

CHAPTER-I

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Stament of the Study/Problem :

The title of the present study is -

"A Case Study of Trade Union Activity in Menon and Menon Private Ltd., Vikramnagar, Kolhapur."

Menon and Menon Pvt.Ltd. is a private sector engineering industrial unit. This unit was established in 1965 at Udyamnagar and shifted to Vikramnagar in 1969. It is a medium scale engineering concern with two departments i.e. machine shop and foundry. This company caters to requirements of some leading industrial groups in India, in the form of machine products and casting. Its annual sales volume of both the sections was around 7 to 8 crores 1987-88. This unit employed on the average 1000 workers in three shifts during last ten years. It has two trade unions namely- (1) Mechanical and Engineering Kamgar Union and (2) Mechanical Va Engineering Kamgar Sangh.

The present study is an attempt to study the various aspects of trade union activities of these two unions during last 15 years, with reference to determination of wages and other allowances, service security labour welfare, and relations with management etc.

Objectives of the Study :

The objectives of this study are given below :

- 1) To trace the history of the two trade unions under study.
- 2) To analyse the working and living conditions of the workers.
- 3) To find out the welfare facilities provided to workers by management and trade unions.
- 4) To examine the industrial disputes involving the trade unions under study.
- 5) To identify the nature and basic causes of the disputes.
- 6) To examine the implementation of the agreements between the union and management.
- 6) To examine the relationship between the union and management.
- 8) To examine the attitudes of workers towards their union and leadership and
- 9) To suggest measures to improve the working of trade unions and management.

Methodology :

In order to accomplish the above mentioned objectives, it was necessary to collect the required data from various sources. The primary and secondary data were collected for this purpose.

A) Primary Data -

The primary data were collected through following ways :

1. Questionnaire -

A detail structured questionnaire was prepared for the present study. Questionnaire is given in Appendix-I.

2. For the conduct of the sample survey we selected a sample of 80 workers from a total of 650 workers. Thus the size of the sample is 12%. Each of the selected worker was individually contacted and the questionnaire was administered. Similarly, the workers were interviewed with unstructured questions and the observations were recorded.

This sample was selected on simple random basis representing the employees of various designations, such as Fitter, Miller Helper, Core-maker, Turner, Grainder, Welder, Painter, Electrician and Inspector etc.

3) Discussions and Interviews -

Additional data was collected through discussions with the persons directly or indirectly related with trade unions and management. The researcher also had discussions with the founder members, outside leaders, local leaders and some members of the unions. In respect of management the researcher had discussions with the Managing Director, Labour Officer, Office Superintendent and Clerks of the Company. These responsible persons provided useful information and data for the study.

4) Secondary Data -

The secondary data was collected from official records of the company, as well as from the office of Labour Commissioner, Kolhapur, and Labour Tribunal, Kolhapur. Similarly, some information was collected from the Union records.

Regarding the theoretical background of trade union movement, role of trade unions and other theoretical concepts, secondary sources were made use of. For this purpose the libraries of - 1) Shivaji University, Kolhapur, 2) Raj. Chh. Shahu College, Kolhapur and 3) Chh. Shahu Central Institute of Business Education and Research, Kolhapur were used.

Scope and Limitations of the Study :

Menon and Menon Pvt.Ltd. Company has been employing around 1000 workers since last 10 years. There were various disputes between the company and workers during last 4-5 years. The company declared a lock-out for 17 months in 1986-87 due to these disputes. In 1987 the company retrenched about 350 workers out of 1000 workers.

The company has to keep excellent working relations with her customers. It is possible only if the workers of the company are happy and satisfied with the wages and other facilities provided to them by the company.

The productivity and efficiency of the workers depends upon the wages given to them as well as the protection they get from their Unions in certain circumstances. Moreover, workers may be happy if the company takes care of their welfare. The service security and retirement benefits

are also essential factors for motivating workers to attain higher levels of efficiency. Joint efforts by trade unions and company are essential in order to maintain high moral of the workers and for growth of the company.

There are some limiting factors for this research work. These limiting factors are - The Menon Group of Industries have four units, but the area of the study is only a unit i.e. Menon and Menon Pvt.Ltd., Vikramnagar, Kolhapur.

The founder members of both the unions are not only leaders of various unions in Kolhapur and Maharashtra but they are also politicians. Therefore, they could not give sufficient time for discussion with the researcher. Therefore, the researcher could not get satisfactory information from them about the history of both the unions and activities of their unions. The researcher could not also get sufficient information about welfare activities of the unions.