

Nature of Trade Union

1. Association of employees

A trade union is essentially an association of employees belonging to a particular class of employment, profession, trade or industry. For example, there are unions for teachers, doctors, film, artistes, weavers, mine workers and so on.

2. Voluntary Association

An employee joins the trade union out of his free will. A person cannot be compelled to join a union.

3. Permanent Body

A trade union is usually a permanent body. Members may come and go but the trade union remains.

4. Common Interest

The member of a trade union have certain matters of common interest-job security, better pay and working conditions and so on, which bring them together.

5. Collective Action

Even when an individual employee has any grievance over certain management decisions, the matter is sorted out by the intervention of the trade union. Employees are able to initiate collective action to solve any problem concerning any particular employee or all the employees.

6. Rapport with the Management

The trade union seeks to improve relations between the employees and employers. The officials of the trade union hold talks with the members of the management concerning the problems of the employees in order to find an amicable solution. It is thus possible for the employees to have better rapport with the management.

Objectives of Trade Union

- (1) To improve the economic lot of workers by securing them better wages.
- (2) To secure for workers better working conditions.
- (3) To secure bonus for the workers from the profits of the enterprise/organization.

- (4) To ensure stable employment for workers and resist the schemes of management which reduce employment opportunities.
- (5) To provide legal assistance to workers in connection with disputes regarding work and payment of wages.
- (6) To protect the jobs of labour against retrenchment and layoff etc.
- (7) To ensure that workers get as per rules provident fund, pension and other benefits.
- (8) To secure for the workers better safety and health welfare schemes.
- (9) To secure workers participation in management.
- (10) To charge discipline, self-respect and dignity among workers.
- (11) To ensure opportunities for promotion and training.
- (12) To secure organizational efficiency and high productivity.
- (13) To generate a committed industrial work force for improving productivity of the system.

Functions of Trade Union

Some of the most important functions of the trade union are as follows:

1. Increasing Co-operation and Well-being among Workers
2. Securing Facilities for Workers
3. Establishing Contacts between the Workers and the Employers
4. Trade Unions working for the Progress of the Employees
5. Safeguarding the Interests of the Workers
6. Provision of Labor Welfare.

1. Increasing Co-operation and Well-being among Workers:

The modern industry is complex and demands specialization in jobs. This results in extreme division of labor, which leads to the growth of individualism and development of impersonal and formal relationships. There is no common unifying bond among the workers.

It is in this context that the trade unions come into the picture and they promote friendliness and unity among the workers. Besides this, the trade unions also discuss the problems, which are common to all the workers. It is a platform where workers come together and know each other. The trade unions also provide some kind of entertainment and relaxation to the workers.

2. Securing Facilities for Workers:

Most of the industrialists are not very keen on providing the facilities and proper working conditions to the workers. They are more interested in getting their work done to the maximum extent. In such conditions, trade unions fight on behalf of the workers and see that the facilities have been provided by the management.

3. Establishing Contacts between the Workers and the Employers:

In present days, there are many industries, which have grown into giants. A single unit in a particular industry may employ hundreds of employees. Many times a worker or employee may not have a chance to see their managers. In this situation, the workers are not able to express their grievances before their employers, and even the management does not know the difficulties faced by the workers.

The trade unions play an important role in bringing to the notice of the employers the difficulties and grievances of the employees. They try to arrange face-to-face meetings and thus try to establish contacts between the employees and the employers.

4. Trade Unions working for the Progress of the Employees:

The trade unions try to improve the economic conditions of the workers by representing their cases to the employers and try to get adequate bonus to the workers.

5. Safeguarding the Interests of the Workers:

Most of the industries try to exploit the workers to the maximum. They do not provide any benefits such as increasing their wages, granting sick leaves, giving compensation in case of accidents, etc. The workers are not made permanent even after many years of service and in some cases they are removed from service summarily. The trade unions provide security to the employees in such situations.

6. Provision of Labor Welfare:

The economic conditions of the industrial workers in India are very poor. The standard of living is very low. A majority of industrial workers in India are illiterate or semi-literate. It is the responsibility of the trade unions to get them proper housing facilities and promote the socio-

economic welfare of the laborers. The trade unions also try to arrange educational facilities for the children of the workers.