
CHAPTER - I

Research Design and Methodology

CHAPTER ONE / RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.

1.1 Statement of the Problem:

In the modern day commerce and industry, trade unions are deemed as an integral constituent in the proper development of an organization. The quantum of literature existing on the pros-and-cons of the trade unionism and its variations is enormous. Suffice it to say that the movement born in the wake of industrial revolution and promoted by a handful of Renaissant rebellious thinkers in Europe has left hardly a corner of the world untouched; and has made inroads into even such total-submission and discipline-oriented services as Armed Forces and Police. The clarion call of the trade unionism is "Workers of the World, Unite!" and its driving maxim is "United, we Stand! Divided, we Fall!" In principle, though, it is a movement born to satiate the motivational and personal needs of its followers. In between, it dons several mantles; that of intermediary, mediator, and buffer between the employer and the employee; and in a broader sense, as a trigger and catalyst for economic and social upliftment of its members by fighting for better wages, facilities, amenities and rights.

The Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC) is a State-level public transport undertaking and is not aloof from trade union movement. There are many public utility services like water supply, electricity, posts, telecommunication, health, education, transport, etc. But among these, road transport

service is a vitally important service from the viewpoint of the society. MSRTC is a State-level public undertaking and is mainly concerned with the passenger transport services. More than one lakh people are employed in this organization at various levels. These employees are members of one or the other of a dozen or so different trade unions functioning within the organization.

The trade unions in MSRTC have attempted to provide welfare facilities like medical assistance, housing, credit, free travel, etc., to their member-employees. Besides, these unions fight for providing service security together with salary commensurate with position and responsibility to its members. They, moreover, attempt to increase the efficiency of the workers and productivity of the employees.

After two decades of MSRTC's having come into existence, it is now essential to ascertain as to how efficiently the trade unions have been playing their role in wage-determination, productivity of the employees and in labour welfare. In this Dissertation, an attempt is being made to find out the role played by various trade unions in wage determination, in labour welfare activities and in increasing the efficiency and the productivity of the member-employees. Measures have also been suggested to improve the working of the Unions as per the requirements of the employees and the management.

1.2 Objectives of the Study:

Following have been framed as the objectives of

the present study:

1. To find out the actual number of trade unions in the MSRTC, Sangli Division, and to ascertain their basic aims and objectives;
2. To study the attitude of the workers towards their respective trade unions;
3. To find out the possibility of a single union in the MSRTC;
4. To study the relationship between the Union and the Management;
5. To study the role of trade unions in wage determination, labour welfare and productivity.

1.3 Methodology Adopted:

To achieve the objectives of the study, necessary data was collected through the following different sources:

A Primary Data:

Primary data was collected through personal interviews, informal discussions, observations and questionnaire.

The details of the primary data are as follows:

I. Personal Interviews and Informal Discussions:

Informal discussions and personal interviews were conducted with the employees, the union leaders, section heads and depot managers in the Sangli Division of MSRTC.

II. Observation:

Over and above the discussions and interviews, the researcher observed as to how the management persons

and union leaders were dealing with the employees' problems.

III. Questionnaire:

Three different Questionnaires were designed separately for employees, union leaders and management persons for collecting the essential data. For a clear-cut understanding of the questionnaire, these were designed in Marathi language.

B Secondary Data:

Secondary data was collected from the published materials like books, journals, periodicals, MSRTC's dairies, administration reports, etc.

1.4 Sample Size:

Interview and observation methods were determined as the best suited methods for collecting the primary data for analysis under this Dissertation. As it was neither practicable nor possible to interview each and every individual employee, it was decided to select and interview 5% of the employees by random sampling method. Membership scrolls of different unions revealed a collective strength of 4367, which figure, when checked against the statistics available from the Divisional Office was found to be somewhat exaggerated. Assuming that the exaggeration amounted to about 10%, it was held that the Union-member strength in Sangli Division was about 4,000; out of which, 200 employees (being 5%) were selected for personal interviewing.

In addition to this primary sample of 200 employees, all the 4 leaders of the recognized Unions in the Division and 11 senior management officers were also informally interviewed for collecting the background material and occasionally for cross-checking the veracity of certain averments made by the sample respondents and their Union leaders.

Thus, in all, 215 people (200 sample respondents + 4 Union leaders + 11 management personnel) have been the source of primary data for this study.

1.5 Scope of the Study:

The scope of the study covers such areas as functioning of the recognized trade unions in Sangli Division of MSRTC, their role in determining, guiding and shaping up of the Corporation's policies towards labour welfare and increasing the productivity of the member-employees; the first-hand glimpse into the intra- and inter-Union relationships as well as an assessment of the attitude held by the Unions and management towards each other as obtaining at the Divisional level; and above all, gauging of satisfaction or otherwise among the sample respondents about the role/s played by their respective representative unions in improving their socio-economic conditions.

1.6 Limitations of the Study:

The researcher is keenly aware that the following circumstances and factors have imposed certain limitations on the present study:

1. The term 'trade union' itself evokes two extremely opposing feelings within the employers/managers and the Unionists; and both tend to view it in different hues and tints. Vocalization of these feelings is usually tainted with such abstract concepts as hate, passion, trust and belief. The researcher, time and again, experienced that the verbal expressions of his interviewees occasionally bordered on the verge of psychic trauma, which the researcher was neither competent nor trained to analyse and interpret;
2. 'Exaggeration' is frequently the natural offshoot of the traumatizing factors stated in (1) above. The responses tendered by the sample, Union leaders and management personnel, though analysed factually later on in this Dissertation, thus suffer from an element of inadvertent or intentional falsification by the respondents. The conclusions arrived at, therefore, have to be considered against the backdrop of this limitation.
3. The study is limited to only one administrative division, out of total 27, of the MSRTC. Again, Sangli Division is a typically rural Division. The conclusions drawn, therefore, may not be representative of all the Divisions of the MSRTC, specifically of the Divisions operating in an urban setting, like Bombay, Pune and Nagpur.

1.7 Scheme of the Study:

The Dissertation has been arranged into Six Chapters. First Chapter deals with the framework aspects as statement of the problem, objectives, methodology, sample size, scope

and limitations. **Second Chapter** deals with the history in brief and the prevalent state of the trade union movement in the MSRTC. **Third Chapter** deals with the trade union movement specifically in Sangli divisions as also records the aims and objectives of the four recognized trade unions operating within the Division. These Unions are: (1) the Maharashtra S.T. Employees' Union (INTUC), (2) Maharashtra S.T. Kamgar Sanghathana, (3) Maharashtra S.T. Chalak-Wahak Sanghathana, and (4) Rajya Pariwahan Castribe Karmachari Sanghathana. The aims and objectives and the organizational hierarchy of these four Unions have also been studied comparatively in this Chapter. **Fourth Chapter** deals with the role of the trade unions in the MSRTC with regard to wage-determination, labour-welfare and productivity. **Fifth Chapter** deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through the questionnaires administered to the employees, Union leaders and the management personnel. **Sixth Chapter** records the conclusions drawn from the analysis and interpretation of the data performed in the preceding Chapter and also gives a few suggestions to the management and to the trade unions. The three questionnaires used for the purpose of primary data collection form the **Appendices** and a comparative **Bibliography** appears at the end of the Dissertation.