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WOMEN EMPLOYEES PARTICIPATION IN TRADE UNIONS PUBLIC SECTOR COMPANIES



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ABSTRACT

The women begin to make up an increasingly large proportion of the workforce; trade unions are beginning to realize the benefits that women can bring to their structures in terms of increased membership and diversity. However, having an increased proportion of women in areas of public life does not automatically lead to an increase in equality. The importance of recruiting and retaining women in trade unions is matched by the need for unions to represent these members in their decision- making structures. By reflecting their membership make-up in their internal structures unions show their legitimacy and commitment to democratic principles. The union is committed to improving female participation and encourages them to seek positions of responsibility and representation. Along this line, there is continued search for solutions to overcome the barriers that limit and undervalue women's participation in the world of work. Women's participation in trade union had long been one of the important areas for promoting and protecting workers' rights in general and women's empowerment in particular.

KEY WORDS: Join in trade union, Motivation, Change in trade union, Gender discrimination

INTRODUCTION

The widely held consensus in development praxis is that the world cannot afford to do without women's full contribution at every level of social, economic and political activity. The empowerment of women is an end in itself, because it is a question of basic human rights. The continued dominance of man, woman had almost, no say in decision making in regard to her rightful role in society, until recently women have unwillingly accepted their subordinate role, during the past 60 years, and opportunities have been identified where women can play an equally productive role in the work place as men. An important factor attracting more women to employment is the hard economic necessity; felt essential for generating there won resources along with men to provide a far better development and consumption base for the family. This attitude is conspicuous in the urban middle and lower middle classes who state that they are seeking employment for improving their standard of living.

Women in developing countries generally receive lower pay than men for the same work, according to data from the international labour organization (ILO); at best; women get an average of 50 – 80 percent wages earned by their male counterparts. Female workers do not enjoy the same benefits as male workers, since women are more often relegated to contract work without any social welfare benefits, and they are the first to be laid off in time of economic difficulty. Women are also less likely to be given opportunities, training or promotion.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

In the earlier stages, male workers predominated the workforce in factories. But now women workers have increasingly taken to industrial work. Both skilled and semi-skilled women workers are entering in the industrial

work. But men are more likely to be the decision makers and the debaters. Women are of the passive, shy and quiet- too she's something about them. This acts as hindrances and gives men a chance to outsmart them. But who were dependent on wages for their lively wood those female employees facing many social employment problems and exploitation of women has been taking place in the industry. The problems of the working women participation in trade unions is very low percentage. Similarly, women working in public sector companies may have their own problems. The roll of trade union is to develop women employees by importing required skills through the union support for functioning and development of on organization and personally.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ★ To study the awareness and perception of women employees in trade unions' public sector companies in Visakhapatnam.
- ★ To changing role played by the women in the trade union in public sector companies.

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLING

The present study is confined to the public sector companies in Visakhapatnam city. The study is mainly based on two sources of data viz., Primary source and secondary source. The primary data has been collected through a structured questionnaire 120 women employees have been selected for the study. All the respondents are personally contacted and their consent was taken for conducting the detailed interview. The secondary data has been collected from textbooks, journals, articles available at different records and reports, news papers and websites, etc. The sample of women was selected on the basis of convenient sampling from Visakhapatnam. The simple statistical techniques like percentages, rankings are employed to analyses the data

Table-1 Women works join trade unions

Join trade unions	Points	Percentage	Rank
To attain economic security	336	28.0	2
To inform women workers views, aims, ides and dissatisfaction	337	28.1	1
To satisfy their social needs	308	25.6	3
To secure from unexpected economic needs like illness, accidents, injury etc.	219	18.3	4
Total	1200	100	

At attempt is made to find out reasons for joining the women worker in trade union Table presents the view of respondents regarding join in trade unions. Among the sample respondents reported that to inform women workers views, aims ideas and their dissatisfaction reasons have been getting more points. To attain economic security also got more or less equal proportion than that of first

rank reason. A considerable proportion of respondents were stated that to satisfy their social proportion of respondents stated that to satisfy their social needs is main reason to join in trade unions is third rank. Its only fourth rank of respondents reported that to sincere from unexpected economic need like illness, accidents injury etc.

Table-2 Women worker's participation in trade unions

Participation in trade union	Points	Percentage	Ranks
Informal consultation with employees	369	20.5	3
Formal consultation through joint bodies	427	23.7	1
Formal consultation though the consultative Forums constituted by Government	417	23.2	2
Women employee participation in decision making at all levels	304	16.8	4
Women employee participation in decision making at board level	283	15.7	5
Total	1800	100.00	

The above table presents women workers participation in trade unions. It is observed from the data respondents participation is very high in formal consultation through joint bodies. Similarly large extents more points of the respondents are

participating in formal consultation through the consultative forums constituted by government. It is also evident from the data the women employees' participation in decision making at all levels, and decision making at board level is very less.

Table-3 Changing the Union- Union Members

Changing the union members	Points	Percentage	Ranks
Inefficiency of the Union to serve the workers	288	16.0	5
Political considerations	334	18.5	4
Influence of friends/fellow workers	402	22.5	2
Achievements of better monetary gains	424	23.5	1
Personal likes and dislikes	352	19.5	3
Total	1800	100.00	

The reasons for changing the union were presented in the table. It is found that very higher percentage respondents stated that achievements of better monetary gains of union are the main reason to change the unions. Similarly, influences of friends / fellow workers

are also other dominating factor in changing the union. However, inefficiency of the union to serve the workers, political considerations is very less influencing reasons to change the union.

Table-4 Motivation Factors Multiple Memberships

Multiple memberships	Points	Percentage	Ranks
To get the benefits from other unions	337	18.7	4
Have opportunity to become office bearer to other positions	414	23.0	1
Influence of friends	397	22.1	3
Not to displease other unions	400	22.2	2
To be in the good looks of other leaders	252	14.0	5
Total	1800	100.00	

The factors that motivate the members to have multiple memberships are show in table. The factors were marked by the respondents in the order of priority and these were ranked on the basis of scores received by them. In this regard it is identified that a larger

extent of respondents reported that to have opportunity to become office bearer to other position, not to displease other unions second rank, Influence of friends third rank, to get the benefits from other unions fourth rank, to be in the good looks of other leaders fifth rank.

Table-5 Objective of the Unions based on Awareness of Union leaders/Member

Awareness	Points	Percentage	Ranks
To promote productivity	602	15.0	4
To ensure job security	650	16.1	2
To ensure justice to members	638	16.0	3
To promote members welfare	721	17.9	1
To educate members	584	14.5	5
To inculcate political ideology in members	255	6.3	8
To inculcate sprit of solidarity and brotherhood among the members	286	7.0	7
To further interest of political party	294	7.2	6
Total	4032	100.00	

The above table reveals that information relating objective of unions. When the respondents were asked about their union objective first rank of the respondents stated that to promote members welfare activities and second rank of the respondents reported that to ensure to ensure job security. The respondents were also stated that to educate member's fifth rank, to promote productivity fourth rank as main objectives of unions. It is observed from the data very less proportion of solidarity and brotherhood among the members seventh rank, further the respondents also viewed that to further interest

of political party sixth rank. Eighth rank of the respondents stated that to inculcate political ideology in members their union main objective. The forgone analysis reveals that almost all respondents accepted that the unions have been striving on different issues. Hence, it can be point out that union is playing a significant role for women workers. When the workers are asked about their union is playing a useful role for women workers around 77.5 per cent of the total respondents positively responded and 27 per cent of respondents are disagreed.

Table-6 Trade Union based on the Opinion of Union Leader/Member

Opinion of union leaders	Points	Percentage	Ranks
To enhance the wages	645	12.6	4
To get non-statutory welfare facilities	727	14.3	2
To have consultations and negotiations with management	732	14.3	1
To conduct workers education programmes	702	13.8	3
To undertake cultural activities	564	7.8	6
To settle employees grievances with management	393	11.2	5
To promote empty and friendship among members	382	7.5	8
To ensure justice and job security	282	5.5	9
To extend financial help to the members in times of need	276	5.4	10
Participate in the development process of organization	388	7.6	7
Total	5091	100.00	

When the respondents were questioned about useful role of the union around 77.5 per cent respondents positively responded. It is only 22.5 per cent opposed it. The above table presents information regarding the uses of union in different aspects. Among the total respondents, a significant proportion large extend reported that the union is useful to get non statutory welfare facilities and to have consultation and negotiations with management.

A considerable proportion of respondents third rank viewed that the union is benefiting to conduct workers education programs, to enhance the wages fourth rank, to settle employees grievances with management fifth rank aspects are more useful to the respondents, when compared to other aspects like extend of financial help to the members in time need, to ensure justice and job security.

Table-7 Leader/Members in relation to the Non-Useful Role of Unions

Role of unions	Points	Percentage	Ranks
Could not get enhanced wages and allowance	62	21.6	3
Could not get improved welfare benefits to employees	67	23.3	2
Biased treatment of members	56	19.5	4
Could not fight against injustice of employees	102	35.6	1
Total	287	100	

Along with uses it is also proposed to study the union not playing a useful role is presented in table. It is evident from the data about first rank of the members stated that the union could not fight against injustice of employees, and second rank of the members

reported that the union could not get improved welfare benefits to employees. While proportion of respondents recorded in the case of enhancement of wages and allowance third rank. The biased treatment of member's fourth rank is given.

Table-8 Political Affiliation of Unions based on Views of Union Women Employees

Views of women employees	Points	Percentage	Ranks
Unions can get funds from political parties to carry out different activities for women workers	436	24.0	2
Changing the women social status	462	25.4	1
Union women's power is strengthened	281	15.5	5
Women union's image is boosted at national level	341	18.8	3
Women Leaders/ members can get a chance to contest for legislative/ parliamentary elections under political party banner	295	16.3	4
Total	1815	100.00	

All the respondents are aware about political party to which the union is having alliance. The information regarding members benefited by union through the political affiliation is shown in Table. The data indicates that large proportion first rank of the respondents accepted that the women social status has been changing through political affiliation of the union. It is interesting to note from the table about second rank of the respondents stated that the unions can get the

funds from political parties to carry out different activities for women workers. The substantial proportion of respondents reported that the women unions' image is boosted at national level third rank, they also reported that women leaders / members can get a chance to contest for legislative / Parliamentary elections under political party banner fourth rank. The fifth rank of respondents viewed that the union power is strengthened. It is clear from the above analysis the women are benefited by the union through the political affiliation at large extent.

Table-9 Union female members should involve themselves in the union activities

Union activities	Points	Percentage	Ranks
Intra - mural activities	426	23.6	3
Extra - mural activities	504	28.0	1
Social - activities	464	25.8	2
Political activities	174	9.8	5
Ancillary activities	232	12.8	4
Total	1800	100.00	

The information is also collected from the respondent's views on the involvement of the union activity. The data relating to this issue is presented in Table. As can be seen from the table the members are reported that women should involve in extra - mural activities given first rank. The considerable proportions of

members are stated that the women should involve in social activities second rank, and intra - mural activities third rank. It is clear from the data very less proportion of respondents accepted that the women should involve in political activity and ancillary activities.

Table-10 Equal pay for equal work through any union

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	41	34.2
No	79	65.8
Total	120	100.0

The sample respondents were also asked about equal pay for equal work through any union .The data relating to this issue is presented in Table. As can be seen from the

table a major proportion of respondents were strangely disagreed. Around 34.2 per cent respondents are positively responded on this issue.

Table-11 Gender discrimination between the Members

	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	27	22.5
No	93	77.5
Total	120	100.0

In any industry gender discrimination between the members is taking place. It is in this connection an enquiry has been made from the respondents. It is interesting to note from the table nearly 27 (22.5 percent) accepted about the gender discrimination. While 93 (77.5 percent) of respondents did not accepted on the issue of gender discriminate as among the members of the union.

CONCLUSION

The awareness amongst the trade union leaders on the need to include women in their organization's decision making bodies or in posts of responsibility within the federations is paramount. However, despite the increasing number of women labour force in the economy and also the increasing awareness on the part of the trade union representatives about the need to enhance opportunity for women in trade union memberships and in organisation's decision making bodies, the reality is stark. Women in public sector companies disproportionately under occupy membership of trade unions and leadership positions. A large number of both male and female employees are working in public sector companies all over India. The status of the employee women depends to a great extent on the social attitude prevailing in the Trade unions. Women workers interaction with male union members in office or work place is also important to be successful in her leadership role. The Trade Union leaders do not motivate

the working women in participation of union activities. Because they say that women's not actively participation in union activities with their every day new problems or difficulties even though they are more effected. The attitude of trade union leaders should be changed. The public sector companies union should be give more importance to the women representative in unions. Women's have no involvement in decision-making role. They are only confined to functional roles. This situation should be changed by the Trade Unions. The responsibility of the society, the government and employers increases considerably to see that proper facilities are being provided to women workers. Trade unions also have responsibilities to see proper maintenance of working and service conditions. It is therefore imperative that women workers should be enrolled as members of trade unions and should take greater interest in the affairs of a trade union. Every trade union should provide special representation to women in its various councils and committees.

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