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Course: MBA (PG)

Semester : 3rd

Paper : MB –HC 02

Subject :-- Industrial Relations

Department :-- Management

University:-- MMHU (Patna)

Date:- 1/10/20

TYPES OF TRADE UNION

Basis of Membership Structure

Crafts Unions

General Unions

Industrial Unions

Staff Unions

Types of Trade Unions

There are 4 Main Types of trade union :

1. Craft Union
2. Industrial Union
3. General Union and
4. Federations

Trade unions fight for workers' rights. As powerful agents of workers, they seek to extract all kinds of incentives, benefits for workers. Through joint action, they provide solid protection to workers and see that the domination of the employer over the industrial arena is contained. Apart from wages and terms of employment, modern unions also take up issues concerning production norms, introduction of new products, technological changes and the like.

In a liberalised environment, the union is looked upon as a facilitator of change. A trade union is there to represent and protect the interests of its members. It is there to protect the economic, political and social interests of its members. The principal aim is to negotiate with employer over pay, job security, working hours, etc. putting the collective power of its members to best advantage.

Generally there are four types of trade unions are:

1. Craft Union:

The workers belonging to the same craft, specialized skill or same occupation can form their trade union irrespective of industry or trade they be employed. For example, mechanists working indifferent industries may form a union of mechanists only. In the same way electricians, carpenters, and turners may form their separate unions. Therefore, craft unions are open to members of a certain trade/skill, like Air India Navigator's unions and Indian Pilots Guild. The main drawback of this union is that during strike in craft union, the entire working of the organisation paralyze because the

workers of this union cannot be easily replaced by other workers. Their unions generally oppose technological advances in the organisation.

2. Industrial Union:

The workers on the basis of industry can form unions irrespective of their craft. For example, if entire workforce of a cement industry decides to form a union consisting of workers of different craft; the union is called an industrial union. Therefore, an industrial union is open to the members of workers of a factory like Girni Kamgar Union at Bombay. This type of union encourages workers solidarity and makes negotiations easy because a single agreement covers all workers of a particular industry. One major drawback of this type of union is that the skilled workers in it feel that their specific demands are not scientifically taken care of.

3. General Union:

This type is open to all members irrespective of their craft and industry within a particular city or region. For example, Jamshedpur Labour Union, whose membership includes workers engaged indifferent industries and crafts of Jamshedpur. In this case, there is no distinction between skilled and unskilled workers.

4. Federations:

These are national level apex bodies in which plant level unions, craft unions, industrial union and general unions are affiliated. They coordinating the affairs of various unions in their fold.