CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS
CONCLUSIONS

The present study gains its significance due to its pioneering effort to explore an otherwise neglected, nevertheless important component of industrial environment: the organization analysis of trade unions. Inspite of its applied significance, the structural and functional analysis of trade unions represents a yawning gap in the literature on industrial relations which represents an important area of inquiry in social work research. As mentioned under the statement of problem, and as in the case of any organization or movement, the internal structure and functioning of unions determine to a great extent the growth, effectiveness and responsiveness of trade unionism. Just as labour problems, labour welfare, industrial relations, worker commitment and human relations, trade unionism is one of the most important concern of social work research. But such an important institution in the history of mankind is still without an integrated theory or proper analysis so far as its functioning is concerned. It is normally believed that the emphasis upon the problems of management in directing the complex industrial system has obscured the role of trade union in the organization of industry and scientifically significant questions relating to union as a complex organization in itself. Still others think that unions seem to consider themselves as private organizations whose internal affairs need to be cloaked in secrecy just as their dealings with the managements. But it needs to be noted that the organizational characteristics of unions and their suspicion of outsiders make their study difficult but however, does not render it less essential to the discipline of social work.

Thus, in the light of the foregoing discussion, the present empirical inquiry, the task of which is to ascertain the realities pertaining to the structure and functioning of unions from an organizational perspective, gains significance. And as
such, the findings of the present study discussed below and suggestions proposed based on them could be considered as important contributions to the empirical understanding of trade union organizations and improving their organizational effectiveness.

This concluding chapter focuses mainly on the findings pertaining to structure and functioning of union organizations on the one hand and indices and determinants of democratic and oligarchic tendencies in union administration on the other. Based on these findings and in view of the significance of union democracy discussed in the statement of problem, an attempt is made to propose a few suggestions that could enable unions to develop a more effective internal structure and function as more effective organizations in terms of realization of members' needs and aspirations. This could render them effective and meaningful actors in the system of industrial relations and bring about much desired industrial democracy. These suggestions, therefore, are aimed at strengthening unionism in general.

Though not very significant from the point of view of the objectives of the inquiry, conclusions regarding other aspects of unionism are presented to provide a necessary backdrop in the foreground of which the main conclusions and suggestions could appear more meaningful. The preliminary investigation reveals that, unionism, in general, is dominated by the industrial unions which constitute more than two-thirds (68.42 per cent) of the total registered unions whereas, the white-collar unionism is the least familiar kind. We also find proliferation of small unions constituting nearly one half (43.74 per cent) of the total unions. This is in contrast to the proportion of large unions (27.13 per cent) which stands at about one fourth of the total. Further, due to the short
history of unionism, over three-fourths (76.92 per cent) of the
unions are those established after 1975. This also indicates a
phenomenal increase in the union building activity in the recent
past. The data on the recognition status of the unions seems to
indicate that, unionism has come to be accepted as an integral
part of industrialism with as many as two-thirds (63 per cent)
of the unions being recognized by their respective managements.
Another conspicuous trend, that is revealed by the survey, is
toward plant unionism in which the plant becomes the basis for
union organization. But on the other hand, coming to affiliation
status, we find only 25 per cent of the unions being
independent and the rest are affiliated to one or the other
federation. This could mean that we do not find solidarity
among Indian unions beyond plant in terms occupations whereas
solidarity is manifested in their being federated to national
federating bodies. Thus we can state that occupational identity
may not serve as source of working-class solidarity, which is
substituted by identification with a political ideology
represented by union federations. We do not find nationwide
organizations representing workers belonging to a particular
trade or occupation as found in the west like nationwide
organizations of steel workers, automobile workers, mining
workers, textile workers, transport workers and so forth. But
nationwide organizations are found in terms of affiliation to
federating bodies. In short, we can state, that it is the
political ideology represented by a federation that serves as a
cement fostering unity and solidarity among working-class more
than the occupational fraternity and identity. Since affiliation
lines serve as sources of identity, the unionism is found highly
politicized. Nearly 85 per cent of the unions have definite
political inclinations and about 83 per cent of the unions
exhibit high to moderate political involvement. May be as a
result of this, about 83 per cent of the unions have outsiders
in leadership positions. Though extent of outside leadership is lower than statutory limit in as many as 90 per cent of the unions, it appears to be all pervasive as most of the unions are found with at least a few outside leaders. The findings also state that, wherever they are found, outside leaders occupy functionally prominent positions in the unions. In terms of unionism, business unionism represents single largest category among the unions. The climate of industrial relations, on the whole, appears to be cordial as 87 per cent of the unions have favourable attitudes toward their respective managements and 83 per cent of the unions are less strikeprone. As a result of this, it may be stated further that, nearly 60 per cent of the unions prefer voluntary method like collective bargaining to resolve their disputes with the managements rather than taking recourse to radical methods like direct action or strike.

Thus the unionism that is investigated is dominated by relatively young, small plant unions with definite affiliation patterns, political leanings and outside leaders, pursuing instrumental goals in cordial climate of industrial relations.

Coming to the structure of trade unions, the study reveals that larger unions tend to have a more well defined division of labour and functional specialization. A statistically significant positive relation is found between the size of the union and the degree of bureaucratization. Th unions generally have a President, who is more often than not a titular head with general Secretary being the most powerful functionary. The analysis also reveals that there is a positive relationship not only between the status of official and the quantum of work turned out but also between the rank of the official and the functional significance of the task performed and the amount of authority required to carryout the task. Based on the findings
of the present study pertaining to the day to day functioning of the unions it could be concluded that though decision making and policy formulation may be quite democratic but once the decisions are taken, it is the bureaucratic machinery that takes over the task of implementing the decisions. Thus, the exercise of considerable amount of power by the general secretaries may not necessarily be taken as an index of oligarchy in the trade unions. The study also reveals that there is considerable discrepancy between the assumed power or power formally vested in the office and the actual power or the power actually exercised by the incumbents of union offices. Thus the actual exercise of authority does not strictly follow the rule book. With regard to the union executive as a structural component it could be concluded that non-partisan independent unions with inside leaders tend to have a more representative executive and hence more democratic than their respective counterparts. Even adherence to constitution seems to be associated negatively with the extent of outside leadership and political involvement.

Union leadership is another important variable studied for its implications for the union structure. And, leadership responsiveness, as discussed in the last chapter, is considered as an important index of union democracy. Based on the findings it may be concluded that independent, non-partisan plant unions have on an average the most responsive leadership. Thus, the ill effects of outside leadership and politicization so commonly lamented, but many a time dismissed as lacking in empirical proof, could be taken as true. Politicization and outside leadership represent a right kind of a mix that renders leadership less responsive and more oligarchic. This finding on leadership is further significant as it is found determining the goals and strategies of unions as actors in the system of
industrial relations. Further, leadership turnover and democratic elections tend to make leadership more responsive. In terms of unionism, the leadership among business unionism is found more responsive than among the ideological unionism.

With respect to union elections, it could be concluded that the presence of outside leaders and political affiliation tend to make them less democratic. Further, centralization as an organizational feature of unions varies with degree of political involvement, extent of functional importance of outside leaders, and inter-union rivalry.

One of the significant findings pertaining to the organizational structure of unions is that the much discussed antagonism between democracy and bureaucracy in unions is rather unwarranted or unfounded. The expression, of democracy versus bureaucracy that we often come across in the literature on union organizations needs to be taken with caution in the light of the findings of the present study. Contrary to this popular notion the data suggest that bureaucratization leads to closer adherence to the rule book of the unions, breeds greater accountability among the leaders, streamlines the decision making process to render it less arbitrary, leads to taking strike ballot more consistently, in short it renders union administration formally more democratic. The findings seem to indicate that democracy and bureaucracy need not be treated as mutually exclusive and antagonistic categories. On the contrary, bureaucratization seems to be inducing democratic tendencies. Further, the data suggest that unions with political affiliations and outside leadership tend to function less democratically than the non-partisan unions with no outsiders.

As a contextual variable, union milieu is found to be having significant implications for the functioning of union
organizations. Apart from fostering inter-union rivalry and minimizing union solidarity, politicization, dominance of outside leadership and affiliation to federation tend to have negative implications for the democratic atmosphere in the union as well as in the plant, and might affect the climate of industrial relations adversely.

Coming to the actual functioning of the unions, the extent of membership participation, areas and mode of participation and practices such as decision by majority opinion, holding referendum and strike ballot are studied to depict the unions in action. These aspects of union functioning are treated as significant indicators of democratic and oligarchic tendencies in the union administration. As in the case of other structural features of union organizations, these functional dimensions of union organization are found significantly associated with the affiliation status, extent of outside leadership, political involvement and the type of unionism practiced. If these functional aspects are taken as indices of union democracy then, it may be concluded on the bases of the findings of the present study that, non-partisan independent unions pursuing business unionism, with no outside leaders function more democratically than unions with definite political affiliations, affiliated to left-wing federations, pursuing ideological unionism and led by the outside leaders. However, the practice of holding referendum seems to deviate from the trends observed in case of other patterns of union functioning. The data suggest that, it is the white-collar unions with communist party affiliation that represent the unions holding referendum more consistently on important issues. In view of the findings pertaining to other aspects of functioning of these unions it could be stated that the absence of one type of democratic machinery is compensated by the presence of another machinery to keep a minimum vent
for the expression of democratic urges. Further on an average, the membership participation is high in about 30 per cent of unions with about 38 per cent of the unions having membership participation in most areas of union administration. The dominant mode of participation is through representatives whereas, in unions affiliated to left-wing federations participation is mostly direct. In nearly one half of the unions the decisions are influenced by the majority opinion and as such in about same proportion of the unions the influence of membership on decision making process could be considered as considerable. It may, further, be concluded that referendum is the least frequently employed method of ascertaining membership opinion (13 per cent) even as compared to the practice of taking strike ballot (28 per cent).

The findings of the present study seem to reveal that, though most of the unions are formally structured in a democratic manner, that is, though the union constitutions provide democratic checks and balances for running the union organizations, there is considerable deviance from these formal checks in the actual functioning of the union. A little over one-fourth (29.49 per cent) of the unions have active membership participation. And this participation varies significantly with size, that is, medium size unions elicit more active participation of the membership. Likewise independent unions with no political affiliation, and no outside leaders are characterized by active membership participation. Further, it is the business unionism, rather than ideological, which elicits greater membership participation.

Unions in which the decisions are taken by majority opinion are deemed to represent those that value democratic principles. Though the proportion of unions seeking majority opinion is less than half of the entire sample, it is as high as
three-fourths among service unions. It is one hundred percent among unions affiliated to HMs, whereas nil among unions affiliated to CITU. In all, the influence of membership is greater in service unions that are independent with no outside leaders. With regard to referendum, the study reveals that, large unions, among white-collar employees that are not affiliated to any federation and have no political affiliations and outside leaders, pursuing instrumental goals are more prone to hold referendum on important issues.

Strike ballot has been studied as another important index of democratic functioning of unions due to its role in deciding the most important action of unions. Since strike significantly affects the working and non-working lives of the workers involved, approval of this decision by the majority of the members has rightly been considered as a democratic practice and could speak significantly about functioning of the unions. Based on the findings it could be stated that only a few (28.85 per cent) unions resort to strike ballot invariably and as such, in most of the unions, the leadership arbitrarily decides whether or not the union should go on strike. It is significant to note that, recognition of union by the management increases the probability of unions resorting to strike ballot. Further, due to the absence of interference from the outside agencies, and the resultant absence of political and ideological considerations, independent unions with no political affiliation, lead by inside leaders tend to be those that resort to strike ballot most consistently. Consistent with their ideology and strategies of unionism, unions affiliated to left-wing federations and owing allegiance to leftist political parties resort to strike ballot least consistently. Findings also suggest that unions that pursue instrumental goals tend to seek membership approval to go on strike more consistently that the unions with ideological
goal orientations. Logically enough, the unions that adhere to
their constitutions closely in functioning and unions that hold
their conventions regularly and frequently tend to hold the
strike ballot regularly. Lastly, it is found that, the unions
with democratic decision making, democratic leadership and
democratic internal structure consider it necessary to hold
strike ballot before going on strike.

The main thrust of the present study is to identify the
indices of union democracy and to ascertain the extent and
determinants of union democracy with a view to suggest
measures that could increase the effectiveness of unionism in
particular and promote responsible unionism and industrial
democracy in general. As such conclusions pertaining to these
aspects of unionism could be considered as of paramount
significance. In view of the significance of union democracy for
the working-class in the particular and economy and society in
general, the conclusions drawn from the findings of the present
study could be of applied value.

Depending upon their implications for the functioning of
the unions a total of seven indices of union democracy are
identified. They are the union constitution, union leadership,
union elections, internal power structure, union executive,
conventions and decision making process. Nearly, one half
(45.51 per cent) of the unions have constitutions, the structure
and functioning of which could be described as democratic.
However, the findings reveal that, the type, size and age of
unions have little implications for the democratic spirit and
functioning of union constitutions. On the other hand a strong
tendency toward having democratic constitutions is found among
independent unions or unions affiliated to right-wing federations,
that pursue business unionism and those unions that are led
chiefly by the insider, or worker leaders. Since oligarchy and democracy in unions is measured many a time in terms of leadership style and functions leadership is operationalized in this study as an important index of union democracy. Two-fifths (40.38 per cent) of the unions have democratic leadership. In view of the general opinion regarding the Indian union movement this figure could be considered as quite high. Further, it is significant to note that, the style and functioning of union leadership does not vary significantly with such important structural variables as size, type and age of unions. Findings, however, indicate that it is the independent unions, pursuing instrumental goal orientations, the unions that are less strike-prone are more likely to have democratic leadership. Further study also reveals that, worker leaders or the inside leaders with no political allegiance are far more democratic in their governing of unions than the outside leaders and those with definite political sympathies. Coming to union elections as an index of union democracy, the study reveals that nearly one half (44.23 per cent) of the unions could be considered as democratic on this count. Logically, the white-collar unions are found to be having more democratic elections as compared to the industrial or service unions. Based on the findings, it could be concluded that, tendency toward affiliation, outside leadership and political affiliation, especially of radical nature, tend to have constraining influences on the extent of democracy in union elections. Similar conclusions could also be drawn with regard to the internal power structure as an index of union democracy. Nearly two-fifths (38 per cent) of the unions have what could be described as democratic internal structure and as in the case of other indices, the type of internal power structure does not vary significantly with the type, size and the age of unions. It is significant to note that, contrary to the general expectations, intra-union rivalry
does not in any way contribute to the development of a democratic internal structure in unions. However, multi-party affiliation among membership appears to be fostering democratic internal structure more than non-partisan status. The internal structure also does not vary with union jurisdiction and the type of unionism. But unaffiliated unions and those led by worker leaders tend to have definitely more democratic internal structure. It is of considerable significance to note that democratic internal structure induces the unions to adopt democratic methods of resolving industrial disputes and also tend to foster a higher degree of responsiveness among the leaders.

Structure and functioning of union executive serve as another important index of union democracy. On this index, nearly one-half (46 per cent) of the unions are democratic which may be taken as quite high a proportion for Indian unions. Only about one tenth (9.62 per cent) of the unions studied have out and out undemocratic executives. Those unions with democratic executive are most likely to be independent non-partisan and those that pursue instrumental goals and have no outside leadership. Further responsive leadership and cordial industrial relations seem to be facilitating democratic structure and practices in the union executives. In turn-unions with democratic executive appear to be less strike-prone and more likely to employ democratic methods to resolve industrial disputes.

The way in which union conventions are conducted is employed in this study as another index of union democracy in view of its being employed as so in many studies discussed under review of literature. As on other indexes of union democracy, nearly one half (46.15 per cent) of the unions are
found with highly democratic conventions, and only about 10 (9.62) per cent of the unions have totally undemocratic conventions. The inquiry further reveals that the unions recognized by the managements tend to have democratic conventions, or put in the other way, managements seem to be inclined to recognize the unions that have democratic conventions. And it is the plant or local unions that tend to have more democratic conventions as compared to regional or state unions. The manner in which the conventions are conducted is further found to be independent of the type, size and the age of unions, the findings also indicate that unions with high degree of political involvement, unions with single party affiliations, unions with affiliation to national trade union federations tend to have conventions that could be described as less democratic. Consistent with findings pertaining to other indexes of union democracy, extent of outside leadership and its functional importance tend to reduce the incidence of democratic conventions among unions. Similarly, the conventions of business unionism tend to be considerably more democratic than are the conventions of unions subscribing to other forms of unionism. That is, conventions of unions pursuing instrumental goals provide wider scope for active participation to the members and reflect the needs and aspirations of the members more closely than do unions subscribing to other forms of unionism. However, more significant is the finding that, unions with democratic conventions prefer voluntary and more democratic methods of resolving industrial disputes to statutory methods. Based on this finding, it may be argued logically that, union democracy provides a necessary condition for industrial democracy to be operative.

The extent of membership influence on decision making has been viewed as an important index of union democracy in the present study which reveals that a reasonably high
proportion of the unions (43 per cent) could be considered as functioning democratically on this count. The study does not seem to support the view that, due to differences in the socio-economics background, educational levels, occupational ethics, the members of different types of unions are differentially disposed toward unionism. The type, size and age of the unions seem to have little consequence for the extent of membership influence on decision making. However, the extent to which the decision making in the unions is democratic seems to vary considerably with the affiliation patterns of the unions the study reveals that those affiliated to HMS have a highly democratic decision making process. Similarly, the political affiliation of unions and the extent of political involvement are found to be negatively associated with the extent of membership influence on decision making process. This supports the assumption that politicization of union movement has negative implications for the membership participation in decision making and thereby for the extent of union democracy. Further, since unions with high degree of politicization tend to be those with outsider leadership, even the outside leadership seems to be having negative implications for extent of democratic decision making in the unions and thereby for the extent of union democracy. Coming to the type of unionism practiced, the findings indicate that, the business unionism, facilitates greater membership participation and to that extent provides better scope for union democracy as compared to other forms of unionism.

Union Democracy

Based on the scores of each union with regard to the seven composite indices of union democracy discussed above, the extent of democracy in the unions under investigation is ascertained. Since the measure of union democracy adopted
here incorporates all the indices of union democracy employed in the empirical studies hitherto, it could be taken as the most realistic composite index of union democracy possible.

The extent of union democracy so ascertained reveals that less than one fourth (20.51 per cent) of the unions are highly democratic in their internal administration. Even those unions that are undemocratic constitute less than one third (30.13 per cent) of the total unions. However, the study reveals that the bulk of the unions, representing one half of the total (49.36 per cent) are moderately democratic. Thus, if we view these findings in the light of the conditions prevailing in Indian unionism in its earlier formative stages, we could infer that at present the Indian unionism finds itself in a transition or passing phase and the trend has been unambiguously toward greater democracy in their internal administration. This trend, as discussed in the last chapter, could be attributed to the shift from the earlier nationalistic unionism to the utilitarian or business unionism subsequent to political freedom and large-scale industrialization and a shift in focus from freedom struggle to struggle for greater share in the fruits of economic development, a shift from national consciousness to the class-consciousness. This shift could be viewed as responsible for the evolution of a streamlined internal structure and the emergence of a class of labour leaders who now man the positions in the unions, in the place of earlier fluid union structure and philanthropic-nationalist brand of union leaders. This is supported by the finding that about one-fourth of the unions already resemble streamlined democracies and another half of the unions are in the process of becoming so, which together seem to suggest a definite trend toward democratization of union movement in India, and other unions that are not so democratic could as well be hoped to follow the suit. Thus, the extent of democracy that is found
among unions in this study could be considered as reasonably high, if not enough, and the oligarchic tendencies in unionism so widely lamented is found restricted only to about less than one third of the unions. Hence, based on the findings of the present study it could be stated in conclusion that the responsiveness of unionism to the needs and aspirations of the working-class and the internal democracy in unions falls in the category of moderately high to high as this situation represents more than two-thirds of the unions. And viewed in the light of the trends it could be speculated that the situation could be hoped to improve further with the passage of time. The 'iron-law of oligarchy' so universally typified for unionism could be stated as on decline.

Another major focus of the study has been to identify the determinants of union democracy to enable the study to arrive at certain suggestions with a view to facilitate much desired democracy in the functioning of unions.

Contrary to the general expectation, the study reveals that the extent of union democracy varies independent of the organizational variables such as size, age and type of unionism. Though sociology of organizations is replete with studies that hold size and age of the organizations as key variables determining the internal structure and style of functioning of organizations. Indian unions seem to be an exception to this rule. However, though not statistically significant, service unions tend to function more democratically than either industrial or white-collar unions. Even this finding appears to be contrary to the common belief that the white-collar unions, due to the traits of their membership could be functioning more democratically than their industrial or service counterparts. The findings also seem to suggest that neither large nor small unions but the unions of medium size tend to govern themselves
more democratically. Further, though not statistically significant, the local unions or the so-called plant unions tend to function more democratically than do the regional or state unions, indicating that union jurisdiction could be one of the minor factors determining the extent of union democracy. It is further significant to note that, the climate of industrial relations has a role to play in determining the extent of union democracy, that is, the unions operating in a climate of hostile industrial relations tend to have more centralized structure and less democratic governing than are the unions operating in the climate of cordial industrial relations. However, a definite association could be found between the recognition status of unions and the extent of union democracy. Thus, the unions recognized by the managements are found to be functioning more democratically than those that are not recognized. It could be assumed that unions recognized by the managements tend to be under pressure to be more responsive to the needs of membership to maintain the recognition status.

Significant association is found between the affiliation status of the union and internal democracy. The independent unions are found to be functioning far more democratically than are the unions affiliated to various federations. Further, among affiliated unions, those affiliated to the right-wing federations tend to exhibit greater internal democracy than do the unions affiliated to the left-wing federations. This finding is further supported by the fact that even the extent of politicization and political involvement are negatively associated with the extent of union democracy. Since each national federating body is sponsored by a political party, affiliation to a federation invariably involves sympathizing with the sponsoring political party. And for the obvious reasons, discussed in the foregoing chapter, the unions with political affiliation and involvement have been found to be less democratic in their internal
regulation than are the non-partisan unions. Thus, it could be stated that, the unions to function more democratically need to be free from politicization and political involvement. Further, as in the case of affiliation, the unions with leftist party affiliations are found to be less democratic in their internal regulation than are the unions with right-wing political affiliations.

Coming to the consequences of much debated outside leadership for unionism, the study reveals a very strong negative association between the extent of outside leadership and the extent of union democracy. It is significant to note that not even a single union with outside leaders in large number and occupying functionally important position functions democratically. Thus, it could conveniently be stated that, the outside leadership hinders union democracy and induces oligarchic tendencies in the union administration.

Further, the union democracy, to some extent, appears to be determined by the type of unionism pursued. The findings indicate that the unions with simple instrumental goal orientations, that is, pursuing business unionism, function more democratically than do the unions with ideological goal orientations. The data suggest that over half of the unions with ideological goal orientations operate through oligarchic structures, whereas the proposition of such unions among those with instrumental goal orientations is as low as less than one-fifth. Thus it could be stated that the unions pursuing materialistic goals such as higher wages, bonus and other fringe benefits tend to be more responsive to the members, elicit greater membership participation and thereby facilitate greater union democracy.

Lastly, another significant finding of the present study with the regard to the determinants of union democracy has
been a very strong positive association between the democratic atmosphere in the plant and the extent of union democracy. In other words, study indicates a strong positive association between the extent of industrial democracy and the extent of union democracy.

This could as well mean that, the unions are most likely to govern themselves democratically if they are operating in a plant where the workers' participation in the management is active, where the joint management councils operate meaningfully, where the grievance handling is democratic and where the influence of workers on the affairs of the industry is considerable, in short, a plant in which the industrial democracy in its true sense prevails. It appears logical that, the unions that are active participants in the industrial democracy can not afford to govern themselves in an undemocratic or oligarchic manner.

Thus, with regard to the determinants of union democracy it may be concluded that the structural variables such as type, size, age and jurisdiction of unions are of less consequence for the degree of democracy found in the unions whereas, recognition status, affiliation status, political affiliation, extent of outside leadership, type of unionism and the democratic environment in the plant could be taken as important explanatory variables of the extent of union democracy.

Suggestions

As claimed in the statement of problem, the present study attempts to make certain suggestions based on the findings. Suggestions, based on the findings of the present study, are made with the presumption that the union democracy is a necessary condition for the realization of the goals of
unionism. As envisaged in the statement of problem, unionism is viewed as an instrument that purports to bring about industrial democracy with its proven positive implications for the working-class, industry and society at large. And to bring about this much desired industrial democracy and to render it meaningfully geared to the needs and aspirations of the working-class, unionism itself needs to be regulated in a democratic manner. As such, as envisaged by Radice (1978: 82) union democracy is not viewed as an end in itself and what is advocated for is not to bring about 'perfect' and 'do nothing' democracy within the unions but a unionism that is responsive to the members and in which the leadership is influenced by the membership. As suggested by Seidman (1959: 198-199) it does not do much good to the unionism if the discipline is sacrificed in order to bring about internal democracy. Just as excessive discipline could result in dictatorship, unrestrained democracy borders on anarchy. Hence, some amount of discipline, even at the cost of a bit of democracy is viewed as a desirable condition for the effective functioning of the unions. It is believed that, there is a border area where the values of discipline, efficiency of administration and collective bargaining appear to conflict with those of democracy in unions. Yet, the democratization of unionism seem to provide the unions with resource of membership loyalty that is so vital for their survival and effectiveness (Seidman, 1959: 198-199).

However, inspite of all these arguments in favour and otherwise of union democracy, its advisibility and utility, there seems to be an overwhelming consensus in advocating for union democracy, though in differential degrees, for the general well-being of the working-class. As such union democracy is viewed in this study as a desired condition endowed with positive value for the effectiveness of unions and the suggestions made in this study are with a view to bring about this desired
condition. It is believed that these suggestions if incorporated would enable unions to develop a more effective internal structure and function as more effective and viable organizations in terms of realization of the members' needs and aspirations. This could also render them effective and meaningful actors in the system of industrial relations and bring about much desired industrial democracy while strengthening unionism in general.

It also needs to be stated here that these suggestions are made in the light of the findings of the present study that union democracy has positive implications for the unionism and the system of industrial relations in particular and for the working class, industry and thereby for the society in general. The findings of the present study reveal that unions with greater internal democracy are characterized by cordial relations with their managements leading to lasting industrial peace in the plant. Such unions are by far less strike prone and tend to take strike ballot regularly and hold referendum on important issues affecting the membership.

Further, in case of a dispute arising between union and management, the unions with greater internal democracy tend to adopt and employ democratic means or voluntary methods of resolving industrial disputes such as collective bargaining and grievance handling rather than resorting to radical measures like strikes and work stoppages.

Further, on the whole, union democracy seems to be fostering a democratic atmosphere in the plant and promote cordial industrial relations and as a consequence of this, the study reveals, the managements tend to be more inclined to recognize the unions that exhibit greater internal democracy. The study seems to provide a clear evidence that the union democracy not only improves the climate of industrial relations, but also provides a conducive climate for the promotion of
industrial democracy. Further, the findings indicate that union democracy promotes union solidarity and thereby enhances membership loyalty to the unions leading to greater bargaining strength of the unions. Another important positive implication of union democracy, as indicated by the findings of the present study is that it fosters responsive leadership in the unions which facilitates the realization of the felt needs and aspirations of the membership. Such unions also provide greater scope for active participation of membership in the decision making process and thereby increase the possibility of decision by the opinion of majority. Finally, the union democracy is found to be fostering greater decentralization of authority, a democratic executive body and grievance handling, in short, a more democratic internal power structure and greater discipline in the management of union affairs, such as regular and frequent conventions and elections.

Thus, the study reveals that union democracy has quite a few positive implications for the working class, the system of industrial relations, the industry and society in general and as such could be considered as a desired condition for the unionism to pursue. Hence, the suggestions that are made here are an attempt to bring about this desired condition through promotion of such factors that facilitate greater union democracy. The present investigation has identified a few determinants that either facilitate or hinder union democracy and by regulating these variables, it is hoped that the unions could achieve greater democracy in their internal regulation.

The determinants of union democracy, as discussed in the last chapter, could be classified into three categories as structural, functional and environmental or contextual. It was also observed that environmental variables have more important
role to play in determining the extent of union democracy than any other mentioned above. However, suggestions are made keeping in view all the determinants of union democracy.

Coming to the structural variables, it could be stated that the unions need to be of a medium size for democracy to be functional within them. Either too big or too small unions have been found to be structurally unsuited for democratic regulation. The study indicates that, it is in the unions of medium size that the decisions are taken most often by majority opinion, strike ballot is more common and referendum is resorted to whenever a decision affecting large number of members is to be taken. It is in such unions that, the elections are more often well fought and members vote in large numbers. Though size of union is not a very significant determinant, it could be suggested that the unions should have a moderate size to facilitate union democracy. Further, the findings suggest that plant unions are better suited for democracy than are either industrial or regional or national unions. In terms of responsiveness of leadership, holding of union conventions, elections and strike ballot, the plant unionism is much favoured form than any other as evidenced by the findings of the present study. Much contrary to the general assumption, the degree of bureaucratization is found to be facilitating union democracy. The study reveals that higher the degree of bureaucratization, greater is the possibility of leadership being responsible, union executive, conventions and elections being more democratic and referendum and strike ballot being more regular. Thus, instead of being a constraining factor, bureaucratization seems to facilitate union democracy as such, attempts to word off bureaucratization appear to be unwarranted. Another important structural determinant of union democracy has been the type of unionism
practiced. As explained in the foregoing chapters, the unions are classified as belonging to a particular type based on the goals pursued and the main objectives sought to be realized by the unions. It is logical to believe that different goals call for different types of strategies and structures and the same has been strongly supported by the findings of the present study. The business unionism pursuing materialistic objectives and instrumental goals are found to be most democratic and the unions pursuing ideological goals least so. Thus it could be suggested that union democracy could be best achieved by gearing unions to the immediate and materialistic needs of the working-class. Further, leadership is another important structural determinant of union democracy. The study suggests that responsive leadership plays an important role in rendering the union executive and decision making process more democratic. It also ensures regular and frequent conventions and elections and sees to it that strike ballot and referendum are resorted to when necessary. The unions under such leadership adhere to constitution more closely and develop a democratic internal power structure. In short, it brings about greater decentralization in union administration and reflects the needs and aspirations of the membership more closely. Thus, it could be suggested that unions need to develop responsive leadership which guarantees greater internal democracy.

However, the study seems to indicate that outside leadership has been the biggest constraining factor in the development of union democracy. Outside leadership could be considered as both a structural and contextual factor hindering the incidence of democracy within unions. The study reveals that outside leadership is significantly associated with structural and contextual variables that deter democratic tendencies within the union organizations. The unions with
large number of outside leaders in functionally important positions are characterized by inactive and undemocratic union executive bodies and less democratic internal power structure. Elections, constitutions and conventions tend to be less democratic and strike ballot and referendum are rarely resorted to. Such unions seldom provide scope for membership participation in the affairs of the union and as such, the extent and areas of membership participation with regard to decision making process appears to be still less leading to a centralized internal structure. On the whole, outside leadership is found to be less responsive and more autocratic in its style of functioning and is characterized by long tenure of office or low turnover. On the basis of these findings it could be suggested that the unions must do away with or at least minimize the extend of outside leadership to realize the desired condition of union democracy. The unions also need to do away with outside leadership as it is associated with incidence of inter-union rivalry, hostile union-management relations, a high degree of strikeproneness and in general has negative implications for democratic atmosphere in the plant and the much sought after industrial democracy.

Coming to the other functional indices—um-determinants, the study reveals that democratic elections, frequent and regular conventions, practice of taking strike ballot and holding referendum promote union democracy. Democratic elections tend to bring about greater leadership turnover and foster responsive leadership. Further, practice of holding regular conventions, and referendum and resorting to strike ballot ensure closer adherence to the constitution and thereby render the decision making process more democratic. Thus, the unions striving to bring about greater democracy in their internal regulation could be suggested to have democratic elections and conventions and to take recourse to strike ballot and referendum on all occasions.
Turning to other environmental factors, the study reveals that, politicization and affiliation to central federating bodies, act as constraining factors in the development of union democracy. It is indicated by the findings that unions with definite political party affiliations and greater involvement in political activities tend to have less representative union executive and such executive bodies tend to function less democratically. In such unions, adherence to union constitution is by far less and they seldom take recourse to strike ballot and referendum on important issues. Conventions of such unions elicit little democratic participation and as such, the general level of membership participation in union activities and decision making process is quite low resulting in negligible influence of membership on the union decisions and affairs. Elections in such unions hardly serve any purpose resulting in low leadership turnover. In short, it could be stated that, such unions have a highly centralized internal structure with oligarchic leadership. Thus, it could be suggested that unions need to abstain from political involvement, eschew political affiliation in order to enjoy the fruits or benefits of democracy.

Further, politicization of unionism is also found responsible for hostile industrial relations, greater strikeproneness and incidence of outside leadership which itself is found to be having negative implications for unionism and industry. Thus, the ill effects of politicization and outside leadership so commonly lamented but many a time dismissed as lacking in empirical proof can be taken as true in the light of findings of the present study. The study indicates that multiparty affiliation is more advisable than the single party affiliation and non-partisan status is more advisable than multiparty affiliation with regard to promotion of democratic control in unions.
Further, coming to affiliation status of union as a contextual variable, the study clearly suggests that the independent unions are by far more democratic than the affiliated ones. Independent unions are found to be having a more democratic executive body and as such decentralized internal power structure. Elections in such unions are found to be more democratic and as such have more responsive and democratic leadership. The democratic practices such as holding regular conventions, referendum and taking strike ballot are more common ensuring greater participation in and influence on decision making process by the membership. Thus, more often the decisions are taken based on majority opinion. Thus, for the reasons discussed in the foregoing chapter, the unions striving to bring about democracy in their internal regulation need to be independent from the central affiliating bodies.

Democratic atmosphere in the plant is another important contextual factor that facilitates union democracy. Hence, workers' participation in the management, joint management councils, democratic grievance handling machineries and shopfloor councils should be encouraged which in turn would promote a democratic atmosphere. And such a democratic atmosphere is found to be encouraging not only industrial democracy but also democracy in union organizations. As mentioned in foregoing chapters, the findings indicate that industrial democracy and union democracy are complementary to each other. Further, intense inter-union rivalry in the plant has been found to some extent responsible for the development of highly centralized union structure and oligarchic leadership. Hence, with a view to promote union democracy, the inter-union rivalry needs to be curbed and kept at its minimum. Lastly, recognition of unions by the management is found promoting democratic practices in the internal regulation of the unions. Hence, keeping in view the positive implications of union
democracy for the industry and society at large, it could be suggested that, managements should volunteer to recognize the unions and accord them the status of rightful bargainers in the system of industrial relations.

In general, the findings of the present study seem to suggest that, growth of bureaucracy in unionism need not be viewed with alarm as bureaucratization in its implications is not antagonistic to the growth of union democracy but on the contrary, facilitates union democracy in more than one way. The unions need to develop a strong and representative executive body which safeguards democratic principles and practices. The unions need to avoid politicization of union movement and encourage a responsive internal leadership through well-organized elections. The unions need to free themselves from the central federating bodies which in turn are the labour wings of different political parties. Plant unionism should be encouraged which is the strong hold of union democracy, and care should be taken to keep the size of the unions moderate. With regard to type of unionism, based on the goals pursued, it is the business unionism with materialistic objectives and instrumental goal orientations that suits best the requirements of union democracy.

Some of the other suggestions made by similar studies elsewhere also appear to be in line with the findings of the present study in promoting union democracy. There is an obvious need to hold regular and frequent local meetings and annual conventions to protect the right of membership to participate freely and to see that the meetings are properly conducted and elections are held honestly (Seidman, 1959: 198-199). Given the present constitutional set up of trade unions, it could be necessary to evolve and implement certain legislative measures restricting the tenure of office of the union
leaders, calling for secret ballot in elections, restricting the number of outside leaders in the unions, promoting decentralization of union structures and encouraging scheme for workers' education (Devaki Devi, 1978: 75-76). Further, all union executives should be directly elected through secret ballot and re-election to union offices should be restricted to 2 to 3 terms. Ordinary members should be in majority on the executive bodies; and the conventions should represent all groups and categories of employees. There should be shopfloor representation on negotiating bodies to encourage membership participation in decision making (Radice, 1978: 227). At the same time, the union leaders need to be given effective trade union education which could equip them to take advantage of internal democratic reforms (Radice, 1978: 177). The studies seem to indicate that the unions tend to mirror the larger society of which they are a part. What Seidman (1953: 231) and Coleman (1956: 526) thought of American unionism in 1950s holds good for the Indian unionism at present. The nation's political life in general tends to be reflected in the government and policies of unionism. The study reveals that quite a few unions operate in highly politicized milieu which in turn affects the extent and nature of union democracy. Majority of the unions are moderately democratic indicating a phase of transition from iron law of oligarchy to union democracy, from old oligarchies to young democracies, in which bureaucratic decision making is being carried out within the framework of formally democratic structures. However, the demand and pressures for democratic control of unions are so counterbalanced by the wide spread apathy among the members and their concern with the effectiveness of unions in providing them material benefits that members are ordinarily satisfied by a moderate degree of democracy.
As a concluding statement, it could be stated that, the present study on the organizational analysis in general and union democracy in particular has sought to empirically identify the indices, and determinants and ascertain the extent and nature of union democracy in the context of Indian unionism. And based on the findings with regard to these and keeping in view the positive value attached to union democracy, the study has sought to make a few suggestions that if incorporated could bring about greater democracy in the internal regulation of unions. Many of the findings presented in the body of the thesis were well founded speculations of hypotheses that only needed empirical proof. Further, a few of the arguments presented in explaining the findings require further research. Likewise, some of the fringe areas of union democracy that are sparingly touched upon need to be taken up for further serious research. However, the limitations of time and resources so characteristic of individual doctoral research such as this could be taken as constraining factors the researchers had to work under and bear with. Another limitation of the present study lies in the structured format of the instrument, employing which the data are collected. The researcher regrets that the wealth of information recorded in the field-dairy during the field work could not be systematically quantified and made use of to support and highlight some of the major findings and suggestions of this study. In the face of constraints like these, the researcher feels gratified for having reached certain conclusions and made a few suggestions that are valid and variable at least in the specific context in which the inquiry was conducted. To this extent, the researcher is inclined to express a feeling of accomplishment which accompanies every successful scientific endeavour though search for social reality and better suggestions is never ending one.