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“MEMBER’S SATISFACTION ON SALARY AND WAGE BENEFITS WITH TRADE UNIONS - AT TNSTC KUMBAKONAM DIVISION “

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Abstract

The existence of a strong and recognized trade union is a prerequisite to industrial peace. Decisions taken through the process of collective bargaining and negotiations between employer and unions are more influential. Trade unions play an important role and are helpful in effective communication between the workers and the management. A union acts as an intermediary between employees and Corporation and provides a necessary complement to legislated benefit and protection. Unions bargain with management for the successful increase workers salary and wages benefits through collective bargaining. The impact of unions on worker's wage and salary benefits therefore, the aim of the study is to analyze member’s satisfaction salary and wage benefits with the activities of trade unions in the TNSTC kumbakonam division Tamil Nadu. The result of the study reveals that among the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers, the majority of the skilled workers perceive moderate satisfaction, whereas the majority of the semi-skilled and unskilled workers perceive a high level of satisfaction with the activities of the trade unions in the study unit.

INTRODUCTION

A trade union is an organized association of workers formed to protect their rights and interest. In the rapid programme of industrial development of India and with the implementation of new economic policy, trade unions have come to occupy a critical position in the success of industrial relations in the country. The Trade Unionism in India has been undergoing rapid changes due to socioeconomic transformation also. It is an important instrument to promote class collaboration and harmony. They are found as an instrument of solving social economic, political and psychological problems of large scale industry, machine, technology and mass production. Trade unions can reshape the relationship between the employers and employees in order to maintain an atmosphere of industrial peace and harmony. Trade unions play a significant role in securing the nature of the job and enforcing the rights on the job. Unions act as an intermediary between employees and Corporation and provide a necessary complement to legislated benefit and protection. Unions bargain with management for the successful increase of worker wages, other benefits through collective bargaining. The impact of unions on worker's wage and salary benefits is presented in Table 4.11

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature paves way for a clear understanding of the areas of research already undertaken and throws a light on the potential areas which are yet to be covered. The reviews of some of the important studies are presented in the succeeding pages.

ParagShil and Santa Kar (2013) measured the satisfaction of the railway employees about the role performed by the trade unions and other activities of the trade unions related to the up gradation of the railway employees in the Badarpur sub-division of N. F. Railway, They concluded that the trade unions at Indian Railway, which are operating in Badarpur Subdivision, in particular, are not only playing an active role in improving the quality of work life of employees, but also in maintaining good industrial relation in the organization. In fact, the welfare of workers seems to be an inseparable component of the functions of these unions.

Manoranjan Dhal and Kailash B.L. Srivastava (2002) their study, based on a questionnaire survey in South Eastern Railway, Kharagpur, examined the perceptions and attitudes of actors of the industrial relations system. Workers were found to be satisfied with the approach of the management but not with union leaders. Managers were also trying to adopt people building strategies and gain the confidence of workers through establishing direct channels of communication with them and bypassing the union. They considered union leaders as obstacles, not willing to maintain good relationships. Union leaders succumbed to pressure due to the loss of membership and lack of participation of workers in union activities. They were satisfied with the prevailing union-management relationships, but considered management as an opposing force, as they were working towards decreasing the membership and creating multiplicity for their own interests. Thus, union leaders had to bear the responsibility to increase membership, work for the success of the union as well as maintain a favourable union-management relationship.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The trade unions have a crucial role to play in maintaining smooth industrial relations. It is true that the unions have to protect and safeguard the interests of the workers through collective bargaining. But at the same time they have equal responsibility to see that the organizations do not suffer on account of their direct actions such as strikes, even for trivial reasons. They must be able to understand and appreciate the problems of managements and must adopt a policy of „give and take“ while bargaining with the managements. Trade unions must understand that both management and workers depend on each other and any sort of problem on either side will do harm to both sides. Trade unions are juristic entities and volitional associations that have, historically and ideologically, represented the aggregate strength of labour to maximise their effectiveness in their endeavour to fulfil their core responsibilities and principal functions. The mandate of trade unions is to, inter alia, protect, maintain, and improve the working conditions of their members. They fulfil this mandate by ensuring that they offer services that meet, if not exceed, members' satisfaction levels. Trade unions ultimately exist to protect the work- and non-work-related interest of their members, whether these be economic, social, political, or environmental (Venter, 2003). Neletal. (2005) asseverate that trade unions are membership organizations: They exist because of their members, they are made up of members, they serve their members' interest, and they are governed by their members. That is, they derive their authority and mandate from the members. Therefore, trade

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union is service providers. They must give employees enough reason to become attracted to them as members and to remain members. Simply put, trade unions, as the embodiment of workers' aspirations, owe a duty of care to their members, and thus should at all times, act in their best interests. Thus, the kind and quality of services offered by trade unions should be perceived by members as sufficient and satisfactory. Highly satisfied and committed union members are more likely to support and participate in trade union activities. Trade unions, like any other organization that provides services, are faced with challenges of membership decline due to perceived poor services or the lack thereof, and are therefore required to devise remedial measures to mitigate the membership decline (Kgapola, Leslie Seth 2017). Against the backdrop of the foregoing, the aim of the study is to analyze the member’s satisfaction on salary and wage benefits with activities of trade unions in the TNSTC kumbakonam Tamil Nadu with the following research questions.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions were addressed in the study.

1. Whether there is any significant difference between satisfaction among drivers, conductors and Technical workers with the activities of the trade unions?
2. Whether there is any significant relationship between demographic variables of the members and their satisfaction of salary and wage benefits with activities of trade unions?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study has been conceptualized in order to analyze the member’s satisfaction on salary and wage benefits with activities of trade unions in the TNSTC kumbakonam division of Tamil Nadu. The study has made use of survey method of research to achieve the set objectives. Among them, 100 members of trade union were selected. Thus, the total sample size is 100 works selected on the basis of convenience sampling method. For the purpose of analysis the workers were classified as drivers, conductors and Technical workers

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The member satisfaction with trade unions in the selected study unit is discussed in the subsequent pages.

DRIVER’S SATISFACTION ON SALARY AND WAGE BENEFIT WITH TRADE UNIONS

The mean score obtained by the drivers for their satisfaction on salary and wage benefits with the activities of the trade unions is shown in table 1.

Table 1

Impact of trade union on salary and wage benefits

S. No.	Variables	SA	A	N	DA	SDA	Total
1.	Union have succeeded in securing better salary or	173	209	49	84	85	600

	wages through their efforts	(28.83)	(34.83)	(8.17)	(14.00)	(14.17)	(100.00)
2.	Union bargains overcome unfair wages	154	295	40	57	54	600
		(25.67)	(49.17)	(6.67)	(9.50)	(9.00)	(100.00)
3.	Union bargain fringe benefits for the workers	319	128	63	55	35	600
		(53.17)	(21.33)	(10.50)	(9.17)	(5.83)	(100.00)
4.	Union reduce wages inequality	109	186	37	175	93	600
		(18.17)	(31.00)	(6.17)	(29.17)	(15.50)	(100.00)
5.	Union maintains and improves workers' terms and conditions through collective bargaining with employers.	146	191	67	121	75	600
		(24.33)	(31.83)	(11.17)	(20.17)	(12.50)	(100.00)
6.	Union negotiate improved terms and conditions for employees, including wages and more fringe benefits	149	210	50	86	105	600
		(24.83)	(35.00)	(8.33)	(14.33)	(17.50)	(100.00)

Source: Data from Primary Source

Table 1 indicates that nearly three fourth (74.50) of the employees agree with union bargain fringe benefits for the workers (74.50 percent), union bargain to overcome unfair wages in the corporation (74.83 percent) and more than three-fifth (63.67 percent) of the employees agree with union secure better salary or wages through their efforts. Nearly three-fifths (59.83 percent) of the employees agree with union negotiate improved terms and conditions for employees and (56.17 percent) unions maintain and improve terms and conditions through collective bargaining in the corporation. However, nearly fifty (49.17 percent) percent of the employee agree with union reduce wages inequality in the TNSTC Kumbakonam Division – 1. It is concluded that the union role in reducing the wages inequality has a low level in the corporation and the union has to focus more on is aspect in the corporation

Significance of demographic status in the involvement of union on job security, salary and wage benefits, welfare facility and working condition.

The demographic variables such as employees' age, marital status, education, income, and residence, number of dependants, experience and cadre of the employees show significant difference in the involvement of trade union on job security, salary & wage benefits, welfare facility and working condition.

The other demographic variables like employees' gender and nature of family do not show any significant in the involvement of union on job security, salary & wage benefits, welfare facility and working condition.

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CONCLUSION

The study reveals that out of 100 sample respondents, nearly 51 per cent of the respondents expressed a high level of satisfaction followed by 35 per cent and 13 per cent of the respondents reported moderate and high level of satisfaction with the activities of trade unions in the study unit.

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