

**EFFECTIVE LABOUR UNION AND MANAGEMENT  
RELATIONS AT WORKPLACE: SYNERGY THAT DRIVES  
ORGANISATIONAL NICHE**

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**ABSTRACT**

The objective of this paper is to emphasise the impact of efficient and effective labour union and management relations on the growth and leading edge of an organisation. Effective labour union and management relations has been a pertinent issue which has continued to generate apprehension and anxiety in the mind of all organisations and individuals worldwide because of the inherent imperatives of appropriate synergy between labour union and management both of which this paper regard as inseparables in steering an organisation towards achieving the stated goals and objectives organisation-wide.

**KEYWORDS:** Labour union, Management, Industrial relations, Synergy, Organisation.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The availability of a solid and empathy-driven labour union and management synergy is a pre-requisite for the rapid development and transformation of any organisation. Since the provision and efficient management of this synergy is best facilitated by the existence and appropriate functioning of both management and the union, it follows therefore that the bi-partite relationship has a vital role to play by making their vast commitment and support available to stimulate and engender niche, efficiency and enhanced productivity organisation-wide. Labour and management relations is concerned with the systems(culture,norms etc), rules(ways) and procedures(how) used by unions and employers to determine the reward for effort and other conditions of employment, to protect the interest of the employed and their employers and to regulate the ways in which employers treat their employees. The systems and procedures will include the process of collective bargaining as well as formal procedures agreements. It is concerned also with the roles of the parties involved in the system management, union officials and employees and the relationship between them. Finally, it covers the industrial relations strategies adopted by management and unions and the procedural agreements evolved to enable the system to operate.

The relationship between employers their employees as individuals are matters which concern groups of workers and there are also individual problems which the workers as a whole believe to be their concern. Some problems even need to be considered on a national scale.

### **THE HISTORY OF INDUSTRIAL AND LABOUR RELATIONS**

Since the past two decades in Nigeria, no single factor has exerted more influence upon human resources management than labour. The nation has witnessed, within the past ten years (1985 to date), a long chain of industrial action which has resulted in the loss of critical man hours and slowing down of the economic recovery programme. It was observed that more than 1.100 trade disputes handled within this period resulted of over 569 strikes and lockouts with a loss of about 7.5 million men hours. Undoubtedly, lack of agreement between the interest of the social partners has caused conflict-inducing situations as workers demanded for higher wages and better conditions of service in a bid to maximize their income, while employers resisted such requests because they feared that their profit would be eroded.

Specifically, in a nation-wide strike by the joint Public Services Union (NJPS) of eleven striking trade unions in February, 1993, economic observers “estimated a loss of about N170.4 million at an average of N20.6 million given the projected Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of about N1.034 billion for the fiscal year. This translated to a daily growth of about N283.4 million of which producers of government services who went on strike for eight days were expected to contribute about 7.3 percent.” (Business times, Monday, Feb.22, 1993p.15).

Through the process of collective bargaining, organized labour has established patterns of employee-management relations not only in unionized companies but also in those which strike to maintain non-union status.

Wage levels, fringe benefits, and working conditions for millions of employees now reflect decisions made jointly by unions and management. Human resources policies and practices are no longer determined unilaterally by management in many organizations but are now jointly determined by active participation by workers. Unions have become such a formidable force in Nigeria and also active in general social and economic spheres of individual communities and the effect of the 1996 emergent restructuring of Trade unions in Nigeria. They attempt to influence the decisions of both State and Federal Government in such areas as employee recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation, health and safety, in recent years, for example, the Nigerian Labour congress (NLC), has negotiated with government on minimum wage, housing policy, impact of structural adjustment policies on workers; and a number of general economic policies. In 1988, the NLC negotiated with the Nigeria Employers' Consultative Association (NECA), the logistics for the implementation of the 1988 incomes policy guidelines. Because of the prominent role that unions play in many organizations and in our society as a whole, human resources management has become much more complex. An understanding of the labour movement is essential for practitioners and students of personnel management.

Significant features of Nigeria's industrial relations scene manifest themselves in the formal and informal systems of industrial relations. The feature is in two parts.

- (i) The formal system of industrial relations comprises the overt process of negotiation and bargaining between employers and employees at the national level for each industry, the results of which are embodied in written agreements.

- (ii) The informal system consists of local arrangement arrived at by silent agreement or through custom and practice in the day to day dealings between employers and employees at local or plant level.

Both of these aspects are important to the practical working of industrial relations. Both employers and employees may, from time to time, find that their national level decision have pre-empted at local level or vice verse.

### **THE LABOUR UNION MOVEMENT IN NIGERIA**

Yesufu (1962) informed that social intuitions such as guilds and craft societies, bronze workers, leather workers, and wood carvers existed before colonial time in the traditional Africa communities.

However, the transition pattern was not definite. It was either a sharp break between the decline of the guilds and births of the trade unions or a gradual and organic change from the guilds to modern to modern trade unions. But in his own view, Fashoyin (1992) emphasized that whether earlier and societies transformed into modern day unions or not, they performed the same duties as they do today. Such duties include:-

- (i) Regulation of their trades, such as ensuring that jobs were performed according to laid down standards and rates set for each job;  
Serving as a social and political forms for their members; and

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

The rule making and regulating processes of industrial relations take place within the framework of government, national, corporate and plant institutions which operate according to certain stated or unstated principles. These principles, and the framework within which they operate, vary substantially from country to country. In the U.K. the institutions consist of:

1. **THE GOVERNMENT** which after the ill-fated 1971 Industrial Relations Act has withdrawn from an attempt to control unions by legal sanctions, or to impose industrial relations systems on to the unions. Instead, the emphasis has been on creating a legal framework which confers rights on employees and duties on employers by such acts as the 1974 Trade Union and Labour Relations Act the 1975 Employment Protection Act.

The Nigerian government has created institutions such as the Advisory, conciliation and Arbitration Service which, besides carrying out the function set out in its title has the objective of

encouraging the development of collective bargaining and the development and, where necessary, reform of collective bargaining machinery. It has specific duties conferred on it by the Employment Protection Act to investigate and make recommendations on union recognition cases. There is also a network of industrial tribunals to hear unfair dismissal, equal pay and equal opportunity cases and other matters raised where employers are failing to comply with the provisions of employment legislation. A Central Arbitration Committee exists to deal, inter alia, with union recognition problems and the failure of employers to disclose information to employees for negotiating purposes as required by law. A further influence exerted by the government is over incomes policy, where recently the aim has been to achieve the maximum degree of consensus in developing an approach with a limited range of sanctions for employers who contravene it.

2. THE UNIONS whose objectives can broadly be defined as being:

- (a) to redress the bargaining advantage of the individual worker vis-a-vis the individual employer by substituting joint or collective action for individual action;
- (b) to secure improved terms and conditions of employment for their members and the maximum degree of security to enjoy those terms and conditions;
- (c) to obtain improved status for the worker in his work
- (d) to increase the extent to which union can exercise democratic control over decisions that affect their interests by power sharing at the national, corporate and plant level.

The union power is exerted primarily at two levels – at the industry-wide level, to establish joint regulation on basic wages and hours with an employers' association or equivalent; and at the plant level, where the shop stewards' organizations exercise joint control over some aspect of the organization of work and localized terms and conditions of employments. Unions are party to national, local and plant procedure agreements which govern their actions to a greater or lesser extent, depending on their power and on local circumstances.

Union could be said to be in the business of managing discontent and Clive Jenkins referred to the professional union bargainer as sitting on 'a pinnacle of institutionalized indignation'. But it does not follow that union introduce conflict - Jenkins also suggested that 'a union official is vocationally a gladiator because the work of the union is basically defensive.' It can be said that the role of a union is simply to provide a highly organized and continuous form of expression for sectional interests which would exist anyway. Such conflicts of interest are inherent in working



relationships and unions can contribute to their solution by bringing issues out into the open and jointly defining with employers procedures for dealing with them. Job regulation aims to provide a framework of minimum rights and rules. Internal regulations is concerned with procedures for dealing with grievances, redundancies or disciplinary problems and rules concerning the operation of the pay system and the rights of workers. External regulation is carried out by means of employment legislations, the rules of trade unions and employers association, and the regulative content of national or local agreements.

3. The employer or the management of an organisation.

The type of rules applicable to labour management relations are :

1. *Procedural* which deal with such matters as the methods to be used and the rules to be followed in the settlement of disputes and regulate the behaviour of the parties to the agreement.
2. *Substantive* which refer to working hours or to other job terms and conditions in the area of employment covered by the agreement. These rules regulate the behaviour of employers and employees as parties to individual contracts of employment.

Procedural rules are intended to regulate conflict between the parties to collective bargaining and when their importance is emphasized a premium is being placed on industrial peace, and less regard is being paid to the terms on which it may be obtained.

Substantive rules settle the rights and obligations attached to jobs. It is interesting to note that more on procedural rather than on substantive rules.

The system of rules is not necessarily a formal system. The rules appear in many more or less formal or informal guises: in legislation and statutory orders, in trade union regulations, in collective agreements and arbitration awards, in social conventions, in managerial decisions as well as in accepted custom and practice.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

*Labour-management relations can be regarded as a system or web or rules regulating employment relations*

The (British) Trade Union and Labour Act 1972, describes trade union as an organization which either.

- i. Consists wholly or mainly of workers of one or more descriptions, whose principal purposes include the regulation of relations between workers of that or those descriptions and employers or employers' associations, or consists of such organizations or their representatives.
- ii. In Nigeria, section (1) of the Trade Unions Act 1973 "defines a Trade Union as any combination of workers or employers whether temporary or permanent, the purpose of which is to regulate the terms and conditions of employment of workers. Whether the combination in question would or would not, apart from this decree, be an unlawful combination by reason of any of its purpose being in restraint of trade, and whether its purposes do not include the provision of benefits for workers". From the definition, it will be appreciated that for an organization to qualify as a trade Union, it must fulfil the following pre-conditions:
  - a. the combination must be of workers or employers
  - b. it must be for established purpose of regulating the terms and conditions of employment of workers. When compared, the British definition of trade union to accord recognition to representatives of either the employers or employees in trade union formation which the Nigerian definition does not emphasise.

*Oluwasanya (2011) posited that Labour-management relations is a dynamic system, web, rules and regulations governing employment relations, most importantly, checks and balances, caveats, improvements, sweeteners among others.* The essence of the system is that the rules are jointly agreed by the representatives of the parties to employment relations, which makes for readier acceptance than if they are imposed by a third party, such as the State.

Different meanings have been attributed to the word "management" some people see it as referring to a group of people, they think of a management team or a group of individuals in an organization.

Management has also been defined as the process of attaining organization's goals by effectively leading and controlling the organization's human, physical, financial and informational resources.

Drucker (1974) defined management as a basic function and role that it cannot be considered a separate function. It is the whole business seen from the point of view of its end result which is to steer subordinates willingly and enthusiastically towards achieving organisation's goals and objectives.

Breech (1989) sees management as a social process entailing responsibility for the effective and economic planning and regulation of the operation of an enterprise in fulfilment of a given purpose or task.

Robbins and Coulter (1966) viewed the term management as refers to the process of coordinating work activities so that they are completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people. This definition reveals management as an on-going activity in pursuit of goals and making use of people. It denotes a function as well as the people who discharge the function. Management can be more scientifically defined as the coordination of the human and material resources of an organization, directing and controlling in order to attain or obtain organizational objectives.

**Management as an art:** Follet, a renowned management scholar defined management as ‘*the art of getting things done through people*’. This is often referred to as practice of management. Art can be defined as ‘‘a skill exercised in terms of the individual personality of the practitioner. Thus, no two drawings of the same object from two artists will be exactly the same. Each artist’s perception is affected by his personal bias, perception, mindset, paradigm, prejudice, belief, background, emotions and gender. The practising manager’s skill is a key variable in the successful practice of management.

**Management as a science:** Taylor is the founder of scientific management. Management as a science is often referred to as the theories of management. Science can be defined as a unified and systematically arranged body of knowledge dealing with facts or truths and application of general laws and principles. It focuses on objectivity. Today’s managers rely on quantitative and mathematical and statistical techniques. Management as an applied science borrowed many theoretical concepts from disciplines such as sociology and psychology.

**Management as people:** In the words of Oluwasanya (2010) ‘*People are people because they have people*’ he further opined that management or leadership is follower-ship, it is the willingness of people to follow that makes a good manager or leader. Management as people also refers to a group of persons or team which has clear roles and responsibilities within a formal organization with the attendant empowerment, authority and responsibility for the achievement and attainment of the organization’s focus, goals and objectives.

**Management as a career:** As a career or occupation, management is broad. Management itself can be regarded as a career, but it also presents a variety of interesting and challenging careers



focused on specialised occupations in such fields as production, marketing, finance, and personnel.

**Management as a practice:** Managers practise management just as doctors practise medicine, lawyers, law and surveyor surveying. Managers use social and behavioural sciences such as economics, psychology, sociology, natural and physical sciences such as biology, mathematics, and physics as tools in aid of the practice of management.

**Management as a profession:** Management according to Schein by some criteria is indeed a profession because it entails the performance of a specific function. It is now prevalent in both business and non-business organization wherein there are obvious sign that management is working toward increased professionalism. Management is also seen as a process demanding the performance of a specific function. Hence, management is a profession. The growth of format management training in graduate schools and through executive development programmes is spreading a body of accumulated knowledge and teaching the skills that are the hall mark of professionalism.

**Management as a universal human activity:** This occurs whenever people take responsibility for an activity and consciously try to shape its progress and outcome. People called managers are not alone in requiring the skills of management. As individual we run our lives and careers: in this respect we are managing. Family members manage children, elderly dependants and households. Management is both a universal human activity and a distinct occupation. In the first sense, people manage an infinite range of activities; When human beings 'manage' their work, they take responsibility for its purpose, progress and outcome by exercising the quintessentially human capacity to stand back from experience and to regard it prospectively, in terms of what will happen; reflectively, in terms of what is happening; and retrospectively, in terms of what has happened. Thus management is an expression of human agency, the capacity activity to shape and direct the world, rather than simply react to it. (Hales, 2001, 2)

Stewart (1987) expressed this idea when she described a manager as someone who gets things done with the aid of people and other resources, which leads to a definition of management as the activity of getting things done with the aid of people and other resources. So described, management is a feature of most human circumstances domestic, social and political – as well as in formally established organizations.

**Management as a distinct role:** management as a distinct role develops when activities previously embedded in the work itself become the responsibility not of the employee, but of owners or their agents. Human action can also separate the 'management' element of a task from the 'work' element, thus creating 'managers' who are in some degree apart from those doing the work. Management as a distinct role emerges when external agents, such as a private owner of capital, or the state, gain some control of a work process that a person used to complete themselves. Such agents then have more say in decisions about what to make, how to make it and where to sell it. They take responsibility for some management tasks previously integrated with the work – even if their titles do not include the term 'management'. Previously independent workers become employees, selling their labor rather than the results of their labour. During the process of industrialization in western economics, factory owner took control of the physical and financial means of production. They also tried to take control of the time, behaviour and skills of those who were new employees rather than autonomous workers. A role is the sum of the expectations that other people have of person occupying a position. The same evolution occurs when an individual starts an enterprise, initially combining the management and ownership functions. He or she performs all the management function as well as the work itself. If the business grows and the owner engages employees, he or she will probably spend more of their time on management activities, while employees concentrate more on the work. This creates the distinct role of management – a role being the sum of the expectations that others have of a person occupying a position.

**Management as an entrepreneur:** Like management, the entrepreneur is responsible for directing vision and resources toward achieving the greatest results and contributions. Drucker (1974) traces the origin of the word 'management' and opined that it could hardly be translated into any other languages. He also points out that the word is equivalent to the French word 'entrepreneur' coined by Say (1767-1832) who defined an entrepreneur as someone who shifts economic resources from an area of low yield and productivity to an area of high yield and productivity.

**Management as a universal process:** management function is identical in all formal organizations whether it is profit making organization or non-profit making organization. The concept of the universality of management implies that all managers irrespective of their position and calling in the organisation hierarchy perform at one time or the other identical functions. The

concept also indicates that management know-how is transferable and a manager can successfully apply his knowledge and skills in a wide variety of industry.

## **FUNCTIONS OF MANAGEMENT**

### **1. PLANNING**

When you fail to plan you plan to fail. Planning is the most basic of all managerial functions since it involves selecting from among alternative courses of action. There must be a basis of probability for plans made not imagined fancies or pious hopes. The plans must be based on realistic objective and goals which must be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, related or realisable and time bound)

### **2. ORGANISING**

To provide the resources needed to implement the plan: to mobilise efforts in support of the plan. We all know what it means when they say you are not organised. To organise is to provide the proper direction and focus in support of the plan.

### **3. CONTROLLING**

Control is needed to ensure conformity with stated plans. Control is also required to verify progress, make sure things happen according to plan, take any necessary corrective action.

### **4. LEADING**

To lead is to guide, conduct, direct and precede. To get the best out of people, working toward the plan; to lead; to properly select and evaluate workers.

### **5. DECISION-MAKING**

Whatever a manager does he does through making decisions. Those decisions may be made as a matter of routine, indeed, he may not even realise that he is making them. Or they may affect the future existence of the enterprise and require years of systematic analysis. But management is also always a decision-making process. The importance of decision-making in management is generally recognized.

### **6. COMMUNICATION**

The word communications is derived from the latin word communis, which translated means common. Communications then can be thought of as the process of establishing a commonness or oneness of thought between a sender and receiver. It is the act of transmitting information in

fact, management functions become operationalized only through effective communication otherwise called effective communicative activity.

#### 7. COORDINATING

To ensure that the efforts of subunits fit together properly that information is shared and any problems solved.

### OBJECTIVES OF TRADE UNION

Several broad objectives characterise the labour movement as a whole. These include:

- i. to secure and, if possible improve the living standards and economic status of its members.
- ii. to enhance and, if possible guarantee individual security against threats and contingencies that might result from market fluctuations, technological change, or management decisions.
- iii. to influence power relations in the social system in ways that favour and do not threaten union gains and goals.
- iv. to advance the welfare of all who work for a living, whether union member or not.
- v. to guarantee unfettered freedom of association and confer trade union rights on unionised workers. The enactment of the Nigerian Trade Union Ordinance in 1938 was a significant landmark in the development of trade unionism in Nigeria.

### FUNCTIONS OF TRADE UNION

1. The Trade Unions are the main power resources of working people.
2. It is a forum for workers to participate in the general managerial functions in the industry.
3. The union provides economic benefits to their members by securing good conditions of service from the employers, which leads to improvement in the standard of living of the members.
4. The union is also a platform for social interaction among its members. The union seminars, lectures, conferences and symposia, the union members thus learn and develop educationally.(why we are here)
5. The union also provides welfare services by awarding scholarship to the children of dependents. Some operate thrifts and credit societies for the convenience of members, in addition to the establishment and operation of cooperatives shops where essential commodities are sold at regulated prices.

6. The political benefits of unionism includes the opportunity for members to constitute a formidable pressure group to enhance bargaining power.
7. Psychologically, the union affords its members a feeling of job security bearing in mind that the union will pursue cases of unfair dismissal by employers and furthermore, the provision of a forum whereby the members could satisfy psychological needs for belongings, leadership, esteem etc.

### **CONDITIONS PRECEDENT TO EFFECTIVE LABOUR/MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP**

The following conditions are key performance indicators of efficient and effective union/management relationship:

- ❖ Recognition and support for trade union
- ❖ Favourable work place climate (aesthetically pleasing work place)
- ❖ Shared values/leadership
- ❖ Open and effective communication
- ❖ High work ethics
- ❖ Synergy/teamwork (two good heads are better than one)
- ❖ Empathy (win-win relationships and decisions)
- ❖ Motivation (stimuli that engenders improved performance)
- ❖ Win-win relationships and decisions
- ❖ Prioritising (put first thing first)
- ❖ Sharpen the saw (continuous improvement)
- ❖ Freedom of Association and assembly(Sect 39, 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria-right to freedom of expression and the press) and (sect 40, 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria-right to peaceful assembly and association). In line with the provision of the African charter on human rights and universal declaration of human rights.

### **THE ROLE OF MANAGEMENT IN SUCCESSFUL LABOUR/ MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP**



The role of management is to exercise authority as well as to build up team work and it is concerned with the development of rules for this purpose. But management has increasingly to accept that it no longer has absolute authority. To a very great extent management and unions are mutually dependent. For each, the achievement of its own function is dependent upon a working relationship with the other. The following are factors which are important in this relationship.

- ❖ Stability: a firmly established basis for interaction between management and employees.
- ❖ Trust: a belief that when the bargaining is over and the agreement is reached, both parties will keep their word.
- ❖ Understanding of each other's point of view, this does not mean that the parties must always be at one about the fundamental issues that affect them. But they must know how each side sees these issues if a collective agreement is eventually to be negotiated or if a relatively stable working relationship is to be maintained.
- ❖ The use the process of negotiation to achieve results beneficial to the company and the employees (jaw-jaw not war-war)
- ❖ The provision of a framework this will enable discussions to take place at all levels on ways of continuing the development of good industrial relations in the company
- ❖ To provide an arrangement through which matters of concern to both employers and management can be discussed and negotiated at an appropriate level
- ❖ To provide a means of negotiation and consultation on all matters directly and indirectly affecting the company's employees with the objective of achieving sound and constructive relations between the management and the employees.
- ❖ To represent and to negotiate wages and conditions of employment on behalf of its members who are employed by the company.

The company and the union recognised that it is in the interest of good labour union and management relations that all employees in agreed bargaining units should become and remain members of the union.

### **THE ROLE OF WORKERS UNION IN SUCCESSFUL LABOUR/ MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP**

The role of labour union is to represent their members to management in all matters that affect them notable among which are:

- ❖ They negotiate and resolve disputes,
- ❖ They may also deal with a host of day-to-day issues affecting the interests of their members.
- ❖ Union can help management and supervision by squashing union. Unreasonable complaints, or by dealing with issues as they arise thus preventing escalations into major disputes.
- ❖ They serve as a dependable ally to management on issues and procedures that translates into organization growth and development.

However, a satisfactory climate of relationships with unions cannot be achieved either by exaggerating militancy or by underestimating it. The approach management should use it to take steps to understand why it exists and to develop strategies, rules and procedures which will enable conflict to be managed by both union and management as well as conjunctive processes of collective bargaining.

### **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS OF EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE LABOUR AND MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP**

The aim of the industrial relations strategies of an organization should be to ensure that corporate objectives can be achieved by gaining the maximum amount of co-operation from employees and by minimizing the amount of industrial unrest. The factors influencing industrial relations strategy can be divided between those operating mainly within the organization and those bringing pressure to bear from outside.

#### **Internal Factors Affecting Labour and Management Relations**

The main internal factors are:

- ❖ The attitudes of management to employees: the extent to which management recognizes that it has a responsibility towards its employees as well as to its shareholders and customers.
- ❖ The attitudes of employees to management: the extent to which they are satisfied with the company as an employer and with their work and prospect
- ❖ The attitudes of management to trade unions, which tend to fall into three categories:
  1. **Negative:** those who resent the existence of unions either because they feel they unnecessarily interfere with management's authority or because they feel they will damage the paternalistic climate that exists and will erode the loyalty of employees to the company.

2. **Neutral:** those who accept unions if they are there, possibly as a necessary evil, but do not believe that there is any point in management taking an active interest in promoting good relationship with them.

3. **Positive:** those who believe that unions can play an important role in partnership with management in developing better relationship between the company and its employees.

- ❖ The attitude of employees to unions. They can also have negative neutral or positive feelings about unions.
- ❖ The inevitability of differences of opinion between management and unions. The primary role of the unions is to look after the interests of their members, while managements is primarily concerned with economic performance. These interests are bound to clash sometimes over how the earnings of the company should be distributed between its owners and its employees.
- ❖ The extent to which management can or wants to exercise absolute authority to enforce decisions affecting the interests of employees.
- ❖ The present and likely future strength of the unions
- ❖ The extent to which there is one dominating union or the existence of a number of competing unions which may lead to inter-union and demarcation disputes
- ❖ The extent to which effective and agreed procedures for discussing and resolving grievances or handling disputes exist within the company.
- ❖ The effectiveness of managers and supervisors in dealing with industrial relations problems and disputes.
- ❖ The effectiveness of shop stewards or employee representatives and the degree of authority they can exercise over their members.
- ❖ The prosperity of the company, the degree to which it is expanding, stagnant or running down and the extent to which technological changes are likely to affect employment conditions and opportunities.

### **External Factors Affecting Labour/Management Relationship Strategy**

The main external factors are:

- ❖ The militancy of the unions- nationally or locally
- ❖ The effectiveness of the union and its officials and the extent to which the officials can and do control the activities of employees within the company.
- ❖ The authority and effectiveness of the employer's association.

- ❖ The extent to which bargaining is carried out at national, local or plant level.
- ❖ The effectiveness of any national or local procedure agreements that may exist.
- ❖ The employment and pay situation-nationally and locally
- ❖ The legal framework within which industrial relations exists.

#### 4. CONCLUSIVE REMARKS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusively, this paper will like to emphasise that the union and management are inseparable success imperatives in an organisation because they need each other. A focused management needs an understanding union and both are dependable ally towards steering an organisation to greatest heights. Therefore, the task before all employees and management is that both parties should ensure that they take decisions and conduct themselves in ways that would translate into making any organisation in which they are privileged to work a better place than they met it. Labour-management relations strategies cannot be developed in isolation, as an analysis of the internal and external factors affecting them clearly indicates. They must be related to overall business strategies as well as to other personnel policies concerning employment, training, pay and working conditions. The specific areas in which labour-management relations strategies can be developed are:

- ❖ The improvement of relationships with employees generally through joint consultation and communications procedures. (shared leadership)
- ❖ The improvement of relationships with unions or staff associations by developing better collective bargaining and other industrial relations procedures or by improving the operation of existing procedures.
- ❖ The improvement of the competence of managers and supervisors in dealing with industrial relations matters, including communications and joint consultation.
- ❖ The education and training of union members or staff representatives (in conjunction with the union or staff association).
- ❖ A statement of common purpose- The company and the union have a common objective in using the processes of negotiation and consultation to achieve results beneficial to both parties.
- ❖ A definition of the role of the unions as recognized by management- the company recognizes that effective industrial relations are best realized through fully representative unions capable of authoritative negotiation.

- ❖ A definition of the role of management as recognised by the unions- the unions for their part recognize that management has the prime responsibility to manage the undertaking in order to achieve its objectives efficiently.
- ❖ An undertaking not to take industrial action until the agreed procedures are exhausted ( a commitment to use procedures or no-strike clause)- The company and the unions agree that mutually satisfactory conditions are best achieved through the process of negotiation. The company therefore agree to refrain from lockout, and the union from stoppage of work or other restrictions on production until the procedure for resolving disputes exhausted.
- ❖ An undertaking may be included not to change the status quo without prior consultation- Prior consultation will take place before any change in working practices or methods of payment is implemented. Should the change result in a dispute between the management and the union, the practice shall revert to what it was prior to the dispute and the change shall only be made subsequently should it be agreed through the negotiating procedure.

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