

TRADE UNION MOVEMENT IN INDIA

Summary of presentation

- What is trade union?
- Characteristics of trade union
- History of trade union
- Why do employees join union?
- Union tactics
- Theories of trade union
- Trade union movement
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- Role and function of trade union
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What is trade union?

1. According to Chambers's twentieth century dic. "Trade union is an organized association of workers of an industry for the protection of their common interests"
2. According to sec. 2(h) of Trade Unions Act 1926 "Trade union means any combination , whether temporary or permanent , formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workmen and employers , or between workmen and workmen , or between employers and employers , or for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business, and includes any federation of two or more trade unions.

An analysis of above definition reveals characteristics of trade union

- It is a combination of worker.
- Such combination could be permanent or temporary.
- It may include federation of two or more unions.
- It regulate relations among workmen , between workmen and employers or among employers themselves.

• History of trade union

The predominance of employer-employee relation is associated with rise of modern industry and large production units .The great transformation which ushered in the industrial society began in Great Britain in the latter half of the 18th century. During the 19th century , the movement spread to a dozen of the other countries . Accelerated industrial development began in around 1830 in France, Belgium and United States, around 1850 in Germany, around 1870 in Sweden, and Japan and around 1890 in Canada and Russia.

Why do Employees join Union ?

Earlier, Workers use to join Unions to protect themselves against:

- Exploitation by the management
- Hire and Fire policy
- Inhuman working conditions.
- Low wage payment and
- Long hours of works



- In present situation there are three reason account for unionization in any plant

- 1) Dissatisfaction
- 2) Lack of power
- 3) Union instrumentality

UNION TACTICS

- Strike
- Invoking political patronage
- blackmailing

Theories of Trade Union

- Over the years in the world various theories have been propounded to justify and explain activities of the trade union
- Robert hoxie's theory
- Political revolutionary theory of trade unionism
- Democratic-socialist trade unionism of webbs
- Gandhian trade unionism

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- Robert hoxie's theory :-He classified trade unions in to various categories.
 1. Business unionism
 2. Friendly or up lift unionism
 3. Revolutionary unionism
 4. Predatory unionism
 5. Dependent unionism

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- Political revolutionary theory of trade unionism
 - Marx advocated (in Communist Manifesto) radical trade unionism acting as an instrument of communist revolution .To Marx trade union where the natural consequence of capitalism with it growing competition among bourgeoisie and resultant commercial crises .

Democratic-socialist trade unionism of webbs

In contrast to the Marxian view, Sindney and Beatrice webbs envisaged workers' organization to under take the task of reconstructing the society by eliminating the services of the capitalist profit makers through democratic and legislative means.

- Gandhian trade unionism
- Gandhiji sought greater equality and socialism through persuasion not coercion. He propounded the concept of TRUSTEESHIP, the abdication of wealth by the rich . He pleaded for a polity of peaceful coexistence based on mutual understanding and enlightened cooperation in the field industries .He asked the workers to be guided by truth, non-violence and social welfare.

Trade Union Movement in India

- The entire period of the growth of trade unionism up till now is conveniently divided into three periods :
- First period 1875-1918
- Second period 1918-1947
- Third period 1947 till date

The first period 1875-1918

- The first period of trade unions in India started from 1875 and lasted up to first world war. During the period the trade union movement was essentially humanitarian. Some friendly societies were formed to look in to the welfare of workers. These unions were sporadic in nature. The first Indian trade union, Bombay Mill Hands Association was formed in 1890, with an immediate aim of agitation for a revision of first Indian Factories Act 1881.

- The Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants of India & Burma registered under the Indian Companies Act of 1882 was created in 1897.
- The Printers Union , Calcutta and Bombay postal union were formed in 1905 and 1907 respectively.
- The kamgar hit vardhak shbha was setup in 1909.
- Active leaders in this period were S.S.Bengali and N.M.Lokhande who fought for workers.
- Panikkar characterizes this period as “the social welfare period of our early trade union movement”.

Second period 1918-1947

- This period actually marked the beginning and growth of organized and continuous trade unions.
- Madras became the nucleolus of organized the labour activity .
- B.P.Vadiya founded the Madras Labour Union 1919.
- There was significant spread of trade unionism in 1920.
- Trade unions like Ahemdabad textile workers union , N.W Railway employees union , indian colliery employees union the jamshedpur labour association ,the bombay port trust employees union, and the E.B. Railway Indian employees association were formed .
- By 1924 there were 1671 trade union in India.
- The all India trade union congress was formed in 1920.
- The period between 1924 and 1935 is characterized as the period of left -wing trade unionism .

TRADE UNION ACT 1926

- GENESIS OF THE ACT
- Buckingham mill case of 1920
- In march 1921 SRI N.M. JOSHI then Gen. sec. of AITUC successfully moved resolution in the central legislative assembly .
- On a resolution being passed by central legislative assembly in march 1924 the Indian trade union was introduced in the central legislative assembly

- The act received its assent on 25th march 1926 .
- It came into force on 1st June 1927. As “the Indian trade unions act 1926 (16 of 1926). By sec.3 of the Indian Trade Unions (Amendment) Act 1964 the word “Indian” has been omitted and now it stands as The Trade Unions Act, 1926.
- To make regulation for the purpose of carrying into effect the provisions of this act the then government passed “The Central Trade Union Regulations, 1938”.

Features of the act 1926

- Definition(S.2)
- Registration of unions (S.3 to 12)
- Duties and liabilities of registered unions (S. 13 to 16).
- Rights and liabilities of registered unions (S.17 to 21).
- Amalgamation and dissolution of unions (S24 to 27).
- Submission of returns(S. 28).
- Penalties and fines (S.31 to 33).
- Power to make regulations (S.29 to 30)

Two splits

- In 1929 in the Nagpur session a split took place in the AITUC. The moderate section under the leadership of N.M.JOSHI, V.V.GIRI, B. SHIVARAO setup a separate organization named national trade union federation.
- In the 1930 session of the congress the extreme left-wing headed by S.K. DESHPANDE, and B.T. RANADIVE formed all India red trade union congress

Growth of trade union after independence

- In the period 1918-47 the ideology inspiring trade union was nationalistic. But after independence, trade union developed into an effective instrument for protecting and safeguarding the interest of the labourers.
- Factors affecting the progress of trade unionism are as follows: -
 - 1- constant inflow of international influence.
 - 2-the pressure of trade union politics
 - 3-government's industrial policy
 - 4-rapid industrial growth

The Constitution Of India

The inauguration of the new constitution gave a new orientation to the trade union movement.

Insertion of Art. 19 (c) one of the Fundamental Rights which reads as, All citizens shall have the right “***to form association or unions***”.

On which restriction can be imposed under Art. 19 (4) in the interest of *sovereignty and integrity of India or public order or morality* .



Further the passing of industrial works committee , formation of development councils under the Industries (Development & regulation) Act 1947, enhanced the prestige of trade union and thereby boosted up its movement.

Five years plans also had several provision for the trade union particularly second, third and fourth . Fourth plan stressed that the trade union is to play an important role to realize the goals of national development.

- There are four important central trade union org. namely AITUC, INTUC, Hind Mazdoor Sabha (HMS), United Trade Union Congress (UTUC).

As of today , there are more than 50,000 registered unions and most of them are affiliated to one are the other central trade unions.

Role and functions of trade unions

- To promote and protect the interest of its members.

The Labour Commission in his report in 1966 opined that unions should pay attention to the basic needs of its members which are:-

- 1-To secure for workers faire wages
- 2-To safeguard security of tenure
- 3-To enlarge opportunities for promotion and training
- 4-To improve working and living conditions
- 5-To provide for educational cultural recreational facilities
- 6-To cooperate in and facilitate technological advanced by broadening the understanding of workers on its underlying issues
- 7-To promote individual and collective welfare
- 8-To cooperate in improving production and productivity

Shortcomings

1. Existence of large number of trade unions with small membership
2. Limited area
3. Political rivalry
4. Financial weakness
5. Outside leadership

Measure to strengthen trade unions

1. There should be no distinction between private sec. and public sec.
2. Code of conduct
3. United front of trade unions should be formed
4. Encouragement should be given to grow proper leadership amongst the worker
5. No union office bearer will concurrently hold office in a political party
6. Penalty for victimization of worker by the trade union employees

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THANK YOU