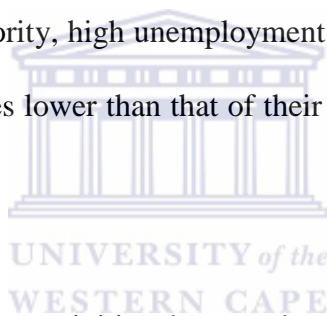
In the first decade, the government initiated a number of development plans. The government crafted a development policy titled 'Growth with Equity' in 1981, the First Five Year National Development Plan, 1986-1990), The Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) among other development policies (Makusha, 2007:21-22). Unfortunately the development policies failed to inspire economic growth and employment (Ncube, 2000). The economy continued to be characterised by retrenchments, rising unemployment, falling wages and rising inflation which were in contrast with the ZCTU's historical calls for a living wage (Ncube, 2000:85). As the country entered the new millennium the unemployment rate was approximately 55%,

and an estimated 76% of the population lived below the poverty datum line (Ross-Larson, 2002:110).

In an endeavour to reverse its economic misfortunes, the state's strategy for reversing the economic decline centred on the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP). It however failed to turn the tide (Ross- Larson, 2002:109-134). Since about 2000, the country experienced extraordinary difficulties. Contracting employment throughout the decade (Dawson and Kelsall, 2011:11) led to massive pauperisation, and job layoffs. Unemployment skyrocketed to 94% by 2008 (EISA, 2010) and life expectancy which stood at 61 years in 1990, tapered to 37 years by 2010 Ncube (2010:84-85). A very high rate of unemployment, combined with very low rates of food production and raw materials export and the highest rates of inflation in the world resulted in an 'economic freefall' and the subsequent abandonment of the local currency unit – the Zimbabwean dollar (Fitzmaurice, 2005:264). In response to socio-economic failures, a broad spectrum of social movements developed over 30 years to press for policy change. Labour, in particular, was consistently involved in grievance battles calling for living wages through to 2009, the period covered by this study.

The ZCTU moved not only to oppose the government's policies but also to found with other social movements, a new political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). The ZCTU seconded a large selection of its most active leadership to take up positions in the new political party and actively canvassed votes for it in the subsequent elections.

The open support for the ANC by COSATU and its influence in the party's leadership changes, as well as ZCTU's position on national elections and formation of the MDC, all seem to suggest that labour social movements assume that they can influence election outcomes to favour a political party or faction of a political party that would support their living wage demands.

1.2   The Research Problem

Broadly, trade union social movement practices in South Africa and Zimbabwe both prior to and after liberation, have focused their strategies on the goal of better living conditions for workers including securing a living wage (Barchiesi and Bramble, 2003). In the apartheid and UDI eras, the unions fought the state and business that primarily conspired to exploit labour through specific policies, laws and low wages (van der Berg and Bhorat, 1999). In the post apartheid and post UDI eras the state is alleged to have failed or delayed to make substantive headways in addressing living wage issues and thus the trade union social movements have continued to make demands for this problem to be addressed. Labour seems to believe that influencing the state will lead to securing a living wage.

In both eras, labour has relied on social movement unionsm strategies to press for its demands. This form of unionism enabled the unions to move beyond confining themselves to workplace based struggles to broader social, political and economic issues (such as human rights, social justice, democracy) (Chun & Williams, 2013).

This study focuses on how the unions have used social movement union strategies to influence political change through democratic elections as a means to secure living

wages. The study argues that struggles for democratic elections by labour take centre stage as unions view this as a tool for selection of a political leadership or party that the trade unions think would support a living wage to improve the standards of living of workers. It is in this context that this study investigates the practices that COSATU and ZCTU use to influence elections and living wage issues.

1.3   Research Objectives

Primary Objectives

The perception of COSATU and ZCTU social movements is that influencing elections will bring into public office, policymakers who favour democratic participation and living wage adjustments. As such this research's main objective is to analyse COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues from the apartheid and UDI eras to the year 2009.
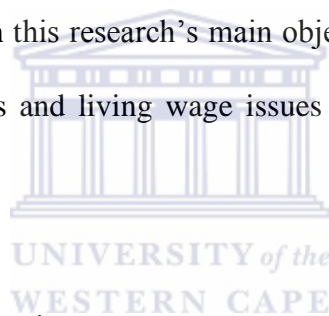
Secondary and more specific objectives

1.3.1   Analyse selected social conditions (poverty, inequality, wages, economic growth, inflation and legislation) giving rise to practices by labour social movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe.

1.3.2   To investigate social conditions that have influenced COSATU and ZCTU practices around election and wage issues.

1.3.3   In the context of social movement unionism theory, distinguish forms of mobilisation and collective action on the part of COSATU and the ZCTU

1.3.4   Specifically, identify and discuss COSATU and ZCTU prominent practices around elections and living wage issues.

1.3.5 Explain COSATU and ZCTU achievements and challenges in the utilisation of trade union social movement practices in influencing elections and living wage issues.

1.4   Research Questions

Pursuant to the above objectives the overall research question informing the study is: *What are the practices on election and living wage issues that COSATU and ZCTU have used in the apartheid and UDI eras through to 2009?*

More specifically, the study sought answers to the following concrete and specific research questions for the above period;

1.4.1 What are the key issues that drive labour union social movement practices in general?

1.4.2 What are the key issues that drive labour union social movement practices in South Africa and Zimbabwe?

1.4.3 What are the key issues that drive COSATU and ZCTU social movements?

1.4.4 What are the practices that COSATU and the ZCTU have employed to influence election and living wage issues?

1.4.5 Is there a discernible and enduring pattern of practices among the two organisations that seem to influence outcomes of election and living wage issues?

1.4.6 What are some of COSATU and ZCTU achievements and challenges in the utilisation of trade union social movement practices in influencing elections and living wage issues?

1.5   Significance of the Research

On a broader note, this study contributes to a further understanding of trade union social movement practices in influencing historical change in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In particular, it highlights the contribution of trade unions to election processes and efforts to improve living wages in the two countries during the apartheid and UDI eras through to the year 2009. This research is also an important additional commentary on the study of trade unions from a social movement perspective. Although there is literature on social movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe, it mainly focuses on the activities of land, rural, human and women rights. As noted by Siedman (1994:143),

> *"trade unions are rarely given much consideration in theories of social movements. Social movement analysts generally begin by asking how individuals identify common interests; unions, however, are often treated as almost inevitable products of industrial society, as workers combine to struggle for better wages and working conditions……shared workplace experiences are central to explaining their collective capacity to struggle".*

As such studies about the practices of trade unions beyond the workplace are imperative. A focus on the two cases of COSATU and ZCTU also contributes to an understanding of the extent to which social movement theory explains trade union practices in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Fairbrother and Webster (2008:310) observe that "one shoe does not fit all," implying that a theory may not be applicable to all contexts. Hence this focus on South Africa and Zimbabwe brings in new insights that relate to the two cases under review.

1.6   Theoretical Framework

Theorising reduces a set of ideas extracted from concepts that stand in relation to each other to form a coherent whole, used to ecplain or understand real life phenomena. In the social sciences, social theory helps us explore and explain social phenomena over space and time. In other words, it is impossible to know everything about the real world

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without drawing on some kind of theoretical ideas (Fulcher and Scott 2003). Theory helps us understand the social world and for us to be objective and explain society in a more unbiased fashion. Different theories, viewpoints and social facts help us to achieve this understanding of society (Holmes, Hughes & Julian 2003:4). Without theory, we cannot analyse things to ensure our accuracy in the analysis, and will also lack direction in what to study. It is in this context that this study applies social movement unionism theory to understand practices of COSATU and ZCTU in elections and living wage issues.

The study of trade unions from a social movement perspective is gaining ground in countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. From a social movement perspective, how, when and what makes trade unions in these countries organise has become a major point of debate. This study is particularly focused on how COSATU and ZCTU social movements organise around elections and living wage issues, in particular how the unions seek to influence election outcomes so that they favour a leadership or party that supports labour's living wage demands.

In analysing COSATU and ZCTU members perceptions of their unions' practices on elections and living wage issues, the study used the social movement unionism theory. Social movements are large scale informal groups of individuals and/or organisations, sharing collective interest and the same side in socio-political, economic and/or cultural conflicts that bring together people, resources and ideas in a wider ecosystem of political activism to effect social change (Mario, 1992). In this context a trade union qualifies to be a social movement trade union if it 'combines conventional institutionalized collective bargaining with modes of collective action and alliances typically associated

with social movements' (Hirschsohn, 1998:633). In other words the concept of social movement unionism recognizes that trade union activity has two dimensions, one economic, the other social and political (Calenzo, 2009).

Social movement trade unionism is a contemporary perspective that seeks to account for the tendency by trade unions in developing countries such as South Africa and Brazil to move beyond confining themselves to the struggle for workplace wage and working conditions to broader social, political and economic issues (such as human rights, social justice, democracy) (Chun & Williams, 2013). Such action has largely been influenced by either exploitative systems of governance or the vagaries of neoliberal economics. Lambert and Webster (1998:20) define social movement unionism as 'a form of union organisation that facilitates an active engagement in factory-based, production politics and in community and state power issues'.

In this regard, social movement unionism has also been defined as a highly mobilised form of unionism usually acting in opposition to repressive political regimes and exploitative workplaces in newly industrialising countries of the developing world (Von Holdt, 2003). Adherents of this form of unionism believe that workers are also citizens and thus have interests in public policies that shape the distribution of rights, entitlements, and responsibilities as well as issues of general economic and social equality (Ross, 2008). They align with other components of civil society (such as women, students and community groups) to advance their common agenda (Calenzo, 2009).

Pioneers of the social movement perspective such as Lambert and Webster (1988) effectively popularised it as they sought to explain the new forms of trade unionism in countries such as South Africa and Brazil. In these countries union struggles exemplified the broader political struggles by social movements during the third wave of democratisation in response to governance failures. Other authorities term these 'Militant labour movements' and note that they have also emerged in response to globalisation (Seidman, 1994).

In the context of von Holdt (2003) and Lambert and Webster (1998) definitions, the trade union social movement perspective identifies four key strategies used by trade unions (Aganon, Serrano and Certeza, 2009). First, trade union social movements have a local focus and base and their power is based on the mobilisation of the so called 'rank and file'. Second, their practices are associated with collective actions that go beyond the regular workplace bargaining mechanisms to the social, political and economic spheres. Third, social movement trade unions build solidarity alliances and coalitions with other unions as well as other social movement groups in the community and beyond who have similar interests and problems. To this, political parties are normally added. However if a union only allies with a particular political party, then it becomes a political union. Finally and more importantly social movement unions frame their demands around state governance issues and formulate transformative visions (Fairbrother, 2009). This is the premise within which COSATU and ZCTU social movement unionism on elections and living wage issues is analysed. Their focus, both in the apartheid and post-apartheid eras challenged mainstream industrial relations and labour movement theories (Hirschsohn, 1998).

1.7   Ethics Statement

This study was conducted after approval by the University and the researcher adhered to all ethical rules of confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent. Observing all ethical rules protected the integrity of all interviewees; and protected careers of those in positions of authority. Ethical integrity was also observed to protect those in positions of authority in the social movements so as to prevent state acrimony. In view of political dynamics at play, particularly in Zimbabwe protecting the interviewees was critical to prevent political persecution.

1.8   Limitations

The study gives a general overview of workers' perception of COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues from a social movement perspective. However, the study results may not be used to generalise trade union practices of all federations in the respective countries or region as they may subscribe to ideals that are different from those of COSATU and the ZCTU with respect to involvement in elections and living wage issues. Further to this, South Africa and Zimbabwe emerged from deep settler and racialised social conditions that have continued to be a reference point in the two economies. This may not be exactly comparable to their counterparts in the region.

1.9   Structure of the thesis

The first chapter outlined the problem and theoretical context of the study which is located in the social movement theory. It also discussed the thesis aims, objectives and the research questions. The rest of the thesis is divided into seven chapters as follows.

Chapter two is an outline of the reseacrh methodology. The study mainly applies a qualitative research approach in view of the fact that it focuses on the perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU members.

Chapter three conceptualises social movements and establishes a working definition. In the context of the focus of the study, the chapter also outlines the relationship between the numerical (or electoral) and the corporatist (or functional) channels of interest articulation and the extent to which the latter can by and large influence the individual and may affect the priorities and attitudes the individual brings into the numerical channel. This perspective is used to tie trade union practices to elections and living wage demands.

Chapter four discusses the major causes of social movement practices in apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa.

Chapter five discusses workers' perceptions of various practices or mechanisms that COSATU has employed overtime to influence elections and living wage issues as well as making inferences on the attendant outcomes.

Chapter six discusses the major causes of social movement practices in UDI and independent Zimbabwe.

Chapter seven discusses workers' perceptions of various practices or mechanisms that ZCTU has employed overtime to influence elections and living wage issues as well as making inferences on the attendant outcomes.

Chapter Eight of the study concludes the thesis by pulling together, the argument on the perceived nature and effect of COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues.

CHAPTER 2

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

2.0   Introduction

Goddard & Melville (2004) state that answering unanswered questions or exploring that which does not currently exist constitutes research. Research methodology is therefore a way to find out that which does not currently exist or the result of a given problem on a specific matter - research problem. A researcher uses different criteria for resolving the identified problem. This chapter explains the criteria (methodology) used to find answers to the statement of the problem of this research. It explains the scope, approach and instruments used to gather and analyse the data.

2.1   Scope and delimitation

This study investigates perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections (making public leadership choices through voting) as a means to securing a living wage policy (a fair and decent level of income and conditions of work that enable a respectable standard of living) for the apartheid and UDI periods through to 2009. It seeks to answer the question "how" do these unions seek to exert the influence and is therefore not an impact assessment study. However the study does not seek to proffer that election and living wage issues are the only policy issues that drive practices by the two trade unions. The study also focuses on the two trade union federations at the national level. Further to this it selects interviewees from two strong affiliate members in each country, one in the public sector and another one in the private sector. In South Africa, the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) and the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU) are used to provide inside perspectives of the federation's affiliate members. In Zimbabwe, the Urban Councils Workers Union (ZUCWU) and the

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General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ) provide further sources of evidence. A selection of these cases and affiliates was meant to cover a wide base of union members, blue-collar, professionals, semi-state institutions and low income farm workers. In the subject area of social movements, the study takes note of the fact that there are different categories of social movements at group level (such as women, land, human rights and environmental social movements) but only looks at labour social movements. There are many social conditions influencing COSATU and ZCTU social movement practices. Nonetheless this study identifies the following as key social conditions; legislation, poverty, inequality, economic growth, inflation, unemployment and wages. This study is not a direct compare and contrast study of the two movements. Rather, it mainly discusses the different practices adopted by social movement unions in different country circumstances in a bid to broaden the prospects of generalising the social movement trade union behavioural patterns.
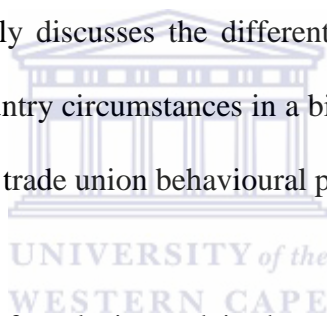
Throughout the study, the unit of analysis used is the organisation (i.e COSATU or ZCTU or their affliates) rather than individuals Unit of analysis is the major entity that is being analysed in a research study, i.e the 'what' or 'who' that is being studied. According to Babbie (2010) a unit of analysis in social science research can be individuals, social organisations, countries, international alliances, schools, communities, interest groups, and voters among other units. This determines the level of analysis of the research study. In this regard therefore, the focus is not on the size of the general membership of the two unions viz-a-vis the ununionised but rather the perceptions of the practices that the two unions use to influence election and living wage issues.

2.2   Mixed Research Methods Approach
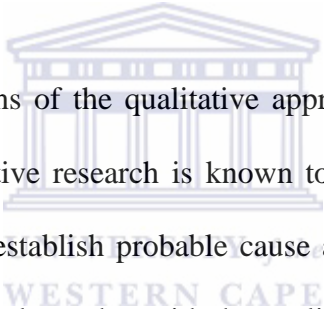
Johnson Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) point out that a mixed methods approach is very useful in providing sufficient evidence for a research phenomenon under study. They note that it involves focusing on research questions that call for real-life contextual understandings, multi-level perspectives, and cultural influences. In this regard it involves using rigorous quantitative research assessing magnitude and frequency of constructs and rigorous qualitative research exploring the meaning and understanding of constructs; and applying multiple instruments as well as purposely integrating or combining these methods to draw on the strengths of each.

This study therefore also employed the qualitative research design. According to Burns & Grove (1998), it is an inductive, holistic, emic, subjective and process-oriented approach applied to understand, interpret, describe and develop theory on a phenomenon or a setting and is a systematic, subjective approach used to describe life experiences and give them meaning. In other words the approach adopts a person-centred and holistic perspective and develops an understanding of people's opinions about their lives and the lives of others.

This study employed the qualitative research design because trade union social movement practices are not easily quantifiable and the utilisation of any of the practices is based on individual, group and organisational perceptions. Success or failure of these practices is also relative and not easy to quantify. A qualitative approach enables description and explanation of different practices and the effects these have on the cases of the two trade unions under study. It supports recording of different events and giving them value within the context of the study. Hence the qualitative design is used here to

analyse perceptions of mobilisation and collective action practices on elections and living wage issues by two trade union federations, COSATU and ZCTU, from a social movement perspective. Consistent with qualitative research goals, this study captures the underlying processes that link action with outcomes by exploring how mobilisation and collective action actually occur through practices.

However the challenge of utilising the qualitative approach alone is that it often involves the utilisation of very few participants or interviewees. In that regard generalisation of findings may not apply to other people or other settings as the findings may be relatively unique to a few people who were targeted in the study (Burns & Grove, 1998).

In view of some of the limitations of the qualitative approach, the study also applied quantitative techniques. Quantitative research is known to be a medium that provides measurable evidence, to help to establish probable cause and effect in a phenomenon. Pasick et al, 2009) notes that if used together with the qualitative approach this approach tends to create more efficient data collection procedures, create better possibility of replication and generalisation to a population, facilitates the comparison of groups, and provides insight into a breadth of experiences. As noted by Pasick, et al (2009), in the case of this study, utilisation of quantitative techniques as part of the mixed methods approach enabled easier measurement of the pervasiveness of the perceptions of trade union practices within COSATU and ZCTU membership as well as establishing central patterns of association, including inferences of causality.

However critics of the quantitative approach argue that the researcher's categories that are used might not reflect local constituencies' understandings (Choy, 2014). Further

important characteristics of people and communities, for example, identities, perceptions, and beliefs can easily be lost in the research as they cannot cannot be meaningfully reduced to numbers or adequately understood without reference to the local context in which people live (Dudwick, Kuehnast, Jones and Woolcock, 2006). The qualitative approach was their also utilised to pick up on the weaknesses of this approach.

2.3   The case study strategy

Henning (2003:23) defines a case study "as a bounded system which has an observable, behaviours, speculations, causes and treatments". McLeod (2008) notes that case study refers to a research study that focuses on the collection and presentation of detailed information about a particular participant or small group, frequently including the accounts of subjects themselves. It intensely looks at an individual or small participant pool, drawing conclusions only about that participant or group and only in that specific context. According to Two case studies of trade union federations were used. A case study strategy provides a holistic, in-depth investigation by using multiple sources of data (Crowe, et al, 2011), and in the context of this study, the labour unions, individuals and secondary sources.

However there are a number of case study types. Baxter and Jack (2008) and Yin (2003) identify six such case study types. The first case study type is explanatory case study. It is normally used if you were seeking to answer a question that sought to explain the presumed causal links in real-life interventions that are too complex for the survey or experimental strategies. For example, in evaluation language, the explanations would link program implementation with program effects. The second type is the exploratory

case study. It is used to explore those situations in which the intervention being evaluated has no clear, single set of outcomes. Third type is the multiple case study that is used to explore differences within and between cases. The goal is to replicate findings across cases. The fourth type is the instrumental case study. This is a study that is used to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps to refine a theory. The fifth type is the collective case study which is similar in nature and description to multiple case studies. The sixth type of case study is the intrinsic case study, which is the one utilised by this study.

The intrinsic case study type is used here as the intention is mainly to better understand how the cases engage in social movement practices. According to Mills, Durepos and Wiebe (2010:500),

> *"An intrinsic case study is the study of a case (e.g., person, specific group, occupation, department, organization) where the case itself is of primary interest in the exploration. The exploration is driven by a desire to know more about the uniqueness of the case rather than to build theory or how the case represents other cases".*

Thus the cases of COSATU and ZCTU labour social movements are not only selected because they represent other cases, but because in all their particularities and ordinariness, the cases themselves are of interest (Baxter and Jack, 2008:5). The case study approach is also used to take advantage of the case study's multi-perspectival nature. This means that the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of the actors (individual members of the unions), but also of the relevant groups of actors (Federations and affiliates) and the interaction between them (Tellis, 1997). Further, case study facilitates data triangulation by accessing multiple sources of data (different categories of interviewees and documentation) (Guion, 2002) to understand COSATU and ZCTU practices on election and living wage issues. The case study also facilitates

triangulation by facilitating the use of different methods with the purpose of illuminating a case from different angles, for example using interviews, questionnaires and literature. This strategy therefore provides triangulation which answers the ethical need to confirm the validity of the processes and conclusions of the investigation. Triangulation increases the reliability of the data and the process of gathering it. In the context of data collection, triangulation serves to corroborate the data gathered from other sources.

2.4   Sampling

In any research conducted, it is often not possible to study whole populations mainly due to resource constraints such as time and/or money to undertake the research. Sampling is a process used to take a representative selection of the population and using the data collected as research information (Frey et al, 2000). In other words, sampling is a technique used to select a smaller section of the population that will accurately represent the patterns of the target population at large. In this study, it was neither feasible nor necessary to collect information from the total population understudy. Hence a smaller subgroup of the target population familiar with trade union social movement practices in the two countries under review was selected for the purpose of study.

There are different methods of sampling. Teddlie and Yu (2007) discuss probability sampling techniques (random sampling and stratified sampling) and non probability sampling techniques (Quota sampling, Convinience sampling and purposive sampling). Random sampling occurs when a researcher gives each member of the population an equal chance of being selected. The key to random selection is that there is no bias involved in the selection of the sample. In stratified sampling a mini-reproduction of the population is made through dividing the population into characteristics of importance for

the research such as gender, social class, education level, and religion. Then the population is randomly sampled within each category or stratum. In the nonprobability category, Teddlie and Yu (2007) point out that in quota sampling a researcher deliberately sets the proportions of levels or strata within the sample. This is generally done to insure the inclusion of a particular segment of the population. In convenience sampling, a sample is a matter of taking what you can get. It is an accidental sample. Finally purposive sampling is another form of non probability sampling. The process of purposive sampling involves purposely handpicking individuals from the population based on the researcher's knowledge and judgment. It is used when a limited number of individuals possess the trait of interest. It is the only viable sampling technique in obtaining information from a very specific group of people. It is also possible to use purposive sampling if the researcher knows a reliable professional or authority that he thinks is capable of assembling a representative sample.
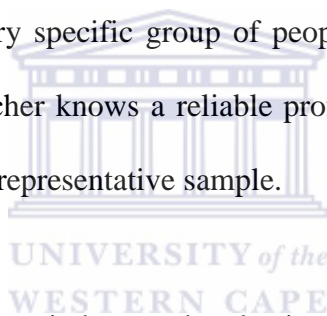
Purposive sampling (also known as judgmental, selective or subjective sampling) was therefore applied in this study. It made it possible to focus on the selected cases of COSATU and ZCTU. Indeed purposive sampling enables the researcher to pay particular attention to characteristics of a population that are of interest that answer key research questions of the study (Kelly, et al, 2003). Purposive sampling was particularly relevant to this study as the researcher was concerned with understanding the audience and had to use common sense and the best judgment in choosing the right habitations, and meeting the right number of right people for the purpose of the study (Elder, 2009:6). In general, sampling in qualitative studies is purposive in order to be able to select information rich cases. Below (Fig 2.1) is a diagram depicting the sampling process. Purposive sampling helped to locate the beginning point of the distribution of

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semi- structured questionnaires by targeting the secretary generals (COSATU and ZCTU headquarters and secretaries or their representatives at provincial levels (Western Cape and Harare) as well as interviewees from the affiliate unions.

Figure 2.1   Case Study Sample
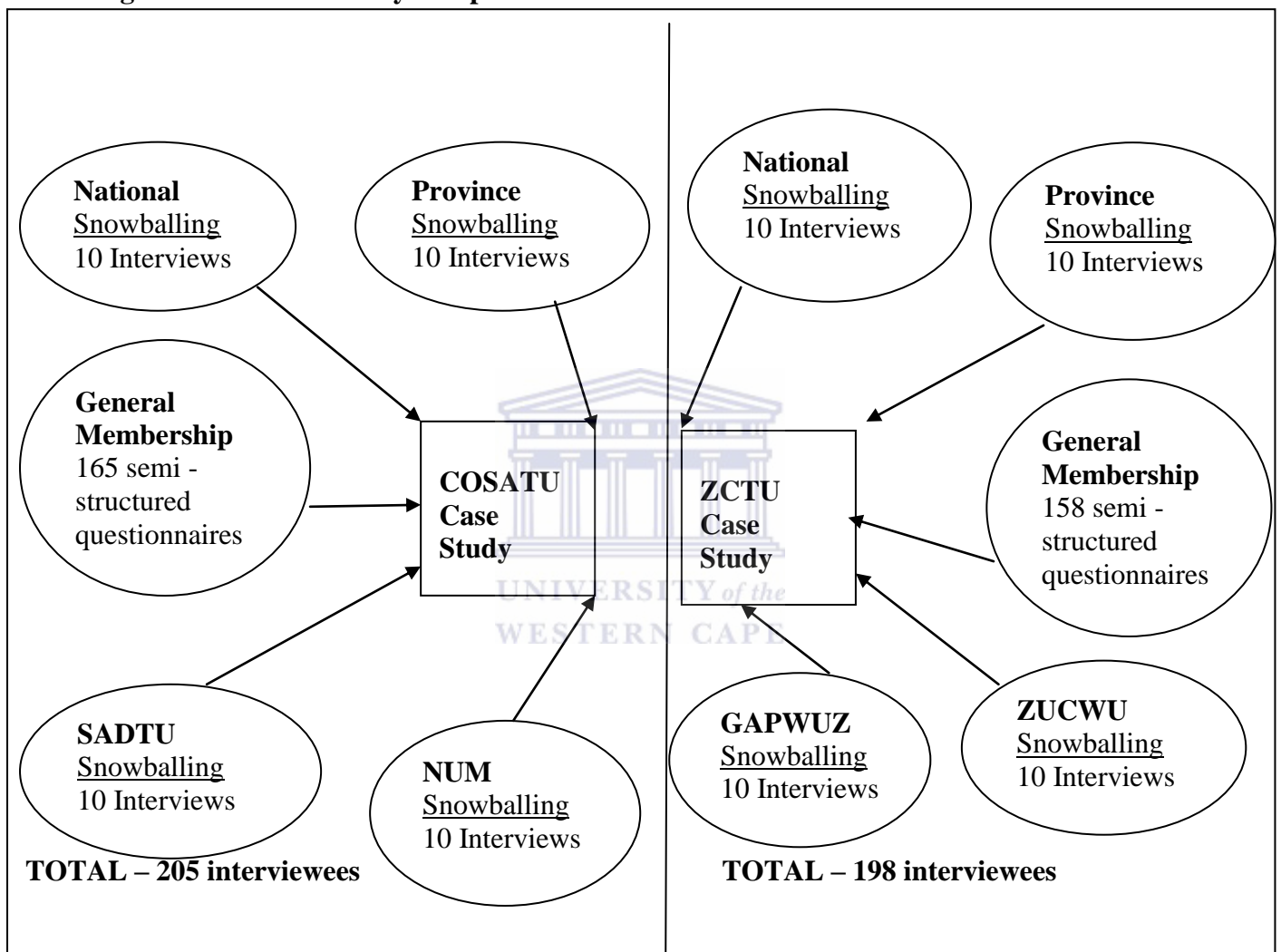
informants in each case. There are three main types of snowballing, namely linear snowballing sampling, exponential non-descriminative snowball sampling and exponential discriminative snow balling. This study used a linear snowballing sampling method. This occurs when the researcher asks an interviewee to nominate the next subject who has the same trait as themselves. The researcher then interviews the

nominated subjects and continues in the same way until they have obtained a sufficient number of subjects. According to Voicu and Babonea (2011:1342),

> *"The snowball method implies the identification of an initial set of respondents who will be interviewed and who will be requested at the end of their interview to recommend potential subjects who share similar characteristics and who are relevant for the purpose of the subject survey".*

Linear snowballing was pretty advantageous for this study because it allowed the researcher to reach populations that would have been difficult to sample when using other sampling methods. Potential informants at this level are ordinarily difficult to set up interviews with and a direct approach may result in prolonged waiting for interview appointment. However if one of their colleagues contacts them or refers the researcher, the response is much quicker. In the end snowballing process proved inexpensive, simple and cost effective. It also needed little planning and fewer workforce compared to other sampling techniques.

Thus using this process, ten semi structured questionnaires, in each union were administered at the national level and at provincial level. Ten semi structured questionnaires were also administered to each of two affiliate members of each federation, one in the public sector and another one in the private sector. Two COSATU affiliate members were randomly selected, namely, the National Union of Mine Workers (NUM) and the South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU). In Zimbabwe, members of the Zimbabwe Urban Municipal Workers Union (ZUMWU) and the General Agriculture and Plantation Workers Union of Zimbabwe (GPWUZ) were randomly selected. The four affiliates are among the largest affiliates in each country. In addition, one hundred and sixty five semi structured questionnaires were completed by general members of COSATU. In the case of ZCTU 158 completed responses were received from ZCTU general membership. In all, 205 responses were received in the

case of COSATU and 198 responses were received in the case of ZCTU. This wide coverage of sources of data enabled the study to draw out detailed conclusions on COSATU and ZCTU practices around elections and living wages.

Despite this broad coverage, however, the research notes that purposive samples can be prone to researcher bias as it is created based on the judgment of the researcher (Elder, 2009). In order to overcome this, the researcher attempted to use clear theoretical framework, research objectives and expert elicitations.

2.5   Semi Structured Questionnaires

Data was collected through semi-structured questionnaires. Using this method, a total of 205 responses were received from COSATU and its affiliates while 198 responses were received from ZCTU (Figure 2.1). A semi structured questionnaire sets up a situation that allows a respondent the time and scope to talk about their opinions on a particular subject or question posed. According to Bird (2009:1307), it is,

> *"a well established tool within social science research for acquiring information on participant social characteristics, present and past behaviour, standards of behaviour or attitudes and their beliefs and reasons for action with respect to the topic under investigation ....(and) a popular and fundamental tool for acquiring information on knowledge and perception".*

The semi-structured questionnaires were intended to comprehensively answer research questions of the thesis whose responses were largely based on subjective meanings and interpretation of social reality by research participants. Given the subjective nature of issues ordinarily raised by labour movements pertaining to democracy, elections and living wages, the semi structured questionnaire proved a very viable instrument.

However, just as other data collection techniques would, semi-structured questionnaires also have some disadvantages. Given its structure, and that data is qualitative, there is a possibility that the researcher may also misinterpret data given by informants due to his or her preconceived viewpoint about the subject of research (Hay 2002:87). Where an interview format is adopted, face-to-face interactions with interviewees also unmake the 'natural setting' necessary for the interviewee to give unbiased or self-censored responses to questions. A high level of professional regime was followed in order to overcome the shortcomings of this instrument.

2.6   Documentary evidence

It is important to note that although instruments such as interviews, questionnaires and observations are often preferred, documentary research methods is also a viable means of getting data in research. It may be as effective as other methods and even cheaper. Mogalakwe (2006:221) states that documentary research relates to the "analysis of documents that contain information about the phenomenon that we wish to study". In this study, documentary sources of data were used through securing archival material such as books and journals. Drawing from the existing body of literature put the study into context and assisted in furthering the understanding of the subject under study.

The use of documents doubled as both a source for secondary and primary data. Documents that relate to the activities of trade union social movements that were gathered included media, minutes, meetings, conferences, resolutions, brochures, pamphlets, manuscripts, published academic literature (books, journals, monographs), policy documents, memos, reports, speeches and letters. Some of the documents were accessed during field work whilst others were accessed during the thesis proposal and literature review stage.

Data collected from these documents aided the critical analysis of the discourse that shape trade union social movements and in particular COSATU and the ZCTU in the socio-political space. Ncube (2010) contends that an analysis of the role of meaningful social practices and ideas in political life as expressed in the political discourses of various actors is crucial in unpacking the salient structures of the struggles for social change.

Further, access to secondary documents enabled the researcher to glance into subjects in the past and present that may have been difficult to reach through other instruments. This was particularly important in terms of examining social movement theory insofar as it relates to the practices of the movements and the consequence thereof overtime in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Hay (2002:149) contends that utilising documentation allows the researcher either inductively or empirically to advance theoretical statements about the temporary aspects (the time, timing, and temporary) of the process of change under consideration or to test deductively derived theoretical hypothesis about that process of change.

The use of documentation as a source of data was done without forgetting the fact that they are prone to 'selective survival', a process that determines what material to keep and what to exclude and why. Cases of incompleteness and/or bias of the contents of documents were not ruled out.

2.7   Data Analysis

The study used the constant comparison approach to analyse the data. In theory, constant comparison process involves comparing incidents applicable to each category or objective or question; integrating these and their properties; delimiting the theory and writing the theory during the research process (Dye, et al, 2000; Scott, 2004:113). Charmaz (1996) posit that in the constant comparison approach, a study develops a theory from the data being gathered from the lived experiences of the interviewees rather than at the end of the field research. Ongoing findings affect the kind of collected data.

The strength of the constant comparison approach in qualitative data analysis is that it enables the grouping of common answers to common questions and to analyse different perspectives on central issues. Further, this approach enabled the researcher to approach the data without a preconceived framework. In this way it enabled the development of localised accounts and experiences of the organisations under review. In particular it enabled the researcher to bring out the five most commonly identified practices, namely disruption, public preference (opinion mobilisation), political access, judicial and international access. Coding was therefore done around these practices.

2.8   Summary

Research methodology is a way to find out that which does not currently exist or the result of a given problem on a specific matter - research problem. This study investigated workers' perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues. A mixed methods approach was used to capture real-life contextual understandings, multi-level perspectives, and cultural influences as well as assessing the magnitude and frequency of constructs with respect to COSATU and ZCTU. The case study strategy was also used to take advantage of the case study's multi-perspectival

nature and triangulation. Purposive sampling was applied in order to focus on the selected cases of COSATU and ZCTU. Data was collected through semi-structured questionnaires as well as scouring documentary evidence.

CHAPTER 3

SOCIAL MOVEMENTS: A CONCEPTUAL ANALYSIS

3.0   Introduction

This chapter gives a brief background to the concept of social movements. It conceptualises the study's working definition of social movements, drawing from key authorities in the field. The chapter also identifies the key differences between old social movements (in particular labour) and New Social Movements (NSM). This is important in this study because it enables the study to situate its argument around social movement trade union practices on elections and living wage issues as old social movements are primarily known for their response to issues of disparities (such as poverty, inequality, poor wages) in capitalist societies such as South Africa and Zimbabwe. This is in contrast to New Social Movements that do not focus on materialistic issues but social changes (Pichardo, 1997). In the last section the chapter establishes the analytical framework that will be utilised in the more empirical chapters that follow.

3.1   Social Movements – A Working Definition

Social movements promote or resist social change through various practices. They have led to so many dramatic changes in societies around the globe and scholars have spent a great deal of time trying to understand where they come from, who participates in them, how they succeed, and how they fail (Tilly, 1994). Social movements vary widely in their ideologies; some movements are revolutionary in their aims (Berdnikovs and Humphrys, 2010), some advocate reforms to the existing system (Giugni et al. 1999); and others are conservative in their orientation and work to oppose changes in society

(Courser, 2011). Social movements vary in scope as well. Many movements are limited to local policies while others have an international outlook (Voss and Williams, 2009).

Conceptualising social movements is in line with the purpose of this study, which is to critically examine perceptions of practices of two labour based social movements, the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) on electoral and living wage issues. By practices here is meant the means by which people advance their cause in social movements. Tilly (2006) refers to these as 'repertoires'. These cover among others non-violence, negotiation, direct action, events/media stunts, demonstrations, propaganda, strikes, boycotts, non-co-operation, civil disobedience, and parallel structures among others.

Diani (1992:13) defines social movements as informal networks of individuals and/or organisations, sharing a collective identity and the same side in political and/or cultural conflicts. However, this study notes that when a specific social movement phenomenon become prolonged, it may become institutionalised leading to a social movement organisation (SMO). The goals of the SMO remains perched within the aspirations of the social movement. McCarthy and Zald (1977:217-18) contend that social movements are a mobilised demand for change in society by arguing that they are "a set of opinions and beliefs which represents preferences for changing some elements of the social and/or reward distribution of a society". While McAdam and Snow (1997) give a more clearer definition by stating that a social movement is a collectivity acting with some degree of organisation and continuity outside of institutional channels for the purpose of promoting or resisting change in the group, society, or world order of which it is a part. However, Arya (1988:17-25) posits that no particular definition can be given to a social

movement because of its diversity. In the same light, Tilly (2004:ix) states that for many years he had avoided the term 'social movement' because it sponged up so many different meanings and therefore obscured more than it clarified.

While it may be difficult to have a single standing definition of what constitutes a social movement, from the above definitions, we can discern that social movements are a form of group action, i.e. large groupings of individuals and/or organisations focused on specific political or socio-economic issues, carrying out, resisting or undoing a social change.

For purposes of this study, the term social movement is derived from Tilly's perspective. Tilly (2004:3) defines a social movement as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. By others Tilly means elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes. This definition reveals key features that can help us conceptualise social movements. These include shared opinions, unity/ solidarity and collective action. It also reveals existence of conflictual issues and extra-institutional action outside the routine procedures of social life.

Indeed in explaining these key features, Nash (2000:161-64) points out that social movements are characterised by shared set of beliefs and a sense of belongingness. He argues that the presence of beliefs and solidarities allows both actors and observers to assign a common meaning to specific collective events which otherwise could not be identified as part of a common event. In this regard, social movements are a major vehicle for ordinary people's participation in public politics (Tilly, 2004).

As such Tilly's definition advances the objectives of this study as it enables the analysis of perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU practices in so far as it relates to identifying the kind of collective claims they make, that is, the issues that are common to their constituents that cause collectivity and solidarity (one of which is the focus of this thesis); the authorities to whom the contentious campaigns and performances are directed; and the mechanisms of action (practices) (as discussed in chapter 5 and 7).

A study of the practices of COSATU and ZCTU in particular at this time in the field of social movements is consistent with current calls for a conceptual shift, away from looking for invariant causes and effects to looking for mechanisms and processes that occur in many different kinds of movements and that lead to different outcomes depending on the specific contexts within which they occur (McAdam, et al, 2001; Oliver, et al, 2003). This is because it has been observed that success or failure hardly describes a movement's effects.
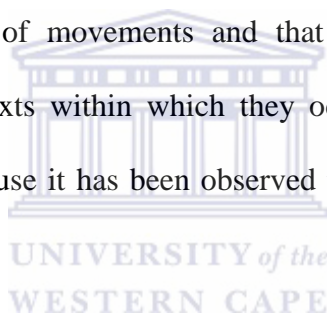
3.2   Social Movements and Social Movement Organisations

This study investigates perceptions of practices of two social movement organisations (SMOs), COSATU and ZCTU from a social movement perspective. However given that the two organisations are clearly institutionalized case studies, it is imperative to distinguish herein, a social movement from a social movement organisation. According to Zald and McCarthy (1997), social movements are not necessarily formally organised institutions. Rather they are usually broad informal groups pursuing a common general goal or ideology in society. Further to this multiple alliances may work separately for common causes and still be considered a social movement. Della Porta and Diani (2006) point out that a single organisation is not a social movement. Instead, a social movement

should be viewed from the perspective of a network of formal or informal organisations depending on shifting circumstances. The term SMOs originates from Zald and Ash's 1966 seminal work on "Social Movement Organizations: Growth, Decay and Change". They point out that social movements tend to manifest themselves through a range of social movement organisations. Zald and McCarthy (1997) distinguishes this social movement from an SMO by pointing out that the latter is a formally organised component of a social movement and it only makes up a part of a particular social movement. For example, COSATU advocates for social and economic justice for all workers. But COSATU is not the only group in the country, region or internationally that pursues worker social and economic justice. There are many other groups actively engaged toward this end. Thus, the social movement may be a push toward worker economic emancipation and COSATU is an SMO working within the broader worker social movement. Its activities are a microcosm of the general struggles of social movements of workers. McCarthy and Zald (2001) posit that SMOs develop to manage the interdependencies of adherents and activists committed to the movement. They note that if a movement effort endures beyond a single event and links several networks of adherents and activists, a more or less formal organisation is likely to develop. Distinguishing an SMO from a social movement, Tilly (2004:48) contends that social movements are interactive campaigns that almost always involve multiple organisations, shifting coalitions, and unnamed informal networks while SMOs outlast these campaigns. Therefore SMOs emerge as a result of social movements.

This study views SMOs as vehicles through which social movements advance consolidated struggles towards the prescribed goals. This is because there may be many social movements and adherents of certain ideologies but without the coordinating role

of SMOs, they may not be able to meaningfully organise their struggles. The SMOs do not necessarily have to have social movement adherents as their fulltime members or employees. Armstrong and Bartley (2013) point out that,

> *"Social movements organise people, resources, and ideas for social change. Many do this through formal organisations, and most sociologists recognise the social movement organisation (SMO) as a key factor in the study of movements. SMOs can be defined as formal organisations that take the collective pursuit of social change as a primary goal".*

In that context therefore SMOs are critical in that they ensure the continuity and survival of social movements. They are the mechanism by which the energy generated by social movements is harnessed, mobilised, directed and channelled to produce greater results. The SMO derives energy from being integrated with the society in which it functions. According to Della Porta and Diani (2006:145), SMOs play an important role by,

> *"inducing participants to offer their services; defining organisational aims; managing and coordinating contributions; collecting resources from their environment; selecting, training, and replacing members…. act as powerful sources of identity for a movement's own constituency, its opponents, and bystander publics".*

A study of social movement practices through the lances of SMOs gives a theoretical structure and tradition with which to analyse their dynamics. The study of SMOs such as COSATU and ZCTU also enables in-depth study from a historical perspective.

3.3   Life Cycle of Social Movements

Christiansen (2011) notes that, social movements have brought momentous changes in society over the last two centuries and have a life cycle of their own. Blumer (1969) identifies four main stages through which social movements pass. Figure 3.1 is an adaptation of Blumer's stages, namely social ferment, popular stage, formalisation and demise stages.

Figure 3.1   Life cycle of social movements

Stage 1 Social ferment	→	Stage 2 Popular stage	→	Stage 3 Formalise	→	Failure	→	Stage 4 Demise

Co-optation → Demise

Repression → Demise

Go mainstream → Demise
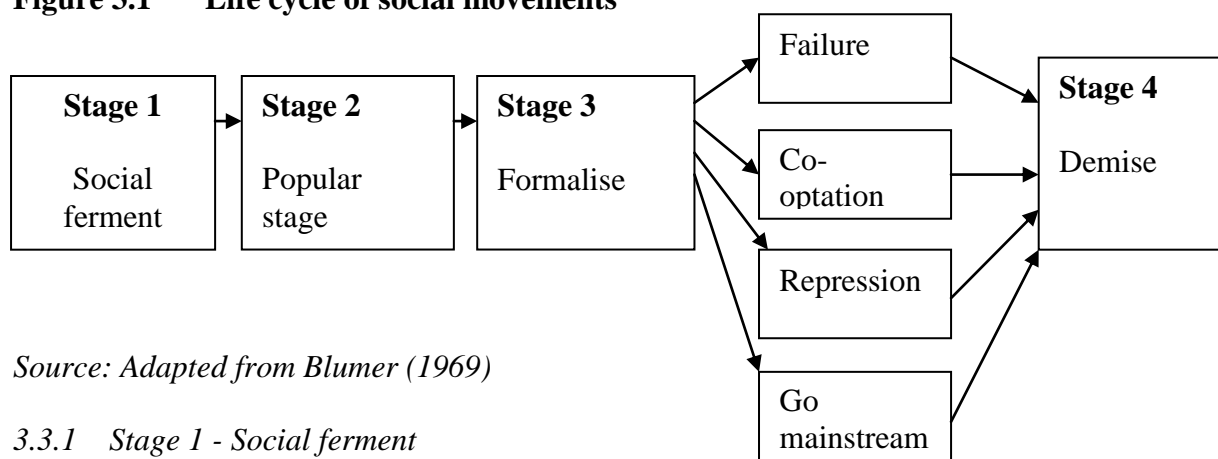
Source: Adapted from Blumer (1969)

3.3.1   Stage 1 - Social ferment

The four stages are aptly summarised by Tischler (2006). The first stage is the social ferment (Emerge). It occurs when people realise that there is a matter of concern among a large group of individuals in society which authorities or institutions are either uwilling or neglecting to address. There is general wide discontent at this stage but social movements are not organised. Most of the societal ferment occurs through individuals expressing discounted through friends, approaching relevant institutions or the media that helps to escalate the problem through negative coverage. Recognition of the existence of a specific problem is tantamount to defining the problem. Various individuals begin to offer solutions and potential charismatic leaders propose solutions to the generality of the affected group. Spontaneous protests may occur as a result of individuals attempting to take leadership roles in influencing change. For example the June 16 student uprising in South Africa (Maharaj, 2008) and the 1990s street protests in Zimbabwe (Bond and Saunders, 2005). Christiansen (2011) also notes that the social ferment stage can also occur through a social movement organisation. The social movement organisation can serve as an agitator. In this way it can raise consciousness and help to create a sense of discontent among the general population over a particular issue. For example on many occasions, COSATU waged countless strikes and

demonstrations to press for political change during the apartheid era and the ZCTU waged strikes and demonstrations since the 1990s against the Mugabe regime's moribund economy (Pillay, 2006).

3.3.2   Stage 2 - Popular stage

Tischler (2006), notes that at the second stage which is the popular stage (coalescence), the social movement begins to create a cooperative force. The larger community now has a sense of what the problem is and who is responsible. The problem in general becomes known to the public. Those facing the same problem become aware of each other. At this stage, a social movement may develop its plan of action, recruit members, hold protest marches, form networks, and get resources. At this point, discontented individuals have become organised and strategic in their outlook. Prominent leaders of the movement begin to emerge and are recognised. For example in South Africa, Steve Bantu Biko's charismatic leadership later made individuals coalesce around the Black Consciousness Movement. All this galvanises support for the social movement.

3.3.3   Stage 3 - Formalisation Stage

The third stage in the social movement cycle is the formalisation stage, otherwise also known as the bureaucratisation stage. Its most elaborate feature is a higher level of organisation and coalition-based strategies (Della Porta & Diani, 2006). According to Tischler (2006:493) during the third stage "Social movements reach the peak of their strength and influence and become firmly established". Social movements at this stage now have power to regularly have access to the political elites and the need to maintain this power and momentum becomes paramount. SMOs within the social movement are therefore now well developed and have to employ fulltime professional staff to run the day-to-day operations of the organisation and pursue movement goals beyond the

irregular and shortlived emotional excitement of movement individuals. Consequently movements that fail to bureaucratise fall away at this stage. The labour movement in South Africa and Zimbabwe is a good example of a movement that passed the stage where they primarily relied on agitation and demonstrations through to formal organisations fighting for the rights of workers.

3.3.4   Stage 4 - Demise stage

Fuchs (2005) gives a fine snapshot of the demise (decline) stage. Despite the terms demise or decline being associated with this stage, it does not literally mean the social movements will disappear. It is used to refer to a number of processes that can occur to the social movements. This fourth stage can result in Repression, Co-optation, Success or Failure (Christiansen, 2011). Movements can decline if the concerned authorities or their agents use repressive (violent) means to deal with the grievances of social movements. Such repression may involve using the state security machinery to unleash violence, passing laws banning specific movement activities or organisations, or justify attacks on them by declaring them somehow dangerous to public order. For example the apartheid state used the security system to violently disperse social movement adherents and passed laws - such as the Pass Laws, Internal Security Act (1979), Unlawful Organisations Act (1960) and Suppression of Communism Act (1950) - to destroy social movements. In Zimbabwe, then Rhodesian government utilised similar security measures and legislation. This type of repression makes it exceedingly difficult for social movements to carry out their activities and recruit new members. As a result labour movement organisations such as the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) and the Federation of South Africa Trade Unions (FOSATU) could not sustain themselves under the barrage of apartheid repression.

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In discussing co-optation, Crossely (2002:164) states that "at a more substantive level, we need to be wary of assuming that movements necessarily and always stand outside the system not least because of the dynamics which tends to pull them back in". Co-optation refers to situations whereby social movement leaders or organisation lose sight of their constituents' original goals and begin to associate more with authorities and movement targets (Tischler, 2006). Co-optation may also occur because the movement has achieved its goals or adherents have become content with the changes that authorities have made and cease to maintain active membership (Christiansen, 2011). Furthermore Crossely (2002) points out that social movements can be co-opted because they need resources from the authorities to survive and therefore have to register as charities or as small businesses and at other times, it may be because their struggles involve using parts of the system to attack others.

Failure during the demise stage may result from leaders who may simply not run the SMOs properly as well as internal conflicts whereby the movements degenerate into factions or capitulate (Christiansen, 2011). Failure may also occur if supporters perceive that enough has been done already to meet the grievances of the members of the movement and stop supporting the SMOs. Failure may also occur if activists become weary of the struggle while ordinary movement members may simple get bored and move on or begin to prioritise other issues.

Finally many movements may decline because they are successful. In this regard decline is used to imply that movements would have been able to force the desired change (Crossley, 2002). If this occurs, movements may move on to generate and present new demands. Movements such as the Black Sash in South Africa created to fight against the

injustices of the apartheid government, have moved beyond to the post-apartheid era with new goals. Alternatively, movements may become successful and decline if their goals or ideologies are adopted and integrated into the mainstream political and economic system (Christiansen, 2011).

Understanding the four stages of social movement development is useful for this study in that it provides a good analytical tool for understanding perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU social movement practices with respect to how these practices arise and occur.

3.4   Old Social Movements vs New Social Movements

Social movements are sometimes classified as old social movements (OSM) and new social movements (NSM). For purposes of this study, it is important to distinguish between these two major categories as the study focuses on one type that struggles for the restructuring of economic markets. Distinguishing these is important as theory shows that their areas of focus differ (Feixa, Pereira and Juris, 2009:426). These authors note that old social movements are known to focus on materialistic goals like improving the living standards of a given social class while NSM mainly focus on non-materialistic goals such as rights, identity, peace, consumer protection, animal liberation and culture. While the phenomenon of NSM is associated with the age of consumption in Europe by suggesting that the society has moved from material struggles, on the other hand the struggle for economic justice is still very much alive in Africa and especially in highly economically unequal countries such as Zimbabwe and South Africa (Mubila, Lannes and Aissa, 2012). Authorities such as Touraine (1981), Habermas (1987) and Melucci (1996) argue that there is everything new about the struggles of these NSM emerging in the post industrial era. However, this thesis is a study of practices of labour, an old

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social movement that to a large extent struggles around the dynamics of the socio-economic base.

OSM and NSMs are alleged to differ on several accounts. Pichardo (1997), states that NSMs are movements with mainly a western origin (though the issues they advocate for are now being picked up around the world). They make claims on issues associated with human rights, such as women's rights, pacifism or peace and environmental rights. According to Scott (1990), NSMs do not emphasise on specific changes in public policy but social identity, lifestyle and culture. Thus the social aspect is given precedence over economic or political issues.

Feixa, Pereira and Juris (2009) also state that OSM and NSM are also distinguished by date (or era). They posit that NSMs are associated with the west's post-industrial economy beginning in the 1960s. The beginning of this era was characterised by student movements in Berkely (1964), Paris, Rome, New York, and Mexico, all in 1968, as well as the Civil Rights Movement (1955-68). These movements emphasised non material identity based issues including generation, gender and ethnicity. As Seidman (1994) observes, NSM emerged following changes in the economic and political structure in post WWII Europe and North America and sought to change prevailing norms and to produce new knowledge and ways of living. The post-industrial period produced new social movements, such as the civil rights movement, the women's movement and the environmental movement. They are "animated by a political project of expanding social citizenship" (Heller, 2009).

In contrast, Feixa, Pereira and Juris (2009) note that the OSM emerged in 19th century Europe and the first half of the 20th century in the form of economic-political protests. The industrial society of the period produced numerous working-class social movements that strove to improve working conditions and wages. Such groups include the revolutionary wave of 1948, the Paris commune and USSR's 1917 revolution. In the Communist manifesto, Karl Marx (1888) discusses these as class based struggles. He argues that capitalism is inherently a class system in which class relations are characterised by conflict between the elite and the workers. The proletariat become conscious of their alienation and of the need to change the conditions that produced it and join together in radical movements leading to a revolution fashioned by the proletariat to rid society of class, and usher in an economically just society. Today however, old social movements can also struggle for moral right issues such as the right to vote and equal rights in general.
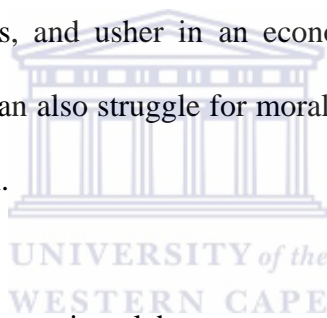
As a result of the Marxian perspective, labour as an old social movement in the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries, was characterised by isolated and alienated membership and large scale subscription by the working poor. NSMs generally date to the latter half of the twentieth century and are characterised by loosely organised networks. According to Offe (1985), NSM are led by members of the new middle class (high educational status, relative economic security), the old middle class and the decommodified persons (i.e. people outside the labour market- the unemployed, students, housewives,). The global justice movement, for example is a typically very heterogeneous movement (Della Porta 2007). Participants in this movement come from different sectors of the society. According to Della Porta (2009), huge events held under the banner of the fight against neoliberal capitalism (such as the World Social Forum

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and the Anti Globalisation Campaigns) have brought together people from different social classes and generations. The "Occupy" movements in the United States, South Africa National Civic Organisation (SANCO) and the National Constitutional Assembly (NCA) in Zimbabwe also drew adherents from the different social strata to articulate a broad range of issues.

According to Ross (2007) and Jenkins (1983) OSM largely drew resources from the membership base through local leadership, volunteer staff, membership fees and other resources donated from direct beneficiaries. NSMs on the other hand have largely relied on fulltime professional leadership, invisible membership, resources donated from outside the movement, and the fact that they do not necessarily require membership participation in the actions that they pursue. Such NSMs as the Environmental Movement, Anti-globalisation Movement and the World Social Forum are typical of these professionalised social movements.
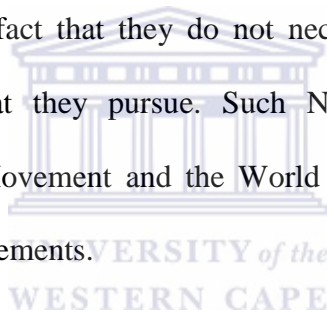
NSM organised around issues of environmental justice, food, disease and identity rights – "colonisation of the lifeworld" (Habermas, 1987), do not seek to take over government or influence political outcomes. They set their stress on grass-roots in the aim of representing the interests of marginal or excluded groups. In the same vein, they resist incorporation into the state system. Instead they rely on and make use of the print, broadcast and electronic media to communicate their messages, generate empathy and mobilise support. Additionally instead of adopting a top down hierarchical approach, NSM adopt direct actions.

However, OSM have, "traditionally been concerned with capturing the state and wielding the instrumentalities of bureaucratic power to compensate for the inequalities of market distributions" (Heller, 2005:79). In this regard, in the early 20th centuries, labour backed parties took root around Europe, including in the United Kingdom, Canada, Australia, Germany and most of Eastern Europe. In Africa, in addition to contributing towards the liberation struggle, labour backed parties again emerged in the late 1990s, sprucing the democratisation process in countries such as Zambia and Zimbabwe. The contribution of labour to democratisation in South Africa was also enormous (Calenzo, 2009).

3.5 Criticism of the dichotomy between OSM and NSM

The dichotomy between OSM and NSM, while plausible, has not gone without criticism. The first claim made by proponents of NSM is that they are different from the OSM with regards to the period when they came into existence. However, critics such as Pichardo, (1997) contend that the so called NSM are not new at all as movements concerned with non-economic issues existed in the industrial era. Calhoun (1993) posits that even before the mid 20th century, there were other mobilisations other than for wages. These focused on women, working children, the status of immigrants, education and access to public services. Temperance, vegetarianism and cooperatives were also areas common with social movements. Therefore, NSM activities and ideologies that are used to distinguish them from OSM are not new. In the same light OSM that focus on economic materialism are still very much in existence today. Labour and student movements waging struggles for better economic policies, employment and access to education are still abound (Calenzo, 2009). NSM that still retain materialist struggles are common in South Africa, for example Abahlali BaseMjondolo, Landless People's

Movement, and South Africa Unemployed People's Movement. This is to the extent that there is no evidence to suggest that NSM are a product of the post industrial society.

Further, there is a huge overlap between NSM and OSM activities to the extent that an attempt to distinguish between the two is superfluous. Rootes (1990) argues that such an attempt is just "a mere academic parasitism." According to Buechler (1995), so called NSM focusing on issues such as women, ethnic minorities, or peace, all have important historical predecessors that span back to the twentieth and sometimes nineteenth centuries. Tarrow (1991) also posits that groups classified as NSM have grown out of pre-existing organisations but this history is obscured by the new social movement discourse. Consequently there is more continuity between OSM and NSM than is typically implied.
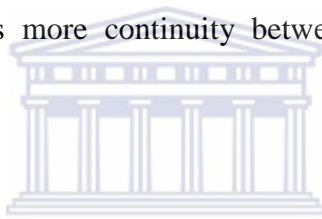
Proponents of the NSM perspective such as Habermas (1987) also point out that these movements do not involve themselves with state politics but mobilise public opinion to gain leverage. However, many NSM have not only become institutionalised but also get involved with political parties and public institutions. Such movements as the Treatment Aids Campaign (TAC) in South Africa began as social movements but have become significantly institutionalised

Buechler (1995), states that advocates of NSM contend that they are not political and are uninstitutionalised. However, all movements are basically political and do take explicit or implicit political stances even if they opt out of the contestation for political power. Further to this social movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe for example, have become institutionalised as they seek to ensure continuity in their struggles for women's

rights, animal rights, social justice and peace. Organisations such as Black Sash and the Progressive Women's Movement in South Africa and the Women of Zimbabwe Arise (WOZA) are typical social movements that have institutionalised to ensure consistency and uninterrupted supply of energy towards seeking social change.

Bayat (2005) reminds us that the version of NSM being post industrial and focusing on non materialistic issues is very Euro-centric. His argument is that many social movements that will fall in the NSM category have emerged in the developing world countries such as in Muslim societies and other socio religious environments which are not accounted for by the NSM. Even movements such as the Green Belt movement in Kenya and Social Justice Coalition in South Africa are clearly contemporary NSM occurring outside a post industrial society. Therefore the concept of NSM is being explained from a Western society's perspective.
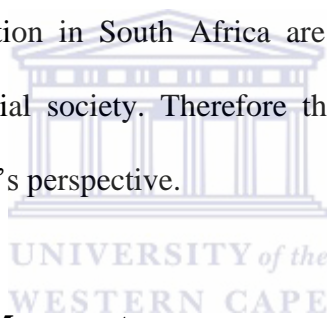
3.6   Trade Unions as Social Movements

This study considers COSATU and ZCTU as social movement for a number of reasons. The first characteristic that makes the two unions social movements is that they use both institutional and extra institutional practices beyond the workplace to reach the state in pursuit of socio economic justice, a key feature of social movements (King and Soul, 2007; McAdam, 2002; Burstein and Linton, 2002, Saunders, 2013). That is, these trade unions utilise both formal institution means (such as formal bargaining, meetings, negotiations, lobbying parliament, litigation, political alliances) and informal means (such as demonstrations, strikes, boycotts) to gain support for worker economic justice.

Second, the two labour social movements press for broad scale social and economic change in society rather than confine themselves to work place issues as means to further their working conditions. They see a positive relationship between the political system, macro-policy and improved standards of living (Siedman, 1994). According to Ross (2007:16),

> *"Social (movement) unionism, generally understood to involve both engagement with social justice struggles beyond the workplace and methods of union activity beyond the collective bargaining process, is claimed to increase the labour movement's organising capacity, bargaining power, and social and political weight".*

The perception of increased political weight is real. COSATU's predecessor, the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU) argued that it entered politics because the existing apartheid laws controlled workers lives, hence the unions were to fight for political change, for without political change, and there would be no gains for the factory worker (Friedman, 1987:127).
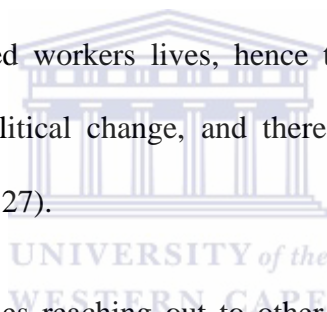
Third, Parker (2008:566) identifies reaching out to other social groups (alliances and networks) and pursuing broad social justice aims as a key future of social movement trade unionism. She identifies the basis of alliance and networks as diverse and argues that such,

> *"(alliances) may be primarily class-based, "other" identity-based or reflect opposition to more general forces, while recognising that political and economic issues are connected and that union and other social movement constituent profiles have become increasingly diverse as working and social patterns alter".*

In this context, COSATU and the ZCTU have not only fought for workplace justice but for the general socio-economic welfare of the societies in which they are found. In so doing they have also allied with other social groups at grassroots levels, urban centres, regionally and internationally (Pillay, 2013). The social movement character of

COSATU enabled a broad alliance with other social movements in the fight to overthrow apartheid (Bezuidenhout, 2000:23) and advance worker constituency interests. These included the ANC and the United Democratic Front (UDF). COSATU (1999) argued that it took a deliberate strategy to be a broad social movement. It formed deliberate alliances with the UDF and its mass-based affiliates to launch a relentless campaign against apartheid and the NP government. It notes that COSATU cadres were in the front rows of the alliance marchers in the cities, in the dusty streets of townships, villages and rural areas to demand a free, non-racial, democratic and non-sexist South Africa. It has also entered alliance with the ANC and other social groups in post apartheid South Africa to fight neo-liberal policies and to promote provision of welfare and basic needs of citizens (Ranchod, 2007:8-9). In Zimbabwe, the ZCTU has allied with other groups including women, student, academic, professionals, business, lawyers and residents in an attempt to bring political change (Taundi, 2010; Ploch, 2010).
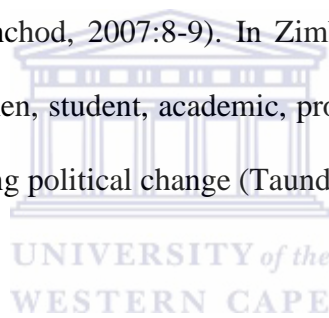
3.7   Trade Unions and Elections

Trade union social movements fight for a democratic political structure because it is a system that is believed to enable the holding of free, fair and transparent elections. Such elections if conducted enable unions to bear significant influence on the leadership choices that are made, and subsequently, the policy choices that are adopted.

3.7.1 Selection of Governments

In democracies, periodic election of political leaders is conducted under conditions of universal suffrage with civil and political freedoms enjoyed by all citizens. Where polities approximate these conditions, the rules of the game provide powerful incentives for office-seeking incumbents and challengers alike to compete for voters' approval in

the electoral contest. Democracies are believed to provide the means through which populations can peacefully and regularly oust inept, inefficient and corrupt governments, through elections. At the same time it is assumed that democracies facilitate mechanism for people to keep more efficient, successful regimes, thus tending to make the quality of governance on average higher in the long run (Adel, 2003). Sen (2001:152)) captures the essence of citizen control in democracies by comparing it to authoritarianism and arguing that,

> *"considering the effects of democracy relative to authoritarian regimes: we have to consider the political incentives that operate on governments and on the persons and groups that are in office. The rulers have the incentive to listen to what people want if they have to face their criticism and seek their support in elections".*

Thus election processes are vehicles through which political power is retained or pursued and social differences are highlighted in a democracy (Sisk, 2008).

As a result of the power of the ballot box, some social movements including labour choose to be open allies and proponents of particular political parties in democracies. Active social movements support of given political parties is intended to gain supporters in legislatures and executive offices. In as much as groups representing business and other elites have been successful in allying themselves, and becoming active promoters of their preferred political parties, social movements of the poor can also support politicians and parties who pledge to address their concerns (Domike, 2008:12). In its quest to overturn the apartheid political system, COSATU for example argued that,

> *"The 1994 elections were largely about the realisation of our dream to rid South Africa of apartheid - a system that was declared a "crime against humanity" by the United Nations. It was about winning a type of freedom that will make a real difference to the lives of ordinary workers and the poor. The Reconstruction and Development Programme represent that vision. Based on this programme, and the commitment to radically transform our country in all spheres of life, we called on all workers and their families to vote for the ANC".*

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In a democracy, the general relationship between social movements and political parties can also take other forms. These also include; lobbying political parties to push their (social movements) general interests and specific policy demands; staging forums that debate or answer questions about political party policies; produce individuals who become party activists and candidates; and more importantly, mobilise voters for political parties (USAID, 2004:9). At election time they may conduct voter education programs that encourage voting in general and/or voting for certain political parties or they may engage in party-specific campaign activities. COSATU for example, engaged in massive mobilisation of workers to vote for the ANC in the 1994, 1999, 2004 and 2009 elections (Lodge, 1999; Shilowa, 1997; Barchiesi, 1999; Southall and Wood, 1999; COSATU CEC Political Discussion paper, 2004; Pillay, 2008). It argued that it has proven that it can play a central role in national elections (COSATU, CEC Political Discussion Paper, 2004). Despite being courted by other political parties in a bid to win workers votes, COSATU argued that other political parties opportunistically (and embarrassingly) declare support for some of its demands but still oppose its overall strategy for social and economic transformation (COSATU CEC Political Discussion paper, 2002), and therefore will not receive its support. Labour social movements thus believe that through the vote carrot in elections they can influence the course of democratisation, socio-economic and political policies of governments in their favour. They fight for the democratisation of the political space in order to create conditions that are conducive to influencing the affairs of the state via elections.

However as mobilisation theory states that in order to convert voting strength into actual political power a group must also be able to maximise voter registration and voter
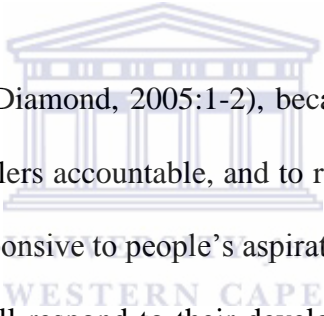
turnout, develop institutional structures for recruiting supportive candidates for public office, and mobilise support for such candidates. Once supportive candidates have been elected, the group must develop a system to hold them accountable to the group (Walters, 2005:24). Thus voter turnout can be a strong factor of movement mobilisation. In the context of elections, once candidates of these movements have been voted into public office, good governance is promoted through regular influence on public policy and decision making; checking on state performance and agencies; promoting social justice and the rule of law.

Further, electoral campaigns often provide umbrellas under which the movements legitimately mobilise and apply collective action forms and frames that have grown out of more contentious interactions (McAdam and Tarrow, 2010). Reactive electoral mobilisation which involves escalating protest in the wake of an election is also available to social movements. COSATU and ZCTU social movements have resorted to these to make their presence felt (newzimbabwe.com – 11/12/2009). This is because voters are assumed to be motivated by securing government policies that are most favourable to their own interests. Hence social movements frame and market ideas that seem supportive of voter aspirations. Accordingly, and in response parties formulate election programmes containing policy initiatives in order to win votes because voters will (other things being equal) vote for the party that adopts policies closest to their own preferences (Thomson, 2001).

3.7.2 *Making policy choices*

Conducting elections, constituting parliaments, and forming governments are not just about who wins the nominal choice, but they are about what policy actions to take

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(McDonald, 2004). McDonald further posits that the minimalist purpose of elections is to make power-holding conditional upon the expressed nominal preferences of the public. Power-seekers get what they want, power, if and only if the people get what they want, good public policy. In other words, elections make power-holding provisional and policy making efficient. They are an orderly, regularised, and omnipresent threat to withdraw consent. Anticipating accountability considerations among voters and competition for office, politicians attempt to act with "responsiveness" to critical mass audiences. They deliver benefits and position that appeal to the audience so as to advance their chances for election or re-election. It is this logic that trade union social movements also appeal to in their demands.

Hence, democracy is important (Diamond, 2005:1-2), because it enables the people, at periodic intervals, to hold their rulers accountable, and to replace the government of the day if it fails to enact policies responsive to people's aspirations. Elections enable people to choose representatives who will respond to their developmental needs and concerns and monitor government and hold it to account on an on-going basis. When citizens are provided a direct "voice" in political life; society's trust of and willingness to cooperate with the state in achieving development is strengthened.

Citizens in a democracy have two ways to gain the attention of government to their concerns and to influence public decision making, that is, to be effectively engaged with their government. They can join and cast their votes for political parties and their candidates that support their views. They can also form or join organisations of like-minded citizens to represent them in the political forum and in public debate on issues

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they consider important (Bezuidenhout, 2000:364). Therefore COSATU and ZCTU rely on the accountability mechanism of elections to draw policy makers to their corner.

3.8   Trade Unions, Elections and Living Wages

In theory, the promise of democracy from the point of view of progressive economic development follows from a very simple argument advanced by the rational choice model of voting (sometimes called the public choice theory) (Geys, 2006). Bwana (2008) posits that in a democracy, individuals are assumed to make orderly choices that reflect their personal preferences and desires. Individual voters do not just vote for the sake of voting, but choose a party which comes closest to their own interests, values and priorities. For example if the poor are numerous such as in societies like South Africa and Zimbabwe, parties compete for electoral support by adopting policies that favour the interests of the poor. This in principle makes it possible for a political party representing the interests of the disadvantaged to acquire substantial political influence in a democracy. And we should expect that government policy will seek to accommodate the economic interests of the poor in this regard.

When trade unions in countries such as South Africa and Zimbabwe played an important role in the struggle for the independence of their respective countries, and collaborated closely with nationalist parties, the rationale of such support was based on the view that democracy would guarantee greater freedom for union action and would promote development and consequently better life and work conditions for their members.

Consequently in democracies or in the case of struggles for democracy, this research argues that the labour social movement see a strong relationship between elections and

living wages. Labour social movements individually or in coalition, work to exert influence on political positions prior to elections, during elections and after elections (McAdam and Tarrow, 2010) . The intention is to ensure that party and government policy positions are pay back for the voting workers. Burstein and Linton (2002, 381-2) alerts us to the fact that,

> *"political parties, interest groups, and social movement organizations (SMOs) strongly influence public policy. These political organisations define public problems, propose solutions, aggregate citizens' policy preferences, mobilise voters, make demands of elected officials, communicate information about government action to their supporters and the larger public, and make relatively coherent legislative action possible".*

On the other hand, anticipating accountability considerations among voters and competition for office, political candidates and their parties tend to try to act with responsiveness to critical social movement audiences such as labour. They deliver benefits and position that appeal so as to advance their chances for election or re-election. As highlighted previously, a democratic political structure provides for constant scrutiny of power elite by the electorate. This is because governments and political parties are not only concerned with implementing policies in response to economic problems, but also with the outcomes of elections (Hamann, 2007). If the policies that are implemented are widely unpopular, ineffective, or even disastrous, it will diminish the chances of the governing party or government to get re-elected.

The policy and interest link between the political leadership and the voter enables an exchange relationship between citizens and politicians. Voters temporarily grant politicians the right to rule and enjoy the spoils of office in exchange for benefits and services (policies) that accrue to their constituencies.

If the policies are successful and viewed favourably by the majority of the voters, the likelihood of political leadership re-election are heightened. The disadvantage of this is that this poses a dilemma for parties that are committed to pass unpopular policies and yet want to be re-elected (Hamann and Kelly, 2011:26; Hamann, 2007). For example, in the context of labour support it can be argued that implementing monetarist policies, including wage restraint and restrictive welfare state policies, is one such situation where governments perceive the need for unpopular reform, yet want to minimise potential electoral repercussions.

In his writing, Hamann (2007) alerts us to the fact that there are potential electoral costs associated with the implementation of unpopular policies. Implementation of neo-liberal reforms in South Africa and Zimbabwe were followed by significant social movement upheavals (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). The reforms increasingly increased the cost of living and eroded income gains, salaries and skyrocketing retrenchments. In Zimbabwe such austerity measures and their failure catapulted the formation of a labour based political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC).

Thus having tenaciously worked to consolidate democracy, voters in various social movement blocs hold governments accountable for their economic policies and accordingly engage in what may be called "economic voting" (Powell and Whitten, 1993). Numerous studies have found that the economy matters to voters. According to Franzese, Jr, (2002), voting patterns are based on ideological positions which the electorate think are favourable to them. He further notes that voting is also based on the potential of proposed party policies to ameliorate certain injustices in societies.

The positive linkage between politicians and voters breaks down when politicians cannot deliver what voters demand or when politicians cannot convince voters that they should demand what politicians are prepared to deliver to them. The voter believes that the leadership will now be lacking accountability and will take action against it. Highlighting the power of the voter's electoral choices, Kitschelt, et al (2009:742) state that,

> *"Political accountability identifies a relationship between citizens (subjects) as "principals" and political representatives and decision-makers as "agents". Politicians who make binding decisions over the rules of conduct and the allocation of scarce resources in a polity are responsive to principals when they deliver benefits such constituencies value. Politicians' responsiveness (is) based on the ability of the subjects to hold them effectively accountable for their actions, i.e. replace them by competing politicians, when the original set of politicians fails to be responsive".*

This scenario explains why for example the apartheid government and the UDI governments lost the democratic elections in 1994 and 1980 respectively. Citizens withdrew their support because they believed that the policy choices of the two governments were at variance with their aspirations. In the same vein, political parties that did not seem to advance the interests of the workers lost that constituency's votes. For example, COSATU argued that,

> *"What do the opposition parties say to workers? All opposition parties including the UDM, IFP, NNP and DP plan to deregulate the labour market or create a "flexible labour market" as outlined in their manifestos. What does this mean in simple terms? It means these parties want to take South Africa back to an era where pregnant women had to lie about their pregnancies for fear of being fired because they were not protected; where employers can easily bash unions; and to an era of cheap labour where workers are paid a pittance rather than a living wage" (*http://www.COSATU.org.za/show.php?ID=2248*)*.

The collapse of citizen-politician linkages of political accountability is an ever present phenomenon in democracies and triggers major policy shifts or political change. When such a relationship occurs, both "subjects and principals" develop new alliances either

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with different groups or maintain an altered relationship. Elections are responsible for shaping or reshaping the relationships. Labour social movements thus effectively speak for non-rich by rewarding political allies and punishing political enemies (Zullo, 2008) whose policies are at variance with their aspirations. In this way they have shown commitment to advancing the interests of union and non-union wage earners through longstanding advocacy of such causes as workplace safety, fair wage and hour standards, national health care, and social insurance.

However, Jauch (2003) observes that Southern Africa's trade unions often have to articulate the aspirations not only of industrialised workers but also of the poor in general. As an organised force with a significant social base, trade unions play an important role beyond the workplace. They hold that a consistent defence of their members' interests over the long term requires them to work for people's overall well-being. Hence in framing their vision of society, they include elements such as political, social and industrial democracy, civil and democratic rights for all, and the elimination of poverty, equality and the rule of law. In this respect, they can legitimately claim to be serving the interests of society generally (Gallin, 2000). Labour will thus rally voters against those prospective leaders whose vision seem not to target these issues, or whose policy position does not appear to offer an immediate remedy to these issues.

For example, COSATU and ZCTU supported the liberation political parties and once freedom was attained, the ruling parties repaid their support by providing for equal rights to organise. The governments also passed laws that buttressed fair treatment and equity on the job, reasonable working time and leave, occupational health and safety and

minimum pay for employees in poorly paid sectors, including domestic and farm workers (South African Human Rights Commission (2006).
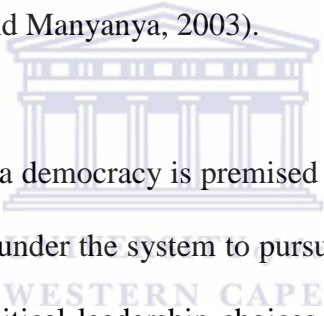
The existence of so many improvements is an indication of the success of the labour movement in achieving its goals and raises important issues about its visibility and strength in raising the standard of living for working people by influencing democratisation and the election of certain political parties whose promised policy position would mirror their (labour) demands. Among labour's common demands is the call to pay a "living wage".

In the context of living wages, the endeavour is for worker based social movements to align themselves with those political parties that favour wage adjustments that promote improved standards of living (Webster, 2007). History is also replete with coalitions among labour, community, and religious partners that confirm existence of a social movement involving numerous individuals and groups in sustained collective actions aimed at winning living-wages, pro-employee legislation and monitoring its enforcement after enactment (Parker, 2008).

Labour movements in the developing world also target annual wage increases to meet living wage demand and decent standards of living. South Africa provides one of such clearest examples. Brenner (2002) notes that COSATU launched a national living wage campaign in 1987. Its campaign included a call for a living wage for all workers; a 40-hour week; job security; May 1 and June 16 as paid public holidays; six months maternity leave; the right to decent education and training; and an end to the hostel system (Rees, 1995). Brenner (2002) further notes that due in part to the success of the

COSATU campaign the concept of living wage was formally incorporated into the ANC's post- apartheid RDP development policy. Regarding living wages, the RDP policy stated that the central goal for reconstruction and development was to create a strong, dynamic and balanced economy which would create productive employment opportunities at a living wage for all South Africans (RDP White Paper, 1994).

In Zimbabwe, the ZCTU has been at the forefront of a living wage campaign in the last three decades despite the country's political and economic turmoil. In fact the turmoil played a catalytic role in rejuvenating the labour movement arena as exemplified by numerous demonstrations by labour, students, women's' movements, the church and other community groups (Bond and Manyanya, 2003).

As such the quest for elections in a democracy is premised on the belief that movements can influence political leadership under the system to pursue policies favourable to their aspirations. The alliances and political leadership choices that the movements make at election time are premised on voting or mobilising votes. The understanding is that voting choices are based on policy positions of such competing political parties. The labour social movements will seek to influence the policy positions of contesting parties and innan election support the one whose policy position is likely to address their living wage concerns. The influence of labour is exerted through social movement unionism which is based on the application of various institutional and extra institutional practices or mechanisms. This study investigates the practices by COSATU and ZCTU used to influence elections which their memberships believe can lead to addressing of living wage issues (see Figure 3.2 below).

Figure 3.2   Theoretical Framework
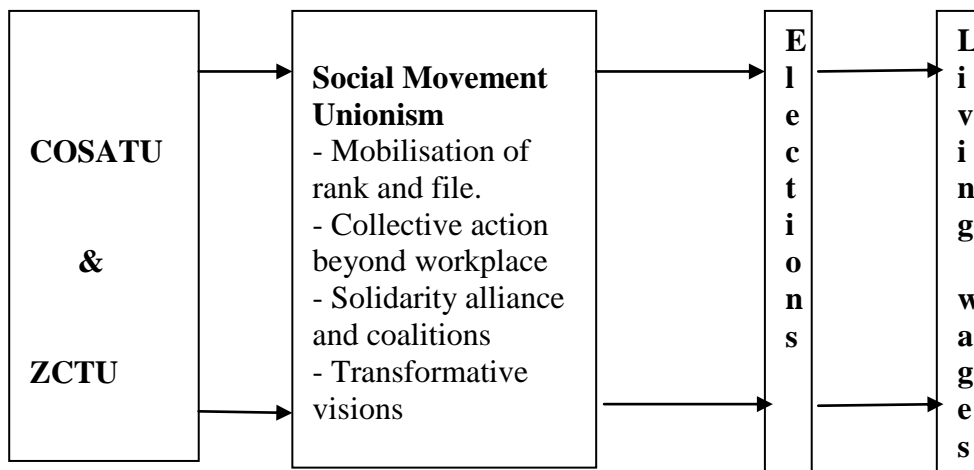
Based on the above diagram, the argument of this thesis is that the perception of COSATU and ZCTU members is that in the political processes, they can engage in practices that influence elections to favour an outcome that produces a leadership that is supportive of living wages.
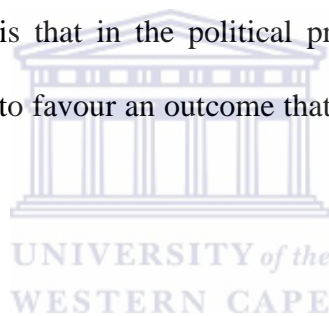
3.9   Summary

Social movements are to a large extent made up of informal groupings of individuals or organisations based on shared interests in the political and socio-economic sphere seeking to effect social change. For purposes of this study, the term social movement is defined as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others. Social movements often seek to reach their goals through SMOs that can lodge enduring struggles against the state system, through both formal and informal mechanisms. Social movements are known to have a lifecycle which covers four stages, namely social ferment, popular, formalisation and demise stages. In this study social movement unionism theory is used to understand COSATU and ZCTU practices. The study postulates that the perception of COSATU

and ZCTU members is that in the political processes, they can engage in practices that influence elections to favour an outcome that produces a leadership that is supportive of living wages.

CHAPTER 4

SOCIAL CONTEXT OF COSATU PRACTICES ON ELECTIONS AND LIVING WAGE ISSUES

4.0   Introduction

This chapter gives a synopsis of the social context of COSATU's social movement union practices on elections and living wages in apartheid and post apartheid South Africa. Social context is used here to refer to the country's socio-economic and political context that influences COSATU's social movement practices. In the preceding chapter we discussed why COSATU can be classified as a social movement. We noted that COSATU is an old social movement and mainly focuses on the material conditions of its members. In that chapter we also discussed how social movements link elections to policy outcomes and in particular how COSATU perceive the link between elections in a democracy and living wage issues. In this chapter, the study proceeds to analyse the social context of COSATU practices on elections and living wage issues. Primary structural conditions influencing these practices include legislative environment, economic performance, poverty and inequality. Although there are many other indicators that show the challenges that South African society is facing, only those that are referred to by labour in its everyday struggles will be discussed.

4.1   The Apartheid era social context

COSATU's social movement unionism was initially influenced by the apartheid era's socio-economic and political context. Despite having been formed in 1985, most of the factors that contributed to its formation have roots in the period from the inception of apartheid (Coleman, 1998). In particular, the apartheid system and the country's labour relations were inextricably intertwined. The apartheid system removed all workplace

and constitutional protection from the working majority (COSATU, 2009). Legislated racial separation and politics informed perspectives on poverty and poor wages. Labour perceived the way out of this predicament as vested in political change (Siedman, 1994). This realisation made COSATU to focus its struggle on fighting the apartheid system.

4.1.1   The Laws

The country's laws militated against a living wage for the workers. The 1910 creation of an independent white controlled South Africa created a virtual monopoly of political power by English and Afrikaans-speaking whites that alienated the majority of South Africans (Peters, 2004:537). The Apartheid system and laws aggressively pursued after 1948 offered total control of the state and resources to the whites (Thompson, 1990) and this had significant impact in influencing COSATU to adopt its socio-political character.

Subsequently, the adoption of the constitution of 1961 did not provide for coloured or African representatives in the country's Senate and House of Assembly. African representation was abolished in 1960, while coloured representation was abolished in 1968. This meant that the ordinary worker had no means to elect representatives of their choice. Revised in 1983, the constitution still maintained the exclusion of the black majority outside of state politics as they were denied political rights (Burdzik and Van Wyk, 1987). The revised 1983 constitution established a tri-cameral parliament which only extended political rights in central government to coloureds and Indians.

The Suppression of Communism Act, Act No 44 of 1950 banned collective organisation or movements. This meant that labour could not collectively make their claims for living wage policy changes. Communism was defined so broadly that a communist was any

person whom the state President felt was busy with promoting the objectives of communism (Act No.4 of 1950). COSATU (1999), states that the Suppression of Communism Act and anti-terrorism laws permitted the regime's security forces to systematically target trade union and workplace leaders. It argues that extrajudicial killings, unlawful detention, torture and other forms of cruel treatment were routinely used to suppress black workers opposed to apartheid and its appalling living conditions.

The Native Labour (Settlement of Disputes) Act of 1953 and the Native Labour Regulations Act provided the apartheid government with powers to limit access by Africans, to cities and restricted their vertical mobility (promotion or appointment to higher job positions) thereby making them survive on starvation wages (Motshekga, 2010). Hepple (1969:7) points out that these and other laws created a society in which black majority were pegged to poverty and servitude. May (2012:67) argues that apartheid policies and legislation were deliberately designed to extract cheap labour.
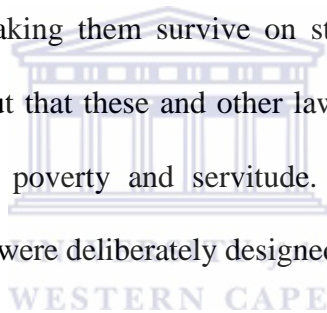
Further to this, apartheid limited direct labour market competition between blacks and whites (Lowenberg, 1997:62-63). Lowenberg notes that white labour and farming interests initially brought together in the Pact government of 1924, sought influx control and job reservation policies. White farmers for example benefited from legislation restricting geographical and occupational mobility of black labour because these restrictions increased the supply of rural workers, lowering agricultural wages.

The Industrial Conciliation Act completed the construction of the racially exclusive industrial system in South Africa by entrenching the racial division of workers, prohibiting the registration of new unions having both white and "coloured" members

and reserving certain work exclusively for "persons of specified race (Budeli, 2009:71). Though many of the Act's restrictions were reformed following the Wiehahn Commission of Inquiry, holding public trade union meetings remained highly restricted (Budeli, 2009).

The Bantu Authorities Act No. 68 (1951), the Promotion of Bantu Self-Government (1959) and the Bantu Homelands Constitution Act of 1971 established and consolidated African reserves, known as ``homelands.'' These homelands were considered to be independent states to which each African was assigned by the government according to the record of origin. All political rights, including voting, held by an African were restricted to the designated homeland. By virtue of belonging to this homeland they lost their citizenship in South Africa and any right of involvement with the South African Parliament. In this regard Africans living in the homelands needed passports to enter South Africa thereby becoming aliens in their own country. At the same time, the South African Parliament held complete hegemony over the homelands.

The Public Safety Act (1953) and the Criminal Law Amendment Act (1953) empowered the government to declare stringent states of emergency and increased penalties for protesting against or supporting the repeal of a law. These penalties included fines, imprisonment and whippings (Merrett, 2011).

Other Legislations such as the Population Registration Act, Act No 30 of 1950, Group Areas Act, Act No 41 of 1950, Prevention of Illegal Squatting Act, Act No 52 of 1951, Reservation of Separate Amenities Act, Act No 49 of 1953 and the Separate Representation of Voters Act, Act No 46 of 1951 affected the workers freedoms and

welfare in various ways. COSATU and its predecessors set out to challenge these pieces of legislation. All these provisions informed the circumstances in which the general membership of COSATU and the public that it also sought to represent found themselves by 1985. COSATU was formed with an objective of fighing for the removal of laws that facilitated continued segregation, poor living conditions and low wages.

4.1.2   Apartheid Wage System

The racially pegged wages under apartheid were very low Elarke, Macgregor and Saunderson (1989). It has been argued for example that for farm workers, the only limit on how low these wages could go was physical starvation (Kraak, 1993:36). Figure 4.1 below highlights the chronic racially pegged average wage levels at the time of COSATU's formation. The wages were biased against the blacks who formed over 70% of the country's population (see Fig 4.1).
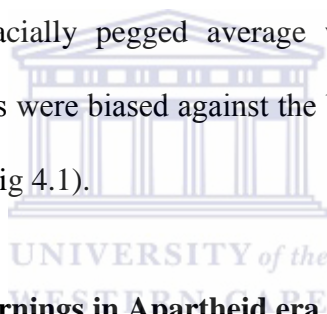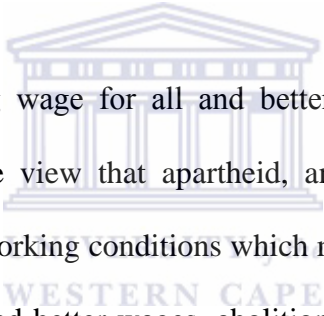
Figure 4.1 Average Monthly Earnings in Apartheid era
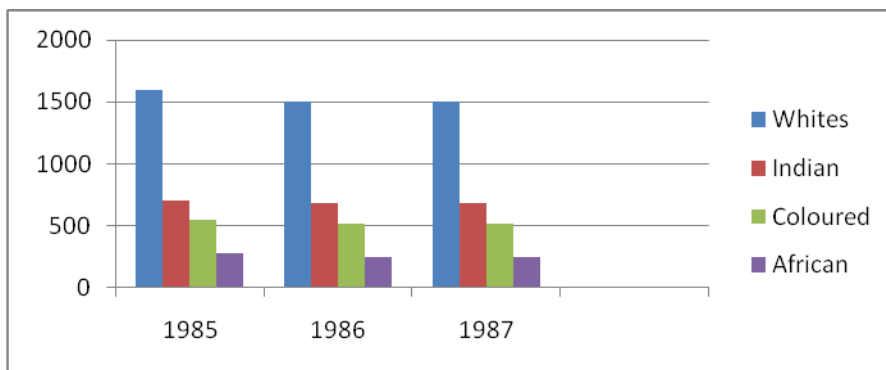
Source: Elarke, Macgregor and Saunderson (1989:110)

As a result of apartheid state employment policies it has been argued that business colluded by paying starvation wages, employed children on farms, used prison labour and refused to embrace black trade unions (SAPA, 1997). Jenkins and Thomas (2000:2) point out that up until 1970, job reservation for whites ensured that their protected employment ensured high wages for them and the crowding of the rest of the population

into low skilled, low paid jobs. Monopolistic employment practices in mining meant that black wages did not rise in nominal terms for about 50 years. Further, studies revealed that the real wages of Blacks were calculated to be a fifth of those of their white counter parts by the 1970s and this ratio rose to a third by the 1990s (Misra, 2008). Statistics collated by Bhorat, and Cassim (2004:9) also highlight that as a result of the reservation policies, Africans mainly occupied the unskilled and semi-skilled employment categories. For example, they note that African employees in this category constituted 89% in 1969; 80% by 1977 and 64% in the 1990s. At the time of COSATU's formation, wage levels, particularly for the black workers were thus pathetic (Elarke, MacGregor and Saunderson, 1989:110).

COSATU's demand for a living wage for all and better working conditions for its members therefore rested on the view that apartheid, and the politics of apartheid, underpinned the bad wages and working conditions which made up their members' lives. Subsequently, COSATU demanded better wages, abolition of segregation based wages and working conditions in every industry and sector through militant action (Hlanganani Basebenzi, 2005:29).

4.1.3 *Poverty and inequality*

Poverty refers to lacking enough food and income to meet all household needs (HSRC, 2006). It can be measured in relative terms, i.e. the status of some members in society relative to others; or a status of a person who is deprived of opportunities to realise human capabilities inherently given to him, including access to such public services as education and health (Sen, 1999). Poverty can also be measured in 'absolute terms', that is a status a person (or persons) whose material well being is below a certain minimum

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level deemed reasonable by the standards of a society to which he belongs (Hayami and Godo, 2005). In this study, poverty is defined in absolute terms. However, statistically,

> *"information collected in the Apartheid era is uneven and unreliable especially with regard to the African population. Legislation such as the Native Areas Amendment Bill and the Group Areas Act skewed official statistics and grossly underestimated the number of people living in cities amongst other things"* (SAHO, 2012).

StatsSA (2012) also acknowledges that the pre-1994 statistical system in South Africa was deeply distorted, with little data on the black African group that constituted over 70% of the population. However, May (2012:68) still notes that using the absolute approach to measuring poverty, by the mid 1980s when COSATU was formed, poverty rates for the rural areas designated for African settlement were estimated at about 75%, against 43% for the total population. By 1991, 50% of South Africans were estimated to be below the poverty datum line, 95% of them being African blacks (Bond, 2000:19). This implies that with their merger wages, the workers carried a bigger burden of supporting their families, many based in the rural areas.
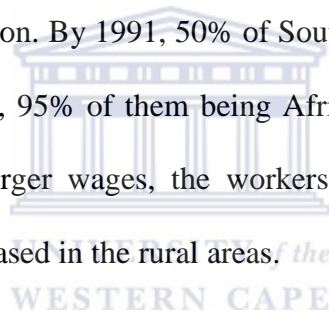
There is a relationship between poverty and inequality in society. When an individual is said to be poor, then there is another individual who is rich. Alternatively when income is unequal, it implies that some individuals are getting more income than others. In this sense poverty and inequality, go hand in hand. For example, an individual experiencing poverty is one who gets less share of income. Measurement of income inequality involves indicators such as the Gini coefficient which ranges from 0 (absolute equality) to 1 (absolute inequality). StatsSA (2008:34) notes that the lower the value of the Gini coefficient, the more equally household income is distributed. Apartheid South Africa's economic policies made it one of the most unequal societies in the world (see Table 4.1). The period following prior to the formation of COSATU and even after its formation

was characterised by ever rising income inequality. The table below (4.1) shows that it even rose from 0.51 in 1985 to 0.672 by 1993.

Table. 4.1 Inequality in apartheid South Africa (1985-1994)

Year	Gini coefficient
1985	0.51
1986	0.50
1987	0.48
1990	0.63
1991	0.68
1993	0.672
1994	0,665

Source: The Presidency Report (2009), StatsSA (2000), PSLSD.

In 1993, a year before liberation, the distribution of income or consumption of the lowest 20% of the South African population received 3.3% and the highest 20% received 63.3% and the highest 10% received 47.3% of the income (Kotze, 2000). These figures are extremely high, indicating a very skew distribution of income. The Gini coefficient seems to have increased in the 1990s. This is because the earlier calculations excluded the then homelands (which had even higher levels of poverty) which were considered to be outside South Africa. StatsSA (2012), notes that independent Bantustans had their own national statistical branch offices but with little statistical capacity to speak of. Such high levels of inequality affected the majority of the population and the workers. COSATU's social movement unionism focused on forcing the state to address this problem.

4.1.4   Economic Growth

Poverty and inequality were also exacerbated by a decelerating economy during this period when COSATU was formed and was active against the minority regime. DFID (n.d) notes that existing empirical evidence has generally concluded that changes in economic growth make a much greater contribution to poverty reduction than other measures such as the redistribution of income. There is a lot of evidence suggesting that

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the poor benefit from increasing aggregate income while they suffer from recession (Sonmerz, 2009:626).

According to DFID (n.d.) existing studies (such as in Ghana and India) have shown that countries with higher growth rates experienced fast poverty reduction rates even if some researchers argue that there is no strong evidence that growth makes the income distribution more or less equal (Sonmerz, 2009, p.626). Income inequality is not always a cause for concern in the context of fast growth and poverty reduction. South Africa's economic growth slowed in the late 1970s and the early 1980s, reducing average annual GDP growth for the 1980s to only 1.5 percent (see figure 4.2). However, poverty remained high. Negligible growth in the 1980s resulted in an overall decline in living conditions to the extent that the average individual, real wealth by 1990 was no higher than it had been in 1970 (StatsSA, 1994). In fact as Figure 4.2 shows, the economy was effectively in recession from 1989 to 1993 and registering only a weak positive growth in 1993 (StatsSA, 1998). This scenario compounded the regime's policy of keeping black wages low thereby further negatively impacting on basic needs of the majority of workers. This provoked COSATU protests and condemnation.

Figure 4.2   Economic Growth, Poverty and Inflation (1985-1994)
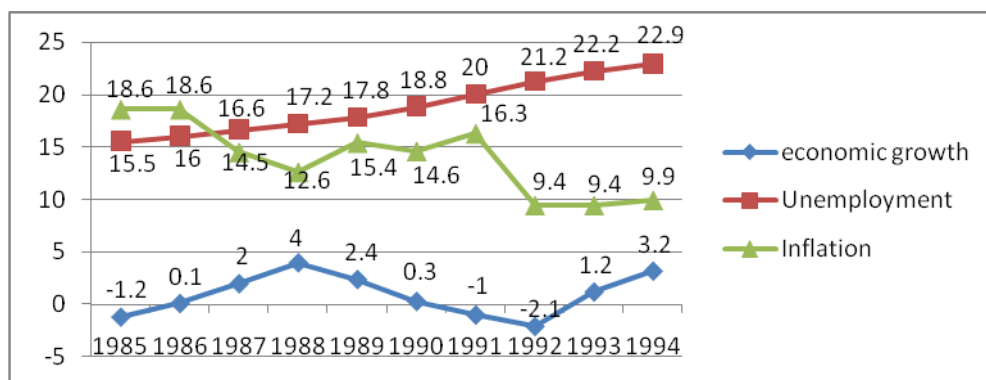
Source: author's calculations based on data of various years from SARB

4.1.5 Unemployment

However, high inequality, poverty, a decelerating economy and rising inflation between 1985 and 1993 were not the only maladies of this period that impacted on COSATU's practices. During the period 1985 to 1993, unemployment levels also increased. Two definitions of unemployment are used in South Africa – the strict and the expanded definition. Both definitions include people aged 15 years and above who are not employed but available for work (StasSA, 1998; Kruppe, et al, 2007). However the strict definition requires that a given individual has taken specific steps to seek employment in the four weeks prior to a given point in time. On the other hand the expanded definition focuses on the desire to work, regardless of whether or not the person has taken active steps to find work. The unemployment statistics calculated in this study are based on the strict definition of unemployment.
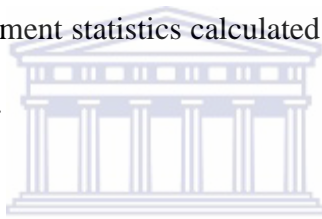
Figure 4.3 shows the pattern of official unemployment growth as recorded by the then Central Statistical Services Department. It is important however to point out that these figures excluded the homelands that had even higher numbers of unemployed. In fact van der Berg and Bhorat (1999) contend that between 1976 and 1990, the number of those without formal sector jobs increased by 32%. By 1994, about half of the economically active population are estimated to have been unable to find formal sector employment. Unemployment was very high except for the white population (see Figure 4.3). Growing unemployment translates into a higher incidence of poverty and general social degradation amongst the affected groups. For COSATU this not only affected part of its constituency who were the unemployed masses but meant the burden of the few employed and poorly paid workers increased.

Fig. 4.3. Unemployment in South Africa (1994)
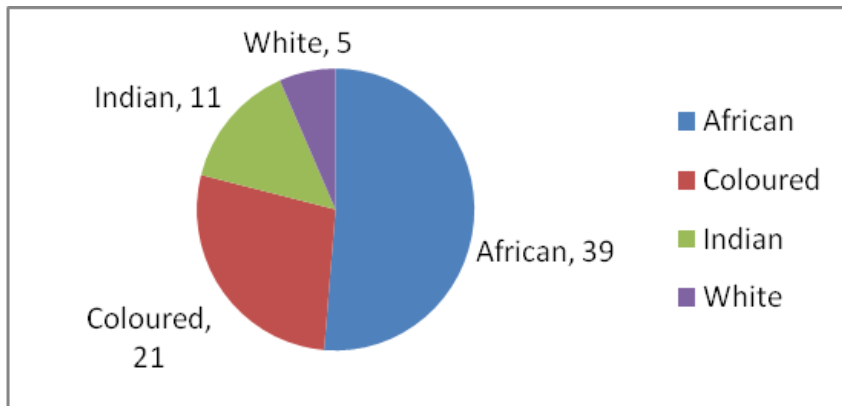
Source: Statistics on Living Standards and Development (PSLD), 1994

4.1.6   Other social policies

Further to this, apartheid social service policies caused a lot of hardships to the segregated population. Roads and rail lines favoured white rural producers and urban commuters providing cheap labour. In the urban areas, the cheap labour was often forced to live a great distance from industrial and commercial centres through the Group Areas Act. As a result, they were forced to spend a lot more of their income on transport (May, 1998), thereby eating more into their already below living wage incomes.

Apartheid also had a serious gender exploitation mechanism through the system of migrant labour. Women were left to look after needs of school children. While migrant workers returned to the family after falling ill or upon reaching the age of retirement. According to Bond (2004:9),

> *"migrant 'tribal natives' were not, when young, supported by companies in the form of school fees or taxes for government schools to teach workers' children. When sick or disabled, those workers were often shipped back to their rural homes until ready to work again. When the worker was ready to retire, the employer typically left him a pittance, such as a cheap watch, not a pension that allowed the elderly to survive in dignity. The subsidy covering child-rearing, recuperation and old age was provided by rural African women".*

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Thus exclusions generated by the apartheid system were intense and led to wide spread social problems which caused COSATU to challenge this political system.

Furthermore, the nature of education and training kept the majority in the lower rungs of formal sector jobs and low income. In higher education, the system was designed to produce the administrative corps for the separate development bureaucracies and to assist in the class formation of a black petit bourgeoisie that would collaborate in the project of separate development (Badat, 1999, p.54). The training of professional occupations (teaching, social work, nursing, medicine etc) was to be directed towards meeting the needs of the black population, particularly those in Bantustans.

4.1.7 The 1987 Whites only Election

Due to its belief that elections give a government a stamp of approval on its policies amidst its social movement character, COSATU allied with the United Democratic Front (UDF) and the National Education Crisis Committee (NECC) to embark on a two-day stay away between 5 and 6 May 1987, protesting against the white only general election on 6 May. An estimated 2,5 million people responded to the call. The apartheid government pointed out that it was disturbed by the fact that the trade union was moving deeper into the political terrain and warned that it would react firmly to efforts to politicise the labour movement if "unhealthy" developments occur (Chicago Tribune, July 19, 1987).

Indeed as per its warning in response to the 1987 elections protest COSATU House was rocked by two massive bomb blasts. Across the country, activists were killed, beaten, imprisoned, and tortured (Daily Maverick, 7 May, 2012). However, 6 May 1987 became

the last time South Africa's white population voted in a racially exclusive parliamentary general election as it later conceded to pressure from COSATU and other movements.

After the 1987 whites only elections, COSATU continued to fight for a democratic South Africa, that it argued should be characterised by a "high wage, low cost economy" (Lodge, 1999). It aligned itself with the ANC and supported it in the 1994 first democratic elections on the understanding that when in power, it will be a party of the working poor.

4.2   COSATU Social Context (1994-2004)

4.2.1 The 1994 first democratic elections

The 1994 elections were the first multiparty, multiracial, based on universal suffrage and a non-racial and democratic constitution in South African history. Faull and February (2012) contend that,

> *"in the run-up to the 1994 poll, COSATU played an important role in voter education and in informing the content and ideological trajectory of the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) which served in 1994 as the ANC's election manifesto. COSATU also played a crucial role in the campaign, complementing and assisting the ANC effort through its considerable infrastructure".*

In 1994, COSATU essentially contributed to organisational capacity in devoting personnel and resources to the election campaign, conducting voter education programmes and canvassing voters for an ANC victory (Visser, 2007). Shilowa (1997) stated that COSATU convened workers forums, released its leadership and shop stewards for the election campaign - thereby contributing resources for a successful outcome in the elections built around the ANC. COSATU argued that its support for the ANC was due to the ANC`s history and track record of struggle against apartheid oppression and exploitation. It also supported the ANC based on its adoption of the

Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP). The RDP was expected to evoke redistributive measures to create sustainable and better paying jobs. As such COSATU backed a government that would locate the needs of the working class at the centre of its development policy.

The establishment of democracy brought fundamentally improved political conditions for the majority. For the first time, the majority enjoyed the right to vote and the full range of mechanism that enabled them to participate in government. Since COSATU fought for a change in the political system, from apartheid to democracy, it believed that conditions were now conducive to making demands on living wage policy that is favourable to its constituency.

COSATU argued that in the new dispensation, its main agenda would be to unite all workers so that they could primarily and collectively improve their wages, working conditions and defend their jobs (James, 2014). COSATU (1999) observed that the class structure of South Africa would for a long time remain the same because the country was still fundamentally a capitalist society. According to COSATU, existing social classes in the system would jostle for control of the democratic state and set its agenda in a particular way (Ntshalintshali, 2001). Hence it stated that it would proactively align with political parties that tended to support its calls to adopt policies that address worker demands including a living wage.

4.2.2 The Laws

COSATU played a significant role in shaping the post apartheid South African constitution. It argued that its objective was to ensure that the people are at the centre of governance (Ntshalintshali, 2001). In the constitution, labour secured high concessions

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to the extent that, Business South Africa, the National Party, the Democratic Party and the Inkatha Freedom Party appealed to the Constitutional Court arguing that workers had been given too many rights under the new Constitution. They stated that for this reason, the new Constitution should not be found to be in compliance with the principles agreed upon during the Codesa negotiations (COSATU, 1996). The Constitution, read in conjunction with the Electoral Act allows all South African citizens over the age of 18 who are registered voters to vote in elections. This provision has been a critical component allowing COSATU to mobilise as many voters around its own cause. The Labour Relations Act (1995) is one of the most critical instruments after the constitution, whose provisions COSATU fought for. Unlike the Industrial Conciliation Act and the apartheid era Labour Relations Act it now benefits the workers in a number of ways. COSATU (1999) itself acknowledged the strength of the Act in facilitating its objectives including influencing elections and living wage campaigns. COSATU contends that the Act strengthens the organisational rights of workers. It protects workers in legal strikes; promotes centralised bargaining and therefore unity of workers into powerful industrial unions. The Act covers all workers including historically excluded public service workers, farm and domestic workers; curtails arbitrary action by employers and gives workers a right to take solidarity action. All this promotes worker mobilisation. In conjunction with the Basic Conditions of Employment Act (1997), this gain supports COSATU's quest for a living wage.

The Basic Conditions of Employment Act deals specifically with minimum conditions of employment, including an employee's right to annual leave, sick leave and maternity leave. It introduced a 45-hour working week and details the rate of pay for overtime and public-holiday work. Its aim is to impose minimum conditions of employment on

employers and to protect employees from malpractice by employers. Employers who are found guilty of contravening these minimum conditions may be prosecuted. This Act, also encourages designated employers to implement affirmative action measures for people from designated (or previously disadvantaged) groups; created a framework to address income inequality prevalent in South Africa and prohibits unfair discrimination on the basis of gender, race, sexual orientation, women and people with disabilities.

4.2.3   *Poverty and inequality*

Most studies have revealed that levels of poverty increased between 1994 and 2004 (Stats SA, 2002; van der Berg and Louw, 2003; World Bank, 1997; Kotze, 2000; van der Berg, et al, 2005). StatsSA (2002) figures indicate that during the 1994-1999 period, average, households in the bottom expenditure quintile spent only 3% of the total annual expenditure in the country, while households in the top expenditure quintile spend as much as 64% of the total expenditure. Thus the level of poverty continued to run deep among the working constituency during this period. Based on the below calculations (Figure 4.4) it can be established that on average 52% of South Africans lived in poverty between 1994 and 2004.

Figure 4.4 South Africa Growth, Poverty and Unemployment (1994-2004)
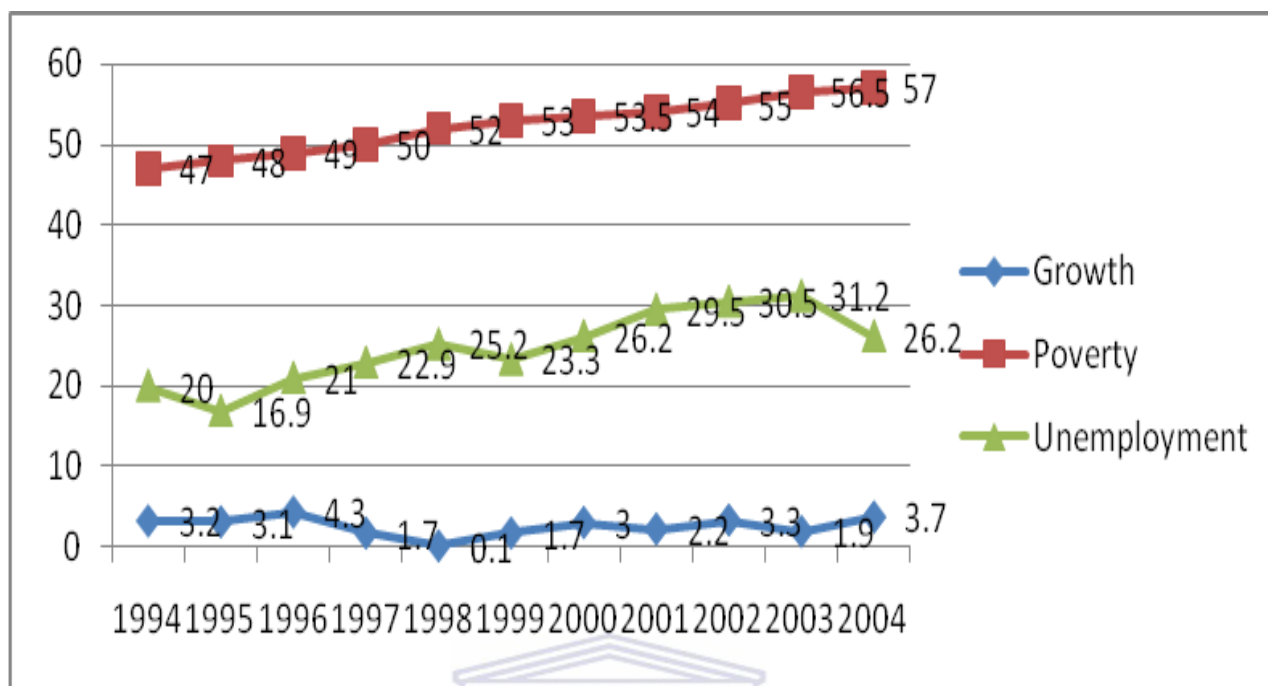
Further, the Gini Coefficient during the period 1994-2004 reflected a highly unequal society (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2   South Africa Growth, Poverty and Unemployment (1994-2004)

Year	Gini coefficient
1994	0.665
1995	0.674
1996	0.678
1997	0.674
1998	0.683
1999	0.685
2000	0.682
2001	0.685
2002	0.670
2003	0.686
2004	0.678

Stats SA's Income and Expenditure Survey (IES2000) highlights that there was a deterioration in economic position of the low income and the poor in the 1990s.

Seekings, et al, (2004), Hoogeveen and Ozler, (2006), Leibbrandt, et al (2011) and Van der Berg et al (2006) all have acknowledged that overall inequality rose through the 1994-2004 period. Income of the poor seems not to have kept pace with income of the rising income of the rich few. As shown in Table 4.4 the Gini coefficient for the period between 1995 and 1999 increased. While there were minute variations in the subsequent five years, inequality remained exceeding high. In 2007, the UNDP ranked South Africa as being the 14th most populous in terms of the numbers of people living on less than PPP\$2 out of 99 countries for which poverty measurements were reported (UNDP, 2009). In 1995, the poorest 20% of households received 1.9% of total income while in 2000, the poorest 10% of households received 1.6% of total income (StatsSA, 2000; StatsSA, 2002). Further, the top 10% of households earned 45%.1% of all income. In other words 90% of households in 1995 received 53.2% of the total income, while five years later in 2000, 90% of households received 54.9%. The household share of national income among the 60% per cent of poorest households fell from 17% in 1995 to 15% in 2000 with the biggest decline amongst the poorest households (StatsSA, 2001). StatsSA (2002) concluded that given these statistics, the poorest households earned slightly less in 2000 than in 1995. The Taylor Commission Report (2000) found that 65 per cent of South Africans lived below the poverty datum line.

In 2004, the IES2005 established that income in the previous 5 years had remained highly unequal. The poorest 40% of the population accounted for less than 7% of household income and the poorest 20% accounted for less than 1.5% of income (StatsSA, 2008). McKinley and Veriava, (2005:8-9) in fact contend that this was a result of the GEAR policy which reinforced the class inequalities and social unevenness inherited from apartheid South Africa. It impacted negatively on the lives of those South

Africans most in need of socio-economic redress. They note that under GEAR, there were massive job losses; increased income and class inequality; lack of access to, and affordability of basic socio-economic services such as water, electricity, housing and education; lack of land redistribution; and, declining levels of social services as a result of privatisation of state assets. COSATU argued that the GEAR approach generated the very same social and economic conditions that prevailed under apartheid (Vavi, 1997; Peet, 2002:75). Further, it argued that society particularly the working class and the poor carried the cost of conservative economic policy (Harsh, 2001).

4.2.4 Economic Growth

Noting from figure 4.4 above, the economy grew by an average 2.56% per year between 1994 and 2004. In relative terms this was an improvement from the 1985-1993 period where the economy was effectively in recession between 1989 and 1993. However this level of economic growth was too low for an economy that gained majority rule in the face of high incidence of poverty, inequality and unemployment (Du Plessis and Smit, 2006). Offsetting high incidence of poverty and unemployment such as that which obtained at this period requires a very fast growing economy. Poor economic performance impacted on poverty and employment as both continued to surge (see fig 4.4). Fig 4.4 also shows that when economic growth slumps (as in the case of 2003) this exacerbates unemployment, poverty and inequality. This has always been a sensitive relationship to COSATU.

4.2.5 Unemployment

The government pointed out that during the 1990s, an average of 50 per cent of the potential labour force was unable to secure a formal sector job. The Taylor Commission

(2002) noted that available evidence indicated that the number of workerless households rose dramatically between 1995 and 1999. Employment in the manufacturing sector was stagnant and job cuts hit mining and agriculture severely (Harsh, 2001:14). In fact the weak economic growth experienced during this period coincided with declining employment. StatsSA (1999) recorded a decline of 12% in formal employment or some 642 000 job losses over the period 1993-1998. Manufacturing lost 6%, construction lost 21% and mining shade off 27% (StatsSA, 2001). Thus hardest hit were those sectors that draw high unskilled labour. COSATU membership is largely drawn from this category of labour and sectors.

In the Income and Expenditure Survey of 2000 (IES2000), StatsSA pointed out that between October 1995 and October 2000, the number of employed people increased over this period. However, at the same time the number of unemployed people also increased. In figure terms, the number of the employed increased from 9.6 million in 1995 to 10.4 million in 1999 (StatsSA, 2001:2). At the same time the number of unemployed people using the official definition also increased from 1.8 million in 1995 to 3.2 million in 1999. This meant that new job creation was not keeping pace with the demand for work, as increasing numbers of people, for example those who were previously scholars and students became available for work and looked for work (SatsSA, 2002). In other instances, jobs created could be jobs for which the majority of the unemployed would either be under qualified or over qualified.

Naidoo (2007) notes that by the late 1990s, the loss of formal sector jobs, mostly affected low-skilled, black workers in both the public and private sectors. While part-time work increased by 31%, full-time work fell during the same period. Labour Force

Surveys in 1997 and 2001 established that between 1996 and 1997 alone, an estimated 40 000 jobs were lost in the public sector; in 1997, the mining industry shed off an estimated 50 000 jobs. As of 1999, the economy had lost over 500 000 jobs (Cottle, 1999).

In the 2000-2004 period, unemployment peaked to 31.2% in 2003 on the strict definition of unemployment (see StatsSA, 2008). The general increase in unemployment to that level in 2003 also coincided with a slump in economic growth from above 3% to below 2%. This seems to have reduced opportunities for income and employment generation. In fact unemployment seems to be more sensitive to fall in economic growth than to any rises in growth rate. The period 1999-2004 witnessed the creation of 2.5 million jobs (StatsSA, 2005). However, this impact was minimal largely because unemployment remained very high over the period. Thus, even if economic growth was positive, averaging 2.82% per annum during this period this did not result in reduced unemployment. This led to COSATU terming it "jobless growth (Shilowa, 1997). Seekings (2007) contends that this rate of growth was caused by the country's growth path which remained capital – and skill intensive.

4.2.6 *Wages*

Wages for the poorest 40 per cent dropped by 21 per cent during this period (Naidoo, 2001). Miriam Altman's 2007 report for the Human Sciences Research Council posited that South Africa's crisis of wage employment was not just a matter of joblessness. It was also a matter of poor wages. According to the report, two thirds of waged workers could be categorised as "working poor". This scenario brought significant uneasiness to

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COSATU as an average of 67% of households relied on income from employment during this period (see table 4.3).

Table 4.3 SA Percentage of households relying on income from employment.

1995 OHS	1997 OHS	2000 LFS	2001 LFS	2002	2003
74	60	67	65	61.8	62.3

Source: calculations using the OHS, LFS and SARB database.

Vavi (1997) observed that statistics revealed that wages of South African workers, in particular the poorly paid, had begun to fall by 1997 under GEAR. He further noted that by March 1997, the wages of blue collar workers had dropped by 7%. While wages were falling, the levels of productivity increased by 4%. Despite these negative impacts, GEAR further called on workers to accept lower wages, to tighten their belts and to accept labour market flexibility. COSATU viewed the long cherished promises of living wage campaign progress as fading away.
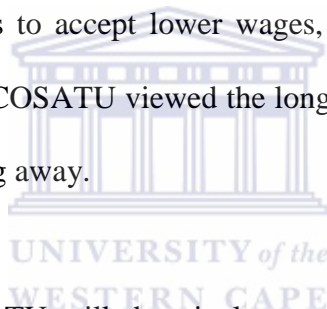
Despite these challenges, COSATU stilled actively campaigned for the ANC in all national elections. COSATU (2003), argued that the ANC is "our organisation and we are not going to throw in the towel and leave it". It is in this regard that the working class had to jealously defend the progressive and working class bias of the ANC. To that end COSATU undertook to swell the ranks of the ANC by calling on its members, shop stewards and leaders to join the ANC en masse; to develop a joint programme with the ANC on campaigns, education, and others matters and to continue building programmatic relations with the leagues of the ANC.

4.2.7   The 1999 and 2004 national elections

In the 1999 and 2004 elections COSATU still supported the ANC and the Mbeki administration despite its apprehensions about the government's adoption of GEAR and the continued challenges that faced the working poor. COSATU argued that it had adopted a pragmatic approach, 'flexible independence' which enabled it to support electoral pacts with the ANC that include COSATU's 'top priorities' as a condition to maintain the Alliance in place (September Commission 1997:31-32; Barchiesi, 1999). COSATU's top priorities included living wage demands.

In 1999, COSATU gave its full backing to the ANC manifesto, pronouncing it as biased in favour of workers and the poor (Sapa, 1999b). The 1999 ANC manifesto highlighted worker gains in the previous five years through the enactment of a new constitution and worker friendly laws. It pledged to take forward labour market transformation to protect the rights of the working people. The slogan for May Day 1999 was *"Workers mobilising for a decisive ANC victory in the election"* (Bassett, 1999). COSATU was involved in raising consciousness and getting the working poor out to vote. COSATU affiliates appointed national and regional co-ordinators, and released people to work at the federation's offices to oversee the campaign (Sapa, 1999). As part of the campaign all shop stewards were encouraged to become involved at factories and in communities. COSATU also channelled its efforts into ensuring that all workers applied for bar-coded identity documents, registered to vote, and that those who registered voted for the ANC (SAPA, 1999).

In an endeavour to defeat the National Party that had taken a majority in the Western Cape province in the previous elections, COSATU's Western Cape provincial executive

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developed what it termed a "dream team," consisting of 500 shop stewards and officials that campaigned for the ANC (Ehrenreich, 1999). It also assembled regional election teams that coordinated the election campaigns within COSATU and ANC branches. It conducted factory meetings in approximately three hundred strategic companies, and special events that included workshops for 6 500 shop stewards advising them of key positions. The shop stewards in turn held an estimated 6 000 meetings at the factory level, sharing the ANC's election manifesto.

A new party, the United Democratic Movement (UDM) came on board arguing that its objectives were similar to the ANC except that it offered a different implementation strategy (UDM election manifesto, 1999). However, COSATU argued that the UDM, the New National Party (NNP), the Democratic Party (DP), Inkatha Freedom Party (IFP), and the rest, were basically opposing change and were defending the interests of minorities that benefited from the apartheid past - capitalists, racists, and Bantustan elites (Umsebenzi, 1999). Though the ANC lost the election in the Western Cape, its performance significantly improved.

In the 2004 election, COSATU still stood by the ANC. In its 2004 election manifesto, the ANC committed itself to halve unemployment and poverty by 2014. COSATU argued that the 2004 ANC manifesto represented a significant shift to the left on economic policy, as reflected by its heavy emphasis on employment creation and equity. It thus had the potential of reversing the existing challenges.

During the 2004 election campaigns, COSATU ran what it argued was a highly visible and effective campaign, possibly exceeding its efforts in previous elections (COSATU

CEC Political Discussion paper, 2004). It sent what it termed strike teams and targeted specific hotspots identified by the ANC (such as Middleburg, Secunda and Bushbuck Ridge in Mpumalanga). It sent special task teams called *amadela kufa" – amaqobokazana angalal'emzini alahlekile* (the brave ones) to areas that were difficult for the ANC such as Mafikeng in the Northwest (including in Taung and Zeerust), the King Sabata Dalindyebo area, and the Eastern Cape in general. COSATU activists also spent months of intense campaigning in KwaZulu Natal (including in rural areas) as well as in the Western Cape (COSATU CEC Political Discussion paper, 2004).

Voting patterns following these campaigns showed significant gains for the ANC among the Indian and Coloured working class. There was a clear shift away from the DA, NNP and IFP towards the ANC. Figures from the Independent Electoral Commission (1999 and 2004) show that in the 1999, the ANC garnered 66.35% of the national vote. Its share of the vote rose to 66.69% in 2004 elections. ANC and SACP alliance partners sang praises for the critical role COSATU played in the elections. COSATU pointed out that it delivered a major victory for the ANC. Following, the ANC victory, COSATU indicated that it in return expected to build on the respect it gained and the relationships forged in the elections campaign to ensure working-class leadership of the National Democratic Revolution (NDR) (COSATU CEC Political Discussion paper, 2004). It argued that a working class leadership is the vanguard for a living wage. Further, it expected government to develop programmes consistent with its central messages during the campaign to address the socio-economic demands of the working class.

4.3   COSATU Social Context (2004-2009)

4.3.1   Poverty and inequality

As shown in Table 4.4 Poverty remained a perennial problem for South Africa. These high levels of poverty continued to bring apprehension among social movements such as COSATU.

Table 4.4   Poverty levels (2004-2009)

Poverty	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Year	57	57	58	53.3	53.3	50

Source: Calculated from Stats SA.

Inequality as shown in Table 4.5 remained high during the period 2004-2009. A Gini coefficient of over 0.6 indicates that inequality is extremely high. Wealth is concentrated among the few.

Table 4.5   Inequality (2004-2009)

Year	Gini coefficient
2004	0.678
2005	0.683
2006	0.685
2007	0.660
2008	0.666
2009	0.679

Source: The Presidency Report (2007); StatsSA data base; IMF estimates.

4.3.2   Economic growth

South Africa's economic growth rate during this period was consistently much higher (see Fig.4.5) than at any other period since 1985, the year when COSATU was formed. Unfortunately steady growth was interrupted by the world economic recession of 2008/9, shrinking by 2% in 2009 and shedding of 959 000 jobs (Assubuji and Luckscheiter, 2009). However figures for both unemployment and poverty (Fig.4.5) indicate they did not significantly reverse during the period of uninterrupted growth, which means that if economic performance is too low, then annual growth has to be even higher than the average 4% recorded during this period. This situation lends itself

to COSATU's argument that neo-liberal economics under GEAR did not adequately address the needs of the working poor (Peet, 2002).

Figure. 4.5   South Africa Growth Poverty and unemployment (2005-2009)
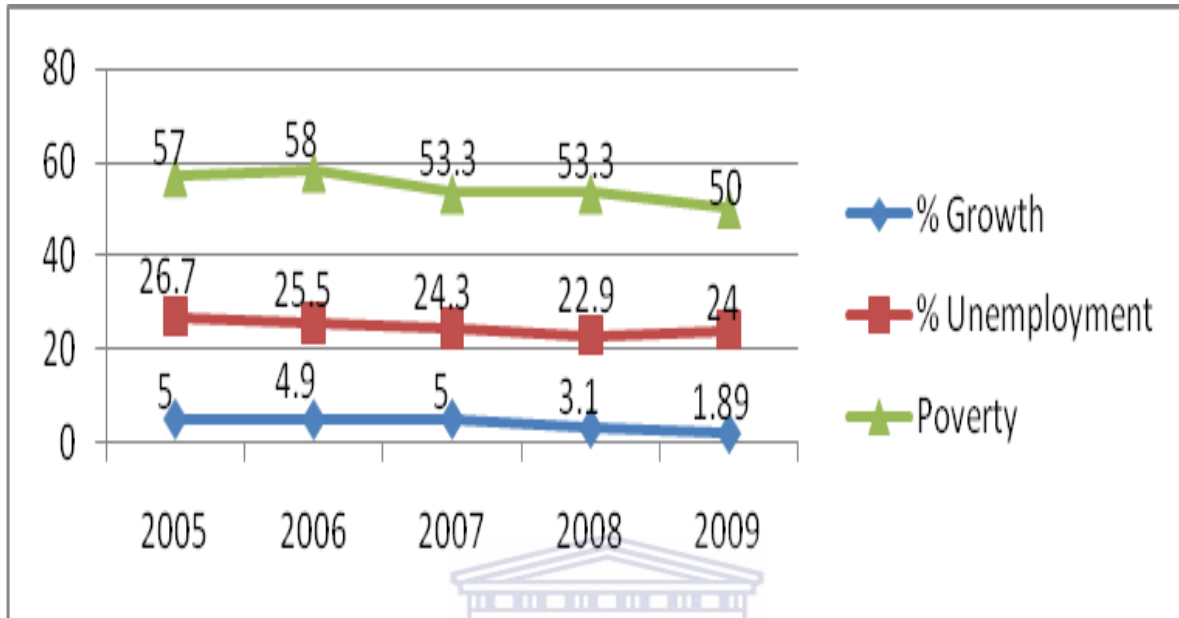
Source: Budget Speeches (2006-2010); SARB quarterly bulletins; Stats SA in Brief; SA Labour force Surveys
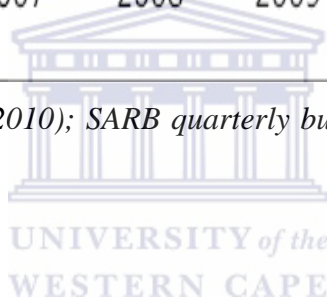
4.3.3   Unemployment

Poverty and inequality were not the only vices of the 2004-2009 period. Unemployment also remained a major concern. While it appeared to have been falling, it began to rise again following the 2008/9 world economic recession (Fig.4.5). In the 2009 labour force survey, StatsSA (2009) noted that job losses were widespread, affecting most industries. Shocked by the official unemployment increase in 2009, COSATU argued that the increase revealed a fundamental structural problem in the economy caused by the government's mistaken policies between 1996 and 2004 (Craven, 2009).

4.3.4   Wages

Most households in South Africa were dependent on income from salaries during the 2004-2009 era. The 2009 general households survey (GHS) carried out by StatsSA established that 63,5% of South Africans dependent on salaries. Unfortunately however, of these people depending on income, the top decile receives a disproportionately huge share. The SALDRU (2009) established that in 2009, the country's top decile earned 69.7% of the salary income. This is a typical sign of a highly unequal income society. The majority of the workers were therefore earning what COSATU called a "poverty wage" and a level below an ideal living wage. Despite an increase in grants as a source of income for the old and children, these do not seem to have had an impact on poverty reduction. In 2009 grants accounted for 43.7% of household income. However the value is too low to alleviate poverty.
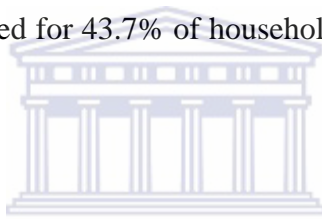
The challenges facing workers largely remained similar between 1994 and 2004. While the ANC remained the party of choice for COSATU, discontent against its leadership grew among labour. In the end, COSATU settled for influencing internal ANC leadership changes.

4.3.5   The ANC internal leadership changes

In the face of continuing poor wages, unemployment, poverty and jobless growth, COSATU embarked on influencing internal changes in the ANC leadership. COSATU believed that the ANC leadership under President Mbeki, continued to drift away from implementing alliance agreed policy positions that are expected to ameliorate problems of the working poor.

This led to the shift from supporting President Thabo Mbeki as ANC president to supporting then sacked Vice President Jacob Zuma. This saw Zuma voted new ANC President, alongside key former unionists and SACP members Gwede Mantashe (General Secretary) and Kgalema Motlanthe (Deputy President). COSATU argued that Zuma was the right leader to position the agenda of the ANC as quality jobs and a living wage for all workers (Maclennan, 2007). It argued that the Living Wage Campaign is vital in that it seeks to move many low or underemployed workers out of poverty wages and create a sustainable wage income strategy that meets all basic needs, improve skills and employment opportunities, and reduce income inequality and poverty (Shopsteward, June/July 2011). COSATU posited that the decade before Polokwane was a painful one for workers, and leaders of the labour movement. The Polokwane ANC conference of 2008 dethroned Mbeki from the ANC presidency. The Polokwane revolt represented a rejection of the worst elements of this period (COSATU, 2010).
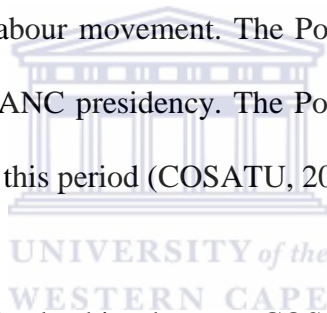
Following the Polokwane ANC leadership changes, COSATU posited that it played a key role to the Polokwane conference outcome – significantly contributing to policy convergence between the Alliance partners including joint formulation of a the election manifesto and close coordination of the 2009 elections campaign (COSATU Central Committee Secretariat Report, 2011:11). It however posited that the gains of Polokwane would never be sustained unless the working class was able to exercise its hegemony in the ANC, the alliance and the state.

4.3.6 The 2009 national elections

The 2009 ANC, election manifesto, which struck a positive code with COSATU, stated that the ANC would "make the creation of decent work opportunities and sustainable

livelihoods the primary focus of our economic policies" (The Shopsteward, 2009). This replaced labour anxieties with neoliberal policies of the previous administration and gave COSATU a new hope that workers' priorities would be made national priorities. As in the previous elections, thousands of COSATU shop stewards and activists campaigned for the ANC.

Outside the usual list of parties that COSATU disdained in the previous elections, a new political party, the Congress of the People (COPE) entered the political arena. COSATU said that it did not support the newly formed COPE because it was a grossly misnamed political party" of the 1996 class project (the internal right wing/neo-liberal group of the ANC). The labour body argued that COPE was being used as a weapon to attempt to roll back working class gains and dismally fail to displace the real congress of the people (The Shopsteward, 2009). COSATU also kept its distance from the Democratic Alliance, which argued towards the elections that COSATU's role should be confined to pursuing the interests of the workers in the workplace only instead of its current attempts to take over an elected party from within and to dictate policy in the highest echelons of the state (Zille, 2009). COSATU argued that the DA was simply a "minority elitist grouping hell-bent on destroying the ANC" (Mail and Guardian, 26 February, 2009).

In line with its 2004 resolution to nurture a working class leadership COSATU deployed working class leaders, not only in the ANC but also in Government (Nattras, 1994). COSATU hoped that these deployments would afford them much leverage in as far as influencing the direction and pace of the economic policies of the country including a living wage.

4.4   Other Social Conditions

4.4.1   Networks and Alliances

During the struggle for democracy, elections based on universal suffrage and living wage, COSATU developed cooperative networks with other social movements, such as UDF, SANCO and other community organisations, including youth, student and women's groups. The many demonstrations in support of political change in the 1980s were jointly organised by the unions and community organisations. Networks also enabled COSATU to communicate and mobilise with local regional and international partners, for further support.

It is through alliance politics that the labour body has sought to influence the ideology of socialism, class consciousness and promoting worker friendly policies including a living wage policy (von Holt, 1991). It is also within the alliance structure that the labour movement promoted the emergence of a working class leadership both within the liberation movements and the ANC post-apartheid leadership and government. Following liberation, COSATU has also used alliances to deploy various mechanisms within the ANC and SACP in an effort to influence government policy. These include campaigning for the ANC in elections, influencing the election of ANC leadership and deploying COSATU members to ANC and government structures.

In 1994 for example, COSATU, was quite influential in shaping policy around, the Workers' Charter, a set of working class demands that fed into the Reconstruction and Development Programme (RDP) - a COSATU initiative that pushed forward a substantive democratic, redistributive agenda for the ANC-SACP-COSATU alliance in the run-up the country's first democratic elections in 1994 (Pillay, 2008). Some

COSATU leaders went on to become ANC Members of Parliament, Cabinet Ministers, government officials, provincial premiers and ministers, and local government leaders and officials as a way of wedging significant influence on party and government policy (Visser, 2007). These leaders included Jay Naidoo, Alec Erwin, Marcel Golding, Cyril Ramaphosa, Jayendra Naidoo, Tito Mboweni, and Sydney Mufamadi (Nattras, 1994).

4. 4.2 Internal Organisation and Infrastructure

COSATU is a formal structured organisation as opposed to an informal organisation. It has been argued that formalisation influences the strategic choices of social movements (Brannan, 2009). However, while institutionalised movements tend to utilise institutionalised tactics, COSATU has variably used both institutional mechanisms as well as disruptive mechanisms. In particular during the apartheid era, COSATU (in collaboration with other social movements) fighting to dethrone the apartheid machinery, resorted to disruptive mechanisms that included wild cat strikes, sit-ins, consumer boycotts and rent boycotts (Kraak, 1993). It also pursued formal institutional tactics including holding local meetings, national conferences, regional and international meetings and conferences to lobby for change. Formalisation enabled the movement to seize mobilisation opportunities through formal structures. It enabled organisational maintenance and expansion of its activities as formal stable organisations are in a position to pursue long term objectives.

4. 4.3 Leadership

The type and quality of leadership plays a role in the success of social movements. There are three types of leaders; professional managers who are paid for their work, nonprofessional staff leaders who are sometimes paid for their work, and

nonprofessional volunteers who are not paid at all (Staggenborg, 1997). COSATU has always successfully deployed the three types of personnel in its activities. It retains an experienced executive and fully paid career leadership that is devoted to everyday organisation maintenance, activity expansion and interaction with state and business machinery. The trade unions' valuable organisational and negotiating experience is shared with community activists, ensuring effective community mobilisation. Its organisational structure includes thousands of shop stewards who act as foot soldiers at the workers committee levels in both collective bargaining and election campaigns (COSATU Campains Bulletin, November 1998).

4. 4.4   *Financial Resources*

Financial support allows organisers to purchase what they need and movements usually need some infrastructure to carry out activities. With a membership base of 300 000 at its formation in 1985 and over 2 million in the last decade, COSATU has benefitted financially from this base. The base has enabled it to raise resources to support its institutional infrastructure, including its affiliates and its campaign machinery during election times as well as making direct donations to the ANC in election years (Molele, 2013; Bendix, 2010).

4.5   *COSATU Framing processes*

In order to be effective, a union also relies on the collective identity and cohesion of its membership (Wood, 2001:293). According to Benford & Snow (2000), framing theory contends that social movements such as COSATU engage in the constant interpreting, communicating, and framing of beliefs, actions and events in order to garner internal

and external support. COSATU's support has been in part to its identification with diagnostic framing; prognostic framing; motivational framing and frame resonance.

4. 5.1 Diagnostic Framing

Diagnostic framing refer to instances when COSATU define the problem, in part by focusing blame and responsibility. For example, in the apartheid era, it argued that in addition to the apartheid political system an array of legislation (pass laws, apartheid labour relations Act of 1989, VAT impositions, privatisation and fuel increases) were responsible for the workers inability to participate in elections and influencing living wage policy. Subsequently, COSATU embarked on incessant campaigns that contributed towards the reversal of these legislations and finally the fall of apartheid. In the post-apartheid era, failure, COSATU has argued that the march towards the National Democratic Revolution meant to empower the worker, had been affected by the obliteration of the change processes by the 1996 class project of neo liberalism which it felt was characterised by a small elite pursuing narrow BEE politics supported by big capital (NEHAWU, n.d.; COSATU CEC Political Discussion Paper, 2010).

4. 5.2 Prognostic Framing

Prognostic framing is used here to refer to how COSATU articulates the solution to the living wage problem of the working poor as well as the strategies for carrying out the action needed to solve the problem. As COSATU puts it, the solution lies in a working class led National Democratic Revolution, the most direct route to socialism characterised by de-commodifying basic needs, building a strong development and democratic state, opening new sites of accumulation including cooperatives and the

strategic deployment of social capital in the form of retirement funds (COSATU, Political Report to the Tenth COSATU National Congress, 2009).

4. 5.3 Motivational Framing

COSATU also utilises motivational framing. This refers to providing the rationale for engaging in group action, using the appropriate motivational vocabularies. COSATU and its affiliates uses such vocabulary that tends to rally workers together into action. For example COSATU's slogan is *"an injury to one is an injury to all"*, a vocabulary which is a vision of social solidarity that tends to bind the working class. NEHAWU's motto *is "Consolidate the Union – Consolidate Working Class Power"*. While NUMSA's motto is *"one sector, one union and one industry, one federation"*. All these slogans espouse worker supremacy as a cornerstone of the organisation.

4. 5.4 Frame Resonance

Frame resonance refers to the power of a given frame to attract and mobilise constituents. COSATU leadership, refers to itself as a working class leadership, working to promote policies, which are rooted in the real needs of working people and their families as a living wage. It argues that it will always fight against policies which severely disadvantage COSATU members, and which have not been properly debated with the workers body (Madisha, 1999). Its fight is not only a fight for a living wage but eradicating the apartheid wage gap and starvation wages, a struggle against capitalist society that is characterised by jobless growth, pays the worker below poverty level salaries and instigates retrenchments.
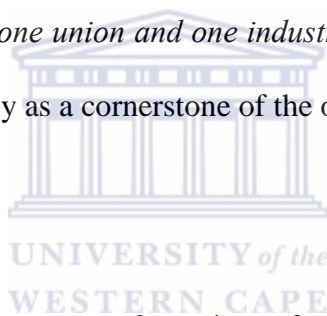
4.6   Summary

COSATU has engaged in practices meant to influence elections and living wage policy since its formation in 1985. They seek to influence election of a political leadership they believe will support labour's quest for a living wage. COSATU has engaged in these practices as a result of obtaining structural conditions in the South African society (such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, economic performance and legislative environment). However it believes that the ANC remains the party best placed to address these challenges. The labour movement has therefore supported the ANC at every election between 1994 and 2004. In the absence of what COSATU may view as an alternative party, it has influenced ANC internal leadership changes when it is not satisfied with the party's progress in addressing its demands. Such influence resulted in the 2007 ANC leadership changes at the Polokwane Conference.

CHAPTER 5

COSATU PRACTICES ON ELECTIONS AND LIVING WAGE ISSUES

5.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses workers' perceptions of COSATU practices on elections and living wage issues due to the conditions discussed in chapter 4. Adoption of social movement unionism by COSATU is based on the view that the state is responsible for crafting the framework regulating the labour market and that state policies can effectively be influenced by labour's involvement in national issues such as elections. Specifically, trade union involvement in elections is meant to influence the election of a political party (or party leadership) whose vision mirrors that of labour with respect to issues such as securing living wages. In order to influence these elections and living wage issues COSATU utilises an array of practices that were identified by its membership. This chapter categorises these practices as follows; disruptive mechanisms, political access, public preference, international access and judicial mechanisms.

Though this chapter points out to these practices and the attendant outcomes, it is important to note that in general a multiplicity of factors come into play and the extent to which the union contributes to living wage changes cannot be precisely measured. Thus the main purpose of the chapter is to highlight that within COSATU membership, there is belief that these mechanisms are a tool available to them for use in pressing for living wage issues. COSATU has thus repeatedly used these mechanisms since its formation. During the 1980s and early 1990s COSATU emerged as a militant and progressive movement simultaneously improving the wages and working conditions of its members while engaged in a successful struggle for democracy against the apartheid regime

(Adler and Webster, 2000; Buhlungu, 2001). In post minority rule SA, though its militancy is reduced, COSATU fortified its alliance with the ANC and engaged in a dual strategy of mass struggle outside government and participating in formal government structures. However Khanya (2005) believes that reduced militancy is a result of more white-collar employees joining the union federation. He further notes that many of the present employees were recruited well into the new democracy and therefore are not steeped in COSATU's militant tradition while some of the unions that later came on board such as the Democratic Nursing Organisation of South Africa (DENOSA) and the South African Society of Bank Officials (SASBO) – The Finance Union are largely conservative.

5.1   Mapping COSATU

COSATU was launched in December 1985 after four years of unity talks between unions which were opposed to apartheid and committed to a non-racial and democratic South Africa. Thirty-three unions attended the founding COSATU congress. A membership of 500,000 workers was claimed, making COSATU the largest federation in South Africa history. At that time, a large part of the membership was made up of unskilled or semi-skilled workers employed in the manufacturing and mining sectors. COSATU's membership rose from 500 000 in 1985 to 1 212 000 in 1994 and 1 974 084 by 2009 (COSATU, 2012a). Table 5.1 below shows membership in all COSATU affiliates since 1991.

Table 5.1 COSATU affiliate membership 1991 – 2012

	1991	1994	1997	2000	2003	2006	2009	2012
CEPPWAWU	88000	78000	94000	74000	65000	62000	64182	80658
CWU	21000	23000	40000	35000	32000	25000	29699	18666
CWUSA	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a	370	
DENOSA	n.a	n.a.	73000	70000	71000	64000	68450	74883
FAWU	129000	121000	140000	119000	119000	115000	118974	126930
NEHAWU	18000	64000	163000	235000	235000	204000	230445	260738
NUM	270000	311000	311000	290000	279000	262000	272000	310382
NUMSA	273000	170000	220000	200000	173000	217000	236909	291025
PAWUSA	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	17000	16169	17146
POPCRU	n.a	n.a	45000	71000	67000	96000	125732	149339
SACCAWU	97000	102000	102000	102000	102000	108000	115488	120352
SACTWU	186000	150000	150000	120000	105000	110000	85000	85025
SADNU	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	8000	8000	9000	9093	8655
SADTU	n.a	59000	146000	219000	215000	224000	236843	251276
SAFPU	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	1000	472	593
SAMA	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.	5000	7246	7759
SAMWU	60000	100000	117000	120000	120000	118000	135906	153487
SASAWU	n.a	n.a.	n.a.	18000	18000	9000	7804	7074
SASBO	n.a	n.a	70000	63000	63000	61000	66093	67402
SATAWU	70000	74000	91000	103000	74000	133000	140392	159626
GRAND TOTAL	**1212000**	**1252000**	**1791000**	**1869000**	**1768000**	**1841400**	**1974084**	**2191016**

Source, COSATU (2012)

However, it is important to observe that in South Africa, only 29% of the workforce was unionised (South Africa Institute of Race Relations, 2013). Other than COSATU, the Federation of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA) had 515,000 members (FEDUSA, 2014) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) has almost 400,000 members in 2009. In this context, the study estimates that COSATU membership constituted 56% of all unionised workers in South Africa. As shown in Table 6.1 above, its largest membership is drawn from the mining sector where its affiliate NUM had approximately 272 000 members in 2009.

Table 5.1 highlights that COSATU's public sector union affiliates' contribution to the total federation membership increased from under 10% in 1991 to about 41 per cent in 2009. In 2009, the National Education, Health and Allied Workers' Union (NEHAWU), with 230 445 members, and the South African Municipal Workers' Union (SAMWU), with 135 906 members, were respectively the third and the fourth largest unions across all sectors of the South African economy.

In seeking to understand the workers'perceptions of COSATU practices on elections and living wage issues, this chapter answered the following objectives;

- Determine the views of interviewees in particular if labour should concern itself with political (electoral) issues.
- Common COSATU practices used to influence elections and living wage issues.
- Establishing the perceived relevance of COSATU practices.
- Establishing workers' views on the perceived relationship between elections and living wage issues.

- Identify challenges COSATU faces in attempting to influence election and living wage issues.

5.2   COSATU practices

5.2.1   COSATU and National Politics

The questions around the participation of COSATU in national politics were meant to draw views of interviewees to determine if they think it is appropriate for COSATU to adopt social unionism and participate in the politics of South Africa. The questions also sought to draw out the reasons for the need for COSATU to participate or not to participate in national politics. Below (Table 5.2) is an outline of the key responses.

Table 5.2   COSATU Participation in national politics

n = 225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think COSATU should be involved in national politics of the country?	190	84.4	45	15.6
Is COSATU involved in trying to influence the political trajectory of the country?	225	100	0	0
Do you think there is a link between a particular party/leadership being elected into power and a commitment to addressing living wage issues	156	69.3	67	30.7
Do you think the quest for a living wage has been advanced by labour's participation in national elections?	130	57.7	95	42.3

Deducing from the sample of this study, a majority of South African workers believe that COSATU should participate in national politics. A total of 84.4% of the interviewees believed that COSATU should be involved in the politics of the country. A

COSATU Deputy Provincial Secretary argued that "*it is impossible to separate working class issues from national politics*". On a similar note, the entire sample in this study believed that COSATU is involved in the country's national politics and has always tried to influence its trajectory since the labour body is in alliance with the ANC, the country's ruling party since 1994.

A majority of responses noted that COSATU needed to participate in national politics because policy interests of workers can best be represented by the workers themselves. Others argued that if the workers federation does not participate directly in national politics, its interests will be subsumed by that of other actors, specifically business. In fact respondents posited that business has the financial means to influence politicians, which workers do not have. In that regard, business need not have an interest in standing on the political platforms because its finance speaks for it. It is through its financial muscle that it has managed to historically exploit the workers without significant reproach from government. However workers do not have the financial muscle to influence government and politicians. The resources available to the workers are their numbers in the federation, and they need to use these numbers to influence state policies towards addressing workers' demands.

Among an array of worker demands is the call for a living wage. As such one of the most important questions in this context was to find out if COSATU's participation in national politics had any influence on the addressing of living wages. This question was asked with the broad definition of a living wage in mind. Such a definition covers a fair and decent level of income as well as conditions of work and maximum hours of work

that enable a respectable standard of living and is viewed as more than a mere minimum wage (Shelburne, 1999).

In light of the argument that workers should participate in the politics of the country through COSATU, 69.3% of interviewees contended that the likelihood of living wage issues being addressed increases if workers' federations back a particular party and secure promise of living wage policy concessions prior to the elections. However the study also established that the likelihood of securing such promises does not always translate into specific actions to address the policy demands once the leadership is elected into public office. Thus while 69.3% of respondents argued that there is a link between the election of a particular leadership and or party into power and a commitment to addressing living wage demands, only 57.7% of the interviewees believed that the quest for a living wage has been advanced by COSATU's participation in politics. It can be concluded in this regard that there is need to push the political leadership to address living wage issues but labour will not always win the battle. The lower number of response (57.7%) may also point out to the fact that decisions reached about wage adjustments are normally a compromise position with the workers' leadership and COSATU constituents view it as an unsatisfactory compromise.

Those interviewees (15.6%) who argued that COSATU should not be involved in national politics stated that the best strategy for the emancipation of workers is to directly compel the employers to meet workers demands. They argued that the employers can determine compensation levels and employment conditions. In fact, they argued that existing collective bargaining structures (bargaining councils) were sufficient to help workers wage successful struggles to secure living wages from employers. As a result of these bargaining structures for example, public service often

reached agreement with public sector workers, petroleum workers, farm workers and mining workers also often reached a settlement with employers. Serve for the minimum wage; employers do not get a directive from the state to effect living wage adjustments.

As a result of this firm belief in the power of participation in national politics as a means to influence policy, workers believe that it is right for COSATU to employ various practices to influence elections and living wage issues. The practices identified by interviewees can be classified as disruptive mechanisms, political access, public opinion mobilisation, judicial and international access mechanisms.

5.2.2   Disruptive mechanisms

Disruptive mechanisms appear to be used to influence a government of choice or a reluctant political leadership to advance living wage demands. Disruptive mechanisms include protests, demonstrations, stay-aways, sit-ins and strikes.
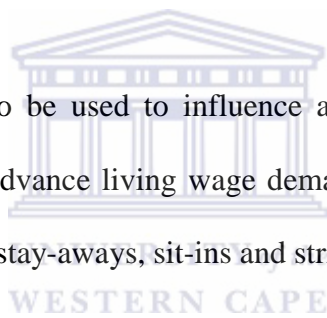
Table 5.3   Perception of disruptive mechanisms

n=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think resorting to disruptive mechanisms is an effective means of drawing attention to living wage demands	129	57.3	96	42.7
Do you think the effectiveness of disruptive mechanisms for living wage is enhanced if staged around a period close to the conducting of national elections	110	48.9	115	51.1
Can COSATU disruptive mechanisms influence voting behavior and national elections	152	67.5	71	32.5

In this study, disruptive mechanisms emerged as one of the acceptable mechanisms that respondents believed are a necessary means for COSATU to influence the political leadership to support its living wage demands (see Table 5.3).

5.2.2.1 Perceptions of the influence of disruptive mechanisms on living wage adjustments

A total of 57.3% of respondents, argued that disruptive activity is effective and yields quicker results in terms of securing critical support from political parties or government for securing living wage adjustments. Further they argued that business, which is particular about production time and production levels tend to respond more promptly once it is certain that work stoppage will disrupt production. A NUM respondent pointed out that *"our capitalist employers emphasise production targets as these are directly linked to profits. Loss of production time seems to really pain them".* Even in the public sector, the state has yielded to disruptive workers most notably in 1989, 1993 and 2007 (Maree, 2013).

5.2.2.2   Effect of disruptive mechanisms on elections

A total of 48.9% of respondents pointed out that disruptive activities conducted around election times are more likely to yield results than at any other time. However, a larger figure of 51.1% observed that disruptive mechanisms may be effective on their own without necessarily being conducted around elections. This view is corroborated by major successful disruptive activity evidence for the period 1985-2009 (see Table 5.5). These disruptive activities actually occurred outside election years. However to a limited extent, the research observes that these disruptive activities occurred on a number of

instances in an election year. A COSATU Shop Steward posited that if disruptive action is taken around election year *"It becomes imprinted in the minds of the people as they go to vote"*.

A major question however is that if such a large number of respondents (51.1%) believe that conducting disruptive actions around election time does not necessarily yield better outcomes regarding living wage demands, why then would COSATU participate in these disruptions at this time? This may imply that COSATU sees the power of influencing political parties towards elections and does follow up on promises that are made by political parties that they would have supported in an election year. Any delays in addressing the promises, or change of policy direction by the new government, results in the labour union engaging in disruptive action to force the changes as promised at election time.

The remaining 0.2 % of respondents noted that the willingness to address worker demands on the part of the state and indeed employers does not depend on the nature of mechanisms deployed or time when such mechanisms are deployed by workers but on the availability of funds to address workers' demands on the part of the employer. A SADTU respondent noted that,

> *" when the public sector workers went on a strike in 1999 requesting for a 7.5% salary increase, the government imposed a 6.3% increase. In 2007 public sector employees demanded a 12% salary increase, but the government stuck with its 7.5% and the strikes ended".*

In other words, the government could not offer any more than it could afford to pay.

Furthermore, the research established that the percentage of respondents (69.3%) (see table 5.2) who believe that there is a link between a particular party/leadership being

elected into power and a commitment to addressing living wage issues is similar to the number of respondents (67.5%) (see Table 5.3) who believe that disruptive mechanisms influence voting behavior and national elections. In that regard even if disruptive mechanisms would not yield living wage gains during an election year, they drum up support around grievances being raised and a particular party being favoured by COSATU as a party that is likely to address its demands.

5.2.2.3 Ways in which disruptive mechanisms influence living wage adjustments

In general therefore workers surveyed largely believe that disruptive mechanisms are an effective means of influencing living wage issues. Table 5.4 lists some of the ways in which respondents felt disruptive mechanisms can influence the addressing of living wage issues.

Table 5.4   Ways in which disruptive mechanisms are seen as effective tools for making wage demands

Why disruptive mechanisms are described as effective
They can help to bring living wage demands to the public platform.
They can create an atmosphere of solidarity and other organisations and individuals can join.
They can easily stop economic activity and government or employers will be forced to address the demands.
Disruptive action by COSATU with large membership base means more people will participate.

Disruptive mechanisms were therefore viewed by respondents as having been commonly used by COSATU with good results. Table 5.3 shows that 57.3% of respondents believed in the power of disruptive mechanisms.

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5.2.2.4   **Commonly identified disruptive activities**

When asked to recall the disruptive mechanisms that COSATU (excluding sector/industrial based disruptive activities) employed between 1985 and 2009 to press for living wage issues, respondents seem to have remembered those that were particularly successful in influencing living wage issues (see Table 5.5)

Table 5.5   Identified common disruptive actions by COSATU (1985-2009)

Disruptive actions	% of Respondents
May 1 and June 16 strikes	38.1%
Release of Mandela Campaigns	48.9%
1988 and 1989 anti labour relations strikes	34.6%
1991 Anti-VAT campaign	32.3%
1995 COSATU mass protests over delays by NEDLAC to finalise a new LRA	37.5%
1996 engaged in rolling action for months to ensure that the lock out close was removed from constitution	36.3%
2000 mobilisation against privatization	42.7%
2005/2006/2007 strikes COSATU's Jobs and Poverty Campaign	51.2%
2007 public sector wages strike won 7.5% increase	58.4%

This is normal as such actions are the ones that leave an important imprint in the people's minds. Table 5.5 lists respondents' most commonly mentioned disruptive actions by COSATU between 1985 and 2009. Due to the focus of this thesis, it excludes those disruptive actions pursued at sectoral/industrial or affiliate union levels.

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In general there was a lower response rate to the question on identifying the most common disruptive mechanisms between 1985 and 2009, particularly the period to the year 2000. This may be a result of the nature of the research instrument which required immediate recall. Most respondents either have forgotten the past disruptive activities or were not willing to spend too much of their time trying to recall. Further note, an analysis of the most commonly identified campaigns that respondents could easily remember seem to be those that were launched to last over several years instead of a one off disruptive activity and are discussed below.

May 1 and June 16 strikes

COSATU planned to engage in disruptive activities on May 1 and June 16 of every year during apartheid. The May 1 and June 16 disruptions were meant to force the apartheid government to observe these two days as paid public holidays. Employers rarely observed May Day as a paid holiday despite a century of its observations around the world. On the 1st of May in 1986, an estimated 1,5 million workers took heed of COSATU's first call to engage in disruptive activities to force the state to declare May, 1 a paid public holiday (Shopsteward, 2012; Bendix, 2010). COSATU was joined by many other groups that included school pupils, students, taxi drivers, hawkers, shopkeepers, domestic workers, self employed and unemployed people (Craven, 2012). In response the apartheid government publicly declared the 1st of May as a public holiday in 1987. Premier Foods became the first large employer to declare 1 May and 16 June as paid holidays. Following this, many other companies followed suit. It is on the background of this success that COSATU went on to launch its Living Wage Campaign in 1987. COSATU argues that, subsequently, in 1987, its members were the only workers to win wage increases above inflation rate and some of its affiliates won the

highest minimum wage increases (COSATU, 2012b; COSATU News, 1986). June 16 was recognised by COSATU as an important day to be set aside to remember the gallant students of that era. COSATU argued that the 1976 youth uprising could not be divorced from the 1973 workers' strikes which began in Durban as it was also born of the struggle against poverty, unemployment, a poor education system for blacks, hostile labour relations and squalid living conditions in the hostels and the townships.

1988 and 1989 Anti Labour Relations Strikes

COSATU called for three days of national protest against the Labour Relations Amendment Bill (LRA) among other pertinent issues affecting workers during a Special Congress in May 1988 (Kallaway, 2002). The 3 days (6-8 June, 1988) were termed the three days of 'national peaceful protest'. COSATU viewed the bill as seeking to curtail the growing union movement and undermine gains made by workers since the 1970s. COSATU's call for a national peaceful protest led to the largest stay-away up to that time in South African labour history and exceeded all expectations. On the first day, between 2.5 and three million workers stayed away. Though support in some areas dropped on the second and third days, it was considered as the country's first three-day national stay-away (The New Age, April 13, 2013). In 1988, millions of workers stayed away from work to press for the reversal of the changes despite the threat of dismissals by employers. The momentum of the anti-Labour Bill mobilisation and the unity of workers across federations finally led to the holding of the Workers Summit in March 1989, where workers formulated their own Labour Relations Act. In the end the apartheid government agreed to proposed changes in 1990. Later in both the constitution and the LRA COSATU secured more rights for workers.

Release Mandela Campaign

COSATU was in the forefront of the campaign for the release of Nelson Mandela. While the Release Mandela Mandela Campaigns were launched in 1982, these gathered momentum when COSATU came on board and combined forces with other social movements.

1991 Anti-VAT campaign

COSATU also embarked on anti-VAT campaign in 1991. Diverse groups were galvanised into action by COSATU. This had had far-reaching effects. During its 1991 Anti-VAT campaign, COSATU won its demand that basic foods be zero-rated, i.e. be exempted from taxation. VAT was also in general reduced from 13 to 10% (ShopSteward, 1996). Apart from winning certain short-term demands, it established labour`s right to have a say on macro-economic issues.
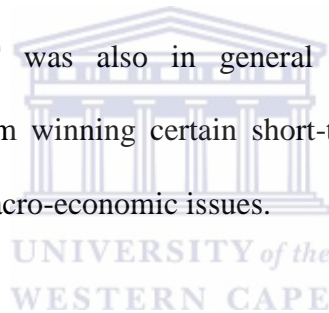
Protests against NEDLAC delays

In 1995 COSATU engaged in mass protests arguing that NEDLAC was delaying the finalisation of the new Labour Relations Act. Thousands of workers marched and protested over weeks and after these protests by COSATU an agreement was reached in NEDLAC (Cherry, 2006) that resulted in business arguing that the legislation was too labour friendly. This action by COSATU shows that in NEDLAC, labour has significant power to influence policy that benefits their members (Buhlungu and Psoulis, 1999). Closely related to this, in 1996 COSATU engaged in rolling mass action for months fighting for the removal of the lock out close from constitution and that the right to strike be included (Shopsteward, 1996). COSATU won almost all of its submissions to the drafting committee (including right to bargaining and right to picket).

Following these disruptive activities unions made significant gains over centralised bargaining, work place co-determination, and provisions for closed shop. Wage differentials narrowed between 1970 and 1995 as a result of incessant disruptive activities. According to Torres (2002) increased union activity raised African real wages by about 15% above otherwise would have been between 1979 and 1990. In the second half of 1990 the unions won an average wage increase of 22% for wage labourers while inflation was running at 15%.

The Anti-privatisation Campaign

COSATU also condemned state privatisation that accelerated at the end of the 1990s decade. It went on to oppose broad state privatisation programme through a number of disruptions. COSATU and its staunch supporters held rallies and took to the streets. In its 14 June 2001 section 77 notice on anti-privatisation protest action, COSATU argued that it was against the privatisation process as it affected the interests of the working poor. It argued that privatisation led to inferior quality services since the working poor would not likely afford services provided through the private sector, especially the provision of basic services and municipal services. Further to this COSATU noted the inevitability of job losses and casualisation of labour that would fuel the unemployment situation and poor salaries under privatisation.

Jobs and Poverty Campaign

COSATU launched its Jobs and Poverty Campaign in 1999 in response to rising levels of unemployment and poverty in South Africa. Since then it has taken numerous actions in

the forms of marches, demonstrations, petitions and five national strikes. COSATU also specifically held demonstrations at companies that it blacklisted alleging bad record of retrenchemnet, casualisation and racism (COSATU, 2006). Thus the focus of the Jobs and Poverty campaign which has been ongoing has primarily been on the loss of jobs, high levels of poverty and growing inequality. The campaign forced the government and the employers into two jobs and poverty summits, the last one being the 2003 Growth and Development Summit which forced them to commit to job creation and poverty reduction (Cherry, 2006). Closely linked to this campaign and in response to the challenge of stagnant wages and the ever-increasing wage gap between senior management and ordinary workers, COSATU and its affiliates led a record number of protracted living wage battles between 2005 and 2007, some of which went on for many months before employers were forced to negotiate a settlement (Maree, 2013).

Public Sector Wage Strikes

The public sector wage and working conditions strike that lasted a full four weeks was the longest experience in post-apartheid South Africa (Maree, 2013). In 2007, public workers went on strike asking for a 12.5% wage increase. Seventeen public sector unions and later to be joined by the private sector, maintained an unprecedented level of unity and cohesion during the strike. The disruption won a 7.5% wage increase. Though the 7.5% increase was lower than the 12.5% workers were asking for, the strike was a success. The previous successful strike of 1999 had produced a 6.3% increase against workers' demand of 7.5% (Barchiesi, 1999). The success of this strike can be ascribed to the growing numbers of public sector employees that joined unions at the end of the apartheid era. Their numbers swelled to 41% of COSATU federation by 2009 (see Table 5.1).

However, it is important to note that in each instance, when workers earned an increase, government unilaterally imposed and implemented its final offer. Authorities such as Khanya (2005) argue that given the swelling numbers of the public sector union membership and the fact that in every disruptive action undertaken, labour has not secured the actual percentage they fight for is a weakness in itself caused by public sector employees who have never been in the militant category and therefore exert less pressure. The numbers of the militant category, the youths, blue-collar employees, those in unskilled and semi skilled category in the private sector has been dwindling from COSATU membership. Buhlungu (2006) approximates that in 1994, sixty percent of COSATU membership was made up of unskilled and semi skilled employees. He notes that by 2006 however, 60% of COSATU members now belonged to the skilled, supervisory and clerical employee categories, a far less militant group that has permanent jobs, higher educational qualifications and upwardly mobile in their careers.
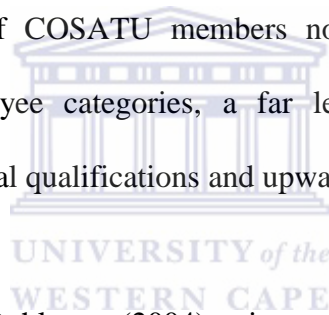
On a further note, Webster and Buhlungu (2004) point out that the rise in non-standard forms of work such as casualisation, informalisation and externalisation have also affected the strength of COSATU. Related to this problem, Gumede (2007) points out that COSATU's utilisation of disruptive mechanisms in the era of neoliberalism is also heavily affected by its adoption of "Business Unionism". While the union has the responsibility to protect its general constituency from the vagaries of privatisation which has resulted in massive casualisation, informalisation and externalisation, COSATU's investment companies will also be bidding for the entities being outsourced by the state.

5.2.3   Public preference mechanisms (public opinion mobilisation)

Public preference mechanisms are processes whereby COSATU mobilises public opinion resulting in political parties and government responding to these shifts in public opinion so as to garner electoral support. The history of COSATU cannot be told without reference to mass mobilisation activities. With support from the mass based UDF, COSATU organised in factories and communities. Through mass mobilisation it fought labour injustices, lack of housing, lack of basic services and the apartheid system itself (Baskin, 1991). Mass mobilisation by COSATU has also been a key feature in post-apartheid South Africa, with COSATU mobilising against job losses, privatisation and other vices of what it terms the capitalist society (Visser, 2004; Cherry, 2006). Thus the masses are an important instrument by which COSATU seeks to influence policy. It is a major means by which COSATU seeks to create an opinion on the masses regarding the potential of any contesting political party in an election to address living wage issues upon assuming power.
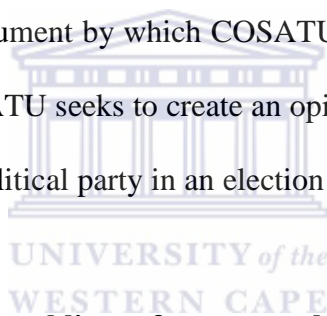
Table 5.6   Perceptions of the public preference mechanism

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Does COSATU appeal to the electorate to change public opinions and attitudes towards voting for a political party of the labour movement's choice?	202	89.7	23	10.3
Does the opinion of the masses change due to COSATU's public opinion mobilisation exercise?	122	54.2	103	45.8
Do you think the ANC crafts its manifestos on labour based on public opinion mobilisation by COSATU?	168	74.6	57	25.4
Do you think there is a link between COSATU's public opinion mobilisation and election outcomes?	171	76	54	24

Respondents to the question on the utilisation of public preference mechanism highlight that it is a critical mechanism for COSATU (see Table 5.6 above).

5.2.3.1   COSATU's utilisation of public opinion mobilisation

A majority of respondents (89.7%) noted that COSATU appeals to the electorate to change public opinions and attitudes towards voting for the ANC, a political party of its choice. A COSATU Provincial Organiser stated that COSATU does this *"by endorsing and campaigning for a party that supports (union) demands"*. It is indeed in this context that COSATU has been campaigning for the ANC in each national election since the first of the democratic era, in 1994, and supporting President Jacob Zuma's first and second bids for the presidency of the party. COSATU renewed its support for the ANC and dedicated organisers to ensuring an "overwhelming" ANC victory in the national elections on the 22 April 2009. In both the national elections in 2004 and the local-government elections in 2006 COSATU ensured again that there would be no viable challenge and alternative to the ANC and its Allies.

5.2.3.2   Effect of COSATU's public opinion mobilisation

The public opinion mobilisation activities of COSATU appear to have been extensive as a whopping 89% of respondents have seen COSATU in the election market, shopping for votes for the ANC. However it was important to also find out if this extensive public mobilisation exercise really influences the electorate to choose the ANC instead of other political parties. A union respondent stated that *" if we do not mobilise voters to vote for the ANC, that constitutes a betrayal of the revolution as the ANC is our movement that we are using to bring about a working class revolution"*. This means that COSATU believes that public opinion mobilisation helps to garner support for the ANC.

A total of 54% of the respondents were positive about the effect of COSATU's public opinion mobilisation exercise. They argued that COSATU not only drums up support for the ANC, but through its extensive network structures, that previously had been even more extensive than those of the ANC, it significantly raised the tempo of the election environment. It served to excite the voters who otherwise would not go and vote thinking that an ANC victory is a forgone conclusion. Further to this, in between the elections, thousands of new entrants join the job market from the youth sector. The shop-floor level campaigns capture these potential new voters for the ANC.

However, nearly 46 percent of the respondents posited that COSATU campaigns for the ANC do not necessarily translate into ANC votes. While the ANC has won an overwhelming majority in the elections both at national and local government levels, its history as a party of the down trodden masses earns it the much required support even without COSATU campaigning for it. Further to this, respondents argued that there is simply no party that has a plausible alternative agenda for South Africa hence the electorate continue to look to the ANC. In view of this two positions, it is important however to note that while COSATU often posits that it has single handedly won votes for the ANC, its role can indeed not be disputed. However the ANC also plays a significant role in its own campaigns to seek the mandate of the people in elections.

However, other factors may counter public opinion mobilisation. For example, the ANC has never made significant inroads in the Western Cape despite putting together comprehensive campaign programmes. In an endeavour to defeat the National Party in the 1999 elections ANC and COSATU put together a broad "dream team," of shop

stewards and officials that campaigned for the ANC (Ehrenreich, 1999). In 2004 COSATU activists also spent months of intense campaigning in KwaZulu Natal and the Western Cape. Though voting patterns following these campaigns showed significant gains for the ANC among the Indian and Coloured working class, the ANC did not capture the provinces and its share of the national vote marginally increased from 66.35% in 1999 to 66.69% in 2004 (Independent Electoral Commission, 1999, 2004). Failure of the ANC to make inroads can be linked to ethnic and racial preferences that may affect public opinion mobilisation.

5.2.3.3 Effect of COSATU's public opinion mobilisation on ANC manifestos

The success of the combined strategy to utilise public opinion mobilisation by COSATU and the ANC has been based on the latter's agreement to address concerns of the workers. A total of 74.6%, of the respondents argued that public opinion mobilisation activities of COSATU influence the inclusion of working class demands on the ANC manifestos. In view of the large body of potential voters among COSATU's membership and the labour union's large mobilisation capacity the ANC strives to capture this body of potential voters by appealing to its living wage cause as elucidated by COSATU. COSATU believes that the living wage is the primary means for workers to fight poverty, close the apartheid wage gap and address broader inequalities in South Africa. Thus the living wage is the cornerstone of the work of the trade union movement. However, given that only 54% of respondents were positive about COSATU's public opinion mobilisation exercise, it may imply that the ANC tends to over value the role of COSATU in influencing the vote.

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Pursuant to COSATU's position in 1994, the ANC manifesto pledged *"Full Rights to all Workers, Better Jobs and Better Incomes"*. In 1999 the election manifesto stated *"Change must go on at a faster pace"* and that, an ANC government finds job creation central to its governance. Its manifesto stated "The ANC believes workers are entitled to a fair share of the wealth they produce. No longer should they be treated as objects of exploitation, to be discarded when years of labour have sapped their strength" (ANC, Manifesto, 1999).

In 2004, the ANC manifesto, was to a large extent blurred when it came to capturing living wage issues. This occurred when support for President Thabo Mbeki in COSATU circles was waning, eventually leading to the ouster of his project in 2007. Following his ouster, the ANC revisited its position on living wage issues. Its 2009 elections manifesto, aptly captured COSATU's views, by pledging that the creation and retention of decent work and sustainable livelihoods, would be the primary focus of all economic policies of the ANC government after the 2009 elections.

5.2.3.4 Link between COSATU's public opinion mobilisation and election outcomes

With regards to elections, COSATU follows an elaborate programme developed by the CEC. This programme entails establishing election teams at national, regional and local level. It includes mobilising workers to register to vote for elections and to vote ANC as well as mobilising resources to carry out this work.

A majority of respondents posited that they believed in a key role for COSATU in influencing voters because, according to a COSATU Regional Deputy Chairperson for Education, *"most voters are workers and influence the outcome"*. A total of 76% of

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respondents stated that COSATU public opinion mobilisation activities have a bearing on election outcomes. Indeed, a cursory view of election results, show that COSATU influences election outcomes. This is more so in particular when anaylsing ANC government's performance on living wage issues. In each election year, despite COSATU complaints that "since 1996, the liberal project had hijacked the ANC", the labour union has been behind giving workers hope that the ANC remains the party of choice. As a result, the ANC has remained as the party of choice to the workers despite poor performance with regards to meeting COSATU living wage demands. Consequently, COSATU has tried to solve this problem of poor delivery by the ANC through influencing its internal leadership changes.

A total of 24% of respondents however had a contrary view about the effect of COSATU's public opinion mobilisation activities on election outcomes. Most of the reasons advanced were as stated in section 5.3.2.2 on the effects of COSATU's public opinion mobilisation. The ANC is a party that appeals to all sections of the society and of which the poor majority call their party.

5.2.4 Political access mechanisms

Political access mechanisms are viewed by COSATU as critical to influencing policy outcomes. On its website (www.COSATU.org.za) COSATU argues that the Alliance to which it belongs comprises three independent formations under the leadership of the ANC. To that end, it tirelessly works towards ensuring that the Alliance stands out as the political centre that steers the ship towards the National Democratic Revolution. It is at the Alliance level that COSATU fights to have all partners to participate equally and fully on matters of national, provincial and local importance. COSATU also believes that the alliance platform should serve to share information and develop common

positions on national and international questions. Further, COSATU expects that the Alliance forum is the means by which partners can debate and discuss their different positions, e. g. on economic policy and privatisation. COSATU established a formal alliance with the ANC and the SACP which strengthened the position of opposition parties and labour demands in the negotiations for a democratic South Africa. Alliance politics also involves labour aligning with factions of political parties and this pushes for internal political party changes, as was the case of the ascendancy of Jacob Zuma to the ANC presidency.

With regards to elections and living wage issues, political access mechanisms include the act of entering into alliances with political parties contesting elections and or formulating policies in government. For example in 1994, and through the alliance, the RDP, a COSATU brainchild was embedded in the ANC's electoral programme (Barchiesi, 1999). As a result in the run-up to the 1994 poll, COSATU played an important role in voter education and in informing the content and ideological trajectory of the RDP. COSATU was critical in the electoral campaign, complementing and assisting the ANC effort through its considerable infrastructure (Faull and February, 2012). The labour movement was thus able to exert a substantial influence on the reforms promoted after the first free election of 1994. During the 1999 election, COSATU again fulfilled its role in the Alliance elections operations: raising consciousness and getting out the vote. The ANC returned to power with a stronger majority. The 2004 Campaign was also hugely successful and COSATU's role was crucial, especially in the urban areas where union infrastructure is concentrated. Working class ANC supporting voters went to the polls in massive numbers in a lowish poll increasing the ANC's takings nationally, and crucially delivering both the Western

Cape and KZN to ANC majorities for the first time since 1994. COSATU was again energised by the results.

Through political access mechanisms COSATU also promotes the concept of its leadership taking up public positions ((Bramble and Barchiesi, 2003; Webster, 1996). Largely these are used to influence policy positions of political allies and government. For example, this can be done by ensuring that proposed policies incorporated into election manifestos of allies represent the interests of the workers and that once in positions of power, allies continue to pursue the policy positions that made COSATU support their election. Table 5.7 below highlights the perceptions of respondents regarding the relevance of political access mechanisms in influencing elections and living wage issues.

Table 5.7   Perceptions of political access mechanisms

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think there is a link between going into alliances and labour's advances towards securing a living wage?	191	84.9	34	15.1
Do you think there is a link between going into alliance with factions of political parties and labour's advances towards a living wage?	120	58.5	105	41.5
Do you think labour leaders should leave the unions and take up positions in political and public institutions?	149	72.7	76	27.3
Do you think the taking up of positions in political parties and public institutions promotes labour's struggles for a living wage?	146	71.2	79	28.8
Would you remember any key positions that labour leaders have taken up in politics or public institutions?	205	100%	0	0%

A majority of respondents argued that political access mechanism was an important aspect of trade union practices that promote improvement in the welfare of workers. Election outcomes in favour of COSATU supported candidates are enhanced by the utilisation of this mechanism. Its allies are assumed most likely to pursue pro-worker policies upon election.

5.2.4.1 Perceptions of link between alliances and advances on living wage issues.

In the context of a living wage, a total of 84.9% of respondents argued that there is a link between going into alliances and labour's advances towards securing a living wage. Respondents argued that the cause of a political party in alliance becomes the cause of COSATU. One such response from a COSATU Workplace Committee Secretary stated that alliance is vital as *"COSATU is able to have access to the leaders and decision making platforms"*. To that end, COSATU also set itself the task of building the ANC and to mobilise its members and the public strongly around voting for the ANC in elections. In all national elections and the local-government elections COSATU campaigns have ensured that there is no viable alternative to the ANC and its Allies. COSATU was able to throw its entire organisational machinery behind the ANC campaigns. Respondents pointed out to the gains that COSATU made through aligning itself with the ANC prior to and after the attainment of democracy.

Alliance gains commonly identified by respondents include a favourable Labour Relations Act, Constitutional protection of workers, bargaining councils, labour rights, employment equality, gender equality in the workplace, general improvement of working conditions and right to freedom of association. All these are the issues that

COSATU fought for and ensured that the ANC government as an alliance partner followed up with the implementation.

5.2.4.2 Perceptions of link between alliances with factions of political party and advances on living wage issues.

A total of 58.5% of respondents posited that alliance with factions of a given political leadership may be necessary and positive in COSATU's fight for a living wage. They argued that such factional alliances, called "slates" in the ANC, facilitate internal leadership changes. Slates are lists that package leaders, and voters are urged to vote for the candidates as a group. In this way COSATU is able to remain supporting a party of its choice but at the same time ensuring that the selected block of leaders in the party are those that most support its position. A Shop Steward posited that *" COSATU always aligns itself with progressive social formations that strengthen the voice of labour"* even in the context of factions. In this regard, Zuma's election was identified as characterised by deliberate factional support through the slate system. The winners had full backing from COSATU. This system was used in Polokwane Congress of 2007. The ANC's congress at Polokwane - which saw the ousting of Mbeki, and the decisive victory of the Zuma faction - was hailed by labour as profound break with GEAR, and a renewed commitment to a worker-friendly nationalist regime (Buhlungu and Tshoaedi, 2012). Much attention focused on resolutions - sponsored by COSATU and its allies - at Polokwane that committed the ANC to labour friendly policies such as ending casual labour. The same commitment appeared in the ANC's election manifesto. The manifesto did not only commit to decent jobs but also stated that the new government after elections would curb labour brokers, casualisation and regulate outsourcing to prevent "unfair" labour practices.

Further, COSATU leaders took opportunity to support candidates who had labour history to join ANC top leadership. As a result, 50% of the top six leadership of the ANC following Polokwane came from a labour background. They were not only in the top six but occupied the top three most influential positions. Jacob Zuma was elected President. Zuma was among the earliest known labour leaders to join the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTUs) when he migrated to Mkhumbane (Cato Manor) in 1959. Kgalema Petrus Motlanthe and Gwede Mantashe were not only among the six members of the top executive but also occupied key positions of Deputy President and Secretary General of the party. Both Motlanthe and Mantashe are former Secretary Generals of the powerful National Mine Workers Union (NUM), an affiliate of COSATU.
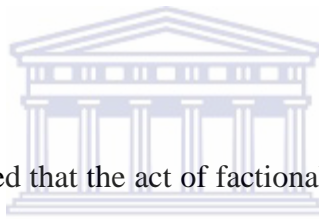
However some respondents posited that the act of factionalism in the ANC tends to lead to factionalism in COSATU as well. Different factions of the labour union may support different factions of the ANC. This causes in fights and weakens the labour union.

5.2.4.3   Perceptions on COSATU taking up political and public positions

The issue of alliances with political parties or factions of political parties seem to be closely linked with a further step that COSATU pursues. There is a tendency for the labour movement to seek political office for its members or individuals aligned to its membership. An average of 72% of respondents posited that it benefits labour to seek public office for its members (see table 5.6) and this furthers its cause for a living wage. As a COSATU Provincial Secretary put it, *"political organisations are an arena to advance working class interests and that should be the bottom line"* (i.e. for labour to enter politics through deploying its leaders). Pursuant to this thought COSATU has been

active in ensuring the deployment of its leaders into public offices. For example, most respondents noted that COSATU seconded 20 of its top senior leaders to take up political leadership positions in the national government in 1994. Approximately 60 unionists also occupied senior provincial positions while hundreds entered local government (Bramble and Barchiesi, 2003). According to Bramble and Barchiesi (2003), COSATU encouraged hundreds of other union officials and activists to join the ranks of the new government bureaucracy and the ANC also recommended very strongly that COSATU allow its cadres, including its senior cadres, to stand for positions in the ANC's national executive committee and at provincial level. The party believed that it could benefit very greatly from the perspectives which COSATU leaders would bring. They would be there as ANC members who came with a COSATU perspective, one that lacked in the ANC.
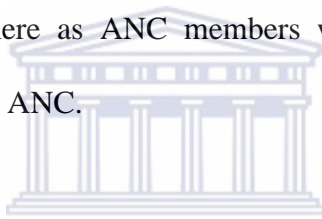
5.2.4.4 Challenges faced by COSATU in trying to use political access mechanisms.

COSATU respondents posited that there is a disjuncture between policies proposed by the alliance and what the state goes on to implement. The state constitutes a different forum from the alliance platform, of which COSATU finds itself without control of. Thus the state often leaves the Alliance behind on policy. In fact the ANC has as the governing party plainly started that "COSATU cannot 'overstretch' its role in the alliance and 'co-govern'…the alliance was built on a 'minimum programme' (Marrian, 2014). As a result of the difference between policy proposals at alliance level and what is implemented in government, COSATU argued that this meant that the alliance was not effective and attributed this to an absence of a "strategic agreement" within the alliance that could influence agenda at the levels of government departments, parliament

and cabinet levels (COSATU, 2000). This also reflects the minimal role that the current political access mechanism can play.

Some of the respondents stated that the leadership that has previously been seconded to take up government positions was too few to exert any meaningful influence on state policy direction. For example Southall and Wood (1999) identify 20 leaders seconded in the 1999 Mbeki administration. This is further affected by the fact that the ANC seeks to satisfy broader interests than a single constituency pursued by COSATU. The ANC views itself as a "broad church, encompassing multiple traditions, organisations and ideologies" (Reitzes, 2010). As such COSATU eventually stopped directly seconding its leadership to parliament though it encourages members to take up positions in politics and government (Cherry, 2006).
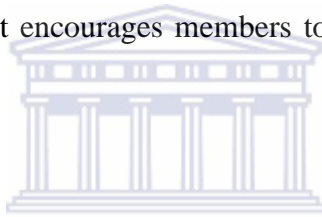
Following the reversal of direct secondment of COSATU leaders, respondents argued that in many instances, leaders who now take up direct political positions are no longer directly accountable to the union membership. They therefore take the new opportunity as greener pastures rather than an opportunity to further the cause of the union and the workers. They then focus on personal material growth at the expense of union battles. This problem is aggravated by the fact that, "the alliance had engendered a culture of self-interest. Members would be less willing to stand up to government if they felt it hurt their chances of getting into government positions" (Ranchod, 2007:3). This tends to limit the utilisation of other mechanisms as leaders may not wish to engage in mass actions that will jeorpadise their chances. Leaders also end up not articulating the voice of members, but their own selfish, material voice.

Departure of leaders from the unions into government hemorrhages the union of experienced quality leadership. Indeed in 1999 COSATU decided not to send affiliates to Parliament on the ANC's lists, in part to stem the hemorrhaging of leadership from its ranks (Buhlungu, 2006). COSATU further complained that MPs deployed to the legislatures soon became subsumed by government and ANC agendas and were unable to exert sufficient influence on policy debates in favour of their working and unemployed constituents. Leaders who leave the union not only join government but some also end up joining the capitalist ranks as businesspersons which is contrary to the workerist perspective.

Another common argument posited as a challenge to COSATU's utilisation of political access mechanisms was that leaders in the alliance reach decisions that are not representative of the grassroots worker. While this may be viewed by architectures of negotiated settlements as compromise politics, respondents argued that labour leaders in alliance simply begin to ignore the demands and interests of the workers who voted them into office. Lastly, respondents posited that government policy is often determined by technocrats and bureaucrats outside the alliance parameters and is not effectively driven by the ANC and COSATU. This is because bureaucrats and technocrats are more educated and utilise their technical expertise and fulltime office position which political leaders do not have (Cherry, 2006).

5.2.5 Judicial mechanisms (litigation)
5.2.5.1 Perception on utilisation of Judiciary mechanism

In a country famed for observing the rule of law on a continent littered with blatant emasculating of the judiciary, one would expect that the poor workers will be too happy to resort to the courts in the event that the affluent employer colludes with government

to pay poor wages. However responses gathered regarding the possibility of resorting to the courts to secure a living wage indicated that COSATU does not perceive it as one of the most critical tools (see Table 5.8) though it is a means that it does not rule out in its quest for the addressing of other socio-economic rights.

Table 5.8   Workers Perceptions on role of judiciary system

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think COSATU should resort to the judiciary to seek redress on living wage issues?	24	10.7	201	89.3
Can COSATU benefit from approaching the courts on living wage issues?	86	38.2	139	61.8
Can Court matters pursued by COSATU influence election and living wage outcomes?	12	5.3	213	94.7

The most common reasons advanced by the respondents as to why they think COSATU should not resort to the court system are listed in Table 5.9 below.

Table 5.9   Reasons why respondents believe COSATU should not approach the courts

Why judicial mechanisms are described as in-effective
COSATU is a people's movement. It relies on mass action.
The judicial system delays the resolution of workers' demands.
Courts are an expensive mechanism for the working poor.
The courts are still not transformed from the apartheid era approach.

As a result of this perception no more than 10% of the respondents responded that the union should revert to the courts in its pursuit of a living wage. This perception may not

necessarily imply that labour does not trust the country's court system. What it means is that when compared with other mechanisms of addressing the living wage issues, courts are ranked lowest in terms of being likely to be utilised by labour.

5.2.5.2 Benefit of COSATU from approaching the courts on living wage issues

The low ranking of the court system by COSATU respondents as a mechanism that it is likely to resort to in seeking a living wage necessitated an inquiry into whether COSATU perceives this as a mechanism that if used can help COSATU in its quest for a living wage adjustment. A low 38% of the respondents believe that although COSATU may not likely approach the courts to seek a living wage demand, once it approaches the courts, it may likely have its living wage concerns addressed. Accordingly, 62% of the respondents argued that it will not benefit COSATU to approach the courts regarding living wage demands. In addition to the reasons highlighted in Table 5.9, dissatisfaction with the judicial means was ascribed to the argument that once the matter is before the judiciary, this takes away the power of the union to mobilise and press for their demands through other mechanisms as the conditions change. It becomes a matter sub judice.

In that regard it may actually preclude the union from using in particular, the much favoured disruptive mechanisms. This significantly reduces the pressure that the union may exert to press for a living wage. It makes it easier for the matter to fall away or be parked for a long time and at times until it loses relevance. For example if workers are pressing for a given percentage increase in annual salaries, the matter may stand before the courts until the period when the union begins to press for the next annual increase. By the time judgment is handed down, it would have lost relevance. The hard pressed

worker seems to demand immediate results, hence favours mechanisms that enable it to remain active and utilise its numbers' power base.

5.2.5.3 Judicial influence on election and living wage outcomes

The question in this section sought to find out if COSATU would resort to the courts in a bid to ensure that its supported party or candidate is granted fair participation to the electoral process so that the chances of winning by the labour supported party are increased. This judicial method was lowly rated as a means of influencing election and living wage outcomes. A total of 94.7% of respondents felt that the Judiciary was not a good platform to utilise in seeking to influence elections and living wages. The argument is however not based on the ineffectiveness of the judiciary. Respondents argued that South Africa is a flourishing democracy and therefore does not have reason to resort to the courts in order to influence the course of elections. Thus it is always expected that an environment characterised by free and fair elections in South Africa will always produce an acceptable result. Given its extensive base of the working people, COSATU believes that this political environment enables a party of its choice to win any election and pursue living wage policy issues as advocated for by labour.

5.2.6 International access mechanisms

Trade union international mechanism played a significant role in the shaping of events which led to the victory of democracy in 1994 and also many of the policy choices made by the SA government thereafter. The utilisation of trade union international access mechanism was done both at labour federation levels as well as the individual affiliate levels. For example since the days of apartheid, COSATU affiliates had closer relations with what were then called, the International Trade Secretariats (ITSs). COSATU

affiliates joined the ITS relevant to their sector (such as the International Transport workers Federation (ITF), the International Union of Food Workers (IUF), and the International Union of Chemical, Energy and Mineworkers (ICEM), and received the benefits of solidarity and, sometimes, financial assistance. Through trade union international access mechanism Scandinavian, Italian and British unions increasingly offered material and political support to COSATU. For example, upon the 1987 COSATU boycott of white only elections and its subsequent persecution, the ICFTU reported that SA was one of the most dangerous countries for union leaders following the subsequent arrests.

 In 1987 COSATU affiliated with the then Organisation for African Trade Union Unity (OATUU) and forged links with representative organisations of workers involved in what was termed the militant anti-imperialist struggles in other developing countries. In the Southern region, COSATU built links with other trade unions through SATUCC, an umbrella body for trade unions in Southern Africa. After 1994 COSATU joined the ICFTU.

The trade union international access mechanism instrument uniquely serves COSATU as well as counterpart unions in the network. It is in this context that COSATU (2003) argues,

> *"Our local struggles are intertwined with international working class struggles - through our local initiatives and victories that we score, we open up a new front in the ongoing struggle against international monopoly capital. The globalisation of capitalism means that no society can survive on its own. Hence we need to appreciate the dynamic linkages between our struggles here at home and on the international front".*

In this regard for example, at an August 2008 Southern African Development Community (SADC) meeting in Johannesburg, and in solidarity with its network

members in the respective countries, COSATU led a march against the participation of Zimbabwean president, Robert Mugabe, and Swaziland's King Mswati arguing that they had not been properly elected to represent their nations.

The above discussion shows the existence of this mechanism as a relevant mechanism for utilisation by COSATU including in its fight for workers' demands. As such in this study, the popularity of this mechanism was also investigated revealing the results highlighted in Figure 5.10 below.

5.2.6.1 Perceptions on utilisation of international access mechanisms.

A high percentage of 84 believe that COSATU should seek active collaboration with other working people's organisations in other parts of the region, continent and the world.

Table 5.10   Perceptions of the utilisation of international access mechanism

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think COSATU should seek international collaborations with other labour movements or institutions?	181	80.4	44	19.6
Do you think collaboration with similar labour bodies and institutions around the world may be helpful in election of a political party of your choice?	134	59.6	91	40.4
Do you think collaboration with similar labour bodies and institutions around the world may be helpful in advancing your living wage demands?	118	52.4	107	47.6
Do you think these collaborations may sometimes be an impediment to your objective of exerting influence on national elections and living wage issues?	20	0.9	205	91.1

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Respondents argued that collaboration with other labour movements and organisations pursuing the objective of emancipating the worker is necessary because workers are the same all over the world and in the words of a COSATU Provincial Organiser, *" the monster we are fighting is the same"* (i.e. capitalism).

5.2.6.2 Perceptions of the influence of international access mechanism on elections.

While the response regarding the influence of international collaborations on the election of a political party of COSATU's choice was in the affirmative, only 59.6% of respondents felt that there is a direct correlation between the two. This percentage is lower than the earlier responses on other mechanisms except for the judicial mechanism. However, the study observed that a large number of respondents, who are mainly ordinary workers or low ranking COSATU local representatives, could not clearly explain the relationship between the international access mechanism and election of a political party or leadership of their choice. They seem to be too far away from the centre of activity that connects them to the international system. Therefore their understanding of this connection is somehow remote. However, interviews with more senior COSATU leaders indicated that they see a link between collaboration with workers bodies at different levels as well as pro worker organisations around the world and its impact on election of political parties of their choice. They argued that such collaborations provided a platform through which COSATU can enunciate its preferred candidates and policies. In this regard, once it agrees on policy positions with a party in which it is in alliance with, the later will feel compelled to fulfill its end of the bargain given that the eyes of the international community will be on it. Sharing of ideas with alike organisations also enable COSATU to improve ways in which it seeks to exert influence on elections.

5.2.6.3 Perception of the influence of international access mechanism in advancing living wage demands.

In the same light that respondents commented on the possible influence of international access mechanism on elections, 52.4% of respondents noted that if the party of their choice is elected, it will feel compelled to meet the promises made to labour. This is because among other factors, COSATU's image, interests and positions that it pushes for are internationalised thereby gaining more force. This significantly impacts on the advancement towards a living wage. However 47.6% of respondents felt that the international system is governed by capital and this influence permeates to the national levels. With such a strangle hold on production, capital is not likely to capitulate but offer wages on its own terms.

5.3 summary

In general COSATU practices in influencing election and living wage issues include disruptive mechanisms, political access, public preference, international access and judicial mechanisms. Of all the mechanisms, the judicial mechanism emerged as the least preferred means of seeking to influence elections and living wages. Further, while respondents argued (with very high percentages) that COSATU utilises these mechanisms and that it is a right thing to do, the responses drastically fell when asked if they think these mechanisms lead to a positive outcome. This perception was mainly below 60%. Therefore an analysis of this result shows that exerting influence on the policy process is never a winner takes all game. Some of the demands of labour fall by the way side as a result of the need for compromise. At the same time, when COSATU engages in these practices, worker expectations would be very high. At the end, while

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workers perceive these practices to be necessary, they also note that they do not guarantee successful outcomes.

CHAPTER 6

SOCIAL CONTEXT OF ZCTU PRACTICES ON ELECTIONS AND LIVING WAGE ISSUES

6.0   Introduction

This chapter gives a synopsis of the social context of ZCTU's social movement union practices on elections and living wages in UDI and independent Zimbabwe. Social context is used here to refer to the setting in which ZCTU finds itself and under which its practices occur. It influences ZCTU and its members' perceptions of the world around them and how they react to it. In chapter two we discussed why ZCTU can be classified as a social movement and the role of social movements in society, particularly as regards to influencing social change. We also noted that as an old social movement, ZCTU focuses on material conditions of its members. In chapter three we discussed how labour as a social movement seeks to influence one aspect of social change, living wage policy through the political system mechanism of elections. Perceptions of links between a given political system (in this case democracy) and the prospects of securing living wage policy favourable to labour were also discussed. The pursuit of this political system as a means to securing a living wage is caused by the appalling conditions that the working poor often find themselves in and the belief by labour that the state is responsible for institutional frameworks that can help change the wage conditions of workers. Thus this chapter discusses the conditions obtaining in Zimbabwe that have influenced labour and specifically ZCTU practices. Key structural conditions include legislative environment, economic performance, poverty and inequality. In this chapter it is argued that the state of these conditions tend to drive ZCTU practices. While there are many other indicators that show the challenges that Zimbabwean society is facing, only those that are referred to by labour in its everyday struggles are discussed.

6.1   UDI Era Social Context

Shopo (1985:10) notes that the UDI regime argued that its efforts would be directed at satisfying the basic needs of the black majority from a Whiteman's perspective and understanding. In the process, Shopo (1985 notes that the UDI government created a political environment that stalled labour's wellbeing which contributed to labour's contestation of the system.

6.1.1   UDI Laws

The minority regime moulded its legislative pieces along the same lines of its big brother, South Africa resulting in the discriminatory legislative system becoming an important rallying point of grievances. The Industrial Conciliation Act of 1934, as amended in 1959, created "a job colour bar" that restricted urban black workers to mainly menial jobs. Ncube (2000:162) points out that the Act denied black employees from collective bargaining. However, following the organisation of African workers and strikes, particularly on the railroads and in the mines, a new Industrial Conciliation Act passed in 1959 did recognise African unions, although it excluded agriculture, domestic, and government workers, sectors where the largest number of African employees were found (Mothibe, 1996). They could therefore not organise or be party to any forum that determined employment conditions. Further the 1959 amendment remained discriminatory in that only existing unions could establish separate branches for African members and a second union in the same industry could not be established. Existing unions, prior to the amendment were of European workers. In addition, unions where African members could become a majority, their vote counted only as one third, to prevent them from controlling integrated unions. Further, while the Industrial Conciliation Act appeared to outlaw racially exclusive trade unions in

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Rhodesia, it allowed the formation within specific industries of unions segregated on the basis of skill. In practice the 'skilled' unions tended to be European dominated, whereas the 'unskilled' unions were almost exclusively African (Harris, 1972). Further, the law governing labour required union leaders to seek permission to hold a meeting and banned strikes in what the regime termed essential services sectors (transport, electricity, production, supply, delivery, and distribution of food, fuel and coal). Consequently it was considered sabotage and punishable by up to 30 years or death, to endanger, interrupt, or interfere with any essential service; or with free movement of any traffic, land, water or air, or to cause substantial loss to a person or the government.

The Masters and Servants Act (1901) made it a crime to break a labour contract, and officials tolerated assaults by Europeans against Africans at work. According to the law African-workers were guilty of criminal offences when absenting themselves from work without lawful cause; showing neglect of duty, or if they disobey a master's command or show abuse tendency towards the master or his family. In addition, the Marshall Servants Act provided that an African who failed to carry out the instructions of his employer could be prosecuted criminally

The Compulsory Native Labour Act (1942) was put in place to empower the State to forcibly conscript African males between the age of 18 and 45 into low wage labour particularly agriculture (Maravanyika and Huijzenveld, 2010). The Act targeted those who had been out of employment for at least three months. The Law and Order Maintenance Act (1960) created a wide range of political offences and imposed strict limitations on all forms of African political activity and organisation. The Act prohibited workers from taking strike action by widening the definition of public order

and essential services to include basically all the main industries and services where the majority of workers were employed (Law and Order Maintenance Act [Chapter 11:07]). The Unlawful Organisations Act (1959) outlawed certain organisations. It provided for the banning of organisations if their activities were deemed "likely" to disturb public order, and prejudicial to the tranquillity of the nation. The Act also allowed government seizure of organisations' property. The Law and Order Maintenance Act and the Unlawful Organizations forbid African gatherings, meetings, or demonstrations. The Emergency Powers Act (1966) empowered the Minister for Law and Order to detain any person in the interest of public safety or public order. The numbers of arrests and imprisonments of workers escalated following this law (African Fund, 1969).

Finally, the UDI Rhodesian constitution (1961) was a farce in terms of the provision of trade union rights as it pretended to protect rights of trade unions by making reference to rights to life, personal liberty, and protection from slavery and forced labour, protection from inhuman treatment and the right of every person to the protection of the law. It stated that,

> *"no person shall be hindered in the enjoyment of his freedom of peaceful assembly and association, that is to say, his right to assemble freely and associate with other persons and, in, particular, to form or belong to trade unions or other associations for the protection of his interests".*

However behind this palatable statement was a saving clause that shut every door on freedom of trade unions. The clause stated that no law would be construed to be inconsistent with sub paragraph 1 to the extent that the law in question made provision which was necessary in the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health, or the economic interests of the state or to protect the rights and freedoms of other persons or which imposed restrictions upon public officers which were necessary in the public interest (Rhodesia Constitution, 1961; Windrich, 1975).

According to Ncube (2000), in this context labour unions were used as forums for control and not for protection of workers' rights.

6.1.2   UDI Wage System

The segregation of all land into white and black areas dispossessed the blacks of most of the more fertile land and undermined their economic self-sufficiency leading to pauperisation and the proletarianisation of blacks (Austin, 1975). The majority of blacks were restricted to small, unproductive, overcrowded and dry native areas so much that they turned to earning a living through wage labour. As the wage labour developed among the African population, the wage structure assumed a racial bias in line with the country's segregatory laws. For example, Foran (2005, p.125), notes that whites earned more in Rhodesia than in South Africa and Britain. This was to the extent that in the end the five 5% white population in Rhodesia took home 60% of the national personal income in the 1950s and 60s and only slightly less in the 1970s, making the wage gap between Africans and Europeans highly unequal. Table 6.1 below, shows that a few months prior to the declaration of UDI in 1965, wide gaps existed in salaries across industries between blacks and white employees.

Table 6.1   1963 Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) average wages

Employment		African	European
in agriculture	241,334	$187.60	$3474.80
in mining	50,153	$322.00	$4300.80
in manufacturing	97,350	$507.20	$3841.60
in construction	48,933	$420.00	$3774.40

Source: African Fund, (1969)

In agriculture African salaries were 18 times less than their European counterparts; in mining, African salaries were 13 times less than that of Europeans; while in manufacturing and construction the gaps were seven and half times and nine times

respectively between the races (African Fund, 1969). The huge gap in agriculture sector

and mining sectors were a result of the fact that the majority of unskilled labour was

absorbed in these labour intensive unskilled sectors. Of the total number of workers

during this period, 13 per cent were Europeans and 87 per cent Africans. A later

study, carried out in 1970, five years after the promulgation of UDI showed that an

average of 725 000 Africans were employed in the wage sector, earning Rhodesian $226

400 000, or an average of $312 per employee per annum. By comparison, 103 500

Europeans, earning $321 400 000 or an annual average of $3 104 per employee were

similarly employed (Harris, 1972.). By 1975, the non-Africans were earning $606

million in wages and the Africans $462 million and the average annual wage earnings of

a non- African were almost eleven times as high as the annual average earnings of an

African (USAID, 1977). Thus in 1977, Harris (1977, p.28) observed that "white

capitalists and landowners receive satisfactory profits, and white workers satisfactory

wages. The returns are secured out of the relative deprivation of black industrial workers

and peasants." Table 6.2 below, shows that by 1979, a year before majority rule, income

remained highly skewed.

Table 6.2   Rhodesia (Zimbabwe) Annual Wage Income, 1979

Group	Proportion of Population	Share of wages
Africans	97.6	60
Europeans	2	37
Other	0.5	3

Source: National Manpower Survey, 1981

The black people, who at independence represented 97.6% of the population, received a

disproportionate 60% share of wages and salaries while whites who represented only 2%

of the population accounted for a disproportionate 37% of wages and salaries. Mazingi

and Kamidza (2011) posit that racial bias towards inequitable distribution of resources

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created conditions of income inequalities. Such rampant wage inequalities of the UDI raised a highly impoverished African workforce which led to a lot of discontentment and struggle for equality by labour. Indeed income inequality was one of the key factors that had a bearing on the practices of the labour social movements.

6.1.3   Poverty and inequality

The USAID (1977) noted that the gap separating the average African and non-African incomes was reflected in the income distribution. According to 1968 estimates, the poorest 20% of the population received only 3.2% of the income, while the wealthiest 5% (which was White population) received 47.8%. A 1970 study, showed that the white population of employee averaged 31% of the labour force but took home 57% of the annual income, while the an average 69% of the labour force, which was African earned only 43% of the total wage income (Harris, 1972). Foran (2005) contends that records show that by 1974 Black urban and rural incomes fell significantly short of the poverty datum line. In 1974 a PDL study established that a typical black family in Fort Victoria required $914 per annum, in Bulawayo $840, and in Salisbury, $882 to meet minimum needs. In that year average earnings in these towns were $528, $562 and $606 respectively.

In 1975, the Europeans earned nearly 58% of the wages and the Africans 42% and the average annual wage earnings of a non- African were estimated at close to eleven times as high as the annual average earnings of an African (USAID, 1977). The USAID (1977) noted that in 1977, the average annual income of the Europeans in Rhodesia stood at about $2 300 per year compared to just $73 per year for Africans. The gini-coefficient was valued at 0.6627 in 1977, revealing a highly unequal society. A World

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Bank study (1987) stated that at independence in 1980, African incomes were one-tenth of that of whites. Moyo and Yeros (2007) observe that black people were grossly underpaid; earning 11 times less than their white counterparts by the time Zimbabwe attained its independence. This high level of inequality among workers created hatred of the segregatory UDI system by majority of black workers and caused them to invigorate their challenge against it.

6.1.4 Economic Growth

The UDI economy was highly dualistic, skewed in a manner that was designed to serve the interests of the minority white population. While high rates of economic growth were achieved between 1965 and 1974, with GDP growth averaging 7.2% per annum (see Figure 6.1), the benefits never accrued to the majority African population. Furthermore (as shown in figure 6.1), the economy started to decline in 1975.
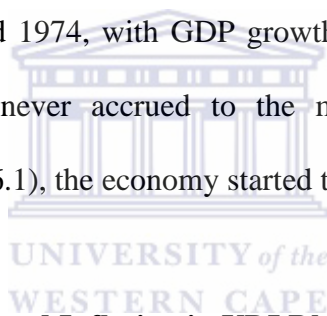
Figure 6.1   Economy growth and Inflation in UDI Rhodesia
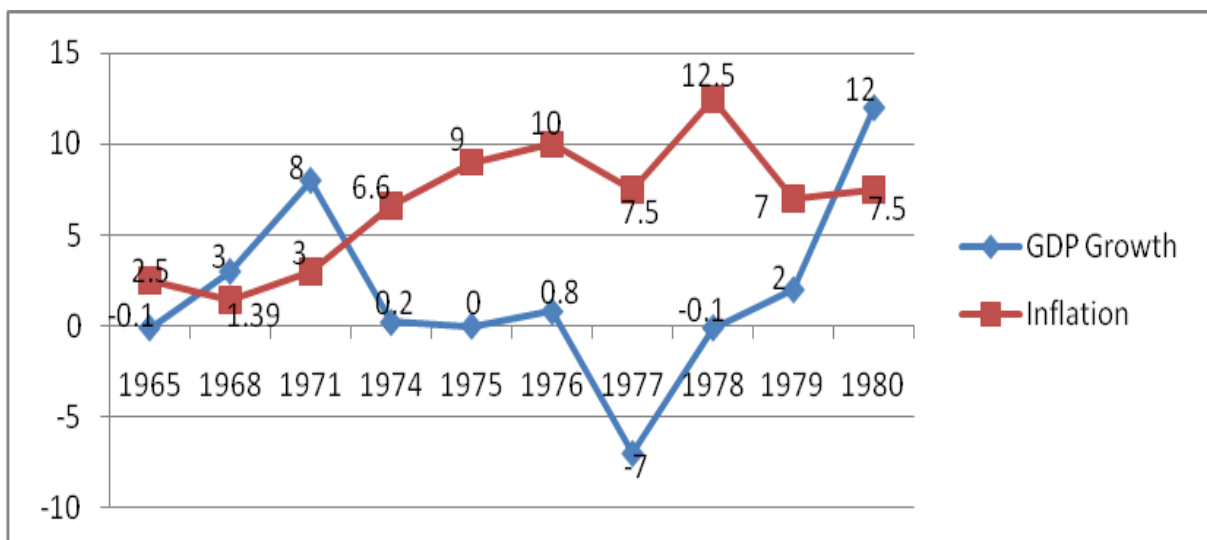
Source: African Development Bank (2011); Chhiber, Cottani, Firuzabadi, and Walton (1989); International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics and data files.

Davies and Rattsø (2000) not that the economic decline is ascribed to the liberation war that intensified during the period leading to the end of the UDI era and the attainment of independence in 1980 as well as the United Nations backed economic sanctions. It is estimated that between 1975 and 1979, when the war ended, the economy declined by a total of 8% (Riddell, 1984:264). Bond (2007:155) exclaimed that the late 1970s Rhodesian economic crisis "was of Great Depression scale". This crisis was felt even more by the segregated poor African wage earners.

6.1.5   Inflation

Positive economic growth from the onset of UDI to 1974 was coupled by low rates of inflation, a phenomenon associated with significant economic growth (Chhiber, et al, 1989). Poor economic performance tends to push up inflation as shown in Figure 6.1 for the period 1974-1979. From figure 6.1 above, it can also be deduced that during the economic downturn, the inflation rate averaged 8.8%. Thus declining economy had impact on inflation levels. Higher inflation increases the cost of living and impacts heavily on the poor.

6.1.6   Unemployment

Unemployment figures released in 1960, indicated that 647,000 Africans were unemployed in that year and around 1969, a total of 605 Africans were estimated to be unemployed (Africa Fund, 1969). Figures thereafter were further suppressed with the government arguing that there was no unemployment among Africans. In addition, while more Africans would have been in need of employment, their penchant for job search was neutralised by the nature of the UDI Rhodesian economy and the wage structure. Erbmann and Sheen (1974) stated that the economy was dichotomised into the

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cash and non-cash economy. The non-cash economy was a traditional, relatively non technical, largely subsistent barter system. The relatively unskilled urban African could easily be re-absorbed into his subsistent rural village if he was unable to obtain urban employment. However, in view of the fact that the economy was designed to mainly service the white sector of the population, unemployment can safely be argued to have been zero percent among the Europeans and there was a process of importing white labour for high order and skilled jobs.

6.1.7   Other social policies

The country's skewed economic and employment policies were also complicated by an education system that was provided along racially segregated lines. In terms of education expenditure, several times more was spent per head on white pupils than was spent on blacks. At the onset of UDI, a European child had a 1:125 chance of entering the University College; the African child's chance was 1:6,000 (Africa Fund, 1969). Thus a segregated system of education was deliberately developed to differently serve the racially defined communities. The differences in the regulations and budgetary provisions for black and white education resulted in restricted provision and a lower quality of education for blacks relative to that provided for whites. The whites were given classical British schooling while the blacks enjoyed primary and trade education. Herbst (1989:69) argues that as a result of this nature of education, and economy; 45 per cent of all blacks were illiterate and only 8 per cent of black children were able to attend secondary school. Investment in human capital also reflected this racial bias. This is supported by the National Manpower Survey (1981) which notes that blacks accounted for only 36% of all available professional and technical positions, while only 24% were in the managerial and administrative category by 1980. Race was a

strong determinant factor for most apprenticeship programmes. This created an aristocracy of white males as income differentials in the labour market reflected racial and gender insensitivity (Mazingi and Kamidza, 2011).

6.1.8   The 1980 Election

Unions played a key role during three decades of nationalist struggles from the 1950s through the 1970s. As a result of the thin line between politics and trade unionism, several trade union leaders emerged as new political leaders following alliances between political movements and social movements. For example, Mothibe (1996) notes that the Southern Rhodesia African National Congress had an alliance with the Southern Rhodesia Trade Union Congress. The Southern Rhodesian African Trade Union Congress (SRATUC) which later became the African Trade Union Congress was aligned to National Democratic Party and later ZANU PF.

However, Tarugarira (2011) notes that as the liberation war became highly militarised, the labour movement was eventually subordinated to the nationalist agenda to the extent that it was even absent from the Lancaster House Conference in 1979 that negotiated Zimbabwe's independence. In fact the basis of the conference was the unsustainable war on the part of the UDI minority government. In the end it was the power of the gun that appeared to exert influence on the electorate rather than social movements such as labour. In fact the military wing of the nationalist movement played a critical role in the campaign process, mobilising voters as well as intimidating potential voters against voting for other political parties as large contingents of them did not go into assembly points but were left behind in the communities mobilizing voters (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2012). As such labour was silent during the 1980 elections but emerged as a junior

partner to the new political arrangement. When Zimbabwe gained its independence in 1980, more than 50 unions belonged to six federations. On February 28, 1981, these unions came together to form the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions.

6.2   Social Context of ZCTU practices (1980-1990)

Zimbabwe gained her independence on April 18, 1980 following the Lancaster House Agreement and elections. ZANU-PF party won an absolute majority in the election. The new party won its ruling ticket on a socialist agenda (Alexander, 2000). The new government pointed out its priority areas as to address past discriminatory policies in land distribution, education, employment, and wages among other socio-economic services. As a result, expectations were very high on the part of labour regarding improvement in salaries, working conditions and the general living standards of the worker and his/her dependents in the rural areas. However the socialist interpretation of the ruling limited the autonomy of the ZCTU in the first half of the 1980s. Its subordination to the state was a prominent feature of the relationship and it was described as corporate paternalist or paternalistic state corporatism where it was confined to largely uncritical, complementary role to the state. Shadur (1994:233) states that,

> *"The Mugabe government's strategy in relation to trade unions and workers like that in other countries such as Zambia was similar to a patriarchal approach to the family. The aim was to work for the benefit of the family members but in so doing the patriarch sometimes used dictatorial methods. Government emphasis was placed on unity within the family structures and dissent was not tolerated. Efforts were made to meet the immediate needs of members and protect them from external threats. Where possible, the immediate position of the members was improved but sacrifices were required so that in the longer term sustained benefits could be obtained. The goal was to work for the benefit of the children and grandchildren"*

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As a result of this mode of governance, there was an absence of a meaningful involvement of organised labour in decision making (Raftopoulos & Sachikonye, 2001).

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6.2.1 The Laws

In 1980, the Industrial relations system in Zimbabwe was governed by the Industrial Conciliation Act , the Employment Act, and the Minimum Wage Act. These legislations specified conditions of employment. In particular, the Minimum Wages Act and Employment Act guaranteed a national minimum wage which saw real wages rise in 1980-81 to the highest ever Gwisai (2002). In 1985 the Labour Relations Act (1985) was ushered in to govern the country's industrial relations. The Act accorded workers full labour rights. The Labour Relations Act also promoted the concepts of equal pay for work of equal value as enshrined in the International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 100 (Equal Remuneration) 1949 and non-discrimination at the workplace as propounded in the ILO Convention No. 111 (Employment Occupation) 1949. Both Conventions were ratified by Zimbabwe. Black female workers also became eligible to paid maternity leave. Under the act, registered unions were granted rights to collective bargaining and representation. The Act also safeguarded basic labour standards, such as minimum wages and maximum working hours. These were large gains on the part of labour which had battled decades of discrimination and poor salaries. However, as the decade wore on, other challenges forced labour to confront the new government in different ways.

6.2.2 Economic growth

Following nearly a century of discrimination, the first post-independence economic policy was the "Growth with Equity", announced in February 1981. According to the document, the intention was to implement policies based on socialist, egalitarian and democratic principles under conditions of rapid economic growth, full employment, price stability, dynamic efficiency in the allocation of resources, and to ensure that the

benefits are equitably distributed. Further, through a socialist lance, in 1982, the Government launched the Transitional National Development Plan (TNDP) (1982-1985). This was followed by the First Five-Year National Development Plan (FFYNDP) (1986-1990), both of which emphasised economic growth, employment creation and poverty reduction, and in the process expected to ameliorate inequalities across societies and within the country (Makusha, 2007:21-22). Unfortunately these development policies failed to inspire economic growth.

The levels of economic growth did not respond to the high aspiration of the post independence euphoria and unemployment, poverty and inequality gradually increased into the 1990s (Sichone, 2003). As shown in figure 6.2, the economic performance over the entire decade was too small to address the endemic problem of inequality, unemployment and generally low standards of living (Tralim, 1999).
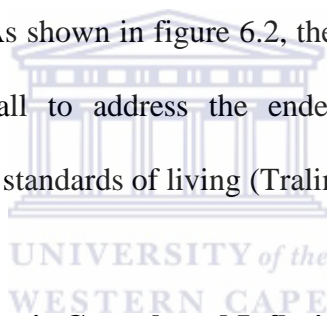
Figure 6.2   Zimbabwe Economic Growth and Inflation (1980-1990)
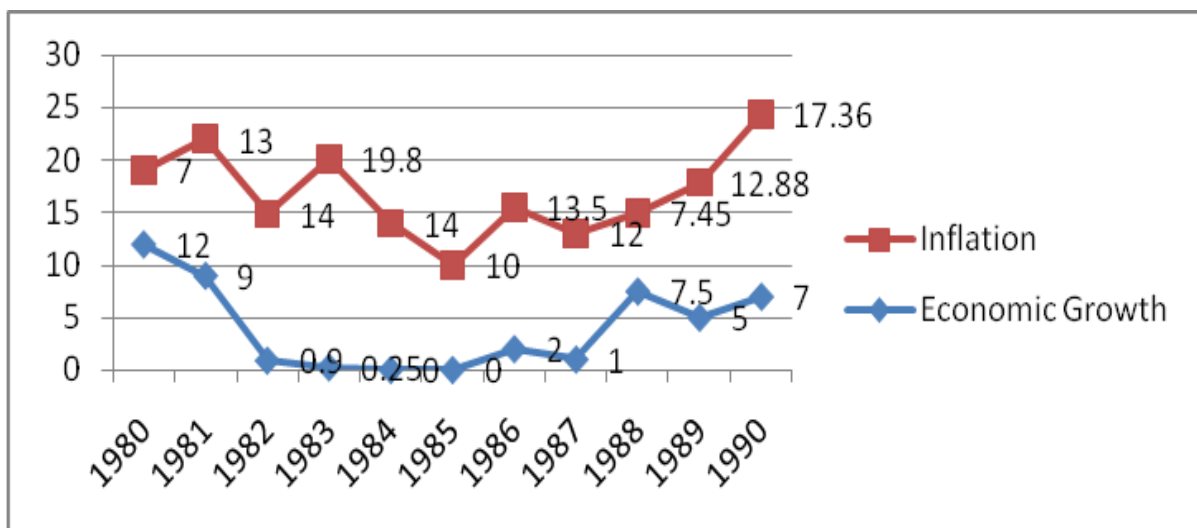
Source: UNDP, (2008); Chhiber, Cottani, Firuzabadi, and Walton (1989); Chhiber, Cottani, Firuzabadi, and Walton (1989); International Monetary Fund, International Financial Statistics and data files.

The annual average growth between 1981 and 1990 was 2.8%. Thus the performance failed to improve the standards of living demanded by the poor workers who had emerged from decades of starvation wages.

6.2.3 Inflation

The average rate of inflation for the entire decade was higher than economic growth (Figure 6.2). In fact inflation pressures, increased as the decade gravitated towards its closure. A two digit hyper inflation that characterised the economy throughout the decade would have tended to affect the purchasing power of the working poor. Ordinarily, inflation exerts pressure on disposable income Myers (2011). In an economy where the majority population was rural and the nature of the traditional support system, it also meant that the fewer waged employees in urban areas found it difficult to extend expected support to their dependents in the rural areas.
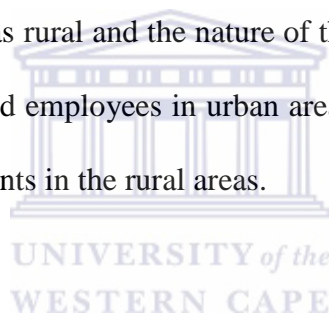
6.2.4 Poverty and inequality

Despite a relatively robust economy, Zimbabwe entered independence with one of the most unequal distributions of wealth in the world, with 60 per cent of the income being earned by 4 per cent of the population (Herbst, 1989). Thus among concerns of the government at independence were the skewed distribution of incomes and high levels of poverty. Government efforts included introducing an incomes policy to narrow income inequalities and also improve the purchasing power of many people. It subsequently introduced a minimum wage and generally adjusted wages of those at the bottom scales upwards by wider margins while upper scales were adjusted only a little (Ncube, 2000). Nonetheless, a stalling economy meant that poverty and inequality gradually increased

between 1980 and 1990, leading the government to introduce new liberal economic reform programmes (Alwang, Mills & Taruvinga, 2002).

6.2.5 Unemployment

According to the CSO, unemployment was about 10.8% in 1982, in 1986 it was 7.2%, and in 1993 it was 7.9 (Table 6.3).

Table 6.3   Zimbabwe Unemployment (1982-1997)

Year	1982	1986/87	1993	1997
Unemployment	10.8	7.2	7.9	7

Sources: CSO (2005). Note: all are based on the standard definition of unemployment, using a short recall period of 7 days

However, important to note is the fact that this period was marked by high public sector employment growth (Ncube, 2000). In the absence of a high public sector employment growth characteristic of the first years of majority rule, unemployment would have been higher. Further to note however is the fact that unemployment statistics from the Central statistics office is based on the official definition of unemployment. This accounts for people who would have been looking for employment in the previous 7 days prior to the census. In an environment of high unemployment, many give up on looking for employment, or engage in informal trade which brings insignificant income that cannot improve their standards of living. Thus broader unemployment would have been much higher. For example, Chitambara (n.d) estimates that by 1989, the rate of unemployment was approximately 26% from about 12.5% in the mid 1980s.

It can also be further argued that the unemployment figures in table 5.3 were conservative because employment grew annually by 1.8%, or 1% during the 1980-1984 phase, and 2.4% in the six years that followed (Ncube, 2000). Ncube notes that this was against a background where primary, secondary and tertiary level enrolments increased

by 311%, 898%, and 355%, respectively between 1979 and 1984 and school output outstripped the jobs created. In 1980 for example, Ncube (2000) posits that there were 26,000 new labour market entrants with primary and secondary education competing for 33,000 non-agricultural job openings. During the period 1986-1990, formal employment was 28 000 per annum against an average 200 000 new potential labour entering the market each year thereby creating a huge pool of unemployed labour.

6.2.6   Wages

The wage gap that was created by the UDI system was difficult to close. This is to the extent that by 1981, two years after majority rule, the income gap was still apparent (see table 6.4).

Table 6.4 Zimbabwe: Ratio of European to African Wages, 1981

Sector	Professional and Technical (Males)	Clerical (males)	Skilled (males)	Semi Skilled (Males)	Overall (Persons)
Agriculture	3.7	4.8	8.5	8.2	24.5
Manufacturing	2.3	3.1	3.9	4	7.3
Finance	2.3	1.7	3.5	-	3.5
Public	2.3	2.3	3.1	3.4	7
All Sectors	2.7	2.8	4.2	3.9	10.4

Source: World Bank, 1987

Table 6.4 above reveals that the ratio of European to African wages remained highest in the sectors with the highest proportion of unskilled workers (agriculture) where the ratio was as high as 25:1 and lowest in the skilled sectors (financial services) with a ratio of 4:1. As highlighted earlier major efforts were made during the course of the decade to rationalise wages, to promote economic parity and lift the lowest income earners through an array of legislative instruments.

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6.2.7   The 1990 National Elections

The 1980-1990 period was characterised by poor performance of development policies leading to increasing inflation, growing poverty, unemployment and deteriorating real wages and causing labour discontent, resistance and opposition (Dansereau and Zamponi, 2005). In 1985, the a new ZCTU President and General Secretary that began to develop a more militant and independent political position that distanced itself from the ruling party, ZANU PF on the basis of failed economic policies (Bond and Saunders, 2005). Tralim (1999) posits that the most important domestic group that articulated opposition to the economic reforms was the ZCTU which adopted a more offensive stand on political and economic issues. Sharp criticism of the ruling party's socialist rhetoric and ideological inconsistency were strongly made in the second half of the 1980s (ZCTU, 2014a).
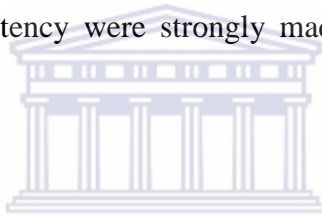
Consequently, prior to the parliamentary elections in 1990 ZCTU refused to publicly recommend their members to vote for the ruling party as had previously been the case. ZCTU also heavily criticised the ruling party's plans to make Zimbabwe a one party system (ZCTU, 2014a). Thus attempts to set up a one party state failed in part due to protests from the labour movement. Then ZCTU secretary General, Morgan Tsvangrayi was even arrested at this time on account of the protests. Amidst opposition to the one party state, Edgar "TwoBoy" Tekere, ZANU PF renegade, joined forces with disgruntled sections of academics, students and workers to form the Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) in April 1989. However despite the formation of a new party challenging the same norms in the state, ZCTU stayed out of the political game and pledged neutrality (Alexander, 2000). According to Laakso (2003), in 1990, the ZCTU wanted to be as independent as possible from political parties. However by and large it

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followed that despite ZCTU pledging neutrality its open distaste ofZANU PF polices and frequent demonstrations against government drove a huge section of the electorate aligned to the workers movement, especially in the urban areas to vote for ZUM (Lodge, Kadima and Pottie, 2002). ZUM's election manifesto focused on the issues palatable to the workers, the deteriorating economy, corruption and multiparty democracy, while ZANU PF's campaign focused on the one party state, socialism (of which labour and other social movements had long lost confidence in) and land reform (Sylvester, 1990). Land reform was a huge draw card for the majority rural voters.

6.3   ZCTU Social Context (1990-2000)

Following a decade of sluggish economic performance which did not create enough jobs and failed to reduce poverty and inequality, the government sought to re-energise the economy by introducing the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) and the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST). However, the economic programmes only served to worsen the plight of the working poor (Kanyenze, 2006).

During this era, the ZCTU turned out to be the key domestic actor fighting against poor government policies and in particular the structural adjustment programme (ESAP) (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). ZCTU resented ESAP as it ushered in decreased wages, higher prices, reduced job security and dismissal of workers as consequences of a liberalisation of the economy and labour body accused the government of capitulating to international financial and capital interests (ZCTU, 2014b; Sachikonye, 1993:262). The labour body stated that the government was now at the complete mercy of the forces of capitalism, opening the economy to super-exploitation by imperialism under the policy

of trade liberalisation. Indeed, ESAP had huge negative impact on the poor. Alexander (2000:387) notes that

> *"It was bad for the working class. The universal minimum wage and employment protection were dumped, the cost of education and health rose steeply, there was rapid inflation (reaching 48 per cent in 1992), real wages slumped (especially in the public sector), there were large numbers of retrenchments (in the private sector as well as in state employment), and inequality increased".*

Thus the adoption of economic reforms by the government had a huge bearing on the practices that the ZCTU adopted during the course of the 1990s decade. Unemployment increased, inflation was on the rise and overall poverty and hardships increased for the majority of the urban population.

6. 3.1 The Laws

As part of the general restructuring process, government intervention in the labour market ended in 1990 (Ncube, 2000).With structural adjustment, regulations were relaxed and the Labour Relations Act (1985) was replaced by the Labour Relations Amendment Act (1992). Government introduced a statutory instrument 379 of 1990, which facilitated the issue of hire and fire of individual employees. Statutory instrument 404 of 1990 introduced a mechanism for quick retrenchment of excess labour. New regulations also introduced labour codes used at plant level to resolve labour disputes. The dispute resolution procedures were amended to allow for quick decision-making by reducing the number of stages followed in resolving disputes. Other important changes arising from the 1992 amendments to the Labour Relations Act include allowing for the formation of committees for managerial employees. The principle of 'one industry one union or employers association was also abolished. In this regard, labour was effectively deregularised and treated as a commodity (Madhuku, 2001). Consequently, the

deregulated labour market was marked by numerous employer driven retrenchments, poor wages and general violation of employee rights (Ncube, 2000).

6. 3.2 Economic Growth

In the 1990-2000 era government introduced new economic development strategies due to the erratic and low rate of economic growth the country experienced between 1980 and 1989 (Budget Statement, 1990). The state adopted a series of economic reforms in a bid to spruce up the economy by shifting shifting from welfarist-socialist economic policies to implementing neoliberal market policies. The first package of reforms consisted of the Economic Structural Adjustment Programme (ESAP) measures implemented between 1990 and 1995. In economic terms however, ESAP failed to meet its objectives (Bautista, et al, 2002). The country's GDP averaged just 1.2 percent for the period between 1991 and 1995 (see fig 5.3). The Zimbabwe Millenium Development Goals Report (2009) noted that the economy shrunk consistently as companies closed down or scaled down operations as a result of the stiff competition in the opened up economy. Between 1991 and1995, real GDP averaged 1.5 percent per annum (Fig 6.3). Due to its poor performance, ESAP was replaced by the Zimbabwe Programme for Economic and Social Transformation (ZIMPREST) in 1996. By and large, ZIMPREST as was ESAP still camouflaged a continuation of an underperforming neoliberal approach, despite additionally pronouncing empowerment, indigenisation and land reform sub policies.

Figure 6.3   Zimbabwe policy performance 1990-1999
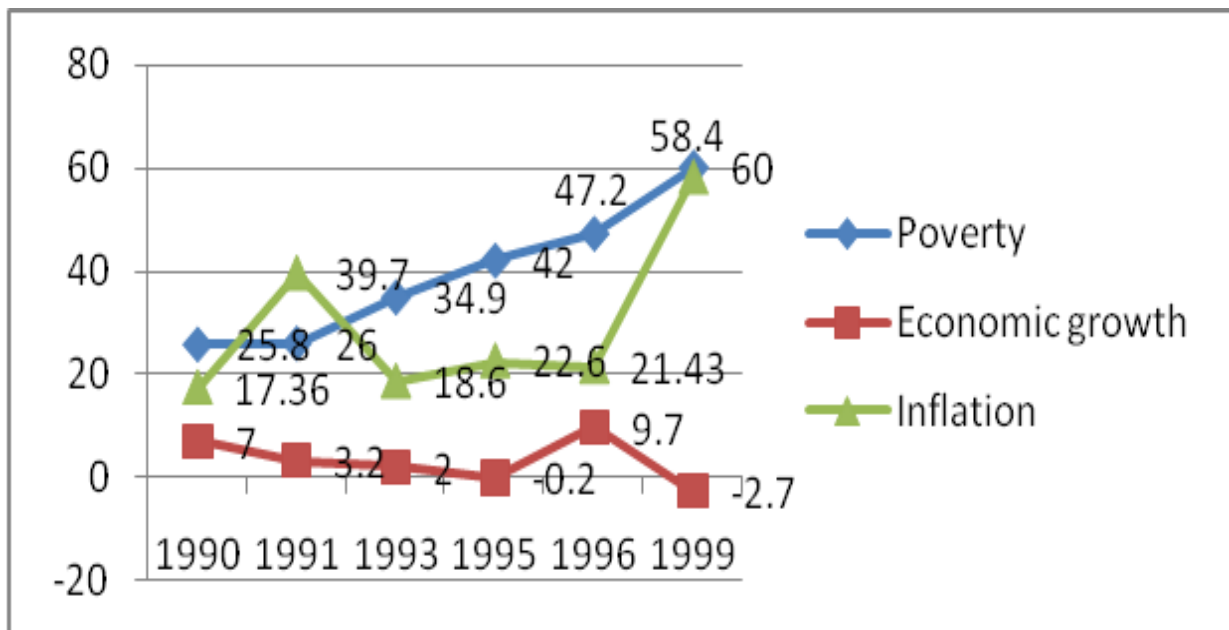
In general average annual economic growth was negative during the 1991-1999 phase

(Fig. 6.3). This scenario agitated labour.

6. 3.3   Inflation

In the environment characterised by poor macro economic performance, inflation was

also high (Fig 6.3). Ordinarily the link is that when economic growth is high, inflation

will be low and high inflation rate is believed to be harmful to economic expansion. The

common belief is that price stability or low inflation is fundamental to achieving higher

economic growth and authorities such as Fischer (1993) and De Gregario (1993) long

argued that there is a negative link between inflation and growth. Further studies by

Andries and Hernando (1997) and Gnosh and Phillips (1998) for example even

concluded that reducing inflation raises output. This theory seems to directly apply to

the case of Zimbabwe whereupon high inflation was accompanied by poor economic

performance (Fig 6.3) between 1990 and 1999. Inflation that had been forecasted at around 10 percent when ESAP was unveiled averaged around 30 percent between 1991 and 1999 (Fig 6.3). Ranga (2004) notes that following the introduction of ESAP, prices of food and basic commodities escalated while the removal of subsidies and the decontrol of prices resulted in a huge increase in the cost of living

6. 3.4 Poverty and Inequality

Amid two sets of economic reforms in the 1990s, poverty levels continued to increase. Government statistics (figure 6.3) show poverty remained a constant problem through 1990-1999 decade and averaged 40%. Actually results of a 1995 poverty assessment study conducted in the country showed that 46% of the country was living in absolute poverty and could hardly afford basic food requirements. The lowest 10% of Zimbabwe's population earned 1.97% of annual income, while the highest 10% made 40.42%. Killick, Carlson and Kierkegaard (1998) posit that very large inequalities of income and wealth were estimated to exist in Zimbabwe by 1991. Further, Alwarg, Mills and Taruvinga (2002) also acknowledged that inequality remained constantly high during the 1991-1999 period. For example inequality was calculated at 0.57 in 1990; 0.676 in 1991 and 0.639 in 1996. Inequality was calculated to be at 0.61 by 2003 (Makina, 2010). Killick, Carlson and Kierkegaard (1998) note that in 1991, 50% of the population received less than 15% of total incomes, while the richest 3% received 30% of the total. In 1997, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) classified Zimbabwe as a "highly unequal society" in which the richest 20% of the population received 60% of the income and the poorest 40% received only 10%. They argued that typically in such a society, the average income of the 40% poorest is

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only one quarter of the national average, while average incomes of the richest 20% are 12 times as high as those of the poor (UNCTAD, 1997).

6.3.5 Unemployment

Low rate of employment creation averaged 28000 jobs created in the formal sector annually in the first ten years of independence compared to around 200 000 school leavers per year entering the job market (Ncube, 2000). Most of these few job opportunities were occurring in the public service and very little was being created in manufacturing, mining and other non state sectors. Ncube (2000:168-9) further posits that employment in non-agricultural sectors fell from 939,800 to 844,000 in the first two years of the reforms. The public sector had by 1995, retrenched 20,000 workers.

The private formal sector on the other hand, retrenched 25,510 workers. As a result of retrenchments, employment growth during the ESAP era was very small. Between May 1999 and April 2000 at least 135,000 Zimbabweans were laid off from jobs in the formal sector—10% of all formal sector employees. Around 15% of the labour force in Zimbabwe's private sector had been laid off earlier in the decade. Furthermore, during ESAP (1991-1995) formal employment was at 9500 per annum against approximately 200 000 entering the job market each year. During ZIMPREST (1996-1999) formal employment was estimated at 43 000 per annum compared to 183 800 per annum joining the labour market.

However government statistics showed low rates of unemployment in an economy bereft of economic growth and job opportunities (Table 6.5 below).

Table 6.5   Zimbabwe unemployment rates (1982-1999)

	1982	1986	1995	1997	1999
Unemployment	10.8	7.2	15	7	6

Sources: ZIMPREST (1996); Poverty Assessment Study Survey of 1995; CSO (2005).

The low figures from government statistics can be ascribed to the fact that the official rate of unemployment is based on individuals who have been actively searching for employment in the last seven days at the time of the study. Given the length and breadth of economic challenges in Zimbabwe, it follows that people would have long given up on going around searching for employment. Thus the low official figures also indicate that more and more people are joining the informal sector and are no longer looking for formal employment. In general the unfashionable informal sector does not generate sustainable income.

6.3.6   Wages

During the 1990-1999 reforms one way in which poverty worsened was by depressing real formal sector wages (Killick, Carlson and Kierkegaard, 1998). Real earnings reduced by nearly a third in 1990-94, reportedly to below 1970 levels. According to Ncube (2000), in the 1990s, manufacturing real wages declined severely and by 1994, they were below those of 1975. In agriculture consumer wages declined between 1990 and 1992, only recovering slightly in 1993 and falling thereafter. Further, in the 1990s, high inflation triggered by economic reform eroded wages in the formal sector as a whole. The average purchasing power of all categories of workers in 1995 was lower than in 1975, a clear indication of falling living standards. Given that access of rural households to remittances from urban workers is a key determinant of their living standards, wide range of retrenchments impacted not only on employees' income, but also a lifeline for the dependents in rural areas.

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6.3.7 The 2000 National Elections

With the economic scourge leading to the closure of industries and depletion of the working class people, the ZCTU became a critical voice in as far as the plight of the working people and the economic revolution was concerned (Dorman 2003). Together with other social movements (Community Based Organisations, churches, professional associations, women's groups, students, and opposition political parties), ZCTU formed a coalition beginning around 1997 to raise national consciousness on the need for a new Constitution and to lobby the state into playing a facilitative though not determinative role, in establishing a process for Constitutional reform (ZCTU, 2014b; Raftopoulos 2000:37). The view was that the failure to bring change of government through elections (and in general government's poor performance) could be attributed to a defective constitutional system.
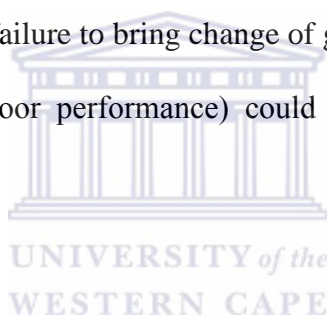
The coalition led to the National Working People's Convention of February 1999 (that culminated in the formation of a ZCTU backed opposition political party, the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). Most of the ZCTU leadership, including its President and Secretary General, became the new leadership of the MDC. At that time Webster (2007:1) argued that, " the formation of a labour party directly linked to the trade union movement is assumed to be the best way by which unions can influence politics". For Dansereau (2003), the failure and inability to solve workers economic problems coupled with increasing restrictions on strikes and demonstrations, as well as the failure to effect change via tri-partite negotiations at the macro-economic level, acted as the impetus for the labour movement to see the need for change at the political level.

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Consequently, with a labour backed party, campaigning for a no vote in the 2000 national constitutional referendum, the draft was overwhelmingly rejected by the electorate. Further, in the 2000 elections, the urban electorate overwhelmingly rejected the ruling party. In the elections, held in June, the worker-backed Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) won 57 out of 120 elected seats, with Mugabe's party, the Zimbabwe African National Union - Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) securing 62 form a total of 120 contested seats. The MDC's successes included all 27 contests in the three most populous urban areas (Harare, Bulawayo and Chitungwiza), and all the fully urbanised constituencies in the next six largest centres (Alexander, 2000). This was despite the fact that the elections were marred by violence against the MDC and ZCTU members. This also characterized the 2002 Presidential elections. In its conclusion, the Commonwealth observer group stated that,

> *"it was clear to us that while the actual polling and counting processes were peaceful and the secrecy of the ballot was assured, the presidential election in Zimbabwe was marred by a high level of politically motivated violence and intimidation, which preceded the poll. While violent acts were carried out by supporters of both of the main political parties, it is our view that most of these were perpetrated by members/supporters of the ruling party against members/supporters of the opposition" (The Report of the Commonwealth Observer Group, 2003)*

The unfree and unfair elections became an integral part of labour's grievances for the decade.

6.4   ZCTU Social Context (2000-2009)

During this period very high rate of unemployment, combined with very low rates of food production and raw materials export and the highest rates of inflation in the world resulted in what the World Bank termed 'economic freefall' and the subsequent abandonment of the local currency unit – the Zimbabwean dollar (Fitzmaurice,

2005:264). In response to socio economic failures, labour further pressed for policy change.

6.4.1 The Laws

Following its rejection mainly by labour in the 2000 elections, the Zanu PF government responded by introducing draconian legislation (ZCTU, 2014b) including the Public Order and Security Act (POSA); Access to Protection of Privacy Act (AIPPA); Labour Relations Amendment Act (2005); Broadcasting Services Act (BSA) and various electoral laws that restricted various freedoms (Mashingaidze, 2006:61-63;). For example, POSA was largely a reincarnation of the notorious Law and Order (Maintenance) Act (LOMA), which was introduced by the Colonial authorities in 1960 and severely restricts freedom of assembly and movement, and provides the police with wide discretionary powers. AIPPA does not give effect to the right of access to information but grants the government extensive powers to control the media and prohibiting what is believed to be the abuse of free expression (Mazango, 2005). The 2005 Labour Amendment Act prevents public-sector employees from joining or forming unions or engaging in collective bargaining.

6.4.2 Economic Growth

In an endeavour to reverse its economic misfortunes, the state's strategy for reversing the economic decline centred on the Millennium Economic Recovery Programme (MERP). MERP was introduced in 2000 with a focus on stabilising the economy though it failed to turn the tide (Ross- Larson, 2002:109-134). Various other economic blueprints were also introduced to try and resuscitate the economy. These are the National Economic Revival Program (NERP): "Measures to address the current

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challenges", February 2003; the "Macroeconomic Policy Framework 2005-2006"; the "Monetary Policy Statement, 2003-2008"; "National Economic Development Priority Program (NEDPP) 2006. All these failed to arrest the economic decline Zimbabwe (Millennium Development Report, 2009). In fact, as shown in Table 6.6, between 2000 and 2008 the economy experienced negative economic growth (- 8.5% per annum).

Table 6.6 Zimbabwe economic growth, inflation and poverty (2000-2009)

Year	Economic Growth	Inflation	Poverty
2000	-4.8	55.9	64
2001	-8.5	71.9	70.9
2002	-11.9	126.9	70
2003	-14.8	622.8	72
2004	-5.0	132.8	68
2005	-4.3	585.9	72
2006	-5	1000	75
2007	-8	20000	78
2008	-14.1	231 000 000	80
2009	5.8	6.2	

Source: Ministry of Finance and Economic Development; RBZ; Central Statistical Office (CSO); UNDP (2008)

This negative growth was also interpreted by a number of quarters. For example, the UNDP (2005:42) estimates that between 1999 and 2007 Zimbabwe's real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) fell by over 35. The country's official annual inflation, which stood at 20 percent in 1997, was over 24, 059 percent in February 2008, the highest in the world (ECA, 2002:109-11). Indeed hyperinflation was a major problem from about 2003 to April 2009, when the country suspended its own currency (Table 6.6).

6.4.3 Poverty and Inequality

As shown in Table 6.6, by the year 2000, an estimated 64% of the population lived below the poverty datum line. The poverty rate increased from 42 percent in 1995 to 63 percent in 2003 (Ross- Larson, 2002:110). According to 2003 Poverty Assessment Survey Study (PASS), 58 percent of households in Zimbabwe consumed less than 3 meals per day, an important sign of poverty and lack of income. The survey also showed

that 72 percent of the population was living below the Total Consumption Poverty Line (TCPL), compared to 55 percent in 1995. This represents a 30 percent increase in the incidence of poverty. As of 2008, poverty was estimated at 80% (see table 5.6). As a result of the drastic decline in economic performance in the post 2000 decade, Zimbabwe experienced a rapid increase in poverty, and real per capita income fell sharply from about US$644 in 1990 to $433 in 2006 and to an estimated $338 in 2008 (African Development Bank Zimbabwe Report, From Stagnation to economic recovery –Zimbabwe Report). A similar trend can be observed with regard to the Gini coefficient of inequality, which increased from 0.53 in 1995 to 0.61 in 2003 (UNDP, 2008).

6.4.4   Unemployment

According to Ncube (2010:85), ESAP was characterised by increased unemployment. As the economy of Zimbabwe shrunk significantly after 2000. As shown in Table 6.6 above, severe economic decline led to shrinking employment and poverty. Such an environment is obviously associated with high unemployment. While the Government of Zimbabwe appeared to have lost count of its unemployment figures, estimates from the UN's Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) indicated that at the close of 2008, only six percent of the population was formally employed (The Financial Gazette, 30 January, 2009). This implied that out of the country's 12 million people, only 480,000 had formal jobs in 2008. Unemployment between 2000 and 2008 averaged 74.5% (Table 6.7). This in itself is symptomatic of a crisis.

Table 6.7   Zimbabwe unemployment (1999-2009)

1999	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
50	50	60	70	73	76	80	83	86	93	95

Source: (CIA World Factbook; The Southern African Political and Economic Monthly, SAPEM, June, 2000; UNESCO, 2000; Mail & Guardian. 30 January 2009; The Economist. 12 July 2007)

6.4.5   Wages

During this era, the economy experienced low wages that were not commensurate with the increasing prices of basic commodities and cost recovery fees on service sectors such as education and health (Ncube, 2010). Hence discontent increased and was expressed by participation of the labour and student movements, together with a range of other social movements. By 2004, real average earnings were far lower than during the last years of the UDI period (1975–79), having collapsed to 10 on the real earnings index (UNDP, 2008). Following hyper inflation and a decelerating economy, the value of wages were entirely wiped off by 2008 when the country abandoned its own currency during a raft of reforms that were crafted to halt the downturn.

6.4.6   The 2008 National Elections

Following the formation of the MDC in late 1999, the ZCTU collaborated with the party in the parliamentary and presidential elections respectively. In fact the US embassy quoted a labour commentator in 2001 as positing that the MDC's future as a political party depended on continued support from the ZCTU (US Embassy Cable, 07/02/2001). While ZANU PF was declared winner in 2002's presidential elections, there was widespread local and international observer condemnation and the elections were generally declared as "unfree and unfair" by the international community (US Institute of Peace, 2003). At the following workers' day "ZCTU leaders and NCA…. Called for more action to force President Mugabe out of power…. They also called for a re-run of the presidential election which they claimed was rigged (Mataire, 2002). The 2008 elections were also condemned by the international community on the basis that the ruling party used unfair violence and rigging to ward off the labour supported MDC (Compagnon, 2011).

6.5.   Other Social Conditions

6.5.1   Networks

ZCTU developed cooperative networks with other social movement organisations (including youth, student and women's groups) and the many demonstrations in support of policy and political change since the twilight years of the 1980s have jointly been organised by the unions and these organisations (Bond and Manyanya, 2003). Networks also enabled ZCTU to communicate and mobilise with local regional and international partners, movements such as COSATU and the Zambia Congress of Trade Unions (ZCTU) for further support COSATU-ZCTU Communique, 2008). ZCTU is also a member of international labour organisations such as the International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Trade Union Congress (ITUC), Southern Africa Trade Union Coordination and the Organisation of African Trade Union Unity.

6.5.2   Internal organisation and infrastructure

According to a Zimbabwean social scientist, Lloyd Sachikonye, the ZCTU was a weak organisation and short of resources until the mid-1980s. Since then however, ZCTU has variably used both institutional mechanisms as well as disruptive mechanisms in seeking to influence change. In particular beginning in the 1990s, ZCTU (in collaboration with other social movements) resorted to disruptive mechanisms that included demonstrations, wild cat strikes, consumer boycotts and food riots (Raftopolous and Sachikonye, 2002). It also pursued formal institutional tactics including holding local meetings, national conferences, regional and international meetings and conferences to lobby for change. Its formal structure enabled the movement to seize mobilisation opportunities through formal structures. It enabled organisational maintenance and

expansion of its activities as formal stable organisations are in a position to pursue long term objectives.

6.5.3 Leadership

At independence, the new ZCTU leadership had little experience in lobbying the government and the unions lacked independence (Dorman, 2003). The labour movement's leadership also jostled to enter politics on a ZANU PF ticket while the party tended to second its preferred candidates to contest for ZCTU positions (Raftopolous and Sachikonye, 2002). The type and quality of leadership plays a role in the success of social movements. Today however, the ZCTU retains an experienced executive and fully paid career leadership that is devoted to everyday organisation maintenance, activity expansion and interaction with state and business machinery.

6.5.4 Financial Resources

Financial support allows organisers to purchase what they need and movements usually need some infrastructure to carry out activities. ZCTU has benefitted financially form its membership base as well as international grant making organisations ZCTU Press Statement – 14 March 2012). The base has enabled it to raise resources to support its institutional infrastructure, including its affiliates and its campaign machinery during election times.

6.6 ZCTU framing process

Social movements such as ZCTU engage in the constant interpreting, communicating, and framing of beliefs, actions and events in order to garner internal and external support (Benford & Snow, 2000). ZCTU as is COSATU's support has been in part to its

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identification with diagnostic framing; prognostic framing; motivational framing and frame resonance.

6.6.1   Diagnostic Framing

Diagnostic, framing refer to instances when labour movements such as ZCTU define the problem, in part by focusing blame and responsibility. Poverty level wages prior to 1980 in Zimbabwe were blamed on the UDI government and its policies and worked as major draw card to draw support. In the 1980s, the ZCTU rallied support by blaming the one party state agenda of the government as responsible for poor policy performance and corruption. The posts 1990s have largely experienced "failed policies" rhetoric as a gathering point for labour and its networks.

6.6.2   Prognostic Framing

Prognostic framing is used here to refer to how ZCTU articulates the solution to the living wage problem of the working poor as well as the strategies for carrying out the action needed to solve the problem. As ZCTU puts it today, it lies in a change of government (Mataire, 2002).

6.6.3   Motivational Framing

ZCTU also utilises motivational framing. This refers to providing the rationale for engaging in group action, using the appropriate motivational vocabularies. For example its slogan is *'Shinga Mushandi Shinga! Qina Msebenzi Qina!'* ('Workers be resolute! Fight on!'). It is also common for the ZCTU to use the slogan used by COSATU, " an injury to one is an injury to all" .

6.6.4   Frame Resonance

Frame resonance refers to the power of a given frame to attract and mobilise constituents. ZCTU argues that it works to protect and advance full social and economic rights and development of all workers in Zimbabwe within and beyond the trade union. Its Congress are run around themes that seek to inspire workers. For example the 2011 7th Congress theme was "Respect our Rights, save the Economy and our Jobs".

6.7   Summary

ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues are influenced by structural conditions in the Zimbabwean society (such as unemployment, poverty, inequality, economic performance and legislative environment) and other social conditions internal to the organisation (such as networking, finances, and framing processes). ZCTU seeks to have these conditions addressed by the country's political leadership. In the course of influencing the political leadership the ZCTU went on to form a labour backed political party with most of its leadership assuming key leadership roles. Since then, in cooperation with the MDC, it has been working to bring a new political dispensation amenable to addressing living wage challenges.

CHAPTER 7

ZCTU PRACTICES ON ELECTIONS AND LIVING WAGE ISSUES

7.0   Introduction

This chapter discusses workers' perceptions of ZCTU practices on elections and living

wage issues. The ZCTU, an amalgam of a number of labour unions that fought for

socio-political and economic rights in the UDI era, became a household social

movement beginning in the 1980s Zimbabwe when it began to extensively adopt a social

movement character in the struggle for living wages. As a result of its social movement

character, Yeros (2001:64) notes

> *"The realm of union politics has thus been understood as a broader*
> *domain, requiring the cultivation of solidarity with other social agents to*
> *change the moral priorities of economic policy, and involving an*
> *engagement with national politics".*

While it initially aligned itself with the ruling party, ZANU PF, it increasingly sought to

challenge the party's political authoritarianism in the late 1980s; fend off the vagaries of

neoliberalism in the 1990s and fought for constitutionalism in the new millennium. The

argument was that these were impeding democratic political choice (including free, fair

and credible elections) which could be used to leverage the state to support living wage

issues and were therefore critical enemies of worker emancipation and better working

conditions. If these could be overcome, then living wages can be attained. Within the

context of the struggle for democracy and economic progress, this chapter specifically

discusses the practices used by ZCTU in seeking to influence election and living wage

issues. These mechanisms are identified as disruptive mechanisms, political access,

public preference, international access and judicial mechanisms. Major perceptions of

the relevance of these practices are discussed. The idea of this chapter is essentially not

to prove that any of the practices used led to changes in government, policy or living

wages but that the union workers have firm belief that the practices can contribute to the

desired changes. Therefore the main purpose of the chapter is to highlight the perceptions within ZCTU about these practices as means available for use in pressing for changes.

This chapter seeks to;

- Determine the views of interviewees in particular if labour should concern itself with political (electoral) issues.

- Common ZCTU practices used to influence elections and living wage issues.

- Establishing the perceived relevance of ZCTU practices.

- Establishing ZCTU views on the perceived relationship between elections and living wage issues.

- Identify challenges ZCTU faces in attempting to influence election and living wage issues.

7.1   Mapping ZCTU

The ZCTU was formed on February 28, 1981 through the merger of six trade union centres: African Trade Union Congress (ATUC), the National African Trade Union Congress (NATUC), the Trade Union Congress of Zimbabwe (TUCZ), the United Trade Unions of Zimbabwe (UTUZ), the Zimbabwe Federation of Labour (ZFL) and the Zimbabwe Trade Union Congress (ZTUC). The ZCTU was established by ZANU-PF when it came to power allegedly with the aim of reducing industrial disputation, and improving the influence of the government over the union movement (Gwisai, 2002). It is not surprising therefore that its top leadership consisted of ZANU PF functionaries including its President, Alfred Makwarimba and General Secretary Albert Mugabe, the brother of then Prime Minister, Robert Mugabe.

In 2009, the ZCTU had 25 affiliate unions. Figure 7.1 below is a list of the affiliates.

Table 7.1   ZCTU Affiliates

Zimbabwe Pulp & Paper Workers' Union
Zimbabwe Domestic & Allied Workers Union (ZDAWU)
Zimbabwe Chemicals & Plastics Allied Workers' Union
Zimbabwe Textile Workers Union (ZTWU)
Zimbabwe Tobacco Industrial Workers' Union (ZTIWU)
Zimbabwe Met al, Energy & Allied Workers' Union (ZMEAWU)
Zimbabwe Security Guards Union (ZISEGU)
Zimbabwe Banks & Allied Workers' Union (ZIBAWU)
Zimbabwe Furniture, Timber & Allied Trades Union (ZFTATU)
Zimbabwe Educational Scientific, Social & Cultural Workers' Union (ZESSCWU)
Zimbabwe Catering & Hotel Workers' Union (ZCHWU)
Zimbabwe Construction and Allied Trades Workers' Union
Zimbabwe Urban Councils Workers' Union (ZUCWU)
Zimbabwe Union of Journalists
Zimbabwe Amalgamated Railway Workers' Union (ZARWU)
Railway Association of Yard Operating Staff (RAYOS)
Zimbabwe Railways Artisans Union (RAU)
Railway Association of Enginemen (RAE)
National Union of the Clothing Industry (NUCI)
National Engineering Workers' Union (NEWU)
Motor Vehicle Manufacturers Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (MVMWUZ)
General Agriculture & Plantation Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (GAPWUZ)
Federation of Food & Allied Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (FFAWUZ)
Commercial Workers' Union of Zimbabwe
Cement, Lime & Allied Workers' Union of Zimbabwe (CLAWUZ)

However, over the years, the general individual and affiliate membership of the ZCTU have declined as a result of company closures, political uncertainty and poor economic performance of the country. For example, then Secretary General, Wellington Chibebe stated that between 2004 and 2009, the general membership declined from 300 000 to 175 000. The present 25 affiliates is a decline from a peak of 39 affiliates in 2003. A total of 12 affiliate unions also left the ZCTU due to disagreements over congress elections. Other than the Zimbabwe Congress of Trade Unions, Zimbabwe also has the more obscure, state sponsored Zimbabwe Federation of Trade Unions (ZFTU).

7.2   ZCTU practices

7.2.1   ZCTU and National Politics

In this section, the study sought to determine interviewee perceptions of the ZCTU's participation in national politics.

Table 7.2   ZCTU Participation in national politics

n = 198	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think ZCTU should be involved in national politics of the country?	121	61.1	77	38.9
Is ZCTU involved in trying to influence the political trajectory of the country?	111	56	87	44
Do you think there is a link between a particular party/leadership being elected into power and a commitment to addressing living wage issues	124	62.6	74	37.4
Do you think the quest for a living wage has been advanced by labour's participation in national elections?	79	39.9	119	60.1

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The study found out that workers believe that it is necessary for labour to challenge political arrangements that do not promote the wellbeing of workers. Table 7.2 above outlines some of the key responses.

A total of 121 (61.1%) respondents believed that the ZCTU should be involved in the country's national politics. The majority of the arguments centred on the nature of the state as necessitating trade union intervention in the political arena. They argued that state policies in Zimbabwe tended to put the future of the worker at stake. Therefore the economic welfare of the worker would only improve if the policies were changed. No one is better able to understand and fight for worker interests other than the workers themselves and in that regard political participation by the labour body is inescapable.

Respondents posited that state policies, through to 2009 tended to be archaic, resulting in poverty wages, unemployment, retrenchments, recession of rights of workers and increased exploitation of workers. As a result of these challenges, the ZCTU together with other social movements have to take on the political establishment to push for the adoption of policies that favour the interests of workers. Such polices include the move towards a living wage.

However, 38.9% of respondents believed that workers should not participate in national politics. They argued that it is wrong for the ZCTU to participate in national politics because it is not a political party. Further a respondent argued that *"not all in the ZCTU support the Movement for Democratic Change so it is wrong for the ZCTU to use our membership fees to prop up that political party."* Further to this, arguments were also posed to the effect that history has shown that the leadership that take interest in politics ends up in political offices, which in itself does not serve the interests of the workers.

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The view is that once leaders leave for political office, they pursue other interests that do not address the challenges facing the workers. A GAPWUZ provincial secretary argued *"The elites in political power are well positioned to assimilate anyone who joins them into their way of life. It is better for any leadership of the workers not to join them"*.

While 61.1% of respondents argued that the ZCTU should participate in national politics, the percentage of those who actually believe that the ZCTU is participating in national politics is slightly lower at 56%. Those who believed that the ZCTU is actually participating in national politics point out to the large pool of former labour leaders who took up positions in the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), a worker based political party formed by the ZCTU leadership in 1999 (MDC Election Manifesto, 2013). They also pointed out that as in the case of COSATU, the ZCTU leadership invites the MDC leadership to grace its important occasions such as May Day rallies. The MDC also invites ZCTU to attend some of its important conferences. Further to this new appointments to the leadership of the MDC tended to draw many individuals from the ZCTU and its affiliates. All this shows that the ZCTU participates in politics. In fact the labour body points out that the "*MDC-T remains a project of the ZCTU and the labour body still holds dearly to the values of the party's founding manifesto*" i.e. crying the working people's agenda (Mahove, 2013:2).

However, 44% of respondents argued that the ZCTU does not seem to participate in national politics. Two major views emerged among those who posited that the ZCTU was not participating in politics. The first dominant view was that unlike COSATU, the ZCTU does not actively campaign or urge its constituency to vote for a particular political party. The ZCTU neither raises resources nor contribute its members' fees towards supporting the electoral cause of the political party of their choice. Further to

this, the ZCTU pronounces its independence from allying with political parties at election time. Any pronouncements it makes regarding the elections, are to do with its expectation of the electoral environment or the party that comes to power. For example, in the last two elections, the ZCTU only stated *"we will not accept an outcome of a flawed election. The ZCTU reserves the right to reject result of a flawed election"* (ZCTU, 2008). This statement implies that to the ZCTU, whomever wins the election, it will have no problem with it as long as the process that resulted in that party winning was not flawed.

A total of 62.6 per cent of respondents believed that there is a link between a particular party/leadership being elected into power and a commitment to addressing living wage issues hence the need for the trade union to occupy itself with national politics. This number is similar to the 61.1 per cent of respondents who contend that the ZCTU should be involved in national politics. This assumed link precipitated the formation of the MDC, backed by the ZCTU and other social movements in 1999 who believed that an alternative voice was needed which if it ascend to power, would likely address their interests (Maroleng, 2004). Union members believed that ZANU PF as a ruling party had presided over deteriorating conditions for the working poor. In that context, the ZCTU even supported this alternative voice by seconding experienced leaders to take up positions in that party. Its President and Secretary General became the Vice President and President of the MDC respectively. The ZCTU then continuously called for constitutional and legislative reforms that facilitated a democratic environment. By so doing, it can be argued that the ZCTU believed that in a democratic political space, the party of its choice, the MDC could win the elections. The major trend of thought being that a party that it supports will likely address its wage concerns. In order to impact on

the politics of the state, elections and living wage issues, the ZCTU utilises an array of practices here classified as disruptive, public opinion mobilisation, political access, judicial (litigation) and international access mechanisms.

7.2.2   Disruptive mechanisms

In general respondents posited that disruptive mechanisms are an important way of pressing for living wage demands by workers. They argued that these may also be effective if staged around election times as the country's populist regime often wanted to be seen as people oriented and would respond quickly. Table 7.3 highlights some of the perceptions regarding utilisation of disruptive mechanisms by ZCTU.

Table 7.3   Perceptions of disruptive mechanisms

n=198	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think resorting to disruptive mechanisms is an effective means of drawing attention to living wage demands	121	61.1	77	38.9
Do you think the effectiveness of disruptive mechanisms for living wage is enhanced if staged around a period close to the conducting of national elections	108	54.5	90	45.5
Can ZCTU disruptive mechanisms influence voting behaviour and national elections	139	70.2	59	29.8

7.2.2.1   Influence of disruptive mechanisms on living wage adjustments

A total of 61.1 per cent of respondents posited that disruptive mechanisms are an effective means of drawing state and employer attention to workers' wage demands. A

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workers' committee chairperson argued *" if we go on strike we are going to get our salary increases much faster as compared to our leadership engaging our bosses in negotiations"*. This maybe because industry seeks to minimise losses resulting from sustained industrial action. Some also noted that industry may respond to disruptive mechanism quickly as they are likely to turn violent if they become prolonged as the workers become desperate for a positive outcome, hence both industry and the state would like to address the problem promptly. For some respondents if the disruptive action is prolonged the state may also cause violence as it may be tempted to use some of its instruments of force to bring back order. Usually the tendency is to try to solve the problem quickly. However, the history of disruptive action in Zimbabwe has shown that factory based disruptions are unlikely to be violent while disruptions beyond the workplace have turned violent immediately after workers poured onto the streets and the state security machinery forces them to quickly disperse (van der Walt, 1998; The Worker, October, 2011). As such it may not be the duration of the disruptive action but the nature of the state and if the action is beyond the workplace that determines whether or not it turns violent.

7. 2.2.2   Effect of disruptive mechanisms on elections

In this survey 54.5%, believed that if disruptive activities were to be conducted during an election year, they are likely to be more successful in yielding positive results. One respondent captured the general sentiment in this category. The respondent posited that *"ZANU PF is a populist regime, which thrives on responding to demands of the electorate, not because it is rational to do so, but just in order to win an election"*. As a result of this behaviour, its government is likely to respond to disruptive demands made by workers towards elections. In other instances however respondents noted that

responses by the government around election time maybe mere vote buying. Such instances refer to the common distribution of food aid, crop seed, fertilizers, funds for income generating projects and parcelling out of land, particularly in the new millennium during election years. A ZCTU shopsteward contended that in the 2008 election period, for example

> *"ZANU PF is alleged to have unilaterally repainted the entire fleet of mini buses from the local parastatal (ZUPCO) with national flag colours. These buses were then removed from the urban routes and presented to the party's rural strongholds as donations from President Robert Mugabe".*

However, 45.5% percent of the respondents argued that disruptive mechanisms by ZCTU cannot influence election outcomes. This is because the ZANU PF government employs various coercive strategies to put down any disruptive practices that workers including the ZCTU may undertake, whether it is an election period or not there by rendering the link between elections and disruptive mechanisms inapplicable. For example, respondents pointed out that past elections (1980, 1985, 1990, 1995, 2000, 2002, and 2008) have been characterised by violence perpetrated by ruling party supporters, party youth militias, war veterans and at times uniformed forces to cow the electorate into voting for the ZANU PF government. As such in such a politically coercive environment, disruptive engagement may not be effective in influencing electoral outcomes.

7. 2.2.3   Ways in which disruptive mechanisms are seen influence living wage adjustments

Respondents argued that disruptive mechanisms influence the processes around living wage adjustments in a number of ways. The most common ways identified by respondents are listed in Table 7.4.

Table 7.4 **Ways in which disruptive mechanisms are seen as effective tools for making wage demands**

Why disruptive mechanisms are described as effective
Ordinarily, employers do not want to lose production time through such disruptions and will therefore seek to address the grievances expeditiously.
Workers have a product to sell which is their labour and by withdrawing that labour it makes employers realise how important it is.
The government is likely to give in easily as they want votes from the workers

7. 2.2.4 Commonly identified disruptive activities

As the majority of respondents were supportive of disruptive practices, the study sought to find out if they remember any that were successfully used by unions in the past. Responses of the most remembered activities are shown in Table 7.5 below.
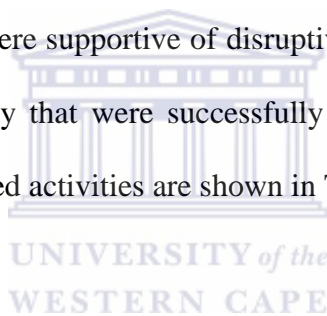
Table 7.5 **Most commonly identified disruptive actions by ZCTU (1912-2009)**

Disruptive actions	% of Respondents
1945 railway workers' strikes	25.8%
April 1948 general strike	26.8%
1980-82 Strikes	56%
The government workers' general strike of 1996	46.5%
1997 –anti war vets levy strike	48%
April 2003 general strike	50.5%
September 2006 General strike	50%
September 2007 general strike	37%

In the majority of cases, respondents on the questionnaires did not identify a significant number of disruptive activities that they could remember despite generally believing that it is an effective mechanism of influencing both elections (54.5%) and the pursuit of living wage demands (61.1%). Recall of earlier disruptive activities can be ascribed to general academic knowledge of the respondents rather than anyone having participated. Further, respondents were not giving sufficient time to go back and reflect on the questions. Hence the recall percentage is very low.

1945 Railways and 1948 general strikes

The general strike of 1945 by railway workers sought to force the employers to pay salaries beyond poverty wages by demanding a whopping fivefold salary adjustment (West, 2012). They also demanded that workers be paid according to their grades and to always be paid in cash rather than food rations. A ZCTU respondent recalled that strike response was estimated at some 80% of 10 000 members of the workforce. In response the government set up an investigatory commission that recommended a 25-30% increase in wages (Mlambo, 2014).

On 13 April 1948, a mass meeting attended by over 40,000 people was convened in Bulawayo, triggering one of the most historic strikes in Rhodesia (Msindo, 2007). The strike as that of 1945 demanded a living national wage and better living conditions. In a few days the strike spread across the country supported by militant pickets and demonstrations and engulfing even the most backward sections, including farm workers, domestic workers, the unemployed and housewives (Mlambo, 2014). The strike forced the government to make significant concessions, including a national minimum wage and recognition of black trade unions. Despite these two strikes having made an

important milestone, low respondent percentages of 25.8% and 26.8% were recorded for the 1945 and 1948 strikes respectively. This may be due to the fact that a long time has elapsed since the strikes and respondents may have relied on their academic memory.

1980-82 strikes

During the 1980-82 strikes, workers demanded higher wages as well as addressing racism and unconducive dispute settlement structures and exploded in a manner that had last been seen in 1948, affecting every sector of the economy (Raftopolous and Sachikonye, 2002). A ZCTU Organiser noted that through these disruptive activities, the new government was forced to introduce far-reaching reforms including introduction of the Minimum Wages Act and Employment Act that repealed detestable and racist colonial employment laws and guaranteed a national minimum wage. The official also pointed out that *" Strikes work - as a result of the 1980-82 strikes, real wages rose in 1980-81 to the highest ever; workers' committees were established at the shopfloor level and a new Labour Relations Act was adopted which broadened worker rights"*.

In general respondents who could recall these strikes reached a high of 56%. This may be because the strikes occurred immediately after independence, a period when expectations were very high from the workers. The number of estimated strikes for this period was also huge. Approximately 200 strikes occurred during this period (Sachikonye, 1996) thereby becoming ingrained in workers memories and such numbers are likely to make the strikes unforgettable.

The government workers' general strike of 1996

In 1996, tens of thousands of government workers went on a nationwide general strike protesting poor salaries, denial of bonuses and poor working conditions (Zeilig, 2002).

The strike was initially organised by the Public Service Association and the Zimbabwe Teachers Association and later joined by the whole public sector. The ZCTU joined in solidarity in a way that cemented the relationship between public sector and private sector employees. Pursuant to this strike civil servants received a significant pay increase, bonuses and an undertaking by the state to harmonise the Labour Relations Act to cover all workers and their unions (Dansereau, 2005). Forty six percent of the respondents recalled this strike. The lower percentage of recall may be due to the fact that this was largely a public sector strike. Interviewees were largely drawn from the private sector union GWAPUZ as well as municipality workers' representatives, ZUCWU.

1997 anti-war vets levy strike

In 1997, amid a rapidly deteriorating economy, veterans of the liberation struggle took to the streets demanding lump sum compensations and monthly pensions for participating in the war of liberation. In an endeavour to appease them, the state announced a five per cent War Veterans Levy and a 2.5 per cent increase in sales tax (Kariuki and van der Walt, 2000). ZCTU argued that in an environment of increasing economic meltdown, the imposition of the war vets levy was unfair and a sign of mismanagement on the part of government and it called upon the government not only to scrap the war vets levy and sales tax, but also to reduce the price of basic commodities that had risen by an average 40 % since the beginning of that year (Bond and Saunders, 2005). Further, labour asked for the establishment of a forum that would facilitate equitable negotiations between government, employers and the workers. Involving more than 2 million workers, the strike led to the shutting down of almost all businesses and workplaces. Respondents argued that this strike was one of the largest

and most successful in ZCTU's history and that of labour disruptive activities in the history of Zimbabwe.

The government made a last minute decision to avert the strike by scrapping the planned 5% war vets levy though workers still proceeded to go on strike (Raftopolous and Sachikonye, 2002). Following the strike, the government set up a National Economic Consultative Forum was set up in January 1998 to involve a broad spectrum of society in negotiating policy. The ZCTU refused to participate in the forum arguing that it differed from the one it had in its vision which would be made up of individuals directly selected by social constituencies (Compagnon, 2011).

April 2003 general strike

On April 23, 2003 ZCTU embarked on a three-day general strike to protest against increase in fuel price by 200 percent that cut deep into workers' cost of living. According to a ZCTU Information Department official interviewed, *"the fuel price increases meant that transport alone would chew up 80% of the average worker's pay and the problem was compounded by an annual inflation that was hovering around 228 percent"*. The economy was also in steep decline. The strike paralysed industry, banks, offices and transport services in the country and the strike was estimated to have been 70% successful in terms of the turnout of demonstrators (Talbot, 2003). However the government did not reduce the fuel prices. This may explain why the recollection of this demonstration by interviewees was quite low.

September 2006 General strike

In September 2006, the ZCTU staged mass protests in the face of steady economic decline of the country calling for living wages. Against a hyperinflation, hovering

around 1,200 percent the ZCTU demanded higher incomes, linking the minimum wage to the Poverty Datum Line, lower taxes and asking the government to stop the harassment of workers in the informal economy (Zimbabwe Human Rights NGO Forum, 2006). While this strike enjoyed a lot of support and high turnout, trade union leaders were detained and interrogated throughout the country on the day of the protest. ZCTU leaders were even arrested in their homes and offices were blockaded. No wage adjustments were also made in relation to this strike. As in the case of the 2003 strike, recollection of this strike was significantly low. Again this can be linked to the fact that the state and industry did not yield to its demands.

September 2007 strike

In 2007, the ZCTU called the job stay-away to protest against a government ban on wage increases, rising poverty and food shortages amid soaring inflation and economic meltdown. As highlighted in chapter 6, by 2007, inflation was hovering around 7600% while unemployment hit a new high of 80%. The economic environment was therefore in contrast to the government's wage freeze that it imposed. However, in this study, only 37% of respondents appeared to recall this strike. With respect to turnout, some of the respondents argued that this strike was a failure while a ZCTU executive member described its results as mixed. Inertia could be ascribed to continued failure by government to arrest economic meltdown and inability to address workers' demands since the beginning of the new millennium. Further to this, striking workers and their leadership increasingly faced state brutality including torture, beatings and arrest during demonstrations thereby discouraging greater participation (Pollack, 2011).

7.2.3   Public preference mechanisms (public opinion mobilisation)

The ZCTU argues that they strive for the establishment of a democratic state in Zimbabwe so that workers can operate within a democratised society, where they are free to express themselves and free to organise themselves (Chibebe, 2004). For the ZCTU, this is in line with the provisions of the ILO's Conventions 87 (freedom of association) and 98 (the right to organize and collectively. However, unlike COSATU which goes out to effectively campaign for the ANC, a ZCTU respondent argued that *"the ZCTU is an independent and fundamental voice in the socio-political arena"*. In this vain, by 1997 the ZCTU entered deeper into the political arena and began to move around organising provincial labour rallies, speaking to workers about its policy and governance expectations (Laakso, 2003). The ZCTU continues to call upon the state to embark on political reforms and economic fairness. At election times the ZCTU has approached the elections with a mandate to educate workers about their rights to economic security encouraging citizens to exercise their rights to vote and calling the state to be transparent and accountable (Solidarity Center, 2013). Table 7.6 highlights some of the responses regarding the perceived utilisation and relevance of the public preference mechanism by the ZCTU.

Table 7.6   Perceptions of the public preference mechanism

N=198	Yes	%	No	%
Does ZCTU appeal to the electorate to change public opinions and attitudes towards voting for a political party of the labour movement's choice?	101	51	97	49
Does the opinion of the masses change due to ZCTU's public opinion mobilisation exercise?	94	52.5	104	47.5
Do you think the political parties craft manifestos on labour based on public opinion mobilisation by ZCTU?	90	45.5	108	54.5
Do you think there is a link between ZCTU's public opinion mobilisation and election outcomes?	92	46.5	106	53.5
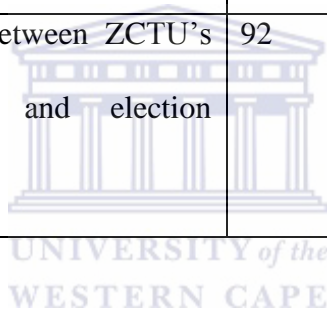
7.2.3.1   ZCTU's utilisation of public opinion mobilisation

Fifty one percent of the respondents posited that the ZCTU appeal to the electorate to change public opinions and attitudes towards voting for a political party of the labour movement's choice. According to a ZCTU provincial organiser however, this is an important exercise done through *"worker education programmes which highlight problems, gaps, causes and possible solutions. If its governance, we then relate to policies and their drivers".* In this way the ZCTU believes that it mobilises the potential electorate to vote for a party of their choice by laying bare the policy and governance shortcomings of the current government.

It is in this context therefore that, even if the ZCTU argues that it is an independent voice, it has worked to support change in government and in the process to produce an electoral result favourable to the MDC. A ZCTU respondent argued that it is important for the labour body to influence the electorate because *"labour seeks to dictate the pace of policy and legislative changes"*. The voting patterns in Zimbabwe's elections, in particular since the formation of the MDC suggest that the urban electorate mainly vote for the MDC, a party founded by labour. Further to this, the urban electorate is mainly workers and therefore are influenced by the ZCTU's position.

Furthermore, the mere fact that the ZCTU has been a vocal and active social movement, means that the general public can be easily influenced by its consistent framing of the nation's problems and begin to buy into the idea of the problem, supporting the labour body's ideals and disdaining the government in power.
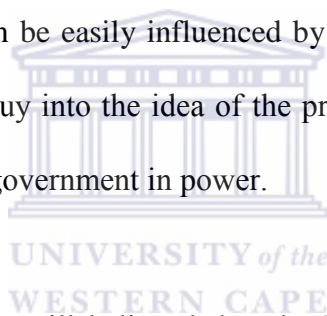
However 49% of the respondents still believed that the ZCTU has not deployed any resources so significant as to influence the electorate. Its programmes of training are mainly confined to its membership whose numbers are a tiny fraction of the potential electorate. An academic, Prof Brian Raftopolous (Interview 04/09/13) argued that in the Zimbabwean socio-economic and political environment, the urban electorate would still have voted for the MDC even if the ZCTU would not mobilise them in that direction. For him, it is not what the ZCTU says but a protest by the urban electorate, over a government that has failed to create jobs and offer living wages.

7.2.3.2   Effect of ZCTU's public opinion mobilisation on MDC manifestos

The ZCTU refers to the MDC as its project and argues that *"No one can stop us from criticising the MDC because it is our own project"* (The Worker, June 2013). It is in this context that the ZCTU argues that it formed the MDC with a political mandate to take the interests of the workers into state governance. In that context the ZCTU argues that it will not fold its hands and let anyone in the MDC twist the ideology of the party and isolate it from the working poor who gave it (the political party) a mandate which it is yet to achieve. According to a number of respondents, the ZCTU believes that this can promote political and economic reforms that enable the worker to fight and secure living wages.

However, only 45.5% of the respondents believed that the ZCTU can influence the MDC's manifesto while 54.5 argued it has no influence on the manifesto. One of the reasons was that for example, the ZCTU only managed to field 20% of parliamentary candidates and only 16 individuals secured parliamentary seats in the first elections that MDC contested and these numbers have not improved but in fact dwindled (Gwisai, 2009).

Similarly, other respondents argued that, the MDC is a mass based party, drawing from a huge base of social movements to the extent that it will be difficult for the ZCTU to shape the manifesto of the MDC. In fact these arguments are corroborated by sentiments from the ZCTU who have acknowledged that they are fighting because their project has been hijacked (The Worker, June 2013). In 2005, its then Secretary General complained that the ZCTU had been used as *"a catapillar that digs the road and as soon as it is smooth and ready for use, the catapillar is banished and punished if it tries to drive on*

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it"(Kagwanja, 2005). With reference to the plight of the workers, its president, George Nkiwane (The Zimbabwean, 10/07/13), argued that some of the MDC's leadership was pushing an agenda contrary to the will of the workers. He observed that they were pushing for policies that worsened the plight of workers. For him such MDC leaders behaved like they did not know the reason why the MDC was formed. He argued that the party was formed to push the needs of the workers. All these issues show that the ZCTU has limited influence in the MDC manifestos.

7.2.3.3 Link between ZCTU's public opinion mobilisation and election outcomes

While the ZCTU and indeed the generality of the respondents (51%) pointed out that the labour body indeed engages in public opinion mobilisation activities, and that public opinion of the masses does change as a result of ZCTU's mobilisation programmes (52.5), a low 46.5% noted that there is a positive correlation between the mobilisation exercise and election outcomes. The 46.5% respondents noted that because the ZCTU is a mainly urban social movement, which appeals to the urban electorate in its programmes, its influence has only been felt in urban areas. In these areas, voters have overwhelmingly voted for the MDC, its preferred political pole bearer, since its formation in 1999.

However, noting from Prof Raftopolous' argument in section 7.4.2.1, and 53.5% of the respondents, the link between ZCTU's public opinion mobilisation and election outcomes is questionable. It is largely superseded by economic hardships facing the urban workers. Respondents also posited that the effectiveness of the opinion mobilisation exercise has historically been hampered by state sponsored violence particularly at election times. According to Human Rights Watch (2011), elections of

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2000, 2002, and 2008 recorded unprecedented state sponsored violence targeting opposition supporters and the leadership. They were also heavily militarised and reports of rigging were not uncommon.

7.2.4. Political access mechanisms

Political access mechanism in this study is used to refer to the utilisation of alliances with political parties or factions of political parties, other social movements and taking up positions in politics and public institutions by labour as a means of influencing elections and living wage issues.

Table 7.7   Perceptions of political access mechanisms

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think there is a link between going into alliances and labour's advances towards securing a living wage?	101	51	97	49
Do you think there is a link between going into alliance with factions of political parties and labour's advances towards a living wage?	150	75.8	48	24.2
Do you think labour leaders should leave the unions and take up positions in political and public institutions?	115	58.1	83	41.9
Do you think the taking up of positions in political parties and public institutions promotes labour's struggles for a living wage?	110	55.6	88	44.4
Would you remember any key positions that labour leaders have taken up in politics or public institutions?	198	100	0	0

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Questions in this study sought to find out if respondents perceive this practice as necessary and if indeed the ZCTU has pursued it. The way in which this practice is assumed to be linked to elections and living wage issues was also discussed. Table 7.7 above shows the pattern of responses regarding the utilisation of this mechanism.

7.2.4.1 Perceptions of link between alliances and advances on living wage issues.

Fifty one percent of the respondents argued that if ZCTU enters into alliances this will strengthen its living wage struggle. Further to this many of the respondents saw no reason why ZCTU should not align with other social movements. In a shop steward's own words "*the ZCTU and other social movements are pursuing the same agenda and mainly draw from the same constituency – the down trodden masses*". Indeed many of the social movements in the Zimbabwean society are confronting similar problems and are affected by the same socio-economic and political environment in a similar way. Further to this, the constituent profile in many instances has become diverse and membership tends to overlap.

The nature of alliances that the ZCTU has entered into in its bid to fight for a living wage in Zimbabwe is related to that of COSATU in respect of aligning with similar social movements to force the state to adopt policy positions that are favourable to the worker. COSATU also entered into a pact with a party then in opposition until it assumed power. The ZCTU has had close working relationships with ZANU PF, Zimbabwe Unity Movement (ZUM) and the MDC (a party that it founded). The MDC remains in opposition. At its formation, the MDC pronounced that it did not believe in low wages; it did not believe in industry paying wages which are below the basic cost of

living and upon assuming power, would work to establish a social contract between the government, private sector, employers and trade unions to work towards paying higher wages so that workers would be able to afford to live on a whole family basis (Bond, 2001). Further to alliances with political parties, the ZCTU allies with social movements that include students, women, and intellectuals in pursuit of an ideal socio-economic and political environment that will facilitate a living wage (Bond and Saunders, 2005).

In view of the fact that there has been limited political reform, and the MDC remains in opposition, 49% of respondents expressed reservations about the efficacy of these alliances in bringing about the desired change. Respondents also posited that some of the so called social movements do not command any meaningful membership in Zimbabwe thereby defeating the strength in numbers concept. ZCTU had a close working relationship with ZANU PF in the early 1980s. In 1990, ZCTU refused to endorse ZANU PF in the elections that ensured and many workers tacitly supported its break away nemesis, the ZUM. In the new millennium, ZCTU founded the MDC, which remains in opposition. Despite these shifts in alliances, the movement towards a living wage has been negligible. According to one respondent,

> "localised alliances cannot in themselves be effective even if a party of labour's choice gains power. The socio- economic environment, and indeed the politics of Zimbabwe, is influenced by the international governance system. For example, pressure from more liberal Western donors, may preclude any party in power from adjusting working conditions especially with regards to remuneration. For example while the ZCTU argued that the MDC was formed to champion the interest of the worker, then Minister of Finance, Tendai Biti (MDC Secretary General) in the unity government was at the forefront of refusing to review remuneration of employees as a result of pressure from the Bretton Woods Institutions".

7.2.4.2 Perceptions of link between alliances with factions of political parties and advances on living wage issues.

Political party factionalism seems to be shunned upon by respondents in the sample. More than 75% of the respondents argued that this is detrimental to the attainment of a living wage by labour. Respondents argued that the ugly face of factionalism can be read from the split of the MDC in 2005. At that time it is argued, the MDC had the opportunity to unseat the Zanu PF government as it was a much stronger force than it became after the split. One respondent retorted that the problem with factionalism in Zimbabwe is that it takes ethnic overtones. It does not only limit the power of alliances but has potential to divide the country. Indeed when considering the MDC split, it is important to note that one faction went on to become largely based in the Ndebele speaking region of the country. A mild split that saw ZANU PF members regrouping under the ZAPU party after 26 years of unity also followed ethnic lines. This also applies to the ZCTU whose smaller faction has largely been a Harare outfit.
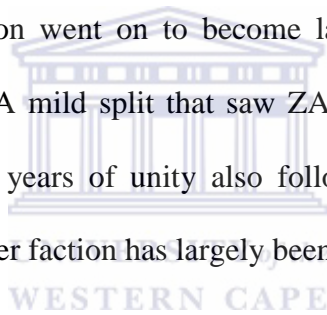
The Zimbabwe scenario is largely different from the South African scenario where COSATU has leveraged on ANC factionalism to bring about a change in the party's leadership. The Polokwane conference was a land mark event that highlighted how internal alliances could be leveraged to bring about the desired change by labour.

7.2.4.3   Perceptions on ZCTU taking up political and public positions

A total of 58.1% of the respondents believe that it is appropriate for the labour body's personnel to leave for political and public offices if these are available. Of those respondents who argued that it is appropriate for labour to take up public and political

positions, 55.6% of them argued that this is an important route for labour to advance its struggles for a living wage.

It is in this context that we find the ZCTU leadership crossing over to political offices in the last decade. Against this background, in 1998, ZCTU publicly announced that it was seeking a political solution to its living wage problems (Raftopolous and Sachikonye, 2001). ZCTU respondents argued that the labour body had been marginalised by a government that lacked the motivation to solve its living wage demands and therefore the only way forward was to form a political party to wrestle government power. In 1999 the MDC was formed however from a mass based coalition of social movements. Nine members of the executive were trade unionists (The Standard, 20/02/2000). Top leadership from the ZCTU included President (Morgan Tsvangirayi), Vice President (Gibson Sibanda), national chairman (Isaac Matongo) and deputy secretary general (Gift Chimanikire). In the 2000 elections, 16 trade unionists won their mainly urban constituencies.
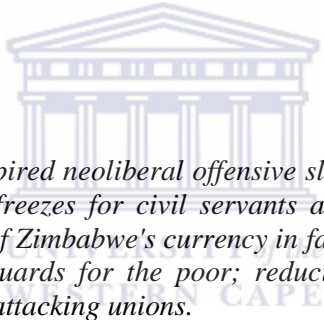
However 41.9% of the respondents felt that labour leaders should not leave to enter politics. A respondent stated the reason for his argument as that,

> *Politicians in Zimbabwe are an elite club, they are concerned with making more deals, making more money and staying in power at the expense of the working poor. If anyone decides to enter politics, they join the club, and never remember where they came from.*

Other respondents pointed out that the political arena cannot be determined by a few individuals coming from a social movement; it is too complex and involves too many local, regional and international actors. For these respondents, labour will be more powerful if it fights for its cause while outside the political arena as its energy will be

concentrated on the specific interests of its constituency such as living wage issues only.

Further, respondents pointed out that it is also hard for political parties to utilise some of the practices that are at the disposal of labour bodies. As a result, 44.4% of respondents posited that if labour leaders enter the political arena and contest elections, this will not necessarily facilitate advances towards living wages.

This argument can be exemplified by the leadership of Mr Morgan Tsvangirayi. As Secretary General of the ZCTU Tsvangirayi in the late 1980s, he led demonstration against government for betraying socialism by adopting ESAP. However as leader of the MDC and in the power sharing arrangement with ZANU PF Gwisai (2013) notes that his leadership,

> *launched a fanatical, IMF-inspired neoliberal offensive slashing of all quasi-fiscal subsidies to the poor; wage freezes for civil servants and starvation wages for other workers; abandonment of Zimbabwe's currency in favour of rigid adoption of the U.S. dollar without safeguards for the poor; reducing inflation to below 5 percent; cash-budgeting; and attacking unions.*

When the underpaid workers demanded living wages, MDC secretary general and then Finance Minister retorted that *"money does not grow on trees"*.

7.2.4.4 Challenges faced by ZCTU in trying to use political access mechanisms.

Respondents posited that the political access mechanism is prone to control by more powerful forces in the international arena that tend to determine the preferred pattern of governance. Towards Zimbabwe, the system tends to shun more welfarist approaches that will be more beneficial to the worker. It prefers a more open market oriented system that gives more space to owners of capital and treats the worker as a commodity whose wage is affected by demand and supply factors. In this sense, there is a template of the

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governance system already in place and any leadership that enters government, fits into this template. It is therefore not easy to shape policy expressly to favour labour even if the ZCTU second its leadership to take up political positions.

Other responses point out to the fact that the movement of ZCTU activists into the political arena, drains the social movement of its skilled personnel. They pointed out to the movement of the ZCTUs top leadership to join the MDC, and the tendency of the MDC leadership to make appointments from the hierarchy of the labour body. Accordingly this has weakened the labour body as new leaders have to be groomed. Today, the ZCTU does not retain the same power that it had in the late 1980s and 90s. Further, the problem of migration to leadership in politics militates against the workers' efforts to fight for living wage as these leaders' ability to accept policies from labour become limited by the larger political environment that demands more than just addressing the demands of the workers.
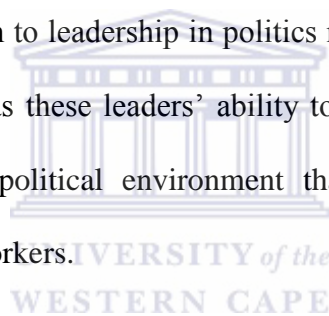
Other responses pointed out to the argument that historically, ZANU PF government has labelled any association of individual with a contrary opinion to be enemies of the state. They are seen as working against the government. In this regard, the coming into being of the MDC through labour, has now meant that genuine labour demands are now easily passed off as political demands by the ZANU PF government. This makes it difficult for workers to demand better wages.

Finally, the leadership that has moved over to political positions is perceived as having tended to regard their new found life as personal greener pastures rather than an opportunity to further the cause of the union and the workers. As the MDC went into

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public office, at local and national levels, allegations of corruption became very rampant (Sunday News, 21, July, 2012).

7.2.5   Perception on utilisation of Judicial (litigation) mechanism

7.2.5.1 Perception on utilisation of Judicial mechanism

The judiciary in Zimbabwe has been used by the ZCTU, its affiliates or individual members in a variety of labour disputes (Labour Court and Supreme Court) and other court injunctions (High Court and Supreme Court) (Brian Raftopolous: Interview). According to Raftopolous, the ZCTU increasingly used the courts to have the state assert its labour rights to fight for a living wage. In this regard the judicial route enabled the ZCTU to carryout activities that promote public opinion mobilisation such as marches, commemorations and demonstrations, which the state ordinarily denied them. The state denied these as they are perceived to have an impact on the voting patterns of those influenced by such actions. They are also seen to generate general discontent with government performance. Statistically however, the respondents (just as in the case of COSATU) do not seem to have a very positive perception about the Zimbabwean courts being ideal for directly influencing both electoral and living wage redress as shown in figure 7.8 below.

Fifty two per cent of respondents argued that the judiciary is not the most viable means of seeking living wage redress. Asked to qualify this, as in the case of COSATU most respondents tended to refer to remuneration and the fact that the court is not ordinarily used to seek living wage adjustments but to interpret the law. In the same light, Labour Court in particular is mainly used to address individual grievances concerning problems such as breach of contract, unfair dismissals, and non-payment of salaries. With more

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emphasis on remuneration, respondents gave further reasons (Table 7.9) as making the judiciary an uninspiring mechanism for addressing living wage issues.

Table 7.8   Workers Perceptions on role of judicial mechanism

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think ZCTU should resort to the judiciary to seek redress on living wage issues?	95	48	103	52
Can ZCTU benefit from approaching the courts on living wage issues?	101	51	97	49
Can Court matters pursued by ZCTU influence election and living wage outcomes?	30	15.2	168	84.8

On a broader note, respondents noted that the Zimbabwean judicial system was heavily politicised and lacked independence to be an impartial adjudicator. A ZCTU Regional Officer argued that *"Questionable judgements have been passed by our judges. Therefore having living wage disputes going to courts reverses the gains of the workers".* It is largely because of this negative perception of the independence of the Zimbabwean judiciary that the respondents felt that it is not best placed to serve their living wage interests.

Table 7.9   Reasons for low regard of judicial interventions

Why judicial mechanisms are described as in-effective
The courts have been corrupted by the political machinery
Many of the Presidents/Judges in the courts are also employers
Court processes take too long to solve matters
The employers use their money to keep appealing to higher courts thereby delaying the resolution through the courts.

Further to this, respondents argued that in instances where courts have passed judgements in favour of labour, they have lacked the means to enforce their judgements. Forty eight percent of the respondents however argued that the judiciary has been helpful to the living wage cause of the workers in Zimbabwe in so far as it has given workers the right to use disruptive mechanisms of forcing the government to reform the political space. The space is essential to promote free and fair political competition and elections. In a free space, the workers will be able to freely vote for a leadership that can advance their living wage cause.

Indeed the ZCTU has on many occasions been rescued by the courts after the state decided to trample on its freedoms provided for in the country's constitution. High profile examples in the past include a 1991 high court interdict preventing Minister of Labour from deregistering the ZCTU; police barring ZCTU general council meetings and other marches and commemorations as well as seeking the discharge of incarcerated ZCTU leadership (van der Walt, 1998).

7.2.5.2 Benefit of approaching the courts on living wage issues

While 52% of the respondents do not think the ZCTU should approach the courts if it needs living wage redress, in the event that the ZCTU still approaches the courts this mechanism can be useful in addressing some of the issues associated with employment relations. According to 51% of the respondents an impartial court system can help individuals represented by their trade unions in terms of the Labour Act to have their grievances addressed, though the process may take too long.

7.2.5.3 Judicial influence on election and living wage outcomes

A majority of respondents (84.8%) believe that utilisation of judicial mechanisms by ZCTU cannot influence the course of electoral outcomes in Zimbabwe or be linked to broad living wage advances for the workers in general. In the event of a failure by the electoral system to produce a fair election, respondents argued that in Zimbabwe, it may still be futile to approach the courts. A ZCTU National Organiser stated that *"The Judiciary is an executive appointment and it is at times not very impartial".* However, 15.2% of respondents believe that as a social movement, the ZCTU's utilisation of the judicial space, popularises the organisation, its mandate and shows its resolve to have living wage issues addressed. In that regard once it takes a certain position on elections, its constituency is likely to follow that.

7.2.6 International access mechanisms.

International trade unionism has increasingly taken space in the labour arena and in the era of globalisation, international trade union bodies have increasingly fought for states to adopt global union agreements (Hodkinson, 2001). International trade unions historically also became important partners or leaders in movements for national

liberation, for political and social democracy or for general movements of the poor. According to Hodkinson (2001:8) they have become an important aspect of,

> *the bottom-up global-local-network perspective of "global social movement unionism" in which labour, NSMs and radical NGOs network at the grassroots level to construct a "global solidarity culture" in the interests of mobilising mass direct action in pursuit of a radical transformation of global society.*

In this regard trade union struggles transcend nationalist visions and assume international labour solidarity (Yeros, 2001). It is in this context that the ZCTU has sought the strength of regional, continental and international solidarity by taking membership and networking with regional trade union bodies. Important examples include; membership of the Southern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC); the Organisation of Africa Trade Union Unity (OATUU) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). The ZCTU also maintains a host of bilateral relationships with national trade unions in South Africa, Nertherlands, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, UK, Canada and the USA among others.

In this study as we sought to understand how trade union social movements seek to influence elections and living wage issues, international access mechanisms emerged as being among those practices that the ZCTU has historically used. Respondents' perceptions were sought regarding the relevance of this mechanism in bringing the desired change. In particular respondents were asked if they thought utilisation of international mechanisms was relevant; if they would have any bearing on election outcomes and if thus in the end this promotes advances towards a living wage.

Table 7.10   Perceptions of the utilisation of international access mechanism

N=225	Yes	%	No	%
Do you think ZCTU should seek international collaborations with other labour movements or institutions?	148	74.7	50	25.3
Do you think collaboration with alike labour bodies and institutions around the world may be helpful in election of a political party of your choice?	103	52	95	48
Do you think collaboration with alike labour bodies and institutions around the world may be helpful in advancing your living wage demands?	100	50.5	98	49.5
Do you think these collaborations may sometimes be an impediment to your objective of exerting influence on national elections and living wage issues?	75	37.9	123	62.3
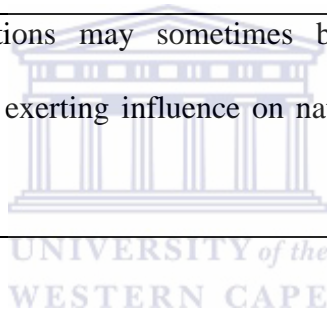
Table 7.10 above shows some of the major responses.

7.2.6.1   Perceptions on utilisation of international access mechanisms.

A majority of respondents, 74.7% pointed out that it is appropriate for the ZCTU to actively seek collaboration with other labour organisations at regional, and international levels. They understood this to be an important avenue for the ZCTU to bring pressure to bear on the government. With respect to collaborations, a former national executive member of the ZCTU affiliate, Zimbabwe Leather Shoe Union posited that *"They add a voice to the struggles of labour through solidarity actions and can assist in consumer boycott activities"*. The Respondents noted that the Zimbabwean socio-political space is characterised by imposition of severe restrictions on the operations of the trade union.

Therefore, it will help if ZCTU link up with these transnational networks so that they can bring pressure on the state from outside.

This is indeed an important avenue as external actors can also shape the international relations of states. If the state is continuously condemned or lobbied against by these external networks, its relations with other states, regional and multilateral bodies will be affected and states try to keep good relations. In the last decade, Zimbabwe has received a huge battering from the international community and a barrage of social movements and other state and non-state actors (Dorman, 2001). The pressure has resulted in a number of reforms including electoral and constitutional reforms as well as reduction in politically motivated violence. Since finding it difficult to fight for a living wage in an unreformed governance environment, these have been a key area of struggle for the ZCTU since the late 1990s.
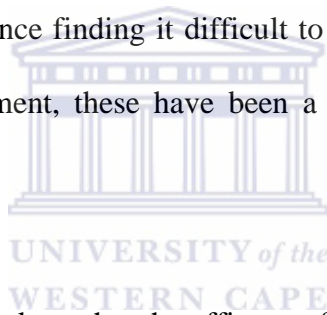
However other respondents pointed out that the efficacy of these transnational networks or collaborations is also determined by the strength of the ZCTU. They believed that these were more useful in the past but have gradually lost steam because of a decline in the power of the ZCTU. They argued that the ZCTU has been weakened by leadership exodus, splits, formation of state sponsored rival unions and the general absence of trade union freedom in the Zimbabwean laws.

7.2.6.2 Perceptions of the influence of international access mechanism on elections.

Respondents (52%) posited that the international linkages by the ZCTU make its partners aware of which political party it is aligned to and will also support that position as it is in the best interests of the local labour body's constituency. Further to this,

international support may raise the required resources to fight for the election of a party of labour's choice or to make members aware of the appropriate party to vote for. A ZCTU national executive member noted that in fact the labour body has received funding from external partners including, Friedrich Ebert Stiftung; FOS Belgium; HIVOS; OXFAM; Christian Aid; the Labour Solidarity Center and the American Federation of Labour and Congress of Industrial Organisations (AFL-CIO). The executive member noted that the ZCTU membership has been hit hard by the economic meltdown and cannot raise sufficient funds to support the labour body's activities. External funding has been used to cover countrywide election education programmes through civic education workshops focusing on the importance of political participation, particularly in the electoral process, as well as the negative impact of voter intimidation. Other workshops focused on democracy and governance and aimed to improve the participation of trade in local governance (World Movement for Democracy, n.d).
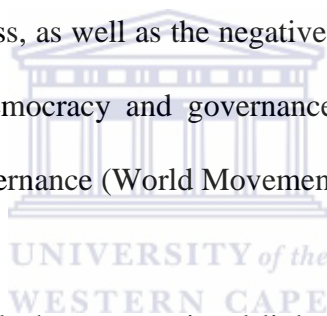
However, 48% of respondents felt that transnational linkages are not always beneficial to ZCTU. Some of the arguments raised included that the organisation has become over dependent on external donors who in the end are now running the labour body's agenda rather than its members. This applies especially to northern based trade union social movements. It is in this context that 37.9% of respondents argued that such transnational collaborations can be retrogressive in respect of elections and the living wage agenda. Others argued that external support for labour has made the government harden its heart as it accuses the ZCTU of puppetry and being agents of the western imperialists. As a result many trade union partner organisations and individuals have been arrested, expelled or barred from entering Zimbabwe. Partners from South Africa, Netherlands, and Norway to name but a few have encountered these problems. Last but not least,

respondents argued that some of the bodies to which the ZCTU is a member, are very weak and almost non-existent in particular SATUCC and the OATUU.

7.2.6.3 Perception of the influence of international access mechanism in advancing living wage demands.

A total of 50.5% believe that there is a link between engaging in transnational collaborations and advancement towards a living wage. For them transnationalisation of labour issues are an important step towards universalising labour rights in the era of globalisation. Further to this, any changes that occur by triggering changes in the political system of a country through transnational network support is likely to result in a better performing economy and better living standards for the working poor.

7.3   Summary

The ZCTU uses a combination of disruptive, political access, public preference, international access and judicial practices in influencing elections and living wages. In general, respondents argued that it is important for the ZCTU to use all these mechanisms in seeking to improve the conditions of Zimbabwe's working poor. However while the ZCTU has used these practices the political environment in which the labour body operates does not fully provide for its freedom to operate. As such increasing effort has been targeting changes in the political process (including electoral process). Lack of local resources has meant that the labour body has had to rely on external funding and solidarity support. This has at times put it in a collision course with the state which argues that it now pursues the agenda of its paymasters rather than the demands of its constituency.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION

8.0   Introduction

This study investigated workers' perceptions of COSATU and ZCTU practices in influencing election and living wage issues from a social movement perspective, from the Apartheid (South Africa) and Unilateral Declaration of Independence (UDI) (Zimbabwe) eras to 2009. The study viewed social movements from Tilly's (2004) definition which perceives them as a series of contentious performances, displays and campaigns by which ordinary people make collective claims on others (i.e. elites, authorities, other groups or cultural codes). In order to ensure a broader coverage, these contentious performances, displays and campaigns were discussed according to Kolb's (2007) classification, namely disruption mechanisms, public preference mechanisms (public opinion mobilisation), political access mechanisms, judicial mechanisms (litigation) and international access mechanisms. In the context of social movements, the trade union social movement perspective refers to labour movements that develop a socio-political character, and concern themselves not only with workplace issues but with broad social and political issues. The two trade unions assumed social movement unionism character after realising that their living wage concerns were also influenced by the state's actions rather than by the employer only hence the need to influence the political system and public leadership.

The study was precipitated by the fact that, in the two countries, limited research exists that pulls together and discuss a consolidated array of practices that COSATU and ZCTU use to influence elections and living wage issues. Further, a study of the practices of COSATU and ZCTU in particular at this time in the field of social movements is

consistent with current calls for a conceptual shift, away from looking for invariant causes and effects to looking for mechanisms and processes that occur in many different kinds of movements that lead to different outcomes depending on the specific contexts within which they occur.

Furthermore, a selection of the two case studies was based on the fact that the quest for democracy and economic progress dominate collective action in the two countries where the political parties in power have not changed since liberation. Studying COSATU and ZCTU practices also enables reflection on two trade union social movements that struggle in contrasting political settings, one constantly democratising and the other constantly seeking to stifle democracy. Through the lenses of elections and living wage issues the study also provided insights into the nature of trade union social movements in the two countries; what they believe in; what they can do and how they do it in pursuing their vision.
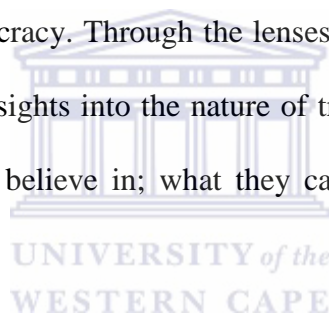
Specifically, the study selected only two aspects of broader union activity and argues that the two social movements seek to influence changes in the political system (through elections) as a means to securing living wages. However the argument of this research is not that these are the only factors accounting for trade union social movement action. The study also neither argues that the labour unions secure final victories or losses when they engage in the business of influencing elections to gain living wages but instead as both COSATU and ZCTU cases reveal, in this process there are advances and at times setbacks for the labour movements.

8.1   Framing Social Movement Trade Unionism

In investigating the trade union social movement practices, social movement unionism theory was used as a way of providing a comprehensive view of understanding the practices. The theory identifies key features associated with COSATU and ZCTU pracices that justifies why they can be classied as social movements.

8.2   Summary of Research Findings

8.2.1   Social Movement Trade Unionism

Social movements promote or resist social change through various practices. They identify a problem, determine that responsible parties are failing to address it adequately, and therefore take action, themselves. In seeking to bring about the desired change, social movements have either engaged formal political institutions by mobilising voters, lobbying policy makers and other strategic institutions or engaged in "outsider" strategies such as public demonstrations and civil disobedience or both strategies. As a result, there has been a plethora of social movements throughout history that have dramatically contributed to the human condition. Distinguishable social movements evolved in the late 18th and 19th century, particularly in Western Europe and North America. Increased proletarianisation during this period caused by growth in the proportion of the population depending on wage labour for survival spurred social movements. A narrative of Africa's liberation and its democratisation today will also not be complete without the contribution of social movements. Trade unions, burial societies, students, religious movements, gender movements and environmental movements that have been shaping the African social landscape are also an illustration of the complexity and breadth of African social movements. In this light, trade union

social movements have not only contributed to democratisation of the politics but of the workplace as well.

Trade union social movements in South Africa and Zimbabwe have been popular due to their use of social movement strategies. They pursue social movement trade unionism which is concerned with broad social and political issues as well as the immediate concerns of their members. The rationale of the trade unions' utilisation of this form of unionism is that they believe it breaks the workplace barrier and enables them to participate in the national and global decision processes that affect the working poor. It also enables them, their general membership, alliance partners and sympathisers to exert influence on political parties and the electorate to pursue a vision that is in line with their living wage aspirations.
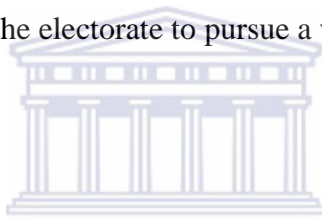
The study observed that COSATU, ZCTU and their general membership contend that they combine bread-and-butter struggles with broader social, political and economic campaigns because they cannot win any living wage concessions if they solely concern themselves with workplace struggles as the broader political context determines the payment of a living wage. They believe that engagement and struggles on a broad platform would deliver more to the working poor than a narrow workplace economic approach. It is in the context of this social movement unionism perspective that this research establishes a connection between elections and living wage campaigns by COSATU and ZCTU and the attendant practices.

8.2.2   Social Context of COSATU and ZCTU Practices

The struggle for democracy and economic emancipation by labour in the apartheid and UDI eras in South Africa and Zimbabwe was influenced by numerous conditions that were not favourable to the worker. The two systems were characterised by socio-political and economic segregation and deprivation. Deliberate legislations were promulgated to promote proletarianisation, low wage labour and abrogation of workers' rights. Due to these conditions labour's main agenda was to unite all workers so that they could primarily and collectively improve their wages, working conditions and defend their jobs. This is a vision that COSATU and ZCTU continue to occupy themselves with in the post liberation period in light of increasing poverty, inequality and specifically reluctance on the part of capital to pay living wages and the reluctance of the state to shoulder additional costs of a social wage.
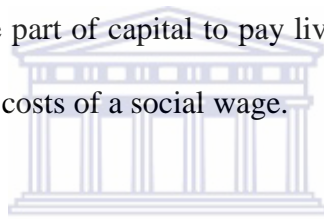
8.2.3   COSATU and ZCTU Practices

A consolidated view of the study is that COSATU and ZCTU adopted a social movement character to fight for social change in South Africa and Zimbabwe. In the case of this study they seek to influence elections and living wage issues. Workers argue that the state is responsible for crafting the framework regulating the labour market and therefore state policies can effectively be influenced by labour to bring desired changes such as living wages. One way in which this can be done is through influencing election into public office of a leadership or party that labour believes will best represent its interests. In seeking to influence elections and living wage issues, COSATU and ZCTU utilise an array of practices, namely disruption, public preference (public opinion mobilisation), political access, judicial and international access mechanisms. While workers place significant importance in these mechanisms, statistically however, the

general perception of their influence was lower in Zimbabwe as compared to South Africa. This may be due to the fact that Zimbabwe still lags behind in democracy and workers often face state repression.

8.2.3.1 Disruptive practices

Disruptive mechanisms have been used to pressure a government of labour's choice to follow on, on leaving wage promises or create public opinion about a government's inadequacies and the need to penalise it in elections. Disruptive mechanisms emerged as one of the practices that workers perceive as necessary for COSATU and ZCTU to influence election and living wage issues. Respondents argued that business, which is particular about production time and production levels tend to respond more promptly once it is certain that work stoppage will disrupt business. Even in the public sector, the state has yielded to disruptive action by workers. In an election year, disruptive practices can be used to influence campaigning parties to incorporate living wage issues in their campaign promises. However the study concludes that disruptive mechanisms may be effective as a means of advancing living wage issues on their own without necessarily being conducted around election times. However despite the disruptive practices being a fairly winning formulae, in Zimbabwe, this has increasingly been met with state brutality against the unions as the state increasingly ran out of resources to appease the discontented workers or felt its power threatened. While disruptive mechanisms appear to often yield results in South Africa, the study also concluded that they do not necessarily provide a winners-take-all situation for the workers. On many occasions in South Africa, industry or the state have not given in to the actual percentages requested by workers but have imposed their final position.

8.2.3.2 Public Opinion Mobilisation

Public opinion mobilisation (public preference) was also perceived by respondents as an important means by which COSATU and ZCTU seek to create an opinion on the masses regarding the potential of any contesting political party to address living wage issues upon assuming power. It is in this context that COSATU has been campaigning for the ANC in each national election since the first of the democratic era, in 1994, and supporting President Jacob Zuma's bid for the presidency of the party and state. Such massive participation by COSATU has resulted in worker revolutionary demands (such as living wage issues) being more pronounced in the ANC's election manifestos and policy pronouncements.

Using a different method, the ZCTU engages in public opinion mobilisation by conducting countrywide election education programmes through civic education workshops focusing on the importance of political participation, particularly in the electoral process, as well as the negative impact of voter intimidation. Other workshops have focused on democracy and governance with the aim of improving the participation of trade unions in local governance. At election times, it also publicly spells out what it deems would be a free and fair election. In that regard, in both countries, public opinion mobilisation practice is used to significantly raise the tempo of the election environment and concentise voters about the wisdom of choosing certain political parties. However in the case of ZCTU such activities have appealed more to the urban base (where workers are concentrated) and political parties that it has allied with have only done well in the urban areas. On the other hand the case of the Western Cape and Kwa-Zulu Natal provinces show that factors such as race and ethnicity may still take precedence over any

efforts by COSATU to convince the electorate to vote for the ANC. Voters in the two provinces do not seem to be generously attracted to vote for the ANC.

8.2.3.3 Political Access

Political access mechanisms are viewed by both COSATU and ZCTU members as critical to influencing government. With regards to elections and living wage issues, political access mechanisms include the act of entering into alliances with political parties, seconding union members to political parties to contest elections and or establishing parliamentary liaison offices. Respondents noted that political access mechanisms are an important aspect of trade union practices that promote the struggle for living wages. This is because political organisations are seen as an arena for advancing worker interests. It is believed that involvement of labour in politics orients the vision of such political institutions towards addressing living wage issues. In this regard COSATU has allied with the ANC and regards the party as "our movement". The ZCTU has previously allied with ZANU PF, ZUM and now the MDC, which it regards as "our project".

However despite utilisation of political access practices by unions, there is often a disjuncture between policies proposed in alliances and what the party goes on to implement once in government. While this may be viewed by architectures of negotiated settlements as compromise politics, respondents argued that labour leaders in alliances simply begin to ignore the demands and interests of the workers who voted them into office and join the "elite train".

8.2.3.4 Judicial practices
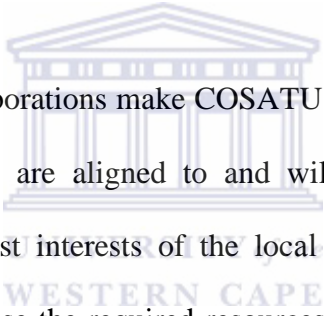
COSATU and ZCTU have utilised this tool on many different occasions. However workers' confidence in this mechanism ranked much lower in both countries when compared to other mechanisms. Respondents felt that resorting to the courts is not one of the most effective routes with regards to remuneration aspect of the living wage. One argument is largely based on the view that the judiciary only interprets the law rather than impose remuneration adjustments.

Another argument is that the judicial process is not only slow but often once an issue is before the courts it becomes sub judice and other practices will no longer be easily applicable on the matter. Further to this, the judiciary does not have the means of enforcing the judgments that it passes. However both COSATU and the ZCTU have consistently approached the judiciary with respect to the exercise of their constitutional rights and or the constitutionality or absence thereof. In some instances this has impact on elections as it raises voter awareness regarding the ills of a government or facilitates a fair electoral environment. However the Zimbabwean judiciary has at times been accused of not being impartial.

8.2.3.5 International Access

COSATU and the ZCTU have sought the strength of transnational solidarity by taking membership and networking with wider trade union bodies. Important examples include; membership of the Sothern African Trade Union Coordinating Council (SATUCC); the Organisation of Africa Trade Union Unity (OATUU); Commonwealth Trade Union Council (CTUC) and the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). They also maintain a host of bilateral relationships with national trade unions in

countries such as the Nertherlands, Finland, Sweden, Denmark, UK, Canada and the USA among others. In general, transnationalisation of labour issues are an important step towards universalising labour rights in the era of globalisation. Respondents believed that transnational solidarity is an important avenue for COSATU and the ZCTU to bring pressure to bear on their governments with respect to elections and living wage issues as transnational unions can exert pressure on the multinationals, business in general and the state from outside. This is indeed an important avenue as external actors can also shape the international relations of states. If the state is continuously condemned or lobbied against by these external networks, its relations with other states, regional and multilateral bodies will be affected and states try to keep good relations.

Further to this transnational collaborations make COSATU and ZCTU partners aware of which political party the unions are aligned to and will also support that position internationally as it is in the best interests of the local labour body's constituency. International support may also raise the required resources to fight for the election of a party of labour's choice; to make members aware of the appropriate party to vote for and the essence of voting. International resources in Zimbabwe have been used to defend labour rights. However some respondents noted that transnational networks can easily make a national union lose its agenda in favour of a global view that is not in psych with local needs.

8.4   Possible Areas for Future Research

Growth of non-standard forms of work - In seeking to influence the state, one of the biggest challenges emerging is that non-standard forms of work are creating a broad base of the ununionised who however have the potential to help COSATU regain its

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more effective militancy of the Apartheid era or help the ZCTU grow its membership that has dwindled due to that country's comatose economy. There is potential to conduct research to find out the impacts of the growing ununionised sector on the power and conditions of unions and the prospects of them joining the unions.

Relevance of alliance politics - The tendency of the ANC and the MDC (when it was in the unity government) to ignore its alliance partners in the crafting of fundamental policy issues brings to question the relevance of alliance politics for trade unions. There is need to investigate the role of these alliances and if they are still relevant in today's governance setting.

8.5   Summary

Five practices are mainly used by COSATU and the ZCTU to influence election and living wage issues, namely disruption mechanisms, public preference mechanisms, political access mechanisms; judicial mechanisms and international access mechanisms. The two unions' workers perceive these to be necessary means to influence election outcomes that favour a political leadership or government which supports a living wage. These mechanisms are not used either sequentially or independent of each other. However, the nature of the political environment, resource mobilisation capacity and ability to frame issues in ways that resonate with the workers determines the extent to which each of these mechanisms can be effectively applied. This is to the extent that the perception of their utility in Zimbabwe is ranked lower than in South Africa given that country's limitations in its governance system.

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The following questionnaire constitutes the primary data collection instrument for the study of a Doctor of Philosophy (Public Administration) in the Center for African Citizenship and Democracy (University of the Western Cape) by Mr Tyanai Masiya. This research's main objective is to analyse COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues. The data collected shall be used primarily for academic purposes and will not in any way be used to identify, incriminate, prejudice or obstruct activities (private or public) of individual respondents, individuals and organisations whose being makes this study successful.

Semi structured Questionnaire for COSATU & ZCTU

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.   Gender   Male   Female

2.   Your Age Group (tick appropriate)

Below 21 years   21-30 years   31-40 years   41-50 years   Above 51 years

3.   Indicate positions you have held in Trade Unions including your current position
        …………………………………………………………………………………………
        …………………………………………………………………………………………

4.   Do you think labour should be involved in national politics or it should confine itself to confronting   the
        employer?...
        …………………………………………………………………………………………

        (a) If you think labour should be involved in national politics, state.................................
        …………………………………………..

        (b)   If you think labour should be involved in workplace issues only, state why.
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5.   There are arguments that even if labour tries to influence the state, it never succeeds because the state is too powerful to be influenced by the labour movement in its policy process. What is your opinion?
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6. (a) Is COSATU/ZCTU involved in trying to influence the political trajectory of the country?

Yes   No

(b) Why

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7. If your trade union is involved in trying to influence national politics, what precipitated its decision to enter the political area? ……………...

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8. (a) Do you think there is a link between a particular party/leadership being elected into power and a commitment to addressing living wage issues? Yes   No

(b) If yes, how do you envisage this link?

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9. (a) Do you think the quest for a living wage has been advanced by labour's participation in national elections? Yes   No

(b) If yes, how do you think the quest for a living wage has been advanced by labour's participation in national elections?

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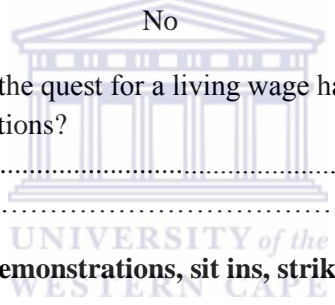
Disruption mechanisms (protest, demonstrations, sit ins, strikes)

10. (a) Do you think resorting to strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins is an effective means of drawing attention to living wage demands? Yes   No

(b) If yes in what ways are these effective tools for making living wage demands?

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11. (a) Do you think the effectiveness of strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins for living wage is enhanced if staged around a period close to the conducting of national elections? Yes   No

(b) Why

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12. (a) If you can identify any, which are some of the most outstanding strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins carried out towards elections both in the apartheid/UDI era and the post liberation eras …………………………………………………………………

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(b) What were the outcomes of each of the above mentioned strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins as regards to living wage demands?

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13. (a) In general, which other strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins that occurred outside the election period both before and after liberation that you think had significant impact on living wage demands?

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(b) What were the living wage impacts for each of the actions you mentioned above?

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(c) What were the other gains of the strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins mentioned in 13 (a)

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14. (a) Can COSATU/ZCTU strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins influence voting behavior and national elections? Yes   No

(b) If yes, how can COSATU/ZCTU strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins impact on national elections?. ……….. ...……………………………………..………………………...

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(c) If yes, can you remember any strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins that had impact on national elections both prior to and after liberation?

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15. (a) What are some of the challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins to further your demands for a living wage?

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(b) What are some of the challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins to further any other union interests?

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Political access mechanisms (alliances with political parties or factions of political parties, taking up positions in politics and public institutions).

16. (a) Briefly outline COSATU/ZCTU history of alliances with political parties/movements?

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(b) Outline what labour achieved by aligning with each of these political parties/movements of which it would not have been able to achieve outside the alliance?.. .... ……….……………

17.   (a) Do you think there is a link between going into these alliances and labour's advances towards securing a living wage? Yes   No

(b) If yes please explain the link

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18.   (a) Briefly outline COSATU/ZCTU history of alliances with any factions of political parties?

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(b) Outline what labour achieved by aligning with each of these factions of political parties of which it would not have been able to achieve outside this alliance?.. .... ……….…………….....................…………… ………………… ……

19.   (a) Do you think there is a link between going into alliance with factions of political parties and labour's advances towards a living wage? Yes   No

(b) If yes please explain the link

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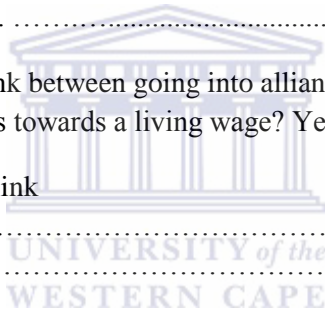
20.   (a) Do you think labour leaders should leave the unions and take up positions in political and public institutions? Yes   No

(b) Why……………………………………………………………………………………… ……. ………… ………………………………………………………………………………

21.   (a) Do you think the taking up of positions in political parties and public institutions promotes labour's struggles for a living wage? Yes   No

(b) Why……………………………………………………………………………………… …….. ………………………………………………………………………………………

22.   Other than living wages, what other labour interests is COSATU/ZCTU likely to gain from the movement deployment of labour leaders into positions in political parties and public institutions?

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23.   (a) Would you remember any key positions that labour leaders have taken up in politics or public institutions? Yes   No

(b) Identify some of the key appointments you may remember…………………………………… ……………………………………………

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(c) If yes to 23(a), how did labour gain from each of these appointments/movements?

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24.   (a) What are some of the challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise alliances/participation in political and public institutions to further demands for a living wage?

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(b) What are the other challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise alliances/participation in political and public institutions to further any other labour interests?

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Judicial mechanisms (litigation)

25.   (a) Do you think your union should resort to judicial means to have a national election issue addressed?   Yes   No

(b)   Why

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(c) In what ways can resorting to the judiciary promote the workers' quest for a living wage?

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26.   (a) Do you think your union should resort to judicial means to have a living wage issue addressed?   Yes   No

(b)   Why

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27.   What other issues of interest do you think will warrant labour approaching the courts   for redress?…………………………………………………………………………………

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28.   (a)Would you remember instances when your union approached the courts for redress? Yes   No
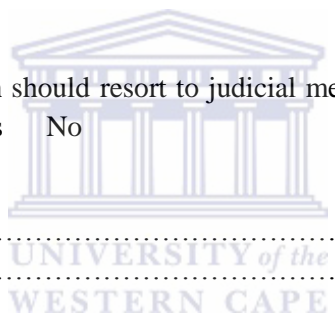
(b) If yes outline some of the instances

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(c) What did labour gain from the recourse to the courts in each instance mentioned in 29 (b)?

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29.   (a) What are some of the challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise the courts to further your demands for a living wage?

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(b) What are some other challenges your union has faced in trying to utilise the courts to further other labour interests?

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Public preference mechanisms (public opinion mobilisation)

30.   (a) Does your trade union appeal to the electorate to change public opinions and attitudes towards voting for a political party of the labour movement's choice? Yes   No

(b) In what ways does your union appeal to the public to change opinions and attitudes towards voting for a political party of the labour movement's choice?

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(c) In what ways may this approach have a bearing on your demands for a living wage?

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(d) Other than 30 (c), in what ways may labour gain from having the electorate vote for a party of its (labour's) choice?

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31.   Outline the history of your union's involvement in mobilising voters for national elections

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32.   What could be some of the challenges that your union has faced in mobilising voters to vote for the party of your choice?

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International access mechanisms (transnational networks, treaties, global markets)

33.   (a) Do you think collaboration with alike labour bodies and institutions around the world may be helpful in advancing your living wage demands? Yes   No

   (b) In what ways may these collaborations influence your struggle for a living wage?
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   .... …………………………………….

   (c) Outline some of the key collaborations that have advanced your struggles for a living wage.
   …………………………………………………………………………………………
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34.   (a) Do you think these collaborations may sometimes be an impediment to your objective of securing a living wage? Yes No

   (b)
   Why?...
   ………………………………………………………………………………………….

35.   In what ways have these collaborations helped you exert influence on national election issues?..............……………….…….………………….………………………………………
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36.   (a) Do you think these collaborations may sometimes be an impediment to your objective of exerting influence on national elections? Yes   No

   (b) Why?
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37.   There is a view that labour can fight for a living wage through influencing national election outcomes. What is your opinion?
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THAN YOU

The following questionnaire constitutes the primary data collection instrument for the study of a Doctor of Philosophy (Public Administration) in the Center for African Citizenship and Democracy (University of the Western Cape) by Mr Tyanai Masiya. This research's main objective is to analyse COSATU and ZCTU practices on elections and living wage issues. The data collected shall be used primarily for academic purposes and will not in any way be used to identify, incriminate, prejudice or obstruct activities (private or public) of individual respondents, individuals and organisations whose being makes this study successful.

Semi structured Questionnaire for Affiliates

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1.   Gender   Male   Female (tick appropriate)

2.   Your Age Group (tick appropriate)

Below 21 years   21-30 years   31-40 years   41-50 years   Above 51 years

3.   (a) Are you a member of COSATU/ZCTU?   Yes   No

(b) If no, are you a member of any labour organisation? Yes   No

(c)What are the reasons for your choice to belong or not to belong to a labour organisation?..
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4.   There are arguments that the role of trade unions should be confined to the workplace not national politics. What is your opinion regarding this view?……………………………...
....

5.   There are arguments that the state is too powerful to be influenced by the labour movement   in   its   policy   process.   What   is   your opinion?...
……………………………………………………………………………………..

6.   (a) Do you think COSATU/ZCTU can influence government policy? Yes   No

(b) How do you think COSATU/ZCTU influences government policy?......…………………………………………………………………………………..
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7. (a) Do you think strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins can have an impact towards addressing living wage demands in your country? Yes   No

(b)Why.............…………………………………………………………………………………
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(c) If yes to 7(a) what are some of the strikes/ protests/demonstrations/sit ins that you think had a significant impact towards addressing living wage demands
…………………………………………………………………………………………
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8. (a) Do you think strikes/ protests/demonstration/sit ins can influence national election outcomes in your country? Yes   No

(b)Why.............………………………………………………………………………………
……… …………………………………………………………………………………….

9. (a) Would you remember occasion when the labour movement had to go on strikes/ protests/demonstration/sit ins as a way of attempting to influence national election outcomes in your country? Yes   No

(b) If yes which elections were these? ………………………………………………….
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

10. (a) Do you think mobilisation activities of potential voters by labour unions can influence your choice of the political party you vote for in an election? Yes   No

(b) Why?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
………………………………………………………….………………………………

11. (a) Would you remember occasion where labour went around mobilising voters or used any means to encourage voters to vote for a particular party? Yes   No

(b) If yes which years were these?
…………………………………………………………..

(c) If yes to 11(a), How did labour seek to influence your voting?
…………………………….. …………………………………………………………..
…………………………………………………………………………………………..

12. (a) Do you think if a political party of labour's choice wins an election, this enhances opportunity for having living wage demands addressed? Yes   No

(b) Why?
…………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………

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13. (a) If yes to (a) do you remember a time when a party of labour's choice won the elections? Yes No

(b) If yes, in what ways did the wining party go about attempting to address living wage issues?
……………………………………………………………………………………………………
…………………………………………………………………………………………………….

…………………………………………….END……………………………………………