
CHAPTER - V

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

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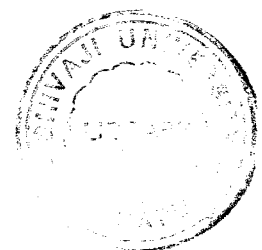
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The present chapter is devoted to summarize the major findings noted in earlier chapters.

The present study attempts to understand the growth, development and organizational aspects of a trade union functioning in a cooperative sugar factory : 'Sakhar Kamgar Union' functioning in Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda (Kolhapur).

THE FIRST CHAPTER is designed to outline the industrial development of Kolhapur and to trace the origin and development of sugar industry in Kolhapur. Kolhapur district had some traditional rural industries like smithy, leather, handloom etc., in the past. However, the industries on modern lines came to be set up in the district mainly through the initiation of the great king Chh. Shahu Maharaj. Apart from the big units in textile, sugar and engineering industries in Kolhapur City, in Shivaji Udyamnagar area of Kolhapur many small engineering units have sprung up after its establishment in 1945-46. Leather industry is also one of the important industries in Kolhapur.

As regards the origin of the sugar industry in Kolhapur district it has been noted that a muslim from Gujrat came to Yalgud of Kolhapur district in 1856 and produced sugar from sugarcane for the first time.



This sugar was famous by the name 'Yalgud sugar' at that time. Upto the end of 19th century, Kolhapur was industrially underdeveloped.

Upto 1930, area under sugarcane in Kolhapur district was limited and sugarcane was used mainly for production of jaggery and handmade sugar. After tariff protection by Government of India in 1932, Chhatrapati Rajaram Maharaj of the erstwhile Kolhapur started sugar factory in the State. Thus, the first ever sugar factory in the district by name " The Kolhapur cane sugar works Ltd.", was established at Kolhapur in the private sector in 1934.

The large scale movement of the cooperative sugar factories was launched in 1954. The year 1955 marked the beginning of the growth of cooperative sugar factories in the district. At the time of the present study there were 11 cooperative sugar factories in the district and different unions were functioning in all these factories.

THE SECOND CHAPTER has dealt with the review of literature and methodology of the present study.

Considering appropriate in the context of the present work, a brief review of few available and accessible, empirical micro studies on unionism is attempted in this chapter. The studies carried out by scholars like Sheth, Bogaert, Pandey, Ramaswamy, Momkootam, Tandon have been reviewed. The review of literature indicated that there is a need to carry out empirical micro studies of trade unions in various sectors of industry and areas; therefore the present attempt to study the union in a cooperative sugar factory.

The details regarding the methodological aspect of the study such as the objectives of the study, selection of the union, selection of the respondents, tool used for data collection, data collection etc., are also noted in the present chapter.

The objectives of the present study were as under -

1. To study the emergence, growth and development of the trade union in Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda,
2. To study various organizational aspects of the trade union (i.e., Sakhar kamgar union)
3. To study leaders' and members' involvement in the union.

The data for the present study were collected from office of the Sakhar Kamgar union, the leaders of the union and from the sample of respondents selected from amongst the workers employed in Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda.

At the time of this research work, there were 905 workers/employees in the Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda. Out of these a sample of 45 employees, i.e., 5% of the total workforce, were selected on the basis of random sampling technique and they were personally interviewed. The data from both the leaders and the selected sample was collected with the help of interviewed schedules. Two separate interview schedules were prepared keeping in view the objectives of the study, and the relevant data were collected from the leaders and the selected sample.

THE THIRD CHAPTER has dealt with the emergence, development and organizational features of the Sakhar Kamgar Union.

Chh. Rajaram Maharaj of Kolhapur state decided to set up a sugar factory in his state, in order to pay better returns to the canegrowers. In 1932, he invited and persuaded an industrialist of Bombay, Ruia, to establish a sugar factory. A site was selected near Kasba Bavda and a factory named as "The Kolhapur Canesugar Works" was registered in the year 1932. The factory took its first season in 1934. All the property belonging to the Kolhapur Canesugar Works Limited was transferred to the newly named Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda on 31st October, 1986. The joint management committee, under the chairmanship of Bhagawanrao Powar and Hindurao Tanekar took lead in collecting members and the share capital and the Kolhapur District Central Cooperative Bank also provided the necessary help.

As noted earlier, in 1932, "Kolhapur Sugar Mill" was established in Kolhapur state. It was in the private sector. Ruia, an industrialist from Bombay, was the owner of the factory. During those days workers' payments were not being made in time, duty hours were not fixed and there was no security of service to the employees. Hence, workers organized themselves and established 'The Kolhapur Sugar Mill Kamgar Union' in 1943. In 1944 and in 1946 the workers went on strike to press their demands such as increase in wages and bonus.

In the year 1949, after the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi, a ban was imposed on the union and on the Navjeevan movement. In 1949, during the period of ban, the attempts to organise the union once again were unsuccessful.

In 1951, attempts were made once again to organize the workers and to establish a union. Taking into consideration the establishment of Bhogawati Sugar Factory, at Parite, Dist. Kolhapur, union leaders took a decision to organize the workers from Bhogawati Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana and accordingly the union was renamed as 'Sakhar Kamgar Union' after incorporating necessary modification in the constitution. This union was registered in May 1951. In 1952, in accordance with the B.I.R. Act, an approval was accorded to the union as a representative recognized union. Then the union got stability. Now the the union i.e. 'Sakhar Kamgar Union' is representing workers belonging to three cooperative sugar factories. These are 1. Chh. Rajaram Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kasba Bavda; 2. Bhogawati Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Parite and 3. Kumbhi-Kasari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd., Kuditre. At the time of this study the total membership strength of Sakhar Kamgar union was 2175.

'Sakhar Kamgar Union' was working as 'independent' union from 1951 to 1963. From 1963 to 1975, the union was affiliated to AITUC. But, because of ideological disputes, in 1975 the union decided to cancel its affiliation. Again it became 'independent' organization. At present 'Sakhar Kamgar union' is affiliated to 'Maharashtra State Sakhar Kamgar Mahasangha'. and 'Mahasangha' is not affiliated to any Central Union organization.

In general, financial condition of the union can be described as staisfactory.

The Managing Committee of the union includes President, 3 Vice-President (one each from three sugar factories in which the union operates) Secretary, Treasurer and six other members representing workers from the three sugar factories. Thus, the managing committee of the Sakhar Kamgar union includes six office bearers and six ordinary members. Of these, one is 'outsider' (President of the Union) and all other are insiders.

The constitution of the Sakhar Kamgar Union is very clear. It includes the objectives of the union, rules regarding the admission of ordinary and honorary members, the number and procedure to be followed for the selection of the office-bearers and members of the managing committee. The details regarding filling up the vacancy among the office-bearers or the members of managing committee and their removals etc. are also noted. The constitution also makes clear the duties of the office-bearers, funds and objects on which the funds can be expended etc.

The Sakhar Kamgar Union has played an important role in protecting and promoting mainly, the economic and job related interests of its members.

IN THE FOURTH CHAPTER, the data regarding socio-economic background and some aspects of union involvement of the leaders and members of Sakhar Kamgar Union are presented and analysed. This chapter also deals with working of the union, union-management relationship and the reasons for non-involvement of workers in the union.

In the present study the respondents treated as union leaders were the members of the Executive Committee of Sakhar Kamgar Union, which



looks after the union business. There were in all 12 members of this Executive Committee including the President, 3 Vice-presidents, the Secretary, Treasurer and 6 ordinary members. All these 12 respondents were interviewed as union leaders. Besides 2 informal leaders who were not office-bearers or the members of the Executive Committee of the Union were also interviewed because they were taking keen interest in the union activities and were influential persons. Out of these 14 leaders, 2 were 'outsiders' and 12 were 'insiders'. Thus, as union leaders 14 respondents were interviewed.

Looking at the personal background of the leaders, it has been observed in the study that, as elsewhere, only men have been attracted towards the union leadership. A large majority of the leaders were married. Hindus were numerically dominant like their counterparts in other parts of the country. Most of the leaders had education upto the 10th standard.

An enquiry into the occupational background of the leaders' families revealed that majority of the respondents' fathers' occupation salaried job. Majority of the leaders grand-fathers' occupation was farming. Most of the leaders reported family income of their families in the range of Rs.2000/- to 3000/-. Majority of the leaders claimed that their families belong to the middle class. Most of the leaders have come from rural areas.

Majority of the leaders have considerable experience in the field of trade unionism. More than half of the leaders were having leadership experience 11 or more years. No respondent receives salary for the trade union work.

Nearly half of the respondents had an opportunity to undergo training in union leadership under the workers' education scheme for the duration of three months. Being insiders, majority of the leaders were able to devote only 1 to 3 hours for the union work per day on an average.

What do members expect from the union leaders? The "leaders should try to protect the rights of the workers', 'leaders should always try to protect workers economic interests' and leaders should attend to and get redressed the workers grievances' these were the expectations of the workers from the leaders perceived by the respondents. Against this background of the workers expectations the leaders reported their functions as union leaders such as the redressal of workers grievances, attending meetings, trying to increase the membership strength of the union. Most of the leaders reported that they were satisfied with the members participation in union activities. In the opinion of the leaders the workers join the unions mainly because they want to protect their economic and job related interests. Protection of workers rights, protection of the economic interest of the workers, fighting against the injustice and creating class consciousness were among the objectives of the Sakhar Kamgar Union to which the leaders attach importance. The respondents believed that qualities such as honesty, oratory, intelligence, unselfish dedication, loyalty to the workers were essential qualities that a trade union leader should possess.

As noted earlier, the data from a sample of 45 workers were collected for the present study. Out of these, 37 workers were member of the Sakhar Kamgar Union.

It has been observed that all the union members included in the sample were men. Majority of the members were more than 35 years of age. Again all the members were married. Hindus were numerically dominant. The majority of the members had some education to their credit. 45.94 percent had education upto 7th standard and 45.94 percent had education upto 10th standard; only one was graduate and two were illiterates. Most (51.36 percent) of the members' average monthly family income reported was in the range of Rs.2500/- to 3000/-. The majority of the members (70.27 percent) were having rural, agricultural and joint family background.

The findings very clearly indicate that the level of workers' participation in the union was very low. It is very surprising that the majority of the members do not know about the leaders' names and positions held by them in the union, the method adopted for choosing the union leaders and the year in which the union came into existence. Similarly, the percentage of members who had attended all the meetings of the union was very low. However, it seems that members show interest in the union only when they face critical situation like strike.

There were 8 respondents in the sample who were not the members of the union. Most of them were reluctant to give any information. Only three of them stated that they were not interested in the union. Some of them claimed that even if they do not become the members of the union, they were in a position to get all the benefits that the other employees were getting due to the union's achievements.

The representatives of all the three sugar cooperatives are in the managing council of the union. As and when the problem arises in case of any worker, or group of workers in any of the factories, local union leaders looking after the day-to-day problems of workers within particular factory attend to the workers' grievances. Then they approach the management authorities and try to settle the things. In case the problem is not solved at the factory level, then these leaders discuss the problem with the union office-bearers and the members of the managing council in the meeting. Then after discussing the problem in detail they decide about the further line of action. In case of common problems relating to all the workers in all the three sugar factories, the decisions are taken in union's managing council. The union leaders told that they believe in peaceful ways of settlement of the disputes such as the negotiations with the managements. The leaders further clarified that the decisions are taken in a democratic way.

It was reported by the union leaders that the Sakhar Kamgar Union is recognized by the Sugar Cooperative Managements. The leaders of this union were being invited for the negotiations by the managements. The majority of the leaders and members described the relations between the union and the management as 'satisfactory'.

The study revealed that the leaders were more enthusiastic and serious about the union activities. As compared to the ordinary members, the leaders' involvement in the union was much better. It was also

observed that, the union was mainly controlled by the 'outsiders' leadership looking after the union business. There was a feeling of respect for these outsiders among the other members of managing council and the workers also. The insiders were also active and they were looking after the day-to-day grievances of the union members in their respective establishments. However, the degree of members' involvement in the union activities was low. Therefore, the union leaders should undertake the programmes which will ensure workers' interest and active participation in the union activities. undertaking 'some' welfare programmes for the benefit of the union members will be one such positive step to ensure better participation of the members in the union activities.