

# A Study on Role of Trade Unions in Employee Relations at St Mahamandal (MSRTC)

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**ABSTRACT:** This study examines the role of trade unions in employee relations at the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). Trade unions play an important role in protecting employee rights, improving working conditions, and maintaining healthy relations between employees and management. The main purpose of the study is to understand how trade unions influence employee motivation, job satisfaction, conflict resolution, and overall workplace harmony. The study is based on primary data collected from 50 employees using a structured questionnaire. Simple statistical tools, including percentage analysis and the chi-square test, were used to analyze the data. The findings of the study reveal that trade unions have a positive impact on employee relations at MSRTC. Most employees feel that union membership improves their job satisfaction and motivation. Trade unions help in resolving workplace disputes, protecting employee rights related to wages and benefits, and maintaining industrial peace. Although trade unions face challenges such as financial constraints of the organization and internal rivalry, they continue to play a supportive role for employees.

The study concludes that effective trade union participation is essential for creating a cooperative work environment. Strong coordination between management and trade unions can further improve employee welfare, productivity, and organizational stability.

**KEYWORDS:** Trade Unions, Employee Relations, Job Satisfaction, Motivation, MSRTC

## I. INTRODUCTION

Trade unions are organized associations formed by employees to protect and promote their collective interests related to wages, working conditions, job

security, and employee welfare. The concept of trade unions is based on the principle of collective bargaining, which enables workers to negotiate with management as a unified group rather than as individuals. This collective approach helps reduce power imbalances between employers and employees and ensures fair treatment at the workplace. Industrial relations theory highlights the importance of maintaining a balance among management, employees, and trade unions to create a harmonious and productive work environment.

Employee relations form an essential part of human resource management and refer to the policies, practices, and systems used by organizations to manage relationships with their workforce. Healthy employee relations contribute to higher productivity, better morale, and stronger organizational loyalty. Trade unions play a key role in employee relations by acting as mediators between employees and management, providing a platform for grievance redressal, influencing workplace policies, and safeguarding labor rights.

The role of trade unions is particularly significant in public sector organizations such as the Maharashtra State Road Transport Corporation (MSRTC). In MSRTC, trade unions not only represent employees' economic interests but also contribute to organizational stability by facilitating dialogue between workers and management. Through collective bargaining, unions participate in wage determination, allowances, and service conditions. Wages and dearness allowances in MSRTC are decided at the central level in consultation with recognized unions, making unions crucial negotiators in preventing disputes related to pay and benefits.

Trade unions also play an important role in labor welfare. They have successfully negotiated benefits such as night allowance, washing allowance, and line allowance for employees. While only a few unions provide direct financial assistance to members during accidents or death, negotiated welfare measures have positively influenced employee satisfaction and helped maintain industrial peace. Additionally, unions support grievance redressal by addressing issues related to unfair treatment, workplace safety, and violations of employee rights, thereby preventing conflicts from escalating.

Despite their importance, trade unions in MSRTC face several challenges. Political influence and external leadership often divert union focus from core labor issues. The existence of multiple unions leads to rivalry and fragmentation, weakening collective bargaining power. Financial instability of MSRTC further limits management's ability to meet union demands, resulting in prolonged disputes and strikes. Employees also face financial problems such as low salaries, irregular income, rising living costs, healthcare expenses, and difficulties in retirement planning. Social challenges like poor work-life balance, health risks, stress, discrimination, and limited career growth further affect employee well-being.

In this context, trade unions play a vital role in addressing both financial and social problems of MSRTC employees. They negotiate fair wages, allowances, pensions, and insurance benefits while also advocating for health, safety, and welfare measures. By supporting employees during personal and professional crises, trade unions help create a secure and supportive work environment. Overall, effective trade union participation strengthens employee relations, enhances morale, and contributes to organizational stability and efficiency in MSRTC.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Adhikary and Banerjee (2022)** investigated the evolving role of trade unions in India during transitional phases of the economy. They found that as employees became more proactive and protective of their interests, union actions tended toward greater militancy. Their chi-square-based study revealed that raw legislation and union activism interacted strongly during restructuring periods, and unions played a key role in shielding workers' rights under reform measures.

**Bose and Mitra (2023)** offered a comprehensive

overview of trade-union involvement in wage and salary policies in India. They reported that unions were still influencing wage levels, spill-over effects, and salary administration, but that rising informalisation and flexible employment were eroding their traditional leverage. Their review concluded that unions had to adapt to remain relevant in the face of cost-of-living pressures and shifting employment contracts.

**Palanikumar and Arumugasamy (2025)** examined employees' perceptions of trade unions in the context of industrial relations in a South Indian state transport corporation. They discovered that workers viewed unions as essential for collective bargaining and employment security, but many also felt that unions lacked responsiveness to individual grievances and modern organisational practices. Their study emphasized that employee trust in unions varied significantly with union transparency and involvement in everyday workplace issues.

**Kulkarni and Datta (2024)** studied the revitalisation strategies of Indian trade unions especially with respect to migrant workers. They found that unions differed in approach—some adopted broad class-based representation while others prioritised particularistic strategies focused on intersectional vulnerabilities of migrant labour. Their analysis concluded that union adaptation to the informal economy and migrant workforce was central to sustaining their significance in India's changing labour landscape.

## III METHODOLOGY

### Research Design

A descriptive research design is applied in this study because the objective is to describe the current scenario of employee relations, trade union activities, and their impact on employees' work environment.

### Objectives of the Study

- To examine the role of trade unions in promoting fair labor practices and protecting employee rights.
- To analyze the impact of trade unions on employee motivation and job satisfaction.
- To study how trade unions contribute to resolving workplace conflicts and maintaining industrial harmony.
- To assess the influence of trade unions on overall organizational productivity and efficiency.

- To explore the broader socio-economic significance of trade unions in shaping labor policies and workforce management.

### Hypotheses

#### Null Hypothesis ( $H_0$ ):

Trade unions have no significant effect on employee motivation and job satisfaction.

#### Alternative Hypothesis ( $H_1$ ):

Trade unions have a significant effect on employee motivation and job satisfaction

### Sources of Data

**Primary Data:** Primary data is collected directly from MSRTC employees using a structured questionnaire and interviews. Questions focus on employees' interactions with trade unions, participation in union activities, grievance resolution experiences, and perceptions of union effectiveness.

#### Secondary Data:

Secondary data includes:

- Official MSRTC reports and circulars on employee relations
- Research papers, journals, and books on trade unions and industrial relations.
- News articles and publications covering MSRTC employee issues

### Sample Design

**Sampling Technique:** The Simple Random Sampling (SRS) technique is used to select respondents. Every employee in the selected departments has an equal chance of being included, reducing bias and ensuring a representative sample of employees regarding experiences and perceptions of trade unions.

**Sample Size:** 50 MSRTC employee

**Sample Area:** Amravati city.

**Sample Universe:** The universe of this study will be Amravati city.

### Tools and Techniques

Percentage analysis, tables, bar graphs, and Chi-square test were used for data analysis and hypothesis testing.

### Scope and Limitations

This study examines the role of trade unions in employee relations at MSRTC, focusing on their functions, grievance handling, and role in creating cooperation between employees and management.

The study is limited by a short time period, dependence on employee opinions, and focus on only one organization, so the findings cannot be generalized widely.

Future research can expand this study by comparing trade unions across different industries, regions, or

countries to identify better practices for improving employee relations.

## III. INTERPRETATIONS

**Table 1 Analysis of Do unions treat employees fairly.**

| Response         | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Always           | 16                 | 32             |
| Most of the time | 18                 | 36             |
| Sometimes        | 10                 | 20             |
| Rarely           | 6                  | 12             |
| Total            | 50                 | 100            |

**Graph 1 Analysis of Do unions treat employees fairly**

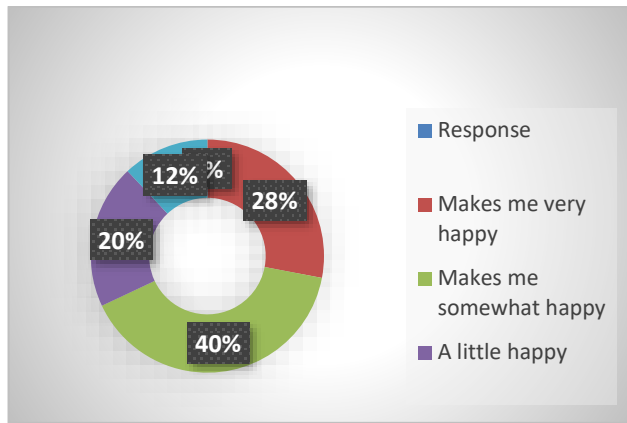


**Interpretation :-** From the above table, it is interpreted that 32% respondents feel unions always treat employees fairly, while 36% respondents feel unions treat employees fairly most of the time. Further, 20% respondents feel fairness is shown sometimes, and 12% respondents feel it is rarely practiced.

**Table 2 How does union membership affect your satisfaction**

| Response                | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-------------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Makes me very happy     | 14                 | 28             |
| Makes me somewhat happy | 20                 | 40             |
| A little happy          | 10                 | 20             |
| No change               | 6                  | 12             |
| Total                   | 50                 | 100            |

**Graph no. 2 - How does union membership affect your satisfaction**



**Interpretation:-** From the above table, it is interpreted that 28% respondents feel union membership makes them very happy, while 40% respondents feel somewhat happy. Further, 20% respondents feel slightly happy, and only 12% respondents feel no change in job satisfaction.

**Table 3 How are disputes solved with unions**

| Response            | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Always solve fairly | 15                 | 30             |
| Solve most issues   | 17                 | 34             |
| Solve sometimes     | 12                 | 24             |
| Rarely solve        | 6                  | 12             |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>50</b>          | <b>100</b>     |

**Graph 3 How are disputes solved with unions**



**Interpretation :-**From the above table, it is interpreted that 30% respondents feel unions always solve disputes fairly, while 34% respondents feel most issues are solved. Further, 24% respondents feel disputes are solved sometimes, and 12% respondents feel unions rarely solve disputes.

**Table 4 How do unions improve productivity**

| Response            | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|---------------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Make work smoother  | 16                 | 32             |
| Suggest better ways | 14                 | 28             |
| Encourage employees | 12                 | 24             |
| No improvement      | 8                  | 16             |
| <b>Total</b>        | <b>50</b>          | <b>100</b>     |

**Graph 4 How do unions improve productivity**



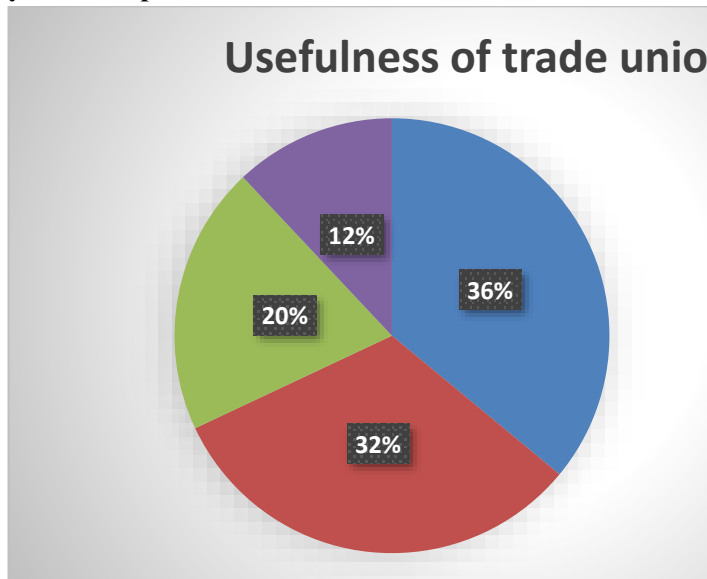
**Interpretation :-** From the above table, it is interpreted that 32% respondents feel unions make work smoother, while 28% respondents feel unions suggest better working methods. Further, 24% respondents feel encouraged by unions, whereas 16% respondents feel unions do not improve productivity.

**Table 5 Overall, how useful are trade unions in your workplace**

| Response        | No. of Respondents | Percentage (%) |
|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|
| Very useful     | 18                 | 36             |
| Useful          | 16                 | 32             |
| Slightly useful | 10                 | 20             |
| Not useful      | 6                  | 12             |
| <b>Total</b>    | <b>50</b>          | <b>100</b>     |



**Graph 4.5 Overall, how useful are trade unions in your workplace**



**Interpretation :-** From the above table, it is interpreted that 36% respondents find trade unions very useful, while 32% respondents find them useful. Further, 20% respondents feel unions are slightly useful, and only 12% respondents feel they are not useful.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that cryptocurrency is becoming popular among investors in Amravati city. Most respondents are aware of cryptocurrency and have some level of confidence about it. However, many investors are still careful due to high risk, price fluctuations, and lack of clear government rules.

The study clearly shows that investor perception strongly affects whether people are willing to invest in cryptocurrency for the long term. People who have positive opinions, better knowledge, and higher trust are more willing to invest. On the other hand, fear of loss, lack of trust, and confusion about rules make investors hesitant.

Overall, most investors see cryptocurrency as a supporting investment rather than a main one. With proper education, better security, and clear regulations, cryptocurrency can become a more acceptable long-term investment option in the future.

#### FINDINGS

This study was conducted to understand investor perception about cryptocurrency as a long-term investment in Amravati city. The study is based on responses from 50 respondents and uses percentage analysis and the chi-square test.

The findings show that awareness of cryptocurrency is high. About 36% respondents actively invest or trade in cryptocurrency, while 40% know about it but have not invested. However, 16% have only heard about it, and 8% do not know anything about cryptocurrency, showing hesitation despite awareness.

Regarding knowledge confidence, 20% respondents are very confident and 44% are somewhat confident. On the other hand, 24% have low confidence and 12% are not confident at all, indicating limited understanding among many investors.

Risk is a major factor affecting perception. Around 32% respondents are most concerned about the risk of losing money, 28% focus on high returns, 24% are affected by market volatility, and 16% worry about legal regulations.

Trust in cryptocurrency platforms is mixed. About 28% respondents fully trust established platforms, while 40% have partial trust. However, 20% have low trust and 12% have no trust, showing security concerns.

Social media strongly influences opinions. About 24% respondents have a strongly positive view and 36% have a somewhat positive view, while 28% feel neutral and 12% feel negative.

Finally, for long-term investment, 16% respondents would consider cryptocurrency as a main investment and 44% would invest a small portion. However, 24% are unsure and 16% do not want to invest, showing a cautious attitude among investors.

#### SUGGESTIONS

- There should be more awareness and education programs about cryptocurrency. Many investors have heard about cryptocurrency but do not understand how it works. Simple workshops, online videos, and sessions in colleges can help people learn the basics clearly.
- Clear government rules and regulations related to cryptocurrency are also necessary. Proper laws can reduce fear among investors and increase their confidence in investing.
- Cryptocurrency platforms should focus on improving security. Strong protection against hacking, fraud, and misuse will help investors trust these platforms more.
- Investors should avoid investing all their money in cryptocurrency. It is safer to invest only a small portion and balance it with traditional options like mutual funds or gold.
- Investors should also be careful while depending

on social media for information. They should rely on trusted and verified sources instead of rumors or misleading posts.

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