CHAPTER IX

CONCLUSION AND POLICY IMPLICATIONS

9.1 Introduction
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References
Emergence of a particular system and the realisation of its ultimate ends depends upon the social environments economic development, the political system prevalent in the society, the values, beliefs and convictions held by the people and above all, the viability and potentiality of legal order to meet the new demands that are geared up by the socio-economic -political variables. The same is true to the trade union system in any society. The trade union system in a society has its own peculiar environment that is based on socio-economic, political and legal conditions in that society - an environment within which various components of the industrial society interacts in order to realise peace and harmony and common relations through combined efforts. Industrial co-operation, peace and harmony are primarily associated with productivity, problem of concern to all countries. Co-operation between management and workers is essential for existence and growth of industries.

The purpose for which trade union came into existence was protecting workers from exploitation by management. Gradually it took up the roles of securing better working conditions for them, a living wage and a matching social status. How far the trade unions have succeeded in reaching this goal? What stood in their way? What ills are ailing the trade unions? How far they are curable? How the ideals cherished and propagated by Gandhiji who spent the major part of his life and time for the real upliftment of the working class by
organising, educating and enlightening them till the moment of his supreme sacrifice, can be utilised to rejuvenate the trade union movement after purging the arena of the accumulated evils and wastes? Answers to or opinions on these and several other questions directly or indirectly were attempted in this study. Following are the findings of the study.

9.2 Findings

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. Size and membership

The absence of strict and stringent provisions in the statutes makes measurement of degree of unionisation and size of union difficult. Even registered trade unions indulge in manipulations and malpractice in the face of inter union rivalry leading to absurd results regarding size and membership of unions.

2. Multiplicity of unions

The linkage between politics and trade unions has gradually led to divisions in unions following divisions in political parties. The resulting fragmentation and multiplicity of union has washed away the efficacy of the trade unions and resulted in erosion in bargaining power of the unions.
united strength of the trade union and the will to fight with a social vision seem to have disappeared.

3. Politicisation of unions

Today most of the trade unions are controlled by the political parties to which the union is affiliated. Every development in the party will have its repercussions in the trade unions also. The political allegiance of the management also may have influence on trade unions.

4. Motivation for joining unions

Though the original motivation for joining a trade union was making available the collective strength of unity for securing better living conditions and protection from exploitation by management, this is now being used for malpractice and malafide actions at least by some of the workers.

5. Leadership

The purpose of a trade union should be to bring welfare for the workers without hampering the progress of the industry. But most of the trade unions today have different and divergent motives. This has played havoc with the trade union movement as a whole. This result is prominently evident in the entire political scene. Selfless and dedicated leaders who can work with a spirit of universal brotherhood for welfare of all is the need of the hour. It is
neither the political affiliation nor the religious belief or sectarian involvement that decides the effectiveness of a leader. It is genuine qualities of leadership like sincerity of purpose, integrity, respect for the basic goodness of man and such other human qualities that contributes in the making of a good leader. It is quite immaterial whether he comes from within the industry or from outside though basic work experience at all levels will prove advantageous to know well the cause for which he leads the fight.

6. Loss of personal touch in human relations and trade unions

With increase in size of industry and adoption of modern methods in manufacturing process the number of people working under the same roof increased considerably. This resulted in a loss of personal touch in the relation between management and workers leading to a need for intermediaries in order to maintain good relations. The resulting missing link in the chain of contact and relationship started appearing even in large trade unions. The organisational set up of these large unions have started lacking in personal touch leading to dissatisfaction in the individual requirement of human elements.

7. Absenteeism

The planned development and growth of any industry is toppled by the absenteeism of working class. Being an impediment in the path of progress the
causes for it have to be studied and analysed. From the reasons forthcoming in the study it can be seen that this is by and large a human relations problem and the solutions have to be found out from that perspective.

8. Wage level satisfaction

Now there is a machinery in most industries for periodic systematic revision in wages linked to price index and inflationary pressure. It is found that by and large employees are satisfied about the wage increase secured through collective bargaining. Since increase in wages had been a major demand of workers since inception of unions the progress achieved in this area through years has been significant and satisfactory. The priority has now shifted to other welfare measures.

9. Trade union goals

Though some minor changes in the priorities according to social and environmental changes have been observed, by and large, the goals of the trade unions have not undergone any remarkable change. Securing labour representation in the Legislative Assembly as a goal indicates the type of new goals emerging.
10. The relevance of Gandhian ideology

Relevance of Gandhian ideologies as a cure for present day trade union problems is established and affirmed by workers, trade union leaders and employers. Gandhian principles are internationally acclaimed today and have gained wide acceptance. His ideals based on the principles of truth and non-violence which are as old 'as the hills' are as relevant today as were yesterday and will be tomorrow. The philosophy of sarvodaya as advocated by him and the concept of trusteeship as developed by Gandhiji are the lasting solutions to the perennial problems affecting the industry and afflicting the social harmony in our state.

9.3 Suggestions

1. The government should formulate a code of conduct for trade unions and the same should be enforced strictly whereby influence of politics can be overcome.

2. Management should adopt effective measures to control absenteeism and trade unions should allow the management a free hand in enforcing those measures.
3. Workers themselves should realise the moral and ethical commitments regarding their work and their behaviour by realising the importance of Gandhian principles, i.e. self-realisation.

4. A 'Training Academy' should be started to impart training to employers and trade union leaders to improve employer-employee relations.

9.4 Gandhiji's Answer to the Problem

Gandhiji had studied this question and has shown the way out. He wanted "Mazdoor Sevaks" and not labour leaders for the movement. He realised that labour in India was very backward and that employer's attitude too towards labour was equally antiquated. He, therefore, felt that external assistance was necessary to organise and run trade unions for workers on healthy lines. His conception of a labour-worker was, therefore, different. He advised those who came forward to do this work to come in a spirit of service. He wanted every labour-worker to first work in the industry as a worker himself so that he may know first hand the worker's problems in the worker's own way. Gandhiji also wanted the labour-workers to know the other man's point of view and so insisted on their studying the management aspect of the industry, including the economics of the industry. He wanted them to get trained in the art of negotiation and representation, and lastly to have firm faith in "truth and non-violence" and to
practise them in the trade union field. Of course, patriotism and duty to the nation were never to be lost sight of.

Gandhiji wanted every union in the country to be fashioned after his illustrious Ahmedbad model. People must have the freedom, courage and wisdom to choose the good and reject the bad. They should not be misled by the old slogan of "outsider's and insiders".

Gandhian thought and approach seem to be more rational and practical. Gandhiji also admits there are conflicts between classes. But he does not say, that because there is conflict between classes, abolish the classes. He says, if there is conflict, abolish the conflict. Gandhiji wants cooperation between the classes not merely for the benefit of the classes so cooperating, but he wants such cooperation for the benefit of the community as a whole. According to Gandhiji, the real employers are the people. They are the employer of all employers, and if they go on strike, the so-called employer also becomes unemployed along with those whom he was boasting 'he was employing. Therefore, Gandhiji advised both employers and employees to consider themselves as "co-servants" of the people. He wanted both labour and capital to consider themselves as joint trustees into whose joint hands has been entrusted the welfare of the people. Their co-operation should, therefore aim at not merely bettering their own
respective interests at the lost community but also in ensuring better service to the community which is the real master.

**Means too are important**

Gandhiji was the latest of the greatest leaders of the world who sought to improve human relations. He insisted that it is not merely enough if the objectives are high and noble ones, but the means adopted for the realization of those objectives must also be pure and free from blemish. It is, therefore, obvious that the means we adopt to serve “man” must not be devoid of the human factor.

A socialist society is built up not solely on monetary incentives, but on ideas of service to society and the willingness on the part of the latter to recognize such service. It is necessary in this context that the worker should be made to feel that in his own way he is helping to build progressive state. The creation of industrial democracy, therefore, is the pre-requisite for the establishment of a socialist society. Nothing but hatred, anger and destruction can result out of conflict. But out of cooperation can materialize all the positive things that sustain life and make life worth living. Such cooperation may be voluntary out of understanding or forced and wrested. Wherever such cooperation is not spontaneous, arising out of a sincere appreciation of each other’s rights and obligations, both to themselves and to the people, the pace of productivity is bound to be the poorest. Where, on the other hand, such
cooperation is spontaneous based on sincere conviction, productivity would
easily go up to the optimum, without anybody having to drive them to do it.

Labour will have to reject the theory of “eternal conflict” with
management. It must concede the legitimate rights of the employer. The
conflicts, if at all, can never be a conflict of interest; for the prosperity of the
concern leading in turn to the prosperity of the employer and the employees, is a
common interest. They, therefore, both work for a common objective.

Employers must realise that a worker is a human being and must start
dealing with him on that footing. They must understand that labour problem is
essentially a human problem.

Employers must realise that a good trade union is even more valuable an
asset to the industry than a plant, machinery and building. Therefore, it is as
much the duty of managements to make the atmosphere conducive for the growth
of healthy trade union in the plant as the maintenance of the plant itself. This
cannot be achieved by granting out of the way favours to either the workers or
their organisations or their leaders. This can be achieved only by the management
adopting a reasonable and predictable attitude in all matters connected with
labour by making it possible for the workers to believe in the management’s
bona fides and by management readily sharing with the workers all information
connected with the working of the plant and not forcing a fight to delay the
justice that cannot be denied. Managements should learn to avoid too legalistic an approach in their dealings with their workers, and should always be guided by the requirements of a human approach, giving broad and prompt justice.

Managements should give up the old idea of "master-and-servant" relationship between themselves and their workers. The entire personnel, i.e., management and workman, should function as one team.

Professor Arunachalam described the lack of understanding of Gandhi by ordinary Indians in this way:

"Gandhi is not well understood by ordinary Indians. They will worship Gandhi; every Indian will worship Gandhi, but there is not a clear understanding. Gandhi was considered to be a very good man. They say it was possible for Gandhi but for us we aren't able to do it; I must beget children, I must make money."

But Gandhism after Gandhi is a serious intellectual response to the problems posed by the deepening of crisis of contemporary world. To present the totality of Gandhi's holistic thought and programme of action and to see its relevance in the 21st century a great transformation of human conscience is essential.
Permanent, practical solutions to many of the above problems are not easy to find. Legislations and enforcement through government machinery have been found far from effective in delivering the goods. Gandhiji had the foresight and wisdom to understand most of the above problems at the infancy of the Indian industry and the dimensions it is likely to reach in the days to pass. That is why he laid stress on the concept of trusteeship and the philosophy of sarovadaya. The concept of trusteeship flows from the concept of Aparigraha or Ahimsa.

The ancient Indian thinkers had found a way of attitudinating each individual to pursue the path of righteous conduct by linking it to his natural desire for a happy life. For them “Dharma” was a term with comprehensive connotations. The Mahabharatham has Bhishma referring to it as that which helps the upliftment of living beings as that which sustains. It is regarded as that which constitutes the foundation of all affairs in the world; as that which conduces to the highest good. The Parashara Smriti has put it as that which sustains and ensures progress and welfare of all in this world. Gandhiji was breathing in and out from the principles of Dharma during his early years and he read extensively from all religious books the basic common principles of which he imbibed. His adoption and propagation of the principles of sarvodaya is an outcome of the above.
Gandhiji's thought is comprehensive. It is because of his multidimensional thought that the people around the world have remained engaged in exploring, explaining and evaluating the relevance of Gandhian thought. But, the more we explore Gandhism, the more we find ignorant and thus get involved in knowing about Gandhian thought and its relevance.

What Gandhiji advocated is a total non-violent revolution in the dynamics of which trusteeship replaces violent class struggles. Using it as an instrument in the hands of the people willing to reconstruct their life and economy, the whole process of non-violent transformation can, be brought about with the state’s legal sanction and protection, wherever necessary.

"Gandhiji believed that aparigraha or the abdication of acquisitiveness would facilitate and promote equal distribution. Equal distribution was his ideal. But since absolute equality will be unattainable, and even injurious in some cases, he would work for the equitable distribution of wealth."

The crucial values which Gandhi advocated, preached, practised and insisted for realisation into practice by the human being are the following: They are truth, Non-Violence, kindness, Charity, repentance, self purification suffering, altruism, tolerance, sacrifice, benevolence, fearlessness, equality, non possession, poverty, humility, generosity, freedom, honesty and simplicity.
Gandhiji’s philosophy offers us practical way to peaceful social revolution to improve the quality of life. In place of social tensions, conflict and tyrannies, it opens the way for freedom, mutual good will and accord, making it possible for unprecedented output of free collective initiative and endeavour.

As Gandhiji’s once said, “Peace is unattainable by part performance of conditions, even as a chemical combination is impossible without complete fulfilment of the conditions of attainment thereof.” Gandhi attached importance to education of workers so that they might know their rights and obligations for organising workers on right lines. Trade union leaders should themselves be suitably trained.

It is evident that in the midst of his varied and more important activities Gandhi could devote his time and energy to the cause of industrial labour. His work as a labour leader was confined mostly to the textile labour of Ahmedabad. But his concepts are of general validity. The success of Gandhian concepts depends much on the human element, and it is for this reason that he appealed always for maintenance of standards of behaviour and cultivation of a spirit of compromise without recourse to extreme steps as far as possible. The influence of Gandhian concepts on the Indian labour policy is profound. But ultimately it is the employers and workers who have to make a fruitful use of these devices and benefit by them. This is an important factor.
9.4 Policy Implications and Conclusion

Proper legislation and strict enforcement of law especially with regard to membership and registration/recognition of trade union is a necessity. Though de-linking politics from trade unions may not sound a practical proposition under the present circumstances methods have to be worked out to limit the number of unions to the minimum (preferably 2) either by legislation or by resorting to educational/counselling methods. Then only, a trade union will have the 'united strength' to stand. Once a limiting in the number of trade union is enforced, influence of political parties on them can be restricted as only major political parties will have hold on the big union which by itself will have a say on its policy matters. Strict care and caution should be exercised to ensure that politicians do not meddle in the unity and integrity of the trade unions. Only committed and dedicated individuals trained in human relations and labour welfare matters should be allowed to lead the trade unions. The management and some governmental agency should help the trade union leaders in disciplining the workers to come to terms with reality and work in the true spirit of trade unionism without indulging in malpractices. He should be taught that work is worship for him and staying away from work will no way contribute to his or his tribe's prosperity or progress.
Though the wage levels in Kerala are favourable compared to those in other states of India, in the emerging context of privatisation, liberalisation, globalisation etc, there is at present a trend to arrest the continuous wage increase. We can only hope that when the fruits of modernisation become fully and effectively available to our industry the above tendency will wane out.

The purpose of all the activities is to serve 'man'. The purpose is to make man happy. 'Man' is, therefore, the centre of our objective and planning, and all our equipments and efforts are only the means to serve him. If, in the process of serving man, we do things, consciously.

The study has proved beyond doubt that the working class in Kerala is not addicted to any political ideology and they are always amenable to change, though a few of them might have developed some kind of affinity towards some leaders. The present arrangement is a marriage of convenience and the majority of workers have expressed a view that a leadership from outside politics would be more beneficial for the working class. The management also have affirmed their feeling that given proper guidance, moral support and economic independence, working class will follow only right path. They are always found to keep an open mind with regard to the relations with working class. The finding that no major ailment affecting the soul of the industry is affecting trade unions is the most encouraging contribution of this study.
Collective wisdom of the intelligentsia and the political will of the authority should together crystallise, take concrete shape and find expression in any ongoing steps to solve the industrial-cum-trade union problems. The corners, curves and edges have to be cemented by Gandhian ideology. This is the only hope, both for industry and for trade unions, in the march towards progress, according to the present study. Capital and labour will then co-exist peacefully as partners in progress.

Development and growth is necessary for providing wage and employment for the worker. Development takes place in the midst of peace which should be secured by employers and workers as a matter of priority avoiding strikes and lockouts. When capital and labour adopt the Gandhian policy of love (avoidance of hatred) non-violence, patience, tact, discussion and negotiation, factors like strikes, lockouts, loss of production and wage disputes will automatically disappear.
References

1. Govt. of India, Planning Commission, Second Five Year Plan, New Delhi, 1956, p.572.


4. Ibid p.4.

5. Ibid.


7. *Young India*, March 1922.
