

Introduction to Trade Unions

Trade unions are associations of workers or organization formed together by labour, workers or employees to achieve their demands for better conditions at their work atmosphere. In the United States, trade unions go by the name labor unions. A labor union, or trade union, is an organization of workers who have joined together to achieve goals in areas such as wages and working conditions. The union negotiates contracts and conditions with employers, keeping employee satisfaction high and protecting workers from unsafe or unfair working conditions.

These unions exist to deal with problems faced by laborers, these problems may be of any nature such as those concerning the pay, unfair work rules, timings and so on. All the workers working under one particular employer is represented by the worker's union. All the communication that happens in between the employer and the workforce generally takes place through the union. All of the above trade unions are also liable and responsible for maintaining discipline among the workers, core purpose is to see that proper relations or being maintained in between management and workers and trade union may take disciplinary action against the workers who ever misbehaves, disturbed peace and harmony in the workplace and maintenance indiscipline.

Trade unions or labour unions are governed by the different law in different countries; they should follow the procedure and mode of registration for formation of the trade union according to the law of the country. Trade union formed in accordance with the law of their country shall have the privileges given by the law of trade union. With privileges or rights of the trade union, it should perform certain duties with respect to workers. The Primary purpose of a trade union is collective bargaining. In India, trade unions can be formed only by the persons engaged in trade or business.

Every registered trade union according to the law of trade union shall have certain functions for achievement of certain objectives which are mentioned in details further. The primary object of the trade union is to protect the interests of the workers and exploitation against him by Management or employer. In addition to this, it is the responsibility and duty of every trade union to support management for its functioning and contribute to organization or company by way of encouraging workers in a positive way for the improvement of overall efficiency of organization.

Trade unions:

- negotiate agreements with employers on pay and conditions
- discuss major changes to the workplace such as large scale redundancy
- discuss members' concerns with employers

- accompany members in disciplinary and grievance meetings
- provide members with legal and financial advice
- provide education facilities and certain consumer benefits such as discounted insurance

Meaning

Labour unions or trade unions are organizations formed by workers from related fields that work for the common interest of its members. They help workers in issues like fairness of pay, good working environment, hours of work and benefits. They represent a cluster of workers and provide a link between the management and workers.

Trade union is a voluntary organization of workers formed to protect and promote their interests through collective action. It may be formed on plant basis, industry basis, firm basis, regional basis or national basis.

Different writers and thinkers have defined the trade union differently.

A few definitions are given below:

1. Trade union is a “continuous association of wage earners for the purpose of maintaining and improving the conditions of their working lives.” **-Web**
2. “A trade union means an association of workers in one or more occupation— an association carried on mainly, for the purpose of protecting and advancing the members’ economic interests in connection with their daily work’.” **-G.D.H. Gole**
4. A trade union is a continuous association of persons in industry, whether employers, employees or independent workers—formed primarily for the purpose of the pursuit of the interest of its members and of the trade they represent. **-The Trade Union Act 1926**

Role of Trade Union

Unions carry out a number of functions. They negotiate on behalf of their members on pay scales, working hours and working conditions. These areas can include basic pay, overtime payments, holidays, health safety, promotion prospects, maternity and paternity rights and job security.

Depending on the circumstances, unions may try to protect or improve workers’ rights. They also provide information on a range of issues for their members, for instance on pensions. They help with education and training schemes and may also participate in measures designed to increase demand for the product produced and hence for labour.

Some also provide a range of benefits to their members including strike pay, sickness pay and unemployment pay. In addition many get involved in pressurizing their governments to adopt a legislation, which will benefit their members or workers in general, such as fixing a national minimum wage.

a) Towards the trade union members:

- To safeguard the workers conditions and parties, education , housing, co-operative
- To ensure health, safe, protective work condition.
- To guarantee a fair deal and social justice to workers.
- To make the workers aware about their rights and duties, settle the disputes through negotiation.

b) Towards the industrial organization:

- To promote of interest
- To help in maintenance of discipline
- To create opportunities for workers participation in management and to facilitate communication with management.
- Maintain harmonic relationship between workers and management

c) Towards the trade union organization:

- To improve financial position and improve workers network of commercial between union & its members.
- To maintain strengthen, necessary records, resolve the problem.
- To manage the Trade union organization on scientific lines.
- To train members to assume leadership position.

d) Towards the society:

- To actively participate in the development of the programs of national development such as family planning, fore situation effective implementation apply cooperation etc.
- To enable unorganized sector to organize itself.