

A COMPARATIVE PERCEPTION OF LABOUR UNREST*

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Labour discontent in industrial organizations manifests itself in varied forms. This paper examines the causes of labour unrest and on the basis of empirical data analyses the differences and similarities in perception of labour unrest amongst management executives, union officials and workers in public and private sector undertakings.

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Introduction

Conflict between labour and management is a universal phenomenon in developed and developing countries. There are various causes of industrial disputes arising out of terms and conditions of employment, wages, bonus, rising cost of living etc. All these causes give rise to industrial conflict. Strike is not only an economic phenomenon but also a social phenomenon expressing the aims and aspirations of the working class. Strikes constitute militant and organized protests against existing industrial conditions. They are symptoms of industrial unrest in the same way that boils are symptoms of a disordered system. They are symptoms of more fundamental maladjustments, injustices and economic disturbances. Industrial unrest, frustration and discontent arise when workers fail to achieve their economic and social objectives. Parul Chakravarthy (1969) feels that it may assume various forms. It may be inarticulate and manifest itself in loitering, pilfering, gossiping, disregard for company's property, indifferent attitude to work, high rate of absenteeism, tardiness and so on. As frustration grows, this diffused feeling of discontent gradually takes definite shape and results in deliberation and organisation of labour. Workers iden-

tify certain terms and conditions of work as the cause of their dissatisfaction. Then industrial unrest becomes articulate in which case it involves open disputes, speeches, meetings, demonstrations, processions on the street and other similar expressions. Strike is, however, one of the most spectacular and dramatic expressions of unrest. The expression of industrial unrest thus ranges from these vague indications at one end of the scale to organised go-slow, strikes and revolutionary activity at the other—the form of expression being determined by a complex mechanism of economic, political, technical and psychological factors.

From an analysis of industrial disputes by causes, we find that wages and allowances is the most important single cause of labour unrest. It reveals that 553 disputes (30 per cent of the total) in 1975 related to wages and allowances and 381 (20.6 per cent) to personnel. In general there has not been a significant change in the distribution of industrial disputes by causes.

The number of mandays lost due to strikes and lockouts was markedly less at 216 lakhs in 1975 against 403 lakhs in 1974. In conformity with the past pattern, more than 50 per cent of the industrial disputes related to wages and allowances and personnel during 1975.

* The data reported in this paper are drawn from the author's unpublished Ph.D. dissertation "Industrial Relations in Public and Private Sector Undertakings" submitted to the University of Ranchi, 1974.

The evils of multiplicity of trade unions and rivalry among them is one of the important factors responsible for labour unrest in our country. The number of registered trade unions has almost doubled during the last ten years without any appreciable improvement in their total membership or in their financial resources. The existence of a number of unions in the same industry or establishment has been giving rise to various problems such as indiscipline, violence and industrial unrest to the detriment of the interests of the workers themselves.

One of the leading central trade unions has stated the following main causes for labour unrest in the public undertakings.

(a) Bad terms and conditions of service, lack of provision of a need based minimum wage or any scientific wage policy, absence of bonus scheme, bad housing etc.

(b) Unsatisfactory living conditions;

(c) top hierarchy management and migratory executives;

(d) lack of proper personnel management;

(e) Non-recognition of trade union and lack of facilities for collective bargaining;

(f) Inter-union rivalry;

(g) absence of job satisfaction;

(h) unhealthy working conditions;

(i) steep rise in prices and consequent fall in real wages; and

(j) Partisan politics.

The labour unrest in our country is mainly due to economic conditions. The depression in real wage, due to steep rise in prices, coupled with rising expectations is an important cause of labour unrest. The workers wages have not been commensurate

with the rise in prices. The standard of living of the industrial workers primarily depends upon their real earnings and the trend of rise or fall in real wages.

Method

The present study attempted to investigate the comparative perception of the causes of labour unrest on the part of three groups i.e. labour, union officials and management executives. Each group was drawn from two comparable steel plants — one in public and another in private sector. The sample for this research consisted of two hundred workers, fifty union and fifty management officials (both from top and middle management) drawn from each undertaking. The methods of stratified random sampling and purposive random sampling were adopted for the selection of the sample. The study was conducted during the year 1973-74. In this study, the congruence of the perception of the workers, their union leaders and management executives was explored, on fifteen possible causes of labour unrest.

Results and Discussion

Ranks were given to different answers and the rank correlation co-efficient is computed. The interpretation of the data is given in the next page.

From Table No. 2 it is evident that:

(i) The correlation ($Rho=0.85$) between the replies of workers and union officials of Unit "A" show significant correspondence as to the causes of labour unrest. The degree of importance to certain items, however varies. Both union and workers gave first preference to lack of promotion as the reason of labour unrest. The workers ranked bonus as the second important factor while union leaders assigned to it third

TABLE 1

RANK ORDERS ASSIGNED TO CAUSES OF LABOUR UNREST IN UNIT A AND UNIT B

Items	Workers		Management		Union	
	Unit A	Unit B	Unit A	Unit B	Unit A	Unit B
(a) Wages and Allowances	4	1	3.5	2	9	2.5
(b) Bonus	2	2	1	1	3	1
(c) Personnel	6	5	2	4	5	5
(d) Lay-off	15	15	15	10	15	11
(e) Retrenchment	12	12	12	9	13	14
(f) Leave & Hours of work	7	9	9.5	8	8	10
(g) Lack of Welfare amenities	11	8	13	7	6	7
(h) Unfair working conditions	8	6	14	6	7	6
(i) Unfair Labour practices	5	7	6	11	2	9
(j) Non-recognition of Union	14	11	5	3	11	2.5
(k) Unfair treatment by the management	3	4	7	12	4	13
(l) Lack of safety measures	10	14	8	13	12	4
(m) Promotion	1	3	3.5	15	1	8
(n) Transfer	13	13	11	5	14	12
(o) Non-implementation of Labour Laws	9	10	9.5	14	10	15

TABLE 2

THE RANK-ORDER CORRELATION (RHO) OF CAUSES OF LABOUR UNREST BETWEEN (A) WORKERS AND UNION (B) WORKERS AND MANAGEMENT AND (C) UNION AND MANAGEMENT OF UNIT "A" AND UNIT "B"

Unit	Workers and Union	Workers and Management	Union and Management
"A"	0.85*	0.69*	0.58**
"B"	0.40+	0.51**	0.61**

TABLE 3

THE RANK-ORDER CORRELATION (RHO) OF CAUSES OF LABOUR UNREST BETWEEN (A) WORKERS AND WORKERS (B) UNION AND UNION AND (C) MANAGEMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF UNIT "A" AND "B"

Unit "A"	And	Unit "B"
Workers and Workers	:	0.89*
Union and Union	:	0.26+
Management and Management	:	0.27+
* Significant beyond	0.01 level	
** Significant beyond	0.05 level	
+ Not Significant		

preference. Unfair treatment by the management constitute one of the important causes of employees' dissatisfaction as is evident from the third and fourth rank assigned to it by the union executives and workers. While workers consider wages and allowances as the fourth important cause, unions view it a relatively less important factor as is evident from the above ranking (9th). According to the union people, unfair labour practices on the part of management is an important cause of workers dissatisfaction (2nd rank). Certain other factors like lay-off, retrenchment lack of welfare amenities, unfair working conditions, transfer have occupied low ranks in the workers and union officials list.

(ii) The correlation ($Rho = 0.69$) between the responses of workers and management officials show a significant relationship. Both the parties perceive that promotion, bonus, wages and allowances, unfair labour practices constitute some of the important causes of industrial strife. As regards other causes the view of the workers is in agreement with that of the management and union.

(iii) The correlation ($Rho=0.58$) between the replies of union and management also indicate significant correspondence. The management officials attached more importance to bonus (1st rank), personnel and wages as compared to the union officials as is evident from their rank assignments.

(iv) The correlation ($Rho=0.40$) between the responses of workers and union officials of Unit "B" indicate no significant difference regarding degree of importance in respect of some items of labour unrest. The union officials are in agreement with the workers that wages and allowances, bonus, personnel, unfair working conditions, promotion etc., are the important

causes of industrial disputes but not lay-off, retrenchment, transfer etc. It is of importance to note that non-recognition of representative union has been assigned 2.5 rank by the union in contrast to eleventh preference given by the workers of Unit B. Unfair treatment by the management was rated fourth by the workers. On the other hand union officials assigned to it less importance as is evident from their ranking (13th).

(v) The correlation ($Rho=0.51$) between the responses of workers and management indicate significant relationship. The workers and management officials are in agreement with the Union that wages, bonus, personnel are the important reasons for workers' dissatisfaction.

(vi) The correlation ($Rho=0.61$) between the replies of union and management people show significant correspondence. Both management and unions representatives rated bonus first, wages second, and personnel fourth cause of unrest among industrial employees. Union officials viewed lack of safety measures as one of the important causes (4th rank) while management representatives listed it 13th.

Table No. 3 clearly shows that:

(i) The correlation ($Rho=0.89$) between the replies of workers of Unit "A" and "B" indicate significant correspondence. The workers of both the organisations ranked bonus, wages, promotion, unfair treatment by the management, personnel as the most important factors of labour unrest. Both assigned less importance to factors like lay-off, retrenchment, non-recognition of union, transfer etc.

(ii) The correlation ($Rho=0.26$) between the responses of union officials of Unit "A" and "B" indicates insignificant correspon-

dence. The union officials of both the organisations ranked promotion and bonus respectively as the first important reason for workers grievances. Other important causes according to both group of officials are personnel, unfair labour practices etc. It is significant to point out that the union representatives of Unit "A" attributed less weight (9th rank) to wages and allowances factor as compared to their counterparts in Unit "B" (2.5).

(iii) The correlation ($Rho=0.27$) between the responses of management executives of both the organisations reveal no significant correspondence. Bonus occupied first in order of importance according to both. According to them personnel causes are also important factors (2nd and 4th rank). It is interesting to note that while promotion occupies 35th position in the management list of Unit A, it has been assigned

15th position by the management of Unit B.

Conclusion

The results of this study reflect the fact that the economic factors have been given supreme importance by workers, unions and management, of both the organisations. It also reveals that lack of promotion as the cause of labour unrest has occupied a dominant place and workers and union officials of Unit "A" gave first preference to this factor. Other important causes of unrest among workers as mentioned in order of preference are personnel and unfair labour practices. As is evident from the tables, lay off, retrenchment and transfer have been assigned relatively much less importance. Thus the above analysis reveals differences and similarities in perception of labour unrest among management, union people and workers of both the units.

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A comparative analysis of antitrust policy against collusion in transition economies: challenges for. Effectiveness. Basic research program working papers. Series: public administration wp BRP 20/pa/2014. This Working Paper is an output of a research project implemented within NRU HSE's Annual Thematic Plan for Basic and Applied Research. Any opinions or claims contained in this Working Paper do not necessarily reflect the views of HSE. Andrey V. Makarov. 1. A comparative analysis of antitrust policy against collusion in transition economies: Challenges for effectiveness. 2. unrest definition: 1. disagreements or fighting between different groups of people: 2. disagreements or fighting. Learn more. The incorporation of rural gentry also prevented unrest in the countryside, by aligning the main possessors of armed force with the imperial state. From the Cambridge English Corpus. Relatives further highlighted the reduction of inner unrest, that accompanied the older drugs, as an advantage of clozapine. From the Cambridge English Corpus. They worried, too, about the potential for fostering labor unrest at a time when unions were growing in influence. From the Cambridge English Corpus. This might happen as a result of such things as: domestic political unrest, and war-related damage to produ 3.10 a comparative perception causes of industrial disputes. The causes of conflict between Labour and Management. usually remain the same wherever capitalist economy prevails. Management and Labour Officials were examined based on 12. possible causes of labour unrest. 6. R.A. Lester, Economics of Labour, Macmillan Company, New. York, 1964, p.3. 93. 3.11 results and discussion. Prolonged labor, labor that does not progress, or failure to progress is when labor lasts longer than expected. Studies suggest that this affects around 8 percent of those giving birth. It can happen for a number of reasons. The American Pregnancy Association define prolonged labor as lasting over 20 hours if it is a first delivery. For those who have previously given birth, failure to progress is when labor lasts more than 14 hours. If prolonged labor happens during the early, or latent, phase it can be tiring but does not usually lead to complications. However, if it happens during the activ