BRIEF SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS
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The major finding emerged from the study en titled “Role and Function of Trade Unions in Railways with special reference to Jhansi division”. Present study was conducted in railways division in Jhansi covering two trade unions i.e., North Central Railway employee sangh and North Central Railway men’s Union objectives of the both unions were to solve the workers problems and to improve economic and social status of the workers and to improve the working conditions and provide the welfare of the workers. Both the trade unions were affiliated to the major trade unions federation viz. Indian National Trade Union Congress and All India Railway Men’s Federation.

Socio-economic frame of the Railways is in relation to central government rules hence the trade unions, management and central government are involved in the functioning of railways organization.

The trade union leadership was in general having political, economic orientation and in railways there was not potential cadre of trade unions leaders. The trade union leadership came from political party and their socio-economic background was that of lower-middle class and upper-middle class.

Trade unions membership of the railroads was as follows:-

Majority of the members from both the unions belonged to elderly matured group of 41-50 years of age. Among both the trade unions 33% were female and majority of them were married.

Caste wise distribution of the members showed that roughly 50% were belonging to general category and remaining 50% were distributed among
OBC and SC category. Majority of the both the unions consisted of Hindus followed by Muslims other religious groups were less represented.

As regards educational status of the members about 34.66% were graduate and other members of the trade unions were also educated. But majority among them was not technically qualified.

Majority of the members form both the unions were having income above Rs. 5000 per month and majority belonged to joint families and were residing in Pacca houses.

North Central Railway Employee Sangh had 100 male and 50 female union members. Similar numbers were taken also from North Central Railway Men’s Union for the purpose of the study in order to have equal representation.

As regards status of services it was found that majority of the respondents had more than 15 years of services. Majority of the respondents have permanent kind of service no body was on contract basis or on temporary basis.

The study tried to assess the problem of union members it was found that among 82.33% there was no problems as revealed by the respondents. Organization was free from any problem which created conflict among the workers. Types of the problem faced by 17.67% members of the trade unions were about lack of communication with trade union leaders others thought that leadership of the trade union was not very cooperative.

As regards the problems faced by the union members from railways organization it was related to mostly about bonus and working condition.

It was observed that there was not any type of difference between male and female mainly in the trade unions.

As regards the issue of punishment given to the trade union members by railway organization about 43% were given punishment despite the fact they were active members of the trade union.
From present study it was clear that in the railway organization there was no harassment because unions were strong to prevent the harassment of individual cases.

No discrimination was found by the railway organization with regard to different trade union. A very insignificant majority of 11.67% found discrimination on the basis of qualification and gender bias.

Union members were asked regarding the type of work they were performing majority 54% found that work was hazardous these respondents were mainly from workshop but 46% denied any hazard associated with their work. Railways provided safety measure particularly in work shop. Majority of the members of the unions have never changed their membership from their respective trade unions.

As regards the recognition of the trade unions by the management. Majority members of the both unions agreed that their union was recognized by the management. After collecting the data it was found that railway organization was working on the formula one industry one union. Similar steps were taken by the railway organization to recognize one representative trade union through election in which North Central Railway Men’s Union won the battle and now it is only recognized trade union by the railways.

Respondents felt that trade union was a legitimate body and should be continued.

As regards role and function of trade unions majority were having positive opinion about the behaviour and role of management including welfare officer who was discharging welfare function for the workers. Majority of the union members participated in union activities.

Both the trade unions VIZ North Central Railway Employee Sangh and North Central Railway Men’s Union extended facilities to their members in the area of health and for better working condition. When ever any problem
appeared it was found that trade union helped them at the time of crisis. 100% respondent agreed that role and function of trade unions were successful and they were performing their role effectively.

Study also tried to assess the relationship between trade unions, workers and management because relationship between these factors ensures industrial peace. Trade union always helped to their workers as an when they were humiliated. As regards relationship between trade union and management it was found that unions always put up the demand for the welfare of the workers before the management. How ever they were not in confrontation between union and management, they always tried to settle the matter through negotiation. As for as the relationship of the worker with the union was concerned union members supported the action taken by the unions at the time of crisis.

Most of the members of the union were satisfied with trade union leaders. Members also participated in the meeting called by trade unions. Majority of the union members accepted the decision taken by trade union leaders.

Trade unions never helped in family matters because it was not possible to solve personal problem. Respondents agreed that they attended the union meeting to express their own problem and for the larger interest of the organization. As regards conflict among fellow workers trade union helped in sorting out the problem.

In the opinion of the respondent institution of trade union is essential for collective bargaining. Majority of the respondent found that behaviour of the trade union leaders was good and they were helpful to their members. Except union members no any member of their family participated in union activities. Workers had not received any award or appreciation letters form there respective trade unions. How ever only 15% informed, that award and
medal were given to them for the good work they have done for the sake of unions.

There were many welfare measures which were provided by the management and trade unions. As regards bonus it was declared by the management both the unions did not provide any help in achieving higher bonus. Trade unions negotiated with the management for increased bonus, which could not materialize. Some time strike was also called, ultimately compromise formulae emerged. At the time of any problem with the union members unions gave moral support and problem was solved by arranging dialogue. Dependents or ward did not get any help form the unions because it was a personal matter. Most of the help given by trade unions was in the area of health and education. Besides; members were helped who were found unfit by the railway organization, attempts were made to rehabilitate them.

Trade unions also provided help at the time of accident and pressed management to provide all possible help to the victims who suffered injury in work place. Amount of compensation was also negotiated with the management and unions helped in getting compensation.

It was found in the study that unions came forwards to help its members at the time of any crisis which emerged in work place. All the respondents were very clear about the objective of trade union. All of them agreed that union were concerned with the welfare of the workers.

Various social service activities were organized by the trade unions like health checkup camps and educational camps and training session for the workers. Majority of the members participated in such camps. In other welfare measures an Employee cooperative credit society was also run by the unions. Workers were also included in such society and purpose of the Employee Cooperative Credit Society was to provide easy loans to the workers. Workers were benefited in getting loans and other facilities. Awards and medals were
also provided by the trade unions to their members those who have done excellent work for the union but majority of the members did not receive any awards.

Union also organized social service camp like blood donation and majority of the member participated in such camps. Mostly these camps were organized ones in a year.

In the final analysis satisfaction level of the union members was also assessed it was found that majority was satisfied with the activity of the trade unions.

Compared with the condition of the Indian labour in the early years of industrial development, the working class has no doubt made a few significant gains. Whatever be their achievement it this respect, have been achieved through heroic and dogged struggles for about a century- struggles which have inflicted immense sufferings and claimed innumerable martyrs. Although in the early phases, the workers’ cause was championed - rather mildly - by a few philanthropists and occasionally advocated by the Lancashire magnates out of their own self- interest, for more than half a century Indian and British capital have fought against the Indian labour unitedly. Without minimizing the importance of the gains made so far, some of their glaring limitations need to be mentioned, specifically, the following:

1. There is still no law guaranteeing the security of service to the workmen. The employers’ right to ‘hire and fire’ can hardly be challenged in any court of law which empowers the management to retrench and lay- off the worker is entitled to merely some ‘compensation’. The restrictions on closures and lockouts are largely illusory. As the latest annual report of the Union Labour Ministry reveals, of the total mandays lost in India on account of labour disputes in 1985, as much as 66 per cent was due to lockouts, while, on
the other hand, the government has been putting increasing restrictions on the workers’ right to strike.

2. There is no law for regulating the working conditions of the workers in the unorganized and small scale sectors where millions are doing slave labour.

3. For the crores of agricultural workers, there is only one law—the Minimum wages Act and even that is honoured much more in violation than observance.

4. The few social security laws that are on the Statute Book are hedged in by so many conditionalities, such as, a minimum period of five years’ service, 160 days’ work in a year and so on, that many of the workers in the industries and establishments falling within the scope of these laws are deprived of their benefits.

5. The conciliation machinery and procedure devised by the relevant laws for setting industrial disputes are extremely costly, litigatory and timeconsuming. There are innumerable instances in which a dispute has not been settled even in 20 years.

6. Most significantly, there is no law clearly recognizing the right to collective bargaining and the right to recognition of the really representative union through secret ballot.

7. The various bureaucratic machinery which deals with labour is riddled with corruption and workers are not only harassed but has also to pay illegal gratifications before they can secure the meager benefits they are legally entitled to.

The most characteristic commentary on the state of the labour law in India is, however, provided by the unsuccessful general strike of the cotton textile workers in Bombay which begun in October 1981 and continued for 18 months. This was the longest strike of the largest number of workers in the
world. This strike was undertaken by the rank and file workers themselves—that is, without the supposed proddings and promptings by any politically motivated trade union leadership. The main demand of the strikers did not relate to any immediate economic benefit, but amendment of the Bombay Industrial Relations Act of 1946 - a law enacted by the Congress ministry in the Bombay province at the instigation of the Indian and British capitalists and blessed by the British governor. What the striking workers specifically demanded was the abrogation of the Act’s provision about trade union recognition, under which a totally unrepresentative trade union of the company stooges had been permanently foisted on the workers. The workers have lost this time! Will not they win on the next occasion?