

# UNIONS AND MANAGERIAL ASSOCIATIONS IN INDIAN ORGANIZATIONS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS

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**Abstract** Foundation of the industrial relations system in India was laid prior to independence and remains mostly unaltered till date. New issues emerge as the country continues to integrate into the global economy. This paper intends to identify the major issues that affect the working of trade unions and managerial associations and discuss their role in maintaining harmonious industrial relations within an organization. A case study approach is used to carry out qualitative research on the identified issues at three major industrial units, each at a different stage of organizational development, having distinct organizational cultures and systems. Important transitions have been concluded from each of the identified public, private and co-operative organizations in India.

**Keywords** Managerial Associations, Labor Relations, Case Study, Inter-organizational approaches

Unions and managerial associations are an important platform for collective representation, negotiation, promotion and protection of interests of its members. These serve as a protection shield against all the obstacles (legal and day-to-day) that comes their way (Chhabra & Suri, 2005). With increasing globalization, business dynamics have changed. A new class of professional managers has emerged as a result of dissociation of workers from the ownership and management. The relations between the employee and employer have gradually antagonized, giving rise to complex, indirect and impersonal Industrial Relations (IR) (11Ju24).

## INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN INDIA

The term IR is concerned with a particular set of phenomenon associated with regulating the human activity of employment. Traditionally, industrial relations was broadly defined to include the relationships and interactions between the management and the workers (Chhabra & Suri, 2005). Proponents of this perspective believe that industrial relations covers all aspects of the employment relationship, including human resource management, employee relations, and union-management (or labor) relations (11Ju14). However, now the term is used in a more specific and restricted sense. It pertains to the study and practice of collective bargaining, trade unionism, and labor-management relations, while human resource management is a separate, largely distinct field that deals with nonunion employment relationships and the personnel practices and policies of employers (11Ju14). International Institute of Labor Studies (1972), defines IR

as “Social relations in production”. This definition intends to cover every sector of the labor force in all parts of the world and the term stands for a wide variety of practices and institutions. Kapur & Punia, 1996, put forward that a trade union signifies an organization of workers engaged in securing certain economic benefits for its members. Section 2(h) of the Trade Unions Act, 1926 defines a trade union as: “Any combination, whether temporary or permanent, formed primarily for the purpose of regulating the relations between workmen and employers, or between workmen and workmen, or between employers and employers, for imposing restrictive conditions on the conduct of any trade or business, and includes any federation of two or more trade unions”. This definition is very exhaustive as it includes combination of employers and federation of two or more of any such combinations (Chawla & Garg, 1997). With a view to self-protect and self-help, labor has organized itself under Employee Associations and Unions. In order to regulate the working hours and other service conditions of the Indian textile laborers, the Indian Factories Act was enacted in 1881 (Monappa, 2003). Bombay Mill hands Association, formed in 1890 by N.M. Lokhande, is often referred to as the starting point of Indian labor movement (Shekhar, et al., 2006; 60). The purpose of this association was primarily to help in drawing government and public attention to the many grievances of the textile workers of Bombay, and to campaign for the revision of the Factories Act of 1881 (Karnik, 1960). This association however was not a trade union. It was a loose organization with no membership, no fund and no rules. Protection and promotion of the interests of the working class is the ultimate goal of any trade union in India.

During the second half of 19<sup>th</sup> century, the working and living conditions of industrial workers were deplorable (Sen, 1977). Workers were unorganized and submissive and made no attempt at collective bargaining or obtaining redress through concerted action. Government had an attitude of complete indifference towards the working class. Failure of workers' initial attempts to organize led them to seek the help of philanthropists and social workers who generally came from classes higher in the economic and social status. In India, no formal trade unions could grow prior to 1918. The stage for emergence of real organized labor movement in India was set by the eve of the First World War (Shekhar, Sinha, & Sinha, 2006; 61). Workers growing awareness of exploitation by the employers, appalling working conditions and rising prices, without a corresponding increase in the wages, despite the employers making huge earnings, led to discontentment. Many Trade Unions were formed throughout India. To this was added the influence of the Russian Revolution of 1917, the establishment of ILO (International Labour Organization) in 1919, the formation of All India Trade Union Congress in 1920 and the non-cooperative movement of Gandhiji during 1920-21, which speeded up the pace of the Trade Union Movement. The impact of the Second World War on the trade union activity was a tremendous one. Great qualitative change had taken place in Indian trade unions related to their ability to participate in negotiations with employers and the tripartite deliberations. With the emergence of independent India (in 1947), the government started to seek cooperation of unions for planned economic development (Dhyani, 1970).

### Issues Related to Trade Unions and Industrial Relations in India

Early unions in India laid much emphasis on the wage issue; subsequently, hours of work and still later, the income and security aspects came to occupy greater eminence (Shekhar, et al., 2006). Laws and regulations framed by the government play a vital role in the labor relations of the country. "There are about 108 statutes relating to industrial relations and they seem to be escalating at an assured pace" (Chandrashekhar, 1969, p.370). Ranging from factory and social security legislation, to terms and conditions of work, to wages and industrial actions, are all closely regulated. The Industrial Disputes Act of 1947, the Trade Unions Act of 1926, The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act of 1946 and other legal provisions like the Central Civil Service Rules of 1964 place severe restrictions on the government employees' freedom to organize and bargain (Chandrashekhar; 370).

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ), a confederation of national journalists' unions and professional associations was founded in 1926 and re-launched in 1952

with a mandate of promoting press freedom, professional development, and recognition of trade unionism (11Au2). In the 1960s, it was apparent that introduction of technology would lead to significant job reductions among technical and production workers and threaten the existence of several unions. Unions responded to this in a number of ways, of which, newspaper strikes in several countries in 1960's, 1970s, and 1980s was an important part. It helped exaggerate the frequency of strikes (Schmidt).

In recent times, though the number of trade unions has increased considerably, a decline has been witnessed in the membership per union. The World Labor Report describes the trade union situation in India as, "Indian unions are too very fragmented" (11Ju12). Rivalry amongst the leaders of trade unions has led to the fragmentation and multiplicity of unions. Caste, religion and certain social factors are also responsible for this disintegration. Non-existence of the legal provisions for the recognition of the unions (except BIR Act and the Maharashtra Recognition of Trade Unions Act and the Prevention of Unfair Labour Practices Act) make for fragmentation of unions and consequent inter-union rivalry" (Monappa, 2003, p. 13)). This multi-unionism has posed a severe threat to the industrial concord in India (Tripathi, 1968). To do away with this practice, government has evolved Code of Discipline which states that union can only claim recognition if its members comprise 25 percent of the total workers in that industry.

Average yearly income of the workers is low & inadequate, because of which subscription dues remain unpaid by the workers, as a result of which, unions cannot undertake welfare programmes for their members. Around 2/3<sup>rd</sup> of the workers are not affiliated to any union and out of the rest, most have an attitude of indifference towards the union affairs. Unions in India are even associated with different political parties and groups, including Congress, Communist and Socialist Unions etc. This has adverse affects upon the negotiation, interest and welfare of the workers since political leaders aspire to achieve personal prestige through prolonged strikes leading to worsening of relations between the management and the employee (Chhabra & Suri, 2005, p. 96)). Under such circumstances, unionism cannot be expected to make much progress.

### Some of the important conclusions that can be drawn are as follows

A managerial association or a union is an organization of employees formed on a continuous basis for the purpose of gaining diversified benefits including self-protection and self-help. The various factors can be represented as a SWOT Analysis given in Matrix below:

**Table 1: Identification of Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats of Unions**

| STRENGTHS                                                                                            | WEAKNESSES                                                                                                                                      |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Application of <b>Democratic principles</b>                                                          | Growth of MA is <b>stagnated</b> because of unorganized movement                                                                                |
| Association enjoys <b>control over decision making</b> and are effectively involved in policy making | <b>Politics has misguided</b> the main objective of MA                                                                                          |
| leaders are able to address <b>welfare issues</b>                                                    | <b>Internal rivalry</b> is affecting the functioning of assn.                                                                                   |
| Works for <b>members' welfare</b>                                                                    | MA is fragmented due to <b>caste, religion, &amp; social factors</b>                                                                            |
| Most of the employees are <b>active</b> in managerial assn.                                          | <b>Corrupt practices</b> negatively affect functioning of ma                                                                                    |
| Strong <b>political</b> backing                                                                      | Members <b>lack knowledge</b> of MA objective & functions                                                                                       |
| <b>Media</b> plays a critical role in MA                                                             | <b>Govt. policies</b> are not followed in MA activities                                                                                         |
| <b>Collective bargaining</b> is applied as an effective tool                                         |                                                                                                                                                 |
| OPPORTUNITIES                                                                                        | THREATS                                                                                                                                         |
| <b>Govt. regulations</b> are being framed to support MA                                              | <b>Privatization</b> is a big threat to development of unions                                                                                   |
| New <b>Govt. policies</b> will be helpful in growth of MA                                            | <b>Younger generation</b> do not have trust in MA                                                                                               |
| <b>Non-members</b> are coming up to join MA                                                          | <b>Multiplicity of assn.</b> is raising competition                                                                                             |
| There is a <b>huge potential of organizing</b> the workforce in India at different level             | <b>Lack of Professionalism</b> is a threat.                                                                                                     |
| <b>Human rights and activism</b> is taken as a positive step towards democracy                       | Government control has become stringent as to formation of <b>bogus as-sociations</b> which is a threat for few people who are in genuine need. |

## CASE STUDY FRAMEWORK AND METHODOLOGY

Literature study has provided a good conceptual background to conduct strength, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) analysis on the unions and managerial associations and to understand their role in maintaining harmonious industrial relations.

The relevance of the topic further prompts us to pursue an in depth study on the identified issues.

**Research Objectives:** The objectives identified for present study are as follows:

To study the role of managerial associations and their effectiveness in different types of Indian organizations.

To understand the employee perception regarding performance of unions in maintaining healthy industrial relations.

Based on the identified issues, a qualitative research was done through expert interviews and opinion survey on the members of Managerial Associations and Unions including decision making managers working in related functional areas. The industrial areas surrounding Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh, India have different set-ups and organizations involved in industrial activities. The city of Allahabad in central India is a politically and socially enlightened city that has majorly contributed in terms of participation in India's struggle for freedom as well as various national movements. Keeping the research objectives

in mind, three organizations were identified for the study purpose; first one is a Multi-unit Co-operative Society, second is a public sector organization and third is a multinational unit. These are at different stages of organizational development, having different organizational culture and systems all being professional organizations showing consistent improvement and growth.

## Cases Identified and Background of the Cases Selected

**Organization 1:** It is an established organization with around 50 years of operational experience as a registered Multi-unit Co-operative Society. The Society is primarily engaged in production and distribution of fertilizers. Its objective is to cater to the fertilizer need of farmers. It developed itself professionally with a social orientation and obtained quality certifications viz. ISO 9001 & ISO 1400. It expanded and increased its production by 17% in the year 2009-10, when compared to the production figures of previous year. A full fledge Human Resource Management centre with technically competent staff meets all the requirements of employees and trainees for their overall development. This organization serves as an important part of the study because it is an important component of the nationwide co-operative organization and it gives a significant perspective to understand the role of managerial association. It is one of the oldest active industrial units in the region and has seen a lot since its inception, which provides a good place to do work on the concerned area.

**Organization 2:** It is a Public Sector Undertaking under the control of Ministry of Heavy Industries & Public Enterprises, Government of India. It was set up in 1970's, as an import substitution unit for manufacture of sophisticated process pumps and compressors for core sector industries which were so far being imported. The company later on started with the manufacturing of High Pressure Industrial and CNG Gas Cylinders as a part of diversification efforts. It gained certification in integrated management systems having ISO 9001:2000, ISO 14001:2004, OHSAS 118001:1999 certification. It includes environment, occupational health & safety management systems, with the objective to design, manufacture and supply capital goods in the fluid handling field including provision of services connected therewith. However it became a sick company having suffered losses consistently since inception aggregating to Rs. 175.29 crores. It was on verge of closure with minimal production and failure in securing orders in competitive biddings. The employees had lost all zeal of work required for productive results. In the year 2005-06, the organization witnessed a turnaround which was achieved through dedicated and sustained pursuits of revival strategies and participative management philosophies to their core. Some hard core human management philosophies were introduced by its Chief Managing Director, which did wonders for the organization that made it a sound prospect to conduct the study on managerial associations and their working in the organisation. It was further ac-credited with the Mini-Ratna status in 2010 for its positive work done in recent years. The organization proved to be a befitting site for finding respondents who would provide considerable inputs with reference to a public sector undertaking, involved in manufacturing industry.

**Organization 3:** This came into existence by taking over a division of a large multinational in the field. Over the years, it developed itself as a company, with more than 50 years of excellent operating experience and became one of the most successful and highly developed power transformer production plants. The unit is spread over a total area of 87276 meter square providing employment to nearly 700 people. The unit has the certification of IMS and is primarily engaged in the production of power transformers, distribution transformers and MV product lines. It is the only unit in India producing oil based transformers. The unit pioneered in the manufacture of shell type furnace transformers in India and holds top position in arc furnace duty transformers. It is the supplier of largest number of transformers in this category to its customers all over the country. Being amongst the most prominent private players in the region with wide array of products, it became a significant site to study the role of managerial associations and their part in harmonious industrial relations. The study conducted in this regard at the site was noteworthy for the fact

that it reflected a new dimension of the private organization and hence functioning of managerial associations therein.

## Research Methodology

Research methodology involved interviews with personnel of executive and supervisory levels and their opinions on the working of managerial associations so as to find out how well these associations worked towards the achievement of Organisational needs and welfare of the members.

### Why Interviews?

Interviews are a special kind of research technique which allows us to gather information by applying respondents' understanding of the topic and intelligence. Frey and Oishi (1995), define it as "a purposeful conversation in which one person asks prepared questions (interviewer) and another answers them (respondent)" This is done to gain information on a particular topic or a particular area to be researched. Interviews can be either structured (closed interview style) or unstructured (open interview style). Open-ended or unstructured interview is defined by Nichols (1991), as "an informal interview, not structured by a standard list of questions. Fieldworkers are free to deal with the topics of interest in any order and to phrase their questions as they think best." This type of structure uses a broad range of questions asking them in any order according to how the interview develops. Patton (2002), has put forth that qualitative interviews facilitate both in depth and detailed study. It is conducted without pre-determined constraints and categories of analysis have openness and inquisitiveness of the objective well attached to the research at hand.

Thus Interview method was adopted as it is difficult to understand managerial associations and their functioning without individual insights of the concerned people, and interviews proved healthy means of studying the functioning of managerial associations and how they involve individual members and their perceptions. Interview of relatively small section of respondents was also helpful in getting detailed and in-depth evidence for the study. Interviews were conducted at the three organizations chosen for the purpose and the responses were categorized on basis of earlier mentioned SWOT analysis done. On the basis of the findings, most significant factors were identified and the same were analyzed to reach the conclusions. Issues and Templates were identified from the interviews conducted at different level as given in the Table 1 above.

## INTREPRETATION AND ANALYSIS OF SELECTED ORGANIZATIONS

### Organization 1

Interviewees gave their valuable inputs about the respective units, which were very much relevant to understand

the role of managerial associations at a multi-unit Co-operative Society. Answers given to the questions helped in understanding the perception towards industrial relations at concerned organization. Some of the important inputs that were discovered are presented in the tabular form as given below.

**Table 2: SWOT Analysis on Managerial Association and Unions**

| STRENGTHS                                            | Y  | N | NR | WEAKNESS                                                  | Y  | N  | NR |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|-----------------------------------------------------------|----|----|----|
| Application of Democratic principles                 | 8  | 7 | 5  | Growth of MA is stagnated because of un-organized         | 12 | 6  | 2  |
| Association enjoys control over decision making      | 12 | 5 | 3  | Politics has misguided the main objective of MA           | 9  | 8  | 3  |
| Points put forth by MA are applied in policies       | 11 | 8 | 1  | Internal rivalry is affecting the functioning of assn.    | 6  | 12 | 2  |
| Assn. leaders ably address welfare issues            | 11 | 7 | 2  | MA is fragmented due to caste, religion, & social factors | 11 | 8  | 1  |
| Most of the employees are active in managerial assn. | 12 | 5 | 3  | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma     | 13 | 5  | 2  |
| MA really works for members' welfare                 | 10 | 5 | 5  | Members lack knowledge of MA objective & functions        | 13 | 6  | 1  |
| Strong political backing                             | 9  | 8 | 3  | Govt. policies are not followed in MA activities          | 7  | 10 | 3  |
| Media plays a critical role in MA                    | 11 | 6 | 3  |                                                           |    |    |    |
| Collective bargaining is applied                     | 11 | 7 | 2  |                                                           |    |    |    |
| OPPORTUNITES                                         | Y  | N | NR | THREATS                                                   | Y  | N  | NR |
| Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA     | 12 | 5 | 3  | Privatization is a big threat to development of unions    | 16 | 2  | 2  |
| Non-members are coming up to join MA                 | 12 | 6 | 2  | Younger generation do not have trust in MA                | 13 | 3  | 4  |
| New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA   | 13 | 6 | 1  | Multiplicity of assn. is raising competition              | 5  | 12 | 3  |
|                                                      |    |   |    | Excessive Govt. control is restricting MA activities      | 11 | 9  |    |

Where, Y= Yes, N= No and NR= No Response

### Observations from Organization 1

A very interesting observation and comment came from one of the workers working since 1978 in the organization. According to him, "Political affiliations were very much there in past and now scenario is changing but still the political backing helps in making voice heard at important junctures". Another observation with respect to the organization came from a Supervisor that leaders of the association are very

much active and they take proper care of the needs of fellow members at different meetings held at unit level and New Delhi. One of the office bearers of the managerial association, made observation on internal rivalry and he was very satisfied with the level of harmony at the plant. He said that, "There is a strong harmony between different groups of the workforce at different levels". Commenting on policy framing, an employee proposed that "Process of decision making is collective in nature and the employees' side is well

put through their office bearers". An interesting response which came up with reference to strikes by managerial workforce was that: "Strikes and closures are not initiated by managers and officers but they do support workers if needed for their cause". A young recruit who was very helpful in understanding the functioning of the associations and their activities explained the role of media and according to him: "Media activism is very much helpful and the same must be dealt positively for better results".

### 3.2. Organization 2

Interviews at this organization helped in understanding the working of managerial association in a public sector enterprise. The associations are working under umbrella of different political organizations which in turn has an impact on the functioning and activities of the organization. Some of the important inputs that are drawn have been portrayed below in the tabular form.

**Table 3: SWOT Analysis on Managerial Association and Unions**

| STRENGTHS                                            | Y  | N | NR | WEAKNESSES                                                | Y  | N | NR |
|------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|-----------------------------------------------------------|----|---|----|
| Application of Democratic principles                 | 8  | 4 | 8  | Growth of MA is stagnated because of unorganized          | 9  | 6 | 5  |
| Association enjoys control over decision making      | 10 | 2 | 8  | Politics has misguided the main objective of MA           | 8  | 5 | 7  |
| Points put forth by MA are applied in policies       | 9  | 5 | 6  | Internal rivalry is affecting the functioning of assn.    | 7  | 3 | 10 |
| Assn. leaders ably address welfare issues            | 10 | 4 | 6  | MA is fragmented due to caste, religion, & social factors | 8  | 6 | 6  |
| Most of the employees are active in managerial assn. | 7  | 5 | 8  | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma     | 9  | 6 | 5  |
| MA really works for members' welfare                 | 13 | 0 | 7  | Members lack knowledge of MA objective & functions        | 7  | 8 | 5  |
| Strong political backing                             | 7  | 5 | 8  | Govt. policies are not followed in MA activities          | 8  | 4 | 8  |
| Media plays a critical role in MA                    | 9  | 3 | 8  |                                                           |    |   |    |
| Collective bargaining is applied                     | 9  | 5 | 6  |                                                           |    |   |    |
| OPPORTUNITIES                                        | Y  | N | NR | THREATS                                                   | Y  | N | NR |
| Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA     | 6  | 7 | 7  | Privatization is a big threat to development of unions    | 11 | 2 | 7  |
| Non-members are coming up to join MA                 | 9  | 5 | 6  | Younger generation do not have trust in MA                | 9  | 4 | 7  |
| New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA   | 7  | 7 | 6  | Multiplicity of assn. is raising competition              | 7  | 5 | 8  |
|                                                      |    |   |    | Excessive Govt. control is restricting MA activities      | 6  | 8 | 6  |

Where Y= Yes, N= No and NR= No Response

### Observations from organization 2

One of the lady personnel working at a managerial position seemed to be very satisfied with the functioning of the managerial association in this organization. She observed that the associations working in the organization have been active since she joined and most of the members have benefited out of the activities undertaken by them. She further added that the funds maintained by the Officers' Union has helped her when she was in dire need of money. Commenting on the issue of involvement of employees in policy framing and decision making, an employee told

that the organization has adopted participative management techniques and his observation was well supported by the other members of the organization. An interesting point was revealed by a middle level manager who opined that "Political parties have been active in association's workings and this is one of the reasons why young people are not coming up to join unions". A Supervisor was very specific about affect of privatization on unions and he disclosed that "In the past, national level unions have been active in the organization, but because of privatization such major unions are unable to grow at par with past and this has resulted in stagnation of major activities of unions at plant level in the

organization". Another aspect which was dealt by one of the Senior Executives of purchase department was that of collective bargaining. He told that "Associations active in the organization have been sacredly applying democratic principles and whenever demands are put forward to the management, collective bargaining technique is practiced".

### Organization 3

Responses captured helped in understanding the operations and working of managerial associations in a typical private organizational setup. Some of the important inputs have been extracted and are depicted below in the tabular form.

**Table 4: SWOT Analysis on Managerial Association and Unions**

| STRENGTHS                                            | Y | N | NR | WEAKNESSES                                                   | Y | N | NR |
|------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|--------------------------------------------------------------|---|---|----|
| Application of Democratic principles                 | 6 | 3 | 11 | Growth of MA is stagnated because of unorganized             | 5 | 3 | 12 |
| Association enjoys control over decision making      | 1 | 5 | 14 | Politics has misguided the main objective of MA              | 3 | 6 | 11 |
| Points put forth by MA are applied in policies       | 1 | 5 | 14 | Internal rivalry is affecting the functioning of association | 4 | 5 | 11 |
| Assn. leaders ably address welfare issues            | 7 | 2 | 11 | MA is fragmented due to caste, religion, & social factors    | 3 | 6 | 11 |
| Most of the employees are active in managerial assn. | 4 | 5 | 11 | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma        | 6 | 3 | 11 |
| MA really works for members' welfare                 | 4 | 5 | 11 | Members lack knowledge of MA objective & functions           | 6 | 3 | 11 |
| Strong political backing                             | 1 | 8 | 11 | Govt. policies are not followed in MA activities             | 2 | 3 | 15 |
| Media plays a critical role in MA                    | 5 | 4 | 11 |                                                              |   |   |    |
| Collective bargaining is applied                     | 6 | 3 | 11 |                                                              |   |   |    |
| OPPORTUNITIES                                        | Y | N | NR | THREATS                                                      | Y | N | NR |
| Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA     | 2 | 6 | 12 | Privatization is a big threat to development of unions       | 0 | 8 | 12 |
| Non-members are coming up to join MA                 | 5 | 2 | 13 | Younger generation do not have trust in MA                   | 6 | 2 | 12 |
| New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA   | 5 | 3 | 12 | Multiplicity of assn. is raising competition                 | 4 | 4 | 12 |
|                                                      |   |   |    | Excessive Govt. control is restricting MA activities         | 2 | 5 | 13 |

Where Y= Yes, N= No and NR= No Response

### Observations from Organization 3

This organization has witnessed shifts in management control. This had an impact on functioning of the unions, as was reported by one of the employees who said that with every shift there was a reshuffle in the association's working body. But still the old horses of union were able to keep up with the demands and made it to the limelight. An interesting point was revealed by a manager who talked of the issues which were specific to the private character of the organization. He said that, "there is zero threat to the spirit and growth of union culture because of privatization, and the associations have been actively working for welfare of the fellow workers in spite of its multi national identity on the larger front". Another issue of multiplicity of associations

was covered by finance officer, who said, "The association active at the organization has been in operation before he joined in the early 90s and the association has not faced any competition from other unions as of yet. Once or twice there was concern that the association may be dissolved to let one of the larger unions to take over in its place, but that was resolved cohesively". A very interesting observation was made by a supervisor at the floor who described the political affiliations at the organization. He said that the political parties and their respective trade unions were very much there in past but now due to management's control and employees' non-enthusiasm towards unions political interventions have changed and the political backing is relatively absent from the plant.

## COMPARATIVE DISCUSSION ON THE ORGANIZATIONS

The study was done at three major industrial units in and around Allahabad to understand the role of managerial associations in maintaining harmonious industrial relations. Respondents and interviewees were asked to select the

three topmost issues, in each of these categories, in terms of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats, from table 1 presented above. Findings from the above analysis were summarized and have been presented below in tabular form, in the order they were perceived to be strength, weakness, opportunity or threat by the employees of these 3 organizations.

**Table 5: Comparative Summary of Organizations**

|               | S<br>No. | Organization 1                                             | Organization 2                                         | Organization 3                                        |
|---------------|----------|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------|
| STRENGTHS     | 1.       | Association enjoys control over decision making            | MA really works for members' welfare                   | Assn. leaders ably address welfare issues             |
|               | 2.       | Most of the employees are active in managerial association | Association enjoys control over decision making        | Application of Democratic principles                  |
|               | 3.       | Media plays a critical role in MA                          | Assn. leaders ably address welfare issues              | Collective bargaining is applied                      |
| WEAKNESSES    | 1.       | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma      | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma  | Corrupt practices negatively affect functioning of ma |
|               | 2.       | Members lack knowledge of MA objective & functions         | Growth of MA is stagnated because of unorganized       | Members lack knowledge of MA objective & functions    |
|               | 3.       | Growth of MA is stagnated because of unorganized           | Govt. policies are not followed in MA activities       | Growth of MA is stagnated because of unorganized      |
| OPPORTUNITIES | 1.       | New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA         | Non-members are coming up to join MA                   | Non-members are coming up to join MA                  |
|               | 2.       | Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA           | New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA     | New Govt. policies will be helpful in growth of MA    |
|               | 3.       | Non-members are coming up to join MA                       | Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA       | Govt. regulations are being framed to support MA      |
| THREATS       | 1.       | Privatization is a big threat to development of unions     | Privatization is a big threat to development of unions | Younger generation do not have trust in MA            |
|               | 2.       | Younger generation do not have trust in MA                 | Younger generation do not have trust in MA             | Multiplicity of assn. is raising competition          |
|               | 3.       | Excessive Govt. control is restricting MA activities       | Multiplicity of associations is raising competition    | Excessive Govt. control is restricting MA activities  |

As can be interpreted from table 5 above, the biggest strength as perceived by the members of organization 1 is that association enjoys control over decision making, in case of organization 2, the managerial association really works for the welfare of its members and in case of organization 3, the biggest strength is that the association leaders ably address welfare issues. When it comes to weaknesses, all the organizations face corrupt practices, which negatively affect functioning of managerial associations. As far as

opportunities are concerned, members of organization 1 consider new government policies to be helpful in growth of MA whereas members of organization 2 & 3 jointly observe entrance of non-members into the association as the biggest opportunity. Talking of threat, members of organization 1 & 2 collectively see privatization as a big threat to the development of unions. In contrast, biggest threat faced by the members of organization 3 is lack of trust of younger generation in managerial associations.

As the learning experiences through interviews were categorized according to SWOT factors it was found that the managerial associations have a significant impact on the industrial relations.

We can find that the government policies and political aspects have a great affect on the functioning of managerial associations in public and cooperative organizations, hence, the associations are very much active and have an important role to play for betterment of the whole set up of the concerned firms. For a private multinational managerial association working there seems to enjoy a significant place in the practicing of industrial relations.

A special finding was that, organization 3 has sound and harmonious industrial relations, and the managerial associations have helped in the turnaround by assisting through the participative management, which is seen in response to strength related questions relating to implementation of suggestions and collective decision making.

Organization 1 is a typical co-operative organization and the managerial associations active in the system have been working towards welfare of the employees and the leaders are performing towards strengthening the objective of welfare of members of the association.

Case site 3 enjoys apex position in its own category of products and the firm's success is mainly due to its performing workforce and the members of managerial associations are helping the cause of the organization by applying democratic principles and performing their part towards achieving the organization's goals.

The role of associations and concept of unionization is very much applicable at each of these units. The cooperative plant, public sector manufacturing unit and multinational private company have their own demands and operating functionalities which are specific to products and the competition faced by respective organizations. Managerial unions have an important role to play; the firms and the employees therein understand the value of harmonious relations with management and they are active towards this particular objective for the good of both the employees and the employers.

## CONCLUSIONS

The study conducted in the course of project revolved around different aspects of achieving healthy industrial relations and how officer unions and other managerial associations are contributing to the same.

In order to maintain healthy work culture at any plant or unit it is very essential that the players involved at different levels should be dedicated towards their goal and unionization supports in achieving the concerned for betterment of all.

Social aspects are part of a sound environment within any organization and politics plays a decisive role in shaping the fate of this critical angle in a worker's life. We can find from the study that managerial associations have been working under the umbrella of political affiliations and it is more prominent in public sector organizations. Professionalism is one of the key features in modern competitive scenario and same applies to the associations and members who are a part of such groups. Younger generation should be motivated to be a part of the system, understand its value and work together to cater to the collective demands which are prevailing within a particular organization.

Adherence to equity, finding solutions by proper means and resolving issues through collective bargaining, which involves personnel by giving them due space at talks, are quintessential features of maintaining cordial working relations between the workforce and management. Any managerial association at work gains strength from the members who are dedicated towards the goal of achieving harmonious environment at the organization and application of suitable practices help in doing the best for the needful which includes the management and concerned employees.

Interviews conducted to gather information on the functioning of the associations allowed the study to be done keeping the perception of respondents in consideration, but some constraints were also witnessed in the course of study. Unstructured questions were posed to the respondents, which at times led to deviation from the course of the objective sought. Informants got involved in personal sense which led to inter-conflicting insights, leading to confusion. Confusion and some hay-way scenario are the shortcomings associated with conducting interviews. Interviewer's bias may have an impact on the answers of the respondents.

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