

CHAPTER NO V

TRADE UNIONS

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5:1 TRADE UNION AND WORKERS PARTICIPATION

Today's growing industrialization is leading to promote the trade unions for protecting workers' interest by workers' collective action. In the developing industrial sector, more workers are working together or in the industrial sector in the country. But a single labourer or worker cannot solve his problems. So they organise themselves into trade unions. So the primary duty of each union is that to solve the labour problem which are created by the modern industry with the help of union labour should try to accommodate more facilities.

A trade union ' must possess definite aims. Its members must be welded together in a united front for the good of the whole group rather than for the promotion of any selfish individual interest and it must be effective to take on a definite and permanent form of organisation through which it strives to accomplish its goals...¹"

" The origin of the trade union movement in India may be traced back to the earliest times when in every village panchayat and guilds settled disputes between their members and masters. The first quarter of the twentieth century saw the birth of the trade union movement in India.

1. Gordans Walking & Paul A Dodu Labour Problems -

The Govt. of India also has given importance to the association of workers as " The workers right of association, organisation and collective bargaining is to be accepted without reservation as fundamental basis of mutual relationship. The attitude to trade unions should not be just a matter of colleration. They should be welcomed and helped to function a part and parcel of Industrial system"¹.

But such trades are not free from political parties. It is the defect the^{or} drawback of Indian trade unions. " Even a cursory glance through the history of movement will indicate the close and direct link between the trade union and the political parties as well as the contribution made by political workers to the growth of the unions. This close link is partly explained by the fact that the Indian trade union movement was nursed and developed by the political leaders. The country as a part of the national movement for independence"...² Such types of political leadership will become a obstacle in the growth of the pure trade union.

A link between various political parties and the trade unions of present at various levels.

" Every political party in the country has sought to have under its control and domination as many trade union as it can. The result is the existance of six important central federations each working in close

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1. Govt. of India planning commission "The first five years plan " - p.577.
 2. G.P.Shina and P.RW Shina " Industrial relations and labour legislation - p.178.

collaboration with and under the guidance. If not direct under control of a separate political party. The link between the AITUC and communist party of India, The INTUC and the Indian National Congress. The H.M.S. and the Sanjukta Socialist party and Praja (Socialist party). The eitu and the communist party of India (Marxist) . The B.M.S. and the Bharatiya Jan Sangh and the CTUC and the small splinter parties of the left is well known.¹ Such link between political parties and trade union will discourage the growth of Trade Union.

5:2: TRADE UNION IN VITA

Through the power loom were working in city from last 4 to 5 decades. There is no powerful labour organisation. It is the drawback at Vita powerloom workers. It has many reasons some of them as follows:-

- 1) Labour coming from out side and not interested organisation.
- 2) Relations between labour and owner is on the individual levels. So labour would not be ready to solve their such good relations.
- 3) There is not any good leadership.
- 4) Workers those who are working in power loom sector are not completely dependent upon power loom. So they are not interested in unionsm.

1 G.P.Shina and P.W.Shina " Industrial Relations and Labour Legislation - p.180.

All above reasons are the drawbacks in the growth of sound leadership and growth of organisation.

But before 6 to 7 years Lal Bavata General Union was established in Vita . But it is not working regularly. Because there is no good response of the workers. This Union is affiliated to centre of Indian Trade Unions (CITU). There is no good situation for the growth of trade union in Vita city. All the members are not paying fees regularly. Every one tries to live apart from that union. Because of their individual reasons and some collective reasons.

5:3 MOTIVATION FOR JOINING UNION

There are various motivations for joining the Union. Some of them for individual benefits and some for collective benefits. It means that, not only higher wages were motivating them to join union, but some social motivations also. About this A. Ramaswamy points out that "There are tangible gains to be had by way of wages and working conditions by unionising. More specifically wages increases reasonable work assignment a large annual bonus and safe guarding workers from abusive treatment by Jobber and the management have been the most important objectives of union."

Secondly Mr. Rose A.M. points out with his quantitative analysis remarks that " personal benefits good causes and higher wages were the most frequently mentioned reasons for union membership."

With the help of above two statements we can say that the economic reasons which motivate the workers to join

the trade union. But alongwith this economic reasons there were some other motivations like political group, sociological and psychological group which were stimulating to the workers for joining trade union.

About the definition of trade union, there is no equility in verious definition. But were agreed following points :-

- 1) To **safe**guard and improve working conditions of their members.
- 2) To maintain advance and protect the economic and vocational interest of their members and more generally to raise status in the society.
- 3) To enable them to overcome managerial monopoly and dictutership.
- 4) To **develop** their barganing power.

SOME DEFINITIONS OF TRADE UNION

- 1) " A Union is a continuing long term association of employees formed and maintained for the specific purpose or advancing and protecting the interest of members in their working relationship. "

Dale yoder¹

- 2) "A trade union is continious association for wage earner for the purpose of maintaining of improving the condition of their working lives."

Sindny and Betatric Webb ...²

1 Yoder Dale 'Personal management and industrial relations 1972 - p.159-160.

2 Webb.Sydney Beatric History of Trade Union 1920 -

- 3) A trade union is any combination whether temporary or permanent formed primarily for the purpose of regulation. The relations between workman, between employees and employers or for business and include any federation of two or more trade union "...

Indian trade union act 1926¹

- 4) It is an association of workers in a particular trade or a craft organised to promote a common interest and "further that interest through negotiation of wages, hours of work and other conditions at employment"....

Robert Dictionary of Industrial relation.²

With all the above various definitions we can understand what is trade union and what about at work. But it is to be noted that modern trade unions retains four characteristics from early development.

- 1) It is economically oriented,
- 2) It is an instrument of defence,
- 3) It implies class distinction,
- 4) It is an outcome of an individualistic society.

5:4: PARTICIPATION IN UNION ACTIVITIES

India has the largest number of trade union, but they have developed very slowly.

"The main features of the present day unionism in India are only about 28% of the workers in India are united. The unions are getting smaller in size. Their Finance are generally in a bad shape. Trade union leadership face several dilemma . The unions often can not make a constructive approach because of intersize interunion rivatries and multiplicity of union. Then there is a hetrogenity of membership with workers from different areas, classes, castes religions, Because of this peuliarities, it has been observed by keen observers of the movement that unlike the trade unions in sweeden, Germany, U.K. U.S.A. Indian Unions are yet weak.....¹

In general we can say that the mejority of workers are not interested to join the trade union. 'In Vita city also participation in union is less. |

The importance of actual participation of workers in Union activities can be made clear by the concept of union democracy " In Trade Union the people are the union member, Since the peoples participation is a measure of real democracy, the participation in the day to day function of trade union constitute a critical measure of real Union Democracy".....²

1 C.B. Memoria - Dynamics of industrial relations in India. H.P.H.P.No.50-51.

2 K.Devaki - Devi - Trade Union Democracy in India.
Indian Journal of social work
April - 1978, p.70

In addition N.R.Seth remarks that participation by ordinary members in union activities are important for three reasons First, a Union exists barically to serve the interest and goals of its members, hence its effectiveness would depend upon largely on the extent to which the members scale to channelise their interests and actieve their goals through the medium of the union by their participation.

Second, if we accept the importance of union leadership emerging from the rank and file the degree of participation by the latter in union work has considerable value as project indicates the pattern of leadership developing in concerate situations of unionism.

Third, It is observations that the iron law of oligarchy or the tendency on the part of selected leaders to become all powerful can be checked by a vigilant and participative membership's .

Above view indicates that the workers participation in union such type of relation should indicate the relation between leaders of union and workers who are the members of union. The union leadership can emmerge through participative activities of union members.

About the Trade Unions indicator N.R.Sheth has selected 7 indicators of trade union participation....

- " i) Union membership,
- ii) Payment of Union dues,
- iii) Visit to union office
- iv) Perusal of union notice,
- v) Participation in Union elections,

- vi) Active participation in elections is the work committees,
- vii) Participation in important union activities, such as union representation to the management dominations organised by the union membership work etc."¹

On the background of these studies it can be noted that the workers at Vita had indicated low interest in union and low participation in the union activities for only Vita city. These are following reasons that are ---

- 1) Less members of workers are joining the unions,
- 2) Out side workers are not interested in joining the union,
- 3) There is no availability of proper and sound leadership.
- 4) Totally very few number of workers are working in powerloom sector,
- 5) There is no unity among the workers ,
- 6) Workers and owners relations are an individual level so workers are not willing to distroy such good relations. So they ~~don't~~ join the trade union.

Workers were asked why they had not taken active participation in union activities ? As above mentioned they had given their answers.

1 Seth N.R. ' Workers participation in trade union activities - p.283

Seth N.R. also reports a similar path among workers towards union work due to familiar and other obligations of workers, a low position accorded to union work in section fear of management and unplacement experience with union leaders.

It is clear that the majority of the workers were not taking active participation. They were satisfied with their union work.

5:5 UNION APPROACH

Such trade unions were established for ~~the~~ improving the working conditions of workers with the help of collective bargaining union also tries to improve the social standard or social conditions of the workers. All that was tried to get with collective bargaining power of workers.

About this ~~P~~unekar S.D. Writes as " Some unions reports to social insurance and social welfare, others encourage collective bargaining and its failure resort to strike which a few follow with the parliamentary method of bringing pressure upon the first and public - pass favourable labour legislation....¹

At the interview many questions were asked about the union approach which instrument were used i.e.

- 1) First militant (2) To work with determination
- 3) Bargaining with management

But in Vita city workers were participating in strike.

1 Punekar S.D. - Trade Unionism in India - p.212