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INNOVATION FOR TECHNOLOGY

**TRADE UNIONISM
IN MAURITIUS**

Final Report

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MAURITIUS RESEARCH COUNCIL

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Initiated with the objective of producing an authoritative, one-stop research output on the history, current operation and future of the trade union movement in Mauritius, this project undertook a nation-wide quantitative and qualitative survey amongst unionists and employers and produced highly insightful data on the realities, constraints, accomplishments and challenges of the movement. As a unique set of empirical findings, it also represents a major research milestone in this field and it is hoped that publications emanating from such findings will generate interest and prompt stakeholders into corrective action.

The survey carried out in Mauritius and Rodrigues maps the evolution of the movement for a better understanding of its current situation and future challenges. The history and evolution of the trade union movement teaches us the foundations or roots of the movement as deeply ingrained in the very psyche of the country, explaining not only how and why the revolt of the working class happened but also how the worker movement is at the heart of democratic politics in Mauritius as we know it today. It is most enlightening to learn, for instance, that here as well as elsewhere, fundamental rights for decent life and work were won after bitter struggle, that sweat and tears were shed and that lives were even lost as the downtrodden class refused to suffer at the hands of the landed gentry, and, as in our case, against the colonial masters during the time of slavery and indentured labour. What lessons can be learnt from a descriptive account of the history of unionism? First, that a people can be stronger if it can pay tribute to and learn from the struggles of its great leaders of the past; second, that the present can be better understood – and thereby better managed – by examining the past; third, that the union movement is rarely dissociated from the political history of a country, and so must continue its political agenda and not allow itself to be constrained to workplace issues; and fourth, that the union movement is as much at a crossroads in its evolution as the country is in its development, and that a thorough review of its history is a real

opportunity to take stock of what has been accomplished and how to tackle the challenges ahead.

The Rodrigues chapter reports on the evolution and current issues concerning labour and employment generally and unions and industrial relations specifically. Conducted qualitatively through in-depth interviews in Rodrigues itself, the study shows that the union movement in Rodrigues, as unstructured and under-resourced as it is, embraces a much more progressist outlook than that of Mauritius. In fact, both unions and the Rodrigues Council of Social Service have adopted a form of social movement unionism, their activism spanning issues well beyond the workplace and embracing causes of local community interest such as parental education and others of a more national nature such as water conservation and utilization and HIV/AIDS. This focus must not be lost, even though union leaders are far from happy about the state of employment relations in Rodrigues, reporting that the currently high unemployment leaves workers extremely vulnerable and employers particularly threatening. All in all, recruiting members is an uphill task, and workers are reluctant to complain about treatment, wages or working conditions, and even less keen to be active unionists. Since it is not expected that formal employment will take a sudden upturn in the near future, unions will need to (a) consolidate their social movement, (b) reinforce and call upon the intrinsic Rodriguan spirit of self-help and (c) take the lead in developing active partnership with Government and employers with a view to fostering sectoral and national-level dialogue around issues of survival and long-term sustainable development of the island.

We also report on a conceptual chapter of Comparative Industrial Relations which has been importantly explicit in situating Mauritius on the international IR scene. Countries considered for comparison and contrast were the Philippines, South Africa, India and the United Kingdom. Unsurprisingly, we note that the national culture of a country impacts on its IR system, that Mauritius, has a relatively long way to go in the modernization process of its trade unionism movement, but also that the problems encountered by trade unions in Mauritius is not that 'specific', and that other countries such the Philippines

and South Africa have endured difficulties a hundred times more tragic. The historic involvement of trade unions in politics, and the political identity of the union movement, is a fact common to all the countries studied including Mauritius, the difference being the extent of association with party politics. The marginalization of women from workplace concerns in general and from the union movement in particular is also common to all the countries; however, whereas in countries such as the UK, South Africa and India, the motivation to tackle gender discrimination and other such issues has been simply remarkable. Mauritius, by contrast, shows little real mobilization towards ending gender discrimination at the workplace or addressing other gender-related work issues. Generally speaking, the female population of Mauritius is found, after comparison with the other countries, to be far less assertive or combative. Unfortunately, even the union movement is characterized by a sluggishness in tackling gender issues decisively, even though the Masculinity index of Mauritius is moderate to high, just like the other countries under study. Other national culture characteristics are also extremely useful in understanding differences in IR systems across countries. India and South Africa, for instance, with lower Uncertainty Avoidance indices than Mauritius, are not only more developed in their IR systems, but also demonstrate greater propensity for risk-taking, spirited action and aggressiveness in claiming for change vis-à-vis government and/or employers. Now, the Individualism/Collectivism index is becoming a growing problem for traditional unions to deal with: high Individualism is lived out either through a decrease in union membership or a proliferation of unions (individualization of values and ideology). South Africa, the UK and Mauritius score high on Individualism, and often this can be demonstrated in union-substitution strategies by employers (such as, through attractive HR services to workers) as well as a marked preference for workers to engage in one-to-one bargaining with their management. Another dimension of national culture is Power Distance, along which Mauritius scores high, with India and the Phillipines. As for the Masculinity index, Mauritius and India score moderate while the other countries under study score moderate to high. Now, High Power Distance, especially when combined with High Masculinity indicates a people's preoccupation with earnings, performance, assertiveness, versus the values of maintaining warm and caring relationships, promoting quality of work life and caring for the weak. Even though Mauritius scores moderately

on Masculinity, we can see that the characteristics associated with high PD and Masculinity in combination produce what seems to be a dangerous trend here, namely: an IR scene tending to be confrontational, ‘macho’, where the presence or contribution of women is rarely acknowledged or noticed, and where power and ego struggles are common. However, these propensities can be reversed, as all culture can be changed at will but with effort. High PD is ingrained in our colonial history, but if South Africa has been able to gradually build democratic values of mutual respect after such a harsh history of bloodshed and hatred, and if the British union movement has been able to make a fabulous u-turn to participatory and co-operative partnership after having experienced near-death in the years 1980 to 1993, then the evolutionary path of the trade union movement not only epitomizes those exceptional human qualities which are vision and patriotism, but is also the symbol of hope for the entire nation.

The chapter on the Management perspective, founded on a solid conceptual framework, has produced useful qualitative and quantitative views from managers of private, public and para-statal organizations on the question of unions in Mauritius indicate that managers have a relatively simplistic and naïve appreciation of the role of unions within the larger picture of industrial or employment relations, and the even larger picture of firm performance and survival. An immense amount of rich data representing views of managers on various aspects of employment, the employment relationship, unions, and enterprise success. The fact that the majority view unions as a nuisance and that their current roles and actions are irrelevant and ‘backward’ shows in fact their own lack of sophistication with regard to management and strategy. Even the low level of interest in the survey (and, by extension, in the subject of unions and industrial relations) demonstrates a disconcerting offhandedness of managers –and worse, of HR managers – regarding the very survival and future of their organization. By stating on one hand that unions are their ‘partners’ then almost immediately decrying the latter’s limited perspective, managers participating in the survey. True, the literature suggests that a sophisticated human resource management system does have the potential to negate the very existence of trade unions by focusing on the promotion of a unified culture of commitment within the organization, and so unions would need to re-think their

strategies to counter employer-led practices of union exclusion or avoidance. However, Mauritian HR is not clear on its position and appears to fence between a rhetoric of pluralism and 'partnership' and a history as well as tendency to practice union avoidance through a distinctively preferred unitarist approach, in which the employment relationship is directly between employer and employee, thus marginalizing unions. The real danger in this trend is that organizations in Mauritius will end up as "bleak houses", with little in the way of sophisticated HRM and almost no union representation. As it stands, we have established that the lowest unionization levels are found in the so-called emerging sectors of the economy, namely, textiles, financial services, construction, and ICT. Managers surveyed seem to think that employees get unionized for 'better pay and working conditions', and that is all, and so the management tolerates the presence of the union. Interestingly, this perception is actually echoed in union leaders' insistence on the fact that, precisely, unions have no choice but to focus essentially on pay and working conditions because these are basics that are not even 'right' in most organizations in Mauritius, and that employers seem to view them, the unions, as something to put up with. Managers even view that unions' potency is either moderate (58%) or weak (21%), with nevertheless relatively high potency being perceived by manager of both public and parastatal sectors. At the same time, managers overwhelmingly claim that they are aware of the accomplishments of trade unions on the wider national issues, then state that unions are not very knowledgeable nor sensitive to the changing business environment, which gives rise to some confusion regarding their objectivity of opinion, given their former statements regarding unions' roles and strength. Again rather perplexing is the high response rate (94%) for claimed 'co-operative' management-union relationships as opposed to adversarial relationships, begging the question as to whether such relationships are enjoyed, promoted, or tolerated. In fact, the general picture is one reflecting the preference of management for dealing directly with employees, whether the presence of unions is tolerated or 'enjoyed'. As concerns the nature of the so-called co-operative relationship goes, it is by far the public sector and the parastatal organizations which express this through regular (as opposed to *ad hoc* or *necessary*) meetings, with a mix of structured and informal meetings held with unions, generally reported to be held in a cordial atmosphere. Other areas however appear to be under-developed, such as the

existence of policies to promote employees' participation in decision-making, both in the private and public sectors, again another confusing finding in the face of claims about treating unions as 'partners'. Some concern can also be raised for the employment or HR situation in parastatal organizations, with most managers conceding to a lack of policy and practice in areas such as promotion of employee motivation, and prevention of discrimination and harassment.

We also report on the latest thinking and survey findings of the "Women in Unions" component of this research. In Mauritius as in many other parts of the world, employment relations practices are not only a reflection of the traditional male perspective to work and organizations, but also of the wider national or societal gender issues at play at a given point in time. As such, the study, consisting of a qualitative focus-group-type, female-only workshop as well as a representative postal survey, aimed at evaluating what has been achieved in terms of addressing the marginalization of women from the trade union movement, evaluating the situation of union leadership as far as women were concerned and to gauge women unionists' views on the style and orientation of unions in Mauritius. Findings reveal that most women believe that unions have not done much for them, and that unions in Mauritius are male-dominated, but that women possess the necessary leadership skills as well as self-confidence needed to succeed in leadership positions. Unfortunately, it was revealed that many women unionists did not exhibit a high degree either of knowledgeability (in matters of, says, laws and negotiations) or of engagement (thus taking a relatively passive role in the running of their union through Womens' "Wings"). Overwhelmingly, obstacles to women's greater participation in the union movement and in claiming leadership roles were cited as : inflexible (thus incompatible) life and work schedules, inconvenient timing of meetings, lack of time-off, and intimidation and even bullying styles of men who "acaparate" union leadership. The two main barriers to women's participation in union activities were found to be: stereotyped ideas about women's abilities, roles and preferences, and difficulties in combining work, family and other (such as union) commitments. The study also uncovered that those services and benefits most needed and/or wished for by women specifically were simply neither provided for by employers

nor were they on unions' agendas either. To name but a few: subsidized or on-site child care, control over work schedules, health plans, clear enterprise policy on sexual harassment, and clear enterprise policy against sex discrimination. Sadly, whereas the literature tells us that unions and civil society are increasingly taking on a 'third force' role whereby they have begun either offering or pressuring employers to offer a range of services to their members, the findings for Mauritius indicate that unions, though endorsing such strategies, find themselves not quite ready to embrace these seemingly too-bold measures, such as, to name but a few: purchasing household items in bulk for cheaper resale to members; providing/organizing laundry, cleaning, and cooking services to alleviate housework load; pressuring policy regarding opening hours of shops, banks and other services; campaigning for street safety; providing extra payment for maternity leave; providing a Women's Network, and many others. As far as strategies to increase women's engagement in union leadership are concerned, respondents were unanimous in protesting about the lack of such measures as: giving greater visibility to women leaders; amending unions' constitutions to provide for female representation on Executive Committees; campaigning to raise awareness of the benefits of empowering women; providing training and development specifically for women members; using non-macho language and style, and conducting meetings in a more friendly and accessible way for wider female participation.. Women unionists, particularly, rallied against the hogging of leadership, attendance at conferences and media visibility of men, and Government's lack of empowerment of women as demonstrated by the absence of women both on the National Pay Council and the National Tripartite Forum. They also condemned the many women who did not rise to the challenge of union work and union leadership.

Being a devoted partner on the project, the Government Servants' Association (GSA) was the natural case study, for a critical review of its activities, in slightly deeper detail than other trade union organizations, along the chosen dimension of 'progressivity' in unions. Within the broad reviews and discussions taking place in this study with respect to the history, accomplishments, actions and future of the union movement, the GSA does represent a case of significant contribution within the union scene, and, despite current

shortcomings and possibly unexplored potential, is set to establish itself as a leader of a hopefully new *type* of Organising cum Social Movement union, even if does not represent the private or parastatal sectors as such. This study has objectively established that the GSA is essentially a Servicing Federation and has demonstrated excellence in this role, as well as beginning to exploit its potential to become a leader, along with such other Federations as the General Workers' Federation, the Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions, the Federation of Parastatal Bodies and Other Unions, and the Federation of Progressive Unions, in shaping the new union movement of the future in Mauritius. Such Service union accomplishments include significant actions in the areas of: Education and training, Communication with members, pressure on Government for policy change, Provident Fund, Benevolent Fund, social activities, Fidelity cards and such others. From an analysis of the GSA, it can be seen that the movement is poised, especially through its main Federations, for either a dramatic ideological and paradigmatic shift, or else a further entrenchment into a Social role. Important and deep questions are raised in this chapter about the very identity of the union movement in terms of *progressing* into the future. Indeed, much pessimism has been noted among union members, but a crossroads is never an easy place to be, and it is clear that, just as employers are expected by union leaders to open up their minds and question themselves on their real philosophies, so must unions, via their Federations, engage in some stock-taking and introspection to establish themselves on one hand as one of the major contributors to what the country has become and will grow into, but also, to weed out past thinking and practices which are likely to jeopardize the potency of the movement, if maintained.

Finally, in lieu of a conclusion, the report ends with a discussion on the future of trade unionism in Mauritius. It describes the new model that trade unions could adopt and the shape that new thinking could take. It highlights that employers and Government have as much a role to play in the establishment of a viable type of employment relationship, given that the stakes are far from being union-specific, but are instead national in social, economic and political terms.

Abbreviations

FPBOU	Federation of Parastatal Bodies & Other Unions
FPU	Federation of Progressive Union
SEF	State Employees Federation
MLC	Mauritius Labour Congress
MTUC	Mauritius Trade Union Confederation
NTUC	National Trade Union Confederation
FCSOU	Federation of Civil Service & Other Unions
GWF	General Workers Federation
FFW	Federation of Free Workers
CMT	Confederation Mauricienne des Travailleurs
FTU	Federation des Travailleurs Unis
FDUF	Free Democratic Union Federation
MLF	Mauritius Labour Federation
ILO	International Labour Organisation
ICTU	Interntional Confederation of Trade Unions
PSC	Public Service Commission
HRM	Human Resource Management
IR	Industrial Relations

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Background and Introduction to the study

The background to employment practices in Mauritius is a complex one. The World Bank and International Monetary Fund have classified Mauritius as a newly-industrialised economy with the highest per capita income in sub-Saharan Africa. On other economic and social fronts Mauritius has been compared to its South East Asian and Indian counterparts. The island was successively colonized by the French, then the British, until it became independent in 1968. This setting up of a new nation, rising from the ashes of slavery and indentured labour, was based on principles of democracy, and retained a Westminster-type constitution. The ethnic plurality of the Mauritian people is naturally borne out in the political as well as employment scene. It is also well-known that nepotism is rife in Mauritius, with ethnic (and thus, political) allegiance representing either an advantage or an obstacle in many people's aspirations for jobs, careers, promotions, transfers and other opportunities.

Mauritius grew out of an agricultural based economy where the main crop was sugar cane. The decline in the price of sugar and the erosion of preferential market arrangements with buyer countries, along with industry-level inefficiencies, has meant that the economy has had to diversify into other sectors. The Export Processing Zone was created in the early 1980s, leading to a boom in the economy, with full employment and a rapid rise in standard of living. The Textile and Garment industry, along with a booming tourism sector helped Mauritius position itself as the "tiger of the Indian Ocean". However, fierce competition from other low-cost producers around the world and a fragile tourism industry has led to dwindling exports, loss of jobs and several plant closures. Apart from aggressive investment-promotion programmes, many of which have borne fruit, as demonstrated by the setting up of 'new' sectors such as the Seafood Hub, Information and Communication Technology firms, and an Offshore business sector, Government has been pressing for reforms in other forms, namely through the restructuring of businesses, investment in technology and capital-intensive manufacturing

methods, “right-sizing” and various other industry and firm-level changes, with the aim of regaining competitiveness in the global marketplace.

This configuration, coupled with the hapless ethnic landscape, has meant that the unequal distribution of wealth and ownership of capital is a constant bone of contention among the various groups making up the population, and persists to this day, although Government is now taking bold measures towards a greater ‘democratisation’ of the economy.

Nevertheless, with the enhancement in educational and professional attainments, it is expected that much more impatience and intolerance will be exhibited by the rising generation in matters of workplace discrimination, favouritism, nepotism and corruption, and that greater demands will be made on society for more democracy, meritocracy and on a ‘clean’ political class. At the same time, Mauritius’ exposure to the global environment means that the population’s expectations of welfare, health, education, working conditions and material well-being have much increased. The intensification of capitalist thinking has, in its wake, given rise to the question which has always preoccupied the working class: how to counter the ills of capitalism. No science and no theory tells workers what they could or ought to do, but by instinct and reflection, the working class almost always rises against profit-maximising business when this is seen as being at the expense of the (powerless) worker. And so the first form of proletariat-organised power came in the form of trade unions., “trade unionism” being thereafter known as the primary form of labour movement to emerge in a capitalist environment. The union binds workers into a common action, with the strike as their ultimate weapon. The aim of a trade union within such an environment is not to replace the capitalist system of production by some other, but rather to secure decent working and living conditions, and so its character is both revolutionary and conservative, with class antagonism remaining at its core, and owners’ interests remaining at odds with those of workers.

In Mauritius, Trade Unions have had to increasingly militate against irresponsible plant closures, overnight layoffs, dwindling purchasing power, price increases and even cases of union intimidation. Employers, on the other hand, condemn the unions' stand on wages and demand more flexibility in employment practices and the right to demand more productivity from workers. The recent Tripartite negotiations and the process by which Government seeks to introduce new labour legislation have testified to this seemingly institutionalized state of dumb dialogue. On one hand, Government professes a caring orientation, but is tied in an intricate web of mutual advantage with the employer group, which insist on restructurings, 'right-sizings', flexibility in 'hiring and firing', wage freezes and such, perceived naturally by the trade union group as heralding a new age of employment insecurity, attack on worker rights and downright union bullying. It is clear then that such a '*dialogue de sourds*'* cannot be sustained. Not only do all stakeholders need to reassess their positions, but more reflection and research is needed to examine more closely the dynamics at hand – historical, current, and future. The stakeholder concept suggests that organisations should be run in the interests of all groups that have a stake in the organisation. Through the development of long-term, committed relationships, organisations will be able to equip themselves for the competitive challenges of the global marketplace (Monks, 1998). However, the individualization of work practices and the spread of participative management styles have been determinant in the changing roles that unions have to play in maintaining relationships at the workplace. In the current configuration of Mauritian industrial relations, unfortunately, statements from the employer groups that unions are 'always defensive and reactive', behind the times, and locked in an outdated logic, are matched in passion by statements from unions that employers are dishonest and maintain their 'tendency to violate their promises', are manipulative and do not sincerely believe in the stakeholder concept. Such feelings augur no promise of mutual respect and dialogue for national development and harmony, and instead bode ominously, in the words of one trade union leader, to "end very badly".

* literally, a dumb dialogue.

The evolution of the union movement to date appears to be characterized by a certain ‘corporatisation’ arising out of the structure and bureaucracy needed to organize the numbers of members and activities involved, and has somehow diluted the class-based cleavage between workers and management, with the result that the very identity and role of unions has been increasingly questioned and that membership increasingly views unions as self-serving and fighting for their own existence rather than for the interests of members. This is not to say that all or most unions face this identity and legitimacy issue. Indeed, many union leaders, who have themselves emerged from the rank and file, are able to retain sensitivity for and focus on workers’ problems and retain a strong proletarian spirit. At the same time, new realities continue to plague even these die-hards: Globalisation and increasingly liberalist trade and business practices exert enormous pressures on workers’ representatives to be ‘business savvy’ and conform to the ‘exigencies’ of the new business environment. What this has meant is that unions have suffered bad press on account of their militancy on pay and working conditions, being portrayed as backward, irresponsible and not ‘playing the game’ of ‘modernisation’. The paradox of such a situation is that, whereas the lifeblood of a labour movement is presumably its membership, unions today feel that they need to seek alternative forces other than the strength of the masses of workers. Part of this quest has been manifested in what some might define as a denial of the proletarian value system, so that a number of union leaders are seen as sitting in conferences with capitalists (ostensibly needing to learn the capitalist’s position and strategies) and keeping an eye on “the needs of the industry”, as well as keeping company with ministers and other high officials as ‘equals’. The other challenge which liberalized global business has brought in its wake is the shift in employment patterns. With new economic sectors emerging, workers find it hard to organize, and unions face much difficulty in penetrating non-traditional sectors, especially where work is mostly contractual and employees tend to be very mobile.

The rationale for a project on trade unions in Mauritius flows from the dearth of reliable, scientific publications in the field. More particularly, there exists no comprehensive compilation of perspectives and issues regarding trade unionism in Mauritius. No systematic and reliable exercise has been carried out to trace the evolution of the trade

union movement in Mauritius. Over the years, the role played by unions has been acknowledged as healthy for democracy and constructive for business and employees by some, and backward and unhelpful by others. Much speculation, guessing and misinterpretation takes place under such circumstances, whereas what is needed is a solid baseline upon which other more focused studies may be undertaken in the future. There exists a vast amount of information in the form of reports, press articles, and other papers relating the history of the trade union movement, but this lies scattered in numerous places and is often inaccessible for general consultation, whether by students or researchers, both local and international. The trade union movement is a powerful force for political and social change, and its role as a partner in the development of a peaceful and prosperous Mauritius can be hindered by inaccurate perceptions, lack of reliable published information, and limited or inaccurate knowledge of its past role and history. This project seeks to close this gap. It takes stock of the changing role of unions and presents a critical review of its accomplishments and challenges, and is timely and essential. As Mauritian society and economy face a crossroads at which tough shifts in paradigm are called for in matters of the growth, productivity and efficiency of 'corporate Mauritius', but also in questions of social justice and stability, sustained growth, employment and quality of life, all partners in the process are called upon to face up to their responsibilities individually and collectively. In short, an intelligent and sensitive review of the role of the unions as partners in development will offer an informed, multi-perspective analysis, without any union, employer or state agenda. All those reflecting upon or studying questions of employment policy, practice and legislation, management and strategy, human resources management, partner perceptions and paradigms will find in this project's output a one-stop-Reader that will enlighten their quests. The empirical status of the latter will also provide a basis for decisions regarding future strategies, orientations and activities of unions, management, and the State. Researchers from any part of the world will also find a unique and original reference to unionization in Mauritius, for informative and comparative purposes.

In order that the various stakeholders – government, industrialists, investors, managers, trade unionists, scholars – take informed positions and decisions within their own fields of action, a working knowledge of the wider perspective on unionization is necessary, thus offering a more mature, constructive and multi-perspective approach, rather than limited, often blinkered views which tend to end in conflict and deadlock. This project of ultimately producing a Reader examines the question of trade union presence, role, and future from a set of traditional as well as contemporary points of analysis, but also offers an important “voice” to stakeholders themselves, that their views be made available to all readers. It will also represent a recognition of the contribution and importance of the trade union movement in the history and development of Mauritius. Each of the chapters within the larger project on trade unionism in Mauritius, represents rigorous conceptual and empirical study. These sub-projects are.: the history and evolution to date of the trade union movement; a cross-country comparison of trade union movements; the management or HRM perspective to industrial relations; a gender perspective of unions; a Rodrigues chapter; a case discussion of our partner organization, the Government Servants’ Association; and a concluding chapter on the future of trade unions in Mauritius.

The overall objective of the project runs in two stages: firstly, to construct a comprehensive collection of authoritative readings on trade unionism in Mauritius, and secondly, to make such a compilation widely available in book form to interested groups and to the public at large.

The initial objectives of the project were as follows:

1. To succinctly trace the history and evolution of the trade union movement in Mauritius;
2. To conduct an objective review of trade unionism in the Public and Private Sectors of Mauritius;
3. To conduct an exploration on the current legal, social, economic and political aspects of trade unionism;

4. To examine the applicability of a strategic human resource management (SHRM) perspective to industrial relations in Mauritius;
5. To make a critical examination of industrial relations in Mauritius from a specifically Gender perspective;
6. To undertake a comparative study of trade unionism in Mauritius and a selected set of countries;
7. To compile an up-to-date database of statistics on trade unions in Mauritius.

Methodology

The point of analysis in this project is trade unions operating in Mauritius. Much information and knowledge is available on the question of union presence, role, power, and future, both in published and unpublished form; however, such information and knowledge resides mostly in anecdotal, idiosyncratic and subjective form. In addition, it is typified by a scattering of bits and pieces of newspaper articles, reports from unions and Federations, and micro surveys by the MEF and/or the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations. The methodological approach of this study involves a systematic gathering together of all such information and a distilling thereof from an objective, academic point of view.

A number of methodological approaches were employed, as required by the objectives and nature of each sub-project. Each sub-project involved its own resources and methodology. However, they most of the time ran more or less concurrently and involved a mix of survey, face-to-face interviews and desk research. The specific methodologies for each block of research in described in detail in the relevant chapters

At the very outset, in conjunction with a review of the international literature, a key informant survey was instrumental in accurately positioning this project within the past, current and future landscape of the Industrial Relation System in Mauritius., as well in determining the direction and processes for the study. In consequence, a slight revision was deemed necessary to the initial list of objectives, and these are laid out below:

1. To discover the roots of trade unionism;
2. To accurately trace the history and evolution to date, of the trade union movement in Mauritius;
3. To examine the management perspective to Employment Relations in Mauritius;
4. To critically examine the Gender perspective to industrial relations in Mauritius;
5. To undertake a comparative study of trade unionism in Mauritius from a selected set of countries, namely: UK, India the Philippines and South Africa;
6. To inquire into the state of industrial relations in Rodrigues, with reference to its history, contextual specificity and speed and direction of evolution;
7. To compile an up-to-date database of facts on the structure of trade unions in Mauritius.

The methodology for the national survey was modified due to the complexity of the structure of unions, with information regarding the very existence of some unions, of their affiliation (to Federations) status, their address, and their leadership being so unreliable as to make it impossible to employ the traditional postal questionnaire.

Following the key informant interviews with a number of union leaders, employer representatives, institutional Chairpersons and such authoritative figures, the following sub-projects were conducted:

An on-site interview survey with key players in the Industrial Relations system in Rodrigues;

A conceptual and comparative review of trade unionism, by comparing and contrasting the movement in Mauritius with those of the United Kingdom, of the Philippines, of India, and of South Africa.

A consultative workshop with women unionists, plus a postal questionnaire survey amongst a sample of unions specifically aiming at discovering views on the gender issue;

A postal/email questionnaire survey amongst the Top-100 list of Business Magazine and the list of members of the Association of HR Professionals, with the objective of exploring management's point of view regarding unions in Mauritius;

A national survey using in-depth interviews of Federation/Confederation leaders, considered as the 'voice' of all unions, to gather views generally on the state and future of the union movement; this was complemented by a postal questionnaire survey amongst non-affiliated unions.

Findings from each of the above was analysed first separately, then integrated into a logical framework which was then organized and written out in separate chapter, as follows:

Chapter One introduces the concept of trade unionism and explains the role and contribution of unions as a movement and a force;

Chapter Two traces the history and evolution of the trade union movement in Mauritius to date;

Chapter Three describes analytically the state of the union movement in Rodrigues;

Chapter Four undertakes a cross-cultural comparison of the trade union movement between Mauritius and such countries as South Africa, India, the Philippines, and the United Kingdom;

Chapter Five produces the findings of the survey of management perspectives and views of the Mauritian trade union movement;

Chapter Six briefly and critically describes the Government Servants' Association, our case study union in this project, along the dimension of trade union 'progressivity';

Chapter Seven presents findings and analyses of gender issues in the union movement of Mauritius, and finally,

Chapter Eight concludes with a discussion of the future of the union movement.

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Chapter 1

An Introduction to Trade Unionism

1.1 Trade Unionism in the larger picture

Before defining trade unions and their *raison d'être*, it is important to highlight that unions do not exist in a vacuum but is rather to be found in the larger picture of Employee Relations and Industrial Relations. Employee relations deal with all the formal and informal relationships of an interpersonal nature that arise from interactions between management and employees at the workplace. It encompasses:

- Industrial relations, that is, the systems of rules, practices and conventions associated with collective bargaining and the avoidance and resolution of industrial disputes;
- Procedures for securing employee participation in the management of enterprises, for example, through work councils ;
- Policies for improving cooperation between management and workers, the control of employee grievances and the minimization of conflicts;
- Systems for involving employees in total quality management (TQM) programmes and the improvement of customer care;
- Communication between management and workers in order to inform the latter about company policy, and
- Strategies for managing relations between an organization and its employees.

Today, Employee Relations incorporates Industrial Relations even though Industrial Relations at first existed as the primary form of employer-employee relationship and in many societies this form is mainlined. Clearly, Employee Relations is a far wider field than conventional Industrial Relations. Indeed managements of many organizations prefer to use the term “employee relations” rather than “industrial relations” as it avoids

many of the mental images of conflict, strikes, social disharmony and disagreement associated with the earlier term.

1.1.1 Unitarist and pluralist perspectives of Employee Relations

Employee relations emerges out of two philosophies; the unitarist and the pluralist. Unitarism rests on the belief that management and labour have identical interests and hence may be expected to pull together towards the same objectives. Willingness to cooperate is taken for granted; dissent cannot be envisaged. Management therefore expects workers to act as a team and to assist the firm achieve its mission. Strikes and other disruptive behaviours are, in the unitarist view, malevolent and just as destructive as those who participate in them. Industrial action simply does not make sense since everyone should be working together for the common good.

The pluralist perspective of ER has been heralded as being a more pragmatic and effective alternative than the unitarist philosophy. The pluralist approach sees conflicts of objective and disagreements between managers and workers over the distribution of the firm's profits as a normal and inescapable state of affairs. Realistically, therefore, management accepts that conflict *will* occur and thus seeks to resolve conflicts by establishing sound procedures for settling disputes whenever these arise. The pluralism view assumes that the best way to achieve consensus and long term stability in management/worker relationship is for management to recognize the existence of conflicts, negotiate compromises and to balance the demands of various groups. This implies the need for grievance procedures, joint-negotiating committees, union-recognition agreements, arbitration arrangements and so on. Trade unions are seen as occupying a key role in the process of solving conflicts, which are viewed as normal and sometimes healthy in that they release emotions which otherwise would be repressed.

1.1.2 Industrial Relations

As Dunlop (1958) noted, industrialization gives rise to employment relationships as we know them today, wherein large numbers of people work under managers' orders in exchange for wages or salaries and other compensation. The resulting body of knowledge regarding industrial relations can be defined broadly or narrowly. Narrow definition of industrial relations includes industrial relations theory, labour organizations (unions and employee associations); management of industrial relations; labour and management history; labor and business law; collective bargaining and negotiations; industrial conflict (especially strikes); grievance procedures; arbitration and mediation, and other dispute resolution techniques; worker participation or industrial democracy; and the effects of unions on employment terms and on society. Broader definitions of IR would encompass "comparative" or internationally-oriented perspectives including training and development, workforce diversity, compensation, selection and staffing, and other employment legislation (laws and regulations directly affecting employment terms, such as laws on pensions, safety, and minimum wages, as opposed to "labour law," which mainly governs relations between employees, organizations and employers.

Kochan (1980) suggested that the important factor distinguishing industrial relations from its contributing disciplines and related applied areas of study (that is, human resources and employee relations) is a distinctive set of values and assumptions. These include the following propositions:

- Labour is more than a commodity, that is, unlike inanimate factors of production such as machinery and raw materials, the work of human beings raises questions about the impact of work and work relations upon employees, questions that are of societal concerns.
- Some industrial relations scholars such as Adams (1992) take this assumption a step further in arguing that a society cannot be truly democratic if it does not

provide mechanisms by which employees can influence their working lives, that is, a means for 'industrial democracy.'

- There are inherent conflicts of interest between employers and employees not only in economic matters (e.g., wages versus profits), but also in terms of the inherent friction in superior-subordinate relations.
- There are large areas of common interest between employers and employees despite their conflicting objectives, and important interdependencies (e.g., firms need workers and workers need jobs). These compel employers and employees to resolve their conflicting interests for the sake of mutual benefit.
- There is an inherent inequality of bargaining power in most individual employer-employee relationships, and thus collective representation of employees (through unions) is often necessary to establish true freedom of contract.
- Pluralism: the notion that there are multiple competing interest groups in society, each with valid interests. Thus in the workplace and in the larger society the goals of workers, employers, and society should be accommodated in an equitable balance. This contrasts with the often implicit assumption in business that the goals of the firm or of its shareholders are supreme.

1.1.3 The Industrial Relations System

The dominant paradigm or conceptual framework for the study of industrial relations is the “Industrial Relations Systems” model advanced by Dunlop (1958). Mauritius as well as many other countries adopts the Dunlop model of Industrial Relations. Dunlop starts from the idea that industrial relations are those relations and “rules”, which exist or are agreed upon between three actors, namely, the employers, the employees/workers and the state, that is, legislators and agencies responsible for the relations between both. In addition, he states that all three actors are operating on the basis of certain values which he calls “ideology.”

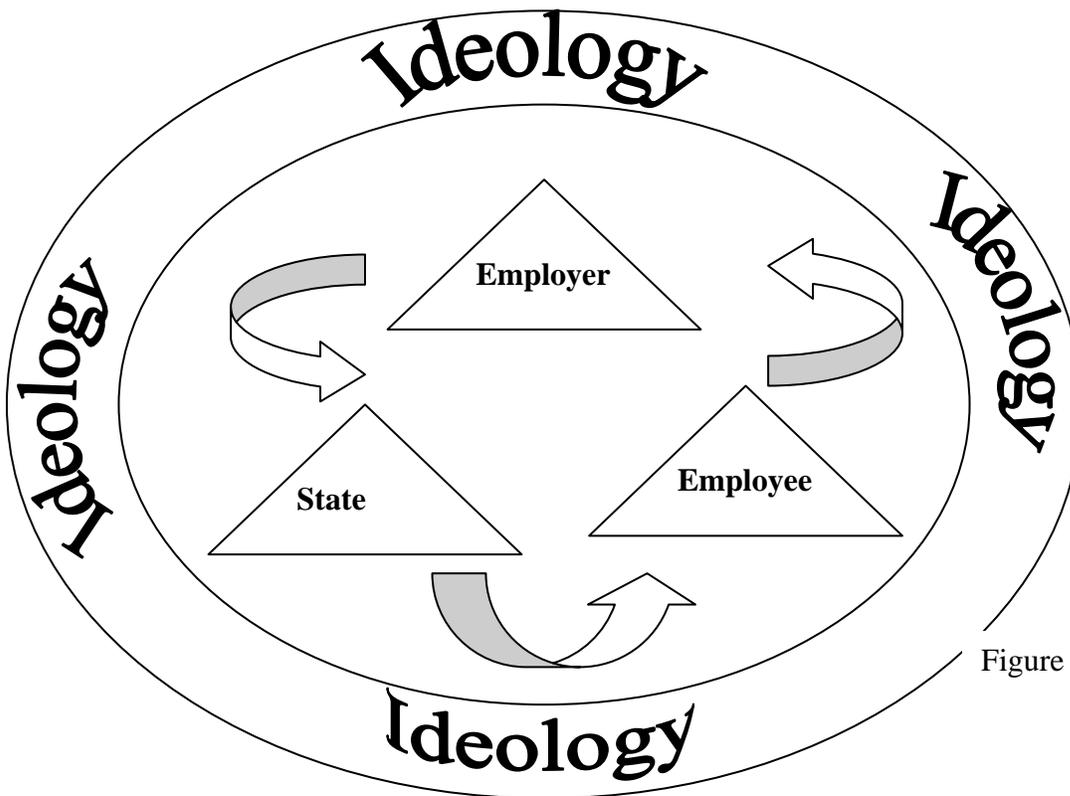


Figure 1.1 Dunlop Model

The basic purposes of the industrial relations systems concept are to provide a conceptual framework for organizing knowledge about industrial relations and for understanding how various components of an industrial relations system combine to produce particular outcomes (and hence why outcomes vary from one setting to another or over time). Thus

for example, wage rates for a particular group of workers might be understood as reflecting the interactions of their unions with management by collective bargaining within the constraints of a particular market, technological, and community environment. Furthermore, the actors in the Dunlop model are supposed to behave as homogeneous groups as regards to their interests and their bargaining behaviour. The three-actor, or tripartite, relation must also be seen as a pure formal pattern when applied to all hierarchical levels. However, when comparing industrial relations systems at a given level of analysis, the roles of the various actors may differ. Unions may play a critical role in one system, and virtually no role in another. In some national systems, for example, within certain Latin American countries other actors such as the military or organized religious institutions may play influential roles. The nature of actor roles may also vary across industries within a nation, perhaps as within the public sector employment, where government is also considered to be the employer. However, although it has endured, the industrial relations systems proposed by Dunlop has been criticized and challenged. Criticisms have included charges that it is too static, failing to specify how change occurs in industrial relations; that its treatment of ideology is too simplistic; and that it is too deterministic or does not encourage sufficient appreciation for strategic choices made by the actors.

1.2 Definition of trade union

A trade union can be described as an association of workers formed to protect their interests in employment situations. It accentuates the collective rather than the individual power resources of employees since ‘concerted behaviours’ is the essence of unionism (Ulman, 1990).

Hyman (1975) defines trade unions as, in essence, ‘secondary’ organisations, since, as he puts it, ‘they are associations of workers who are already ‘organised’ by those to whom they sell their labour power and whose actions they are designed to influence. This characteristic is significant since it is crucial in reaching an understanding of the powers available to trade unions and their ability to be proactive or reactive in response to the

various challenges facing them. The history of the trade union movement abounds with examples of struggles not only against employers over pay and conditions of work, but also against the state, for the right to exist. Such struggles, and resultant victories and defeats, have shaped and been shaped by the political, economic and social context of each particular era.

The most well-known definition of a trade union was coined by the historians Sidney and Beatrice Webb (1920): “*A trade union or labour union is a continuous association of wage-earners for the purpose of maintaining or improving the conditions of their working lives.*” This definition conveys two significant features of trade unions: the notion of a collective organization and that the composition must be that of wage earners.

1.2.1 Theories on union development

A number of attempts have been made to explain the origins, development and roles of trade unions and the labour movement in general. It is important to note that the entire labour movement normally involves trade unions but also political parties and other forms of pressure groups committed to improving the conditions for working people.

1.2.1.1 Sydney and Beatrice Webb

The husband and wife team studied the British trade unions in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries. According to the Webbs, the principal role of trade unions was to extend representative democracy to the industrial sphere by collective bargaining. Industrial democracy, in the Webbs’ view, meant the determination of wages and other terms and conditions of employment through collective bargaining, because collective bargaining meant that employers and elected employee representatives were able to meet and negotiate as equals. Unions’ behaviour, they argued, was characterized by two main “devices” and three main “doctrines” as follows:

- The “device of common rule,” that is, the standardization of working conditions for all employees in an occupation or an industry in order to eliminate individual bargaining. This prevented employers from forcing down wages and working conditions through dealing with employees as individuals.
- The “device of restriction of numbers” whereby unions demanded that entry to certain occupations be open only to those who had served a long apprenticeship, plus other practices designed to reduce labour supply and hence increase or maintain the bargaining power of the unions. Such measures were however possible only in craft work situations and, the Webbs argued, as mass production emerged they would become progressively less important.
- There is also the “doctrine of vested interests,” which involved union opposition to any technological development that threatened traditional skills or challenges workers’ control over their jobs.
- The “doctrine of supply and demand,” whereby unions would consciously use market forces to their own advantage.
- The “doctrine of living wage,” that is, the application by unions of the general principle that the basic needs of all workers should be satisfied and that employees in strong bargaining positions should use their power to help weaker groups.

1.2.1.2 Selig Perlman

Perlman (1924) argued that the development of labour movement in any given country could be explained by three factors:

- The strength of a country’s capitalist class in terms of its ability to maintain and exercise its power to rule the nation;
- The extent and attitudes of a country’s intelligentsia;
- The objectives and policies of trade unions.

The mix of these factors in a particular nation would, Perlman suggested, determine the nature of its labour movement and how the latter would behave.

1.2.1.3 Karl Marx

Marx regarded trade unions as an instrument to be used by the working class in order to seize political power. The essentials of Marx's views can be summarized as follows:

- The accumulation of capital in a small section of the society that owned the means of production meant a split between this privileged 'capitalist class' and the overwhelming majority of people who owned neither land nor property but were compelled, for economic reasons, to offer their labour for bare subsistence wages;
- The Capitalist system relied on the exploitation of labour, so that conflicts between the owners of industry (employers) and the workers were inevitable;
- Unions arose from workers' needs to protect themselves from employers' attempts to reduce wages while increasing output;
- The struggle between unions and capitalists would necessarily develop into political conflict, so that unions would play their part in the overthrow of the capitalist system and its replacement by socialism, and
- To the extent that unions focused on mundane day-to-day employee relations issues rather than pursuing broader political goals, their leaders would have to be educated in socialist thinking.

1.2.1.4 American thinkers

A number of writers examined the development of trade unions in the United States. Frank Tannenbaum (1920), for example, claimed that the US trade unionism emerged as a defensive reaction by workers against machinery-based production and the factory system which had disrupted the economic structure of the American society. Unions, according to Tannenbaum, were essentially conservative organizations that offered the complete opposite to Marx's interpretation of unions' role. Tannenbaum predicted, though wrongly, that as unions grew they would be able to purchase and manage big businesses so that unions and corporate' interests would increasingly merge.

Robert. Hoxie argued in 1919 that the American unions were ‘opportunistic’ bodies, reacting to whatever labour market situations existed at any particular moment. Hoxie distinguished four main types of American unions, although he offered no theory on how these categories emerged:

- “The business union” which accepted the capitalist system in its entirety. Members have no class consciousness but see the union simply as a device for improving their terms and conditions of employment. Business unionism would use restrictive labour practices where appropriate, and would exert pressure on political parties if this might help them to achieve (mundane) union objectives.
- “The uplift union,” an idealistic organization that sought to further the economic and social interest of workers through education and the lobbying of government.
- “The revolutionary union,” the aim of which was to overthrow the capitalist system and implement workers’ control of industry. Members have a strong class consciousness and perceive irreconcilable conflicts of interests between capital and labour. There were, according to Hoxie, two forms of revolutionary union: socialist and anarcho-syndicalist. The former was more pragmatic and was prepared to work within the existing socio-political framework. Anarcho-syndicalist, conversely, had a disregard for orthodox collective bargaining and favoured direct actions as the means for attaining goals.
- “The predatory union,” concerned with lining the pockets of union leaders. There are two forms of predatory unions:
 - “guerilla unionism” which would ruthlessly use power to extort money from employers;
 - “hold-up unionism” involving union collusion with employers to enrich union leaders at the expense of workers.

1.3 Trade unions' objectives and roles

Over the last three hundred years, trade unions have developed into a number of forms, influenced by differing political and economic regimes. The immediate objectives and activities of trade unions vary, but primarily include:

- Provision of benefits to members like: to insure members against unemployment, ill health, old age and funeral expenses;
- Have more say over management long-term plans;
- Dispute settlement;
- Demanding equal pay and opportunities for women and men;
- Collective bargaining: Where trade unions are able to operate openly and are recognised by employers, they may negotiate with employers over wages and working conditions;
- Industrial action: Trade unions may organize strikes or resistance to lockouts in furtherance of particular goals, and
- Political activity: Trade unions may promote legislation favorable to the interests of their members or workers as a whole. To this end they may pursue campaigns, undertake lobbying, or financially support individual candidates or parties.

1.3.1 Collective Bargaining

Collective bargaining is the process by which management and unions established terms and conditions of employment. The process is described as collective because workers are involved in it as a group and are represented by individuals chosen for that purpose. The process is bargaining because it involves give and take and, ordinarily, the making of a contract. The contract that result form the collective bargaining process is called as the collective agreement and it regulates the relationship between employer and employees.

Collective bargaining is often thought of as a struggle between management and labour in which labour seeks to obtain concessions from management. Management is thought of

as possessing economic advantages (such as profits) that labour seeks to wrest from it wages and benefit increases. Management is also thought of as possessing rights and prerogatives that labour seeks to limit by increasing the rights of workers. In both cases collective bargaining is thought of as a dispute over the division of authority and of economic gains. This type of bargaining may be describes as *distributive*, since it involves the distribution of financial and non-economic privileges.

But this is not all what is involved in negotiations. In fact, when one thinks of negotiation outside of the labour relations process, for instance between two business persons, then bargaining is conceived as a process that results in a gain for both. Collective bargaining also involves this aspect of bargaining where conflict is minimal and both sides stand to gain. This type of bargaining is called as *integrative* bargaining.

1.3.2 Industrial actions

Industrial action or job action refers collectively to any measure taken by trade unions or other organised labour movement meant to reduce productivity in a workplace. Industrial action may take place in the context of a labour dispute or may be meant to affect political or social change. Specifically industrial action may include one or more of the following:

- Strikes;
- Go slow;
- Work to rule;
- General strike;
- Slow down;
- Overtime ban.

1.3.2.1 Strikes

- Economic Strike which is intended to resolve a “Bargaining Impasse” and can only occur in connection with contract negotiations;

- Unfair Labour Practice Strike the purpose of which is to force the employer to cease committing what the union believes to be unfair labor practices. It may or may not occur during negotiations;
- Wildcat Strikes which is conducted by groups of workers without the authority and consent of the union;
- Sympathy Strike is a strike action that is initiated by workers in one industry and supported by workers in a separate but related industry or profession. Sympathy strikes are also called sympathy action, secondary strikes and secondary action. The term *sympathy strike* implies that the purpose of the strike is to support and express sympathy for, the primary strikers;
- Jurisdictional Strike is when there is pressure on an employer to assign work to the members of one bargaining unit rather than another or to pressure an employer to recognize one union as representative of its employees when it already recognizes another, and
- Lockout is the Management's equivalent of a strike. It can only occur legally when an existing labour agreement has expired and there is truly an impasse in contract negotiations.

In the case of Mauritius, the provisions of the existing Industrial Relations Act makes for lengthy procedures before a strike is possible. First of all, the union has to declare the strike then members and leaders will have to wait for 21 days during which the case will go to the Prime Minister, Industrial Relations Commission or Permanent Arbitration Tribunal to seek for some arrangement, which could be reached to prevent the strike. The IRA also stipulates that workers engaged in a strike are not remunerated. Section 93 of the IRA also allows the Prime Minister to declare a strike illegal even if it is legal, on the ground that the strike may imperil the national economy. However, the right to strike is often regarded as a measure of last resort and one which has to be used responsibly, failing which it could prove harmful for the country's economy. Furthermore, this state of affairs could damage the ability of organisations to provide employment or even increase in pay of workers. Additionally, the loss of earnings of many employees may result in a severe drop in the standard of living of the workforce in general.

1.3.2.2 Go slow

A go-slow is a term used in industrial relations used to define a slowing down of production or provision of a service by a labour force in pursuance of an industrial dispute or grievance, as opposed to a direct interruption of it.

1.3.2.3 Work to rule

Work-to-rule is an industrial action in which employees do no more than the minimum required by the rules of a workplace, and follow safety or other regulations to the letter in order to cause a slowdown rather than to serve their purpose. This is considered less disruptive than a strike or lockout; and just obeying the rules is less susceptible to disciplinary action. Notable examples have included nurses refusing to answer telephones and high school teachers refusing to write recommendation letters for their students' college applications.

1.3.2.4 General Strike

A general strike is a strike action by a critical mass of the labour force in a city, region or country. While a general strike can be for political goals, economic goals, or both, it tends to gain its momentum from the ideological or class sympathies of the participants. It is also characterized by participation of workers in a multitude of workplaces, and tends to involve entire communities.

1.3.2.5 Slow down

A slowdown is an industrial action in which employees perform their duties but seek to reduce productivity or efficiency in their performance of these duties. A slowdown may be used as either a prelude or an alternative to a strike, as it is seen as less disruptive as well as less risky and costly for workers and their union. Striking workers usually go unpaid and risk being replaced, so a slowdown is seen as a way to put pressure on management while avoiding these outcomes. Other times slowdowns are accompanied by intentional sabotage on the part of workers to provide further disruption.

1.3.2.6 Overtime ban

An overtime ban is a form of industrial action where employees limit their working time to the hours specified in their contracts, refusing to work any overtime. Overtime bans are less disruptive than strike action, and since there is no breach of contract by the employees there is less chance of disciplinary action by the employer than there is with strikes. However, an overtime ban can have a significant impact on industries which normally operate outside of regular office hours, such as emergency services, public transport, or retail.

1.4 Types of Unions

A number of bases have been identified for organizing different types of workers in different types of unions. These organizing bases, or boundaries, are listed in the table below along with the respective name of the unions.

Table 1.1 Classification of Trade Unions

Organizing bases or boundaries	Generic union name
Within an employing organization	Company unionism
Within a craft or group of skills	Craft Unionism
Within an occupational group	Occupational unionism
Within an industry	Industrial unionism
According to a religious or political affiliation	Ideological unionism
Based on inclusion, not bound by any of the above	General unionism

Company unionism

Company unionism generally refers to a union that is not restricted to organizing within a particular employing organization but also controlled and sponsored by it. This strategy has been used to restrict recognition to the company trade union. Employing organizations resorting to this approach in the past have actively discouraged membership of trade unions. The term company unionism has therefore been used in a pejorative way to indicate an inferior form of trade union that is dependent on the employer and which is controlled and influenced by the organization to prevent conflict from occurring, at least overtly.

Craft unionism

The power of craft unions rests on the organization of highly skilled workers. These skilled workers are able to limit the supply of new labour through their exclusive position in being able to train and pass on their skills to entrants to the particular craft. However, the exclusiveness of many different craft unions was eroded through time by industrial and technological changes. Technological changes, for instance, allowed employers to develop new processes that permitted them to use other workers with lower levels of skill, thereby displacing craft workers.

Occupational unionism

Occupational unions, like craft unions, organize workers who undertake the same type of job. This involves organizing an occupational group across employment boundaries. In some cases, this will involve a union organizing an occupational group who works within the same industry or sector. There are some occupations that are spread across industrial sectors, and an occupational union will have to expand its recruitment across these industrial boundaries.

Industrial unionism

Industrial unionism adopts a different basis for the way in which it seeks to organize workers and build a union movement. Its strategy is based on organizing all workers within a particular industry irrespective of their occupation or level of skill. These unions

have been characterized as being ‘*vertically*’ oriented in terms of their approach to building membership.

Ideological unionism

Political affiliations and religious beliefs have also shaped the basis of trade union organization. For example, trade unions in France and in Italy have traditionally been influenced by ideological and, to some extent, religious beliefs and aligned according to political affiliations.

General Unionism

General unionism, in theory, is designed to be open to any grade of worker, or occupation, across any industrial sector.

1.4.1 Forms of membership

- A closed shop: Membership in a union is required as a condition of employment. The closed shop is generally illegal in the US.
- A union shop: Becoming and remaining a union member is required as a condition of employment after the thirtieth day of employment (or later).
- An agency shop: All employees who do not join the union pay a fee of dues to the union for its services as a bargaining agent.
- Maintenance of membership shop: All employees who choose to become union members must remain so as a condition of employment.

1.4 Why do workers join unions?

Workers join unions for a number of reasons, such as:

- To safeguard interest;
- To defend unequal wages and other benefits not being provided;
- To provide support in times of redundancies and injustices;

- To improve the terms and the conditions of work;
- To provide assistance in cases of disputes and grievances;
- To benefit from welfare facilities like, low interest rate loans, provident fund, etc.

1.6 Support of International organizations to Trade Unions

There are a number of organizations present and ready to support the goals and objectives of trade unions world wide for instance the International Labour Organization (ILO), International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC) among others.

1.6.1 International Labour Organization (ILO)

Created in 1919, the ILO is devoted to advancing opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. Its main aims are to promote rights at work, encourage decent employment opportunities, enhance social protection and strengthen dialogue in handling work-related issues. In promoting social justice and internationally recognized human and labour rights, the organization continues to pursue its founding mission that labour peace is essential to prosperity. Today, the ILO helps advance the creation of decent jobs and the kinds of economic and working conditions that give working people and business people a stake in lasting peace, prosperity and progress.

The ILO aims is to ensure that it serves the needs of working women and men by bringing together governments, employers and workers to set labour standards, develop policies and devise programmes. Its tripartite structure makes the ILO unique among world organizations because employers' and workers' organizations have an equal voice with governments in all its deliberations.

In fact, the ILO encourages tripartism within member States of which Mauritius is a member by promoting social dialogue, which is defined as all types of negotiation, consultation and exchange of information between, or among, representatives of

governments, employers and workers on issues of common interest, which will help in designing and implementing of national policies. Achieving fair terms of employment, decent working conditions, and development for the benefit of all cannot be achieved without the active involvement of workers, employers and governments, including a broad-based effort by all of them. To encourage such an approach, one of the strategic objectives of the ILO is to strengthen social dialogue among the tripartite constituents. It helps governments, employers' and workers' organizations to establish sound labour relations, adapt labour laws to meet changing economic and social needs and improve labour administration. Below is the list of the Labour Standards ratified by Mauritius:

Table 1.2 ILO Conventions ratified by Mauritius

	Item	Date ratified
1	Unemployment Convention, 1919 (No. 2)	02.12.69
2	Unemployment Indemnity (Shipwreck) Convention, 1920 (No. 8)	02.12.69
3	Right of Association (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No. 11)	02.12.69
4	Workmen's Compensation (Agriculture) Convention, 1921 (No.12)	02.12.69
5	Weekly Rest (Industry) Convention, 1921 (No. 14)	02.12.69
6	Medical Examination of Young Persons (Sea) Convention, 1921 (No. 16)	02.12.69
7	Workmen's Compensation (Accidents) Convention, 1925 (No. 17)	02.12.69
8	Equality of Treatment (Accidents Compensation) Convention, 1925 (No.19)	02.12.69
9	Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery Convention, 1928 (No. 26) 02.12.69	02.12.69
10	Forced Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29)	02.12.69
11	Protection against Accidents (Dockers) Convention (Revised), 1932 (No. 32)	02.12.69
12	Workmen's Compensation (Occupational Diseases) Convention (Revised), 1934 (No. 42)	02.12.69
13	Certificate of Able Seamen Convention, 1946 (No. 74)	02.12.69
14	Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81)	02.12.69
15	Contracts of Employment (Indigenous Workers) Convention, 1947 (No. 86)	02.12.69
16	Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organise, 1948 (No. 87)	1.05.05
17	Employment Service Convention, 1948 (No. 88)	03.09.04

18	Labour Clauses (Public Contracts) Convention, 1949 (No. 94)	02.12.69
19	Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95)	02.12.69
20	Migration for Employment Convention (Revised), 1949 (No. 97)	02.12.69
21	Right to Organise and Collective Bargaining Convention, 1949 (No. 98)	02.12.69
22	Minimum Wage Fixing Machinery (Agriculture) Convention, 1951 (No. 99)	02.12.69
23	Equal Remuneration Convention, 1951 (No. 100)	18.12.02
24	Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105)	02.12.69
25	Seafarers Identity Documents Convention, 1958 (No. 108)	02.12.69
26	Discrimination (Employment and Occupation) Convention, 1958 (No. 111)	18.12.02
27	Dock Work Convention, 1973 (No. 137)	18.03.03
28	Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138)	30.07.90
29	Tripartite Consultation (International Labour Standards) Convention, 1976 (No. 144)	14.06.94
30	Labour Administration Convention, 1978 (No. 150)	5.04.04
31	Workers with Family Responsibilities Convention, 1981 (No 156)	5.04.04
32	Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons) Convention, 1983 (No. 159)	09.06.04
33	Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160)	14.06.94
34	Part-time Work Convention, 1994 (No. 175)	14.06.96
35	Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182)	08.06.00

1.6.2 International Trade Unions Confederation (ITUC)

A globalised world economy requires effective global governance. The ITUC seeks to increase intergovernmental cooperation to ensure that the social dimension of globalisation, including decent work and fundamental workers' rights, is right at the centre of decision-making at world's major global and regional institutions. This includes the World Bank, International Monetary Fund, World Trade Organisation, United Nations and its specialised agencies, especially the International Labour Organisation (ILO) with its tripartite structure and mandate to set international social standards.

The ITUC also works with its Global Unions partners to promote effective rules governing the behaviour of private business. Some of them includes:



- Public Service International (PSI);



- Building & Wood Workers International;



- Umicore.

ITUC seeks to achieve international frameworks for social dialogue and collective bargaining, and systems of corporate governance that hold management accountable for the social impact of business activities. This requires a combination of campaigning and mobilisation with advocacy and lobbying so that the policies of these institutions and companies support, rather than undermine, the achievement of decent work for all. This includes action around:

- Trade, investment and labour standards;
- Health and safety at work and sustainable environmental practices;
- Global governance;
- The social responsibilities of business including global social dialogues;
- Social protection and sound legal employment relationships;
- Trade union organizing;
- Fighting HIV and AIDS;
- Combating child labour and forced labour.

A major focus of ITUC work is also to ensure full and universal respect for the Fundamental Workers' Rights of the ILO, which guarantee the right to organise in a trade union, the right to collective bargaining, protection from discrimination, and the elimination of child labour and forced labour.

This chapter leads us to probe into the salient concerns of the trade union movement with specific reference to the Mauritian situation. As we have seen, conceptualizing unionism is itself problematic, and so charting a description at least, and an analysis as an ideal, is a challenge that is now addressed in the chapters that follow.

CHAPTER 2

HISTORY and EVOLUTION of TRADE UNIONISM IN MAURITIUS

2.1 International history of Trade Unionism

Globalisation has it that events or situations that happen in the world directly or indirectly affect the current and future state of a given country. Globalization means that the whole world has turned into a global village and countries not adapting to this new configuration would find themselves at a loss. Likewise, the ways in which trade unionism has developed internationally considerably impacted on the movement in Mauritius, as for instance, with the arrival of slaves and of immigrants, labour codes and laws were created, transmitted and passed down the generations by the colonizers. So much so that institutions were set up to deal with Labour issues and the structure of the movement itself emerged out of these effects. Even if today Mauritius is a politically independent nation, the Industrial Relations scene in Mauritius is a constant reminder of the laws and practices of the colonial past.

2.1.1 Roots of Trade Unionism: Great Britain

It all began around the eighteenth century where much of Western society witnessed a transformation from an agrarian culture with craft-based production to a culture shaped by the first industrial revolution.

Trade unionism as a movement originated in Great Britain in the 19th century, in the wake of the Industrial Revolution. Already, at the beginning of the 18th century, Britain's industrialization surpassed all of Europe, and by the turn of the century Britain was by far the most industrialised country in the world.

2.1.1.1 Early Forms of Trade Unions In Britain: Guilds

Trade unions are often said to be the successors of Guilds. A Guild is an association of craftsmen in a particular trade. The master was an established craftsman in the Guild with recognized abilities who took on work apprentices. These were boys in late childhood or adolescence known to the craftsman's family and were trained by him in the elements of the trade. The apprentice was provided with food, clothing, shelter, and an education by the master, in return for unpaid work. After completing a fixed term of service of five to nine years, an apprentice became a journeyman, that is, a craftsman in a position to work for a given master and paid in wages for his labour. A journeyman who could provide proof of his technical competence might rise in the Guild to the status of a master, whereupon he could set up his own workshop and hire and train apprentices.

The only preoccupation of journeymen was to control the entry into the trade and at the same time influence wages and protect their own interests. To exert such control, they began to organize themselves in local societies in the form of fraternal and self-help associations. The early unions were formed partly as social clubs with an increased concern for improving wages and working conditions. The Parliament regarded such organisations as a limitation to free trade and therefore a violation according to laws.

2.1.1.2 The Combination Acts

In 1799, the British Parliament adopted a new law, termed the *Combination Acts*, which made any form of organizing and trade unionism illegal. The new law stated: "Any workingman who, combined with another to gain an increase in wages or a decrease in working hours could be sentenced to three months in jail or to two months hard labour." The sentence was to be imposed by two magistrates, and Appeal was made extremely difficult.

After submitting to much pressure, Parliament repealed the Combination Acts in 1824. It recommended that the restrictions against the workers' right to form groups should be

repealed and also granted immunity from prosecution. Even with the repeal of the Combination Acts, trade unions did not get the legal status that many had sought, and had to content themselves being 'tolerated' instead. At the time the upper social classes considered unions as dangerous, illegal movements, probably. It was due to the riots and violent strikes in which the *Luddism* or *Chartism* movements were engaged, and reported in the Press. .

2.1.1.3 Luddism

Luddism was the social movement of textile workers in the early 1800s who protested, often by destroying machines, against the changes produced by the Industrial Revolution, which they felt threatened their jobs. The movement, which began in 1811, was named after a mythical leader, Ned Ludd. Measures taken by the government included many death penalties and transportations to a penal colony.

2.1.1.4 The Tolpuddle Martyrs

Tolpuddle is a village near Dorchester in Dorset where between 1833-1834 a great wave of Trade Union activity took place at a lodge of the Friendly Society of Agricultural Labourers. Entry into the Society involved a payment of a shilling (5p), and swearing before a picture of a skeleton never to tell anyone the Society's secrets, that is, projects of the organization and where it was found.

The Prime Minister of the time bitterly opposed any trace of trade unionism, so that the secret of the Society was at last exposed and six farm laborers were sentenced for 'trade union activities' in March 1834 to seven years of transportation to a penal colony in Australia. The labourers at Tolpuddle who lived in dire poverty on just seven shillings a week wanted an increase to ten shillings, but instead their wages were cut to 6 shillings a week. There was an uproar throughout the whole country when hearing this sentence, so 250,000 people signed a petition and a procession of 30,000 people marched to Whitehall in support of the labourers, until the sentences were remitted. Government had to pay a

free passage for them to return to their home country. The tree under which the ‘martyrs’ met is now very old and was reduced to a stump, but it has become a place of pilgrimage in Tolpuddle, where it is known as the ‘Martyrs Tree.’ The story of the Tolpuddle Martyrs is perhaps the best known case in the early history of the Trade Unions, and this accomplishment is marked by an annual workers’ festival in July in the village of Tolpuddle.

2.1.1.5 The Reform Act 1832

In following years, trade unionism grew rapidly, but it was not until the passing of the Reform Act in 1832 that union activity began to develop on a significant scale. The Reform Act also known as “The Representation of the People Act 1832,” was an Act of Parliament that introduced wide-ranging changes to the electoral system of the United Kingdom. According to its preamble, the Act was designed to “take effectual measures for correcting diverse abuses that have long prevailed in the choice of Members to serve in the Parliament.” The Act expanded the number of individuals entitled to vote, doubling the size of the electorate.

2.1.1.6 The Trade Union Act 1871

Prior to 1871, many strikes occurred and most of them were extremely violent (sometimes people were injured or even killed). Government of the day led by Gladstone then decided to investigate these organisations by appointing a Royal Commission whose terms of reference were to make recommendations on this issue. At the same time, the trade unions were confronted with various problems of embezzlement; linked to the fact that, having no judicial status to exist or to go to Court, they had to use someone’s name in order to leave their funds in a bank, so much so that the holder of the money was often tempted and usually escaped with it.

When the Royal Commission’s investigations closed, it was considered necessary to give legal status to the trade unions. The *Trade Union Act of 1871* was passed in Parliament,

giving legal status and recognition of the collective or corporate personality of trade unions. This provided unions with the possibility not only to exist but to organise everything concerning their activities, and to begin a new form of organisation which established their “independence” and their future power within the British Society. Thanks to this legislation, Trade Unions could sign contracts, enter into agreements, and function as an entity (not like a simple gathering of persons), and all these new rights could be exercised without members being punished or prosecuted.

Trade unions also obtained the right to have their internal rules which were strictly drawn up by themselves. And so, the decision to strike belonged only to Trade Unions; and the government and the courts had the right to react only in cases of “subversive riots.” If the aim of the strike was a demand for better pay, for instance, the authorities could not stand in their way.

The legal document highlighted that, to be considered as a trade union, the organization had to be ‘registered’. It also meant that these organisations were obliged to be widely known (i.e., not to be secret), to have their rules and especially to have and declare a certification of their accounts which had to be made publicly available.

However, the Gladstone Government did not appreciate the “generosity” of such a legislation toward the Trade Unions. In the same year (1871) the Criminal Laws Amendment Act were passed which limited some of the Trade Unions’ way of striking by prohibiting picketing. However, this law was removed by the next Government in 1875, and picketing was allowed if conducted in a pacific manner.

After the Trade Union Act, which effectively legalised trade unions, it took almost another twenty years before the unskilled workers began to form mass organisations and the so-called general unions really grew.

2.1.1.7 The Creation of the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants

Work on the mid-nineteenth century railways was hard and dangerous. Accidents claimed the lives of hundreds of railway-men every year, and one parliamentary inquiry revealed that employees worked 90 to 100 hours a week, with obvious implications for their health and safety and that of their passengers. Even if the work was both secure and prestigious, the rail companies experienced attempts by their workers to organise. When the Railway Working Men's Provident Association in 1865 was formed, the company moved swiftly to disrupt it by dismissing its most prominent members. It was not until 1871 that the first enduring trade union organization emerged, the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants. Within a year, it claimed 17,247 members, but this represented a tiny proportion of the 250,000 who worked on railways at that time.

2.1.1.8 Sheffield Outrages

Sheffield's early success in steel production had involved long working hours, in desperately unpleasant conditions which offered little or no safety protection. There was a disease caught by employees of the Sheffield company called as "Grinder's Asthma." They suffered from shortness of breath, their complexion became dirty yellow, their features expressed anxiety, their voices became rough and hoarse and they coughed loudly. This is perhaps one of the strongest reasons why that city became one of the main centres for trade union organization and agitation in the Britain at that time. By the 1860s, industrial unrest culminated in the Sheffield Outrages, which was followed by a series of explosions and murders carried out by a small group of ultra-extremist militants.

2.1.1.9 The Taff Vale Court

The legal status of unions became endangered by the Taff Vale court decision of 1901. Actually, the Taff Vale Railway Company sued the Amalgamated Society of Railway Servants for losses during a strike. As a result of the case the union was fined £23,000. Until this time it was assumed that unions could not be sued for acts carried out by their

members during a strike. The court exposed trade unions being sued every time it was involved in an industrial dispute. However, after 1906 the Government passed the Trades Disputes Act which removed trade union responsibility to pay for damage during any strike action.

2.1.1.10 The Building Up of the Trade Union Congress

At a conference in Manchester in 1868, the Trade Union Congress (TUC) was founded. The TUC was composed almost exclusively of unions of skilled workers until 1889, when it began to accept the first affiliations of “new” or unskilled general unions. By 1900 TUC had 1,200,000 members in their affiliated unions. Between 1910 and 1920, trade union membership trebled, from 2,5 million to 8,5 million. But the post-war slump of 1921 led to a great crisis in the history of British trade unionism and this was marked by the General Strike of 1926. The failure of the strike resulted in widespread disillusionment and by 1933 union membership had fallen to 4,5 million, half of what it had been in 1920. After the World War II union membership gradually increased until by 1969 it stood at more than 13,000,000. By 1997 the membership had fallen to approximately seven million.

2.1.1.11 The UK General Strike of 1926

The British coal-mining industry suffered the worst economic crisis in 1925, largely caused by some factors:

- The First World War: The heavy domestic use of coal in the war meant that coals were depleted. Britain exported less coal during the war than it would have done in peacetime, allowing other countries to fill the gap. The United States, Poland and Germany benefited in particular.
- The fall in prices of coal.

Mine owners wanted to normalise profits even during times of economic instability, which often took the form of wage reductions. Coupled with the prospect of longer working hours, the industry was thrown into disarray. Mine owners therefore announced

that their intention was to reduce miners' wages, and the TUC responded to this news by promising to support the miners in their dispute. The outcome of which was that the Conservative government which was in power at that time declared that they would provide a nine-month subsidy to maintain the miners' wages and that a Royal Commission under the chairmanship of Sir Herbert Samuel would look into the problems of the mining industry. This decision became known as "Red Friday" because it was seen as a victory for working-class solidarity. In practice, the subsidy gave the mine owners and the government time to prepare for a major trade union dispute. Herbert Smith (a leader of the Miners' Federation of Great Britain) said of this event: "We have no need to glorify about victory. It is only an armistice."

The Samuel Commission published its report in March 1926: it recognised that the industry needed to be reorganized. The report also recommended that the government subsidy should be withdrawn and that the miners' wages should be reduced to save the industry's profitability. After the Samuel Commission's report, the mine owners published new terms of employment for all miners. These included an extension of the seven-hour working day and a reduction in wages. Depending on a number of factors, the wages would be cut between 10% and 25%. The Miners Federation of Great Britain refused the wage reduction and the negotiation was: "Not a penny off the pay, not a second on the day."

At a Conference on 1st May 1926, the TUC announced the organization of a general strike "in defence of miners' wages and hours" which was to begin on the 3rd of May. The TUC feared that an all-out general strike would bring revolutionary elements. They, therefore decided to bring out workers only in the key industries, such as railway men, transport workers, printers, dockers, iron and steel workers. The Government had prepared for the strike over the nine months in which it had provided a subsidy and did whatever it could to keep the country moving.

On **4th May 1926**, the number of strikers was about 1.5-1.75 million. Workers' reaction to the strike call was immediate and overwhelming, and this surprised both the

Government and the TUC. On this first day, there were no major initiatives and no dramatic events, except for the nation's transport being at a standstill.

On *5th May 1926*, the propaganda machine was set in motion. It could be read in the newspaper: "TUC did not have the right as to exhort their followers to continue action." In the *British Worker*, the TUC's newspaper: "We are not making war on the people. We are anxious that the ordinary members of the public shall not be penalised for the unpatriotic conduct of the mine owners and the government."

On *6th May 1926*, there was a change of atmosphere. Means of transport began to improve with volunteers workers.

On *7th May 1926*, the TUC met with Sir Herbert Samuel and worked out a set of proposals designed to end the dispute. The Miners' Federation rejected the proposals. In the meantime, the government took action to protect the workers who decided to return to work.

On *12th May 1926*, the TUC General Council announced their decision to call off the strike, provided that the Government offered a guarantee that there would be no victimisation of strikers. The Government stated that it had no power to compel employers to take back every man who had been on strike. For several months the miners continued to maintain resistance, but by October 1926 hardship forced many men back to work. By the end of November most miners were back at work. However, many were victimised and remained unemployed for many years. Those that were employed were forced to accept longer hours and lower wages.

2.1.2 Trade Unionism and Politics

One of the first attempts of union leaders to engage in political actions came about in the 1830s with the Reform Act of 1832 where unionists joined members of Parliament and drew up petitions for universal male suffrage, which became part of the Chartist

platforms (Chartism was the first specifically working-class national movement in Britain and was concerned mainly with electoral reforms) and trade unions played an important part in these activities. The members of the trade unions even won seats in the first Royal Commission on trade union matters that the Parliament set up in 1869. But the working class did not emerge as a major political force until the miners' entry into the political arena.

2.1.2.1 Labour Representation Committee

In 1900, the Trade Union Congress co-operated with the Independent Labour Party (founded in 1893) to establish the Labour Representation Committee, (LRC). Six years later, twenty-nine LRC members were elected in Parliament and in 1918 the LRC was renamed as the Labour Party. After the Second World War, Labour Party campaigned on a programme of nationalisation, reconstruction and the establishment of extended public welfare services; and won a resounding victory. They won the 1950 election with just five seats more than the Conservatives, to whom they lost the power a year later. After which, the Conservatives stayed in power for thirteen years. In 1964, Labour Party returned to power where they stayed until 1970. After 1970, the Party lost because they could not agree on whether or not to join the EEC. In 1974, Mr. Heath, member of the Conservative group, lost his Prime Ministership when he asked the people: who is to govern the country the government or the trade unions? After that, the Labour Party returned to power, which they kept until 1979 when Margaret Thatcher became Prime Minister.

During her reign as Prime Minister, Margaret Thatcher managed to destroy the power of the trade unions for almost a generation. Only now, more than 13 years after her departure, are they beginning to find their feet again. To understand the scale of what supporters called as her achievement while others called it her shameful legacy.

2.2 History of Mauritian Trade Unionism

Just as the history of Mauritius is closely linked to the slave era, so the Trade Unionism in Mauritius can be traced back to the slavery period too. As in other civilized parts of the world, the recorded history of Mauritius reveals that there has always been a struggle of the oppressed for their emancipation and liberty.

2.2.1 The Slavery period

The first permanent settlement of Mauritius was in the year 1722 by the French who shortly afterwards brought in African slaves to work on the sugarcane estates. Mauritius remained a French colony until 1810. In the year 1810, L'île de France (Mauritius) was captured by the British for economic and strategic purposes. But to make the island fruitful they needed abundant cheap labour force to work on the fresh and fertile land. At that point, slaves imported from countries like Madagascar, Africa, India and China was the ideal source of labour. Being a slave was to be reduced to a material thing belonging to the master with no meaning and no existence. The slaves were uprooted from their country of origin to an unknown country where they would live in a piteous state and in frightful conditions. Slaves were not paid, nor were they well treated by the colonists and any act of organizing was severely repressed and punished. Some punishments consisted of amputations of various parts of the body and exposure in the open air for a day and eventually culminating in execution at sunset.

No longer submitting to their inhuman treatment, the slaves began to exert a certain form of resistance which was expressed in a number of ways: rebellions, refusal to reproduce new-born, suicides, theft, refusal to work and above all "marronnage" which is the act of running away of slaves to live on mountaintops, for example, or preparing their trip secretly to Madagascar or back to their country of origin.

2.2.2 Abolition of Slavery and the recruitment of Immigrants

Following the British Government's decision to free all slaves of the British territories, an Act of Parliament was passed on 7th August 1833 in Mauritius, to abolish slavery. However, it is only in 1835, by the Ordinance No. 8 that slavery was completely abolished at the time when William Nicholay was the governor. During that period, the 28,000 freed agricultural workers out of a population of 66,000 workers refused to continue to work because of the inhuman treatment meted out to them even after the abolition of slavery. Consequently, small sugar cane planters were faced with a shortage of labour and this is when they turned to India to import indentured labourers with a first batch arriving on the island in the year 1834 at the initiative of James Arbuthrot, a recruiting agent.

2.2.2.1 The system of indentured labour

From 1834 to 1870, approximately 362,150 immigrants (289,763 males and 72,387 females) were imported to Mauritius from India. The immigration of the indentured labourers was supposed to be on a temporary basis. However, once on the island, the small planters and the State found all sort of reasons to manipulate and retain them for longer than what was stipulated in their contracts. In 1847, the State offered £2 to all those indentured workers who gave up their return ticket to India. The State also judged that the quota of female indentured labourers be of a minimum 25%. This is how short term immigration turned into lasting one. This was a strategy used by the government and the small planters to firstly discourage the male immigrants to return to their country and secondly give them reasons (women and money) to stay in Mauritius. The immigrants settled on the plantation fields itself. With this massive labour force working on the sugar cane fields, the economy of the country was boosted. This form of exploitation turned out to be very profitable for both the sugar barons and small planters.

2.2.2.2 The Plight of the Indentured labourers

The whole body of immigrant workers included labourers, turners, boilers, mechanics, drivers and messengers, people who worked both in the sugar cane fields and factories. They were forced to work like machines and made to live as animals. Their working, living and social conditions were as follows:

- They had no fixed hours of work. Starting before sunrise they were required to go on responding to the whims of their supervisors;
- They had no set time for lunch. On some days they could have it at noon whereas on others even at 2 p.m;
- Their wages varied between 30 and 40 cents per day;
- They were required to give a certain percentage of their earnings to their supervisors;
- They were often abused and ill-treated while at work;
- They were dismissed on flimsy grounds or even without reason;
- They lived in small thatched rooms with only one small door and no other openings;
- They wore tattered rags;
- They had a few utensils, two wooden beds, mattresses made of grass and jute used as bed sheets and covers;
- Their food consisted of some boiled rice and vegetables;
- They were divided into several categories and lived almost separately. Those belonging to one group did not practically know what the others of the similar groups were doing;
- They could not do anything to have a satisfactory social status as they received meager wages which were not enough for a somewhat decent living. They could live neither in a proper house nor provide themselves with the bare necessities of life. In cases of sickness, they could not even afford to buy medicines;
- Education was in most cases neither their concern nor that of their children. Let apart the learning of alphabets, they were not even aware what was happening beyond the seas. Matters relating to conditions of work and wages were not even questioned.

Relaxation or temporary cessation from work was something inconceivable. According to them any rest or leisure was meant for their employers, they themselves being born to work and serve;

- They were conditioned and brainwashed in such ways as it was not possible for them to think of reasonable wages. They considered every small amount they received for their labour as a mercy of the sugar barons;
- The whole working population did not count for an iota in the politics of the country. It was only the officials of the House and the big planters who mattered. The workers were required to remain satisfied even in poverty. The affairs of the country were not their concern;
- A ruthless capitalist system was set up to crush the wishes of the workers who had begun to think that the rich had been sent by God to enjoy all the good things available in Mauritius. They believed it was their sacred duty to serve both the rich planters and the big officials.

2.2.2.3 Adolphe De Plevitz: a savior for the immigrants

Adolphe De Plevitz came to Mauritius around the year 1859. He was the manager of a sugar estate at Nouvelle Découverte. He was among the first philanthropists to have noticed the trials and sufferings of the Indian immigrants and was very much interested in the cause of the immigrant employees. The latter considered him as their friend and never hesitated to go to him whenever they needed help. Therefore, alarmed by the inhuman working conditions of the workers, he addressed a petition, “The Old Immigrants Petition,” signed by some 10,000 old immigrants and was translated in Tamil and Hindi. This document was sent to Her Majesty, Queen Victoria, describing and stressing the deplorable plights and tribulations of the workers. As a result of De Plevitz’s action, the British Government set up a Royal Commission of Enquiry in 1872 constituted of William Edward Frère and Victor Alexandre Williamson. Based on the recommendations of this commission, the country acquired its first labour law. This first Labour Ordinance remained in force for nearly 45 years when it was superseded by the Labour Laws of 1922.

2.2.3 Introduction of the First Labour Laws: Law Of 1878

The laws of the 1878 stipulated that investigations had to be carried out whenever there were complaints. Legal proceedings were set up and wages were fixed according to the requirements. Once every six months, a medical officer was required to pay a visit to estate officials and make a report thereon. The Estate had to provide medical facilities to all the other workers also. The period of daily work was limited to nine hours, and the Sunday “Corvée” was for 2 hours only and additional payment being made for extra work. In case of absence, one day’s wages would be deducted for every day’s absence. The double cut system was abolished. In case of 3 days’ absence without prior notice, an arrest warrant was to be issued followed by 12 months of confinement at the Vagrant Depot. The pass system (*also introduced in South Africa at some point in time where people were not free to move, their slightest move and progress of work being noted in their pass book*) was at last abolished and it was for the government to provide return passage tickets to those who wished to go back to India.

2.2.3.1 Impact of Labour laws 1878

Despite the Laws of 1878, labourers still suffered and had to bear the whims of the estate owners who considered labourers to be the private property of the estate as it used to be at the time of slavery. From time to time labourers and artisans did unite and fight for their rights and for the betterment of their working and housing conditions, but the mobilization of the working class was very slow and no significant benefits were gained.

2.2.4 A Special Envoy: Manilall Doctor

In 1892, a disastrous cyclone crippled the sugar industry by half. This brought the economy down and added to the sufferings and afflictions of the workers because small planters were not abiding by the law passed in 1878. Desperate and seeing the uncertainty in the applicability of this law, workers subjected themselves to numerous

acts of atrocity such as amputating their fingers on railways, suicides and, in their desperation, setting fire to sugarcane fields.

At that time, in 1901, a representative from the Indian National Congress, in the person of Mahatma Gandhi, came to visit the island. This visit reinforced the struggle for the emancipation of the working class. Gandhi toured the country and asked workers to prepare themselves to fight for their rights instead of being passive in their sufferings. This was followed by the visit of a special envoy in the person of Manilall Doctor on 13th October 1907. At that time Mauritius was facing a severe financial problem due to the post-cyclone circumstances and the wandering of workers not willing to take up their posts of work. The Chamber of Agriculture, supported by the Government, formulated a request of loan of around £600, 000.

2.2.4.1 Manilall Doctor and L'Action Liberale

“L'Action Liberale,” founded in the year 1907, consisted of members like Dr. E. Laurent, the leader, and of René Mérandon, Anatole de Boucherville, and many other members who chose to mobilize themselves against the superiority of the bourgeoisie classes. The latter classes cursed the Association with the words “Péril Asiatique” when they witnessed Action Liberale taking a new turn with Manilall Doctor joining the small gathering. Workers viewed the movement as a means to improve their lives. Gaining strength, L'Action Liberale made a request to the Royal Commission to inquire into the finances of the country and the country's sugar industry before granting any loan. Numerous meetings were organized between Action Liberale and the Sweethetham Commission of 1909 during which they seized the opportunity to voice out the problems and grievances of the workers. The association recommended the Commission to tax luxurious products instead of basics like rice and peas. Dr.Laurent and Manilall Doctor were criticized by the press as being enemies of the people and opponents of progress and prosperity of the country.

2.2.5 The Start of the Trade Union Movement

Mr. W. Moutou was known as the precursor of the trade union movement in the country. In 1921, the first strike was launched by the rail way men of Plaine Lauzun under the impulsion of W. Moutou to claim an increase in wages. Despite the failure to attain the desired objective, the strike did constitute a landmark in the struggle of the working class. It was a sign that workers recognized that they had certain rights and that they were exploited by the propertied class.

After the organization of a few public meetings in Port-Louis, Flacq and Belle Rose, W. Moutou tried to set up the “National Trade Union of Mauritius” but to no avail. This was due to the capitalist class which held political power in Mauritius. But W. Moutou did not end there. In 1924, he edited and published “Le Drapeau Ouvrier,” which aimed at the strengthening of the emancipation of the working class. However, his further moves to set up a trade union organization failed. When Moutou submitted a draft proposal for the setting up of a trade union based on the British Syndical Legislation to the Legislative Council, it was unfortunately not given consideration. All the members of the Council of Government were Conservatives and therefore bitterly prejudiced against the working class and trade unionism. Politics in this country operated under the wishes of unscrupulous politicians in whose power was the entire economy of the country. Even the governor and the administration were under their influence.

2.2.6 Dr. Maurice Curé: Founder of the Labour Party

Born on a 3rd September 1886, Dr. Maurice Curé was a man of varying moods with strong likes and dislikes.

Influenced by Eugène Laurent in the year 1906 when he was still at school, he interested himself in politics, qualifying it as his “first love.” In 1913, he was qualified as a medical practitioner. In those days “Action Liberale” was contesting the elections to the

Municipal Council of Port-Louis. Hence Curé jumped into the fray and began to support the candidates. At that time Dr. Curé was desperately looking for a job given the strained economic conditions. A proposal for the post of medical practitioner in the Municipality of Port-Louis was made for him. Everything seemed settled, when unexpectedly the governor cancelled his appointment because he had lodged a plaint against a British police constable who had shouted at him for no reason. However, the cancellation of his appointment was a blessing in disguise since then he was able to accurately assess the attitude of Government. After that incident, Dr. Curé's involvement in politics went on increasing. Perturbed by the attitude of Government, Curé shouted out that Mauritius has to get out of the clutches of the British Empire and surrender itself to the French. He was very confident that the population would support and side with him. However, this retrocession movement eventually collapsed because people believed that the idea itself was ill-conceived.

In 1924, Dr. Curé was defeated in the Municipal elections of Port-Louis mainly on account of certain harmful moves made against him. In 1926 and 1931, Dr. Curé was again candidate for the Municipal Council elections. His campaign's programmes were presented as follows: higher wages, better housing, hospital care for the working class, and recognition of trade unions.

In 1936, some strong supporters turned up at Dr. Curé's place and requested him to continue his struggle. He agreed but remarked that the only way to serve the working class was to militate. He realized that there is a need for the labourers to have their own elected representatives in the Council of Government. (To be eligible to form part of the Council, certain conditions had to be met:

- Should have a property value of Rs. 3000 or;
- Having an annual salary of Rs. 600 or;
- Having a monthly salary of Rs. 50.)

This system disqualified labourers who earned only 30-40 cents daily. Dr. Curé denounced this system aggressively, and sent petitions to the Governor asking for the

appointment of two members to represent the labourers and the Artisans in the Council of Government.

2.2.6.1 Dr. Curé and the formation of the Labour Party

Ferment is the word to describe the situation of Mauritius at that time and Curé jumped at the opportunity to start a political party. He at once undertook some ground work and succeeded in creating an interest and awareness in his favour to serve the working class. In an article dated 3rd February 1936, he explained the reasons why a political party was absolutely necessary in Mauritius. He even remarked that the results of the Council elections held that year (1936) had given seats as follows: capitalists (6) and the middle class (2). The fact that the Labouring class had not obtained any seat had boosted his energy and the idea was immediately crystallised into the formation of a political party. The Party could also maintain direct contacts with the capitalists to occasion both workers and capitalists. Quoting the Charter of the International Bureau of Labour, Curé stressed that all the conditions mentioned therein should be available to the workers of Mauritius. These conventions were:

- Employment;
- Minimum Wages;
- Old-age Pension;
- Freedom to form Trade Unions;
- Protection against accidents and diseases, and
- Safeguards for women and children.

Curé suggested the appointment of two persons to secure representation for workers. His words were: «Le Parti doit militer pour être représenté au Conseil par des Nominées.» These words were spread everywhere and publicity was given for a meeting which was held on a 23rd February 1936 at the Champ De Mars. The purpose of the meeting was to organize a party which could represent the workers of the country. On that historic day some 8, 000 workers, mostly Indian Labourers, attended the meeting at which Dr. Curé spoke lengthily. The main theme of the meeting was that if workers wanted to escape

their deplorable conditions, there was a need for them to become more alert. Conditioned as they were to show satisfaction even in distress, their life had become a synonym of slavery with poor food, low wages and ramshackle huts to live in. Therefore, they had to organize themselves as a sufficiently strong force to avoid further deterioration of their living and working conditions. It was only then that they would receive consideration and remain totally at the mercy of their repressive employers. The only way Curé found to remedy the situation was to strengthen the Labour Party. Such a party would prove beneficial to all categories of workers including shopkeepers, tailors, barbers, shoemakers, clerks, teachers, labourers, small planters, blacksmiths, tinsmiths, cabinet makers, plumbers, mechanics, drivers and many more.

2.2.6.2 Labour Party: the talk of the country

The Labour Party became a household talk. Much consciousness was created everywhere with the result that both labourers and artisans felt very strong. In fact they became aware of their dormant strength which the capitalist could now not ignore. A wave of enthusiasm was displayed all over the country. Several meetings were organized to maintain this atmosphere. The topics elaborated in those meetings were:

- Labourers' wages of between 30 and 40 cents only per day;
- Labourers' inferior quality of rations;
- No organizations set up to make proposals for improved employment conditions;
- There was a need to appoint two persons to represent the working class in the Council of the Government;
- The workers should be given the right to vote in an election and to form trade unions;
- The enforcement of the Minimum Wages Ordinance by setting up a Department of Labour to replace the immigration department which had become outdated.

What Curé and other leaders of the time really wanted was a change of attitude, an accommodating spirit, and a sort of reconciliation on the basis of mutual understanding. But used to live in ivory towers, the capitalists were not prepared to understand the problems of the workers. Nevertheless, the mass of labourers organized, imbued with

zeal and determination, even resorting to strikes at different places with the result that in 1937 the sugar industry was paralyzed in its peak crop season. Now, instead of remedying the situation, the employers continued to show their arrogance and defiance towards the workers.

2.2.6.3 Reactions of capitalists to Curé's popularity

Both the capitalists and the Government viewed the popularity of Dr. Curé with much concern. They took the offensive approach by planning to execute a number of measures in order to discredit him in the eyes of the public. This action was considered the best way to weaken the Labour Party which they considered as a nuisance.

2.2.6.4 Dr. Curé and Pandit Sahadeo hand in hand

In 1937, when Dr. Maurice Curé was persecuted by both the Government and big planters, he felt the need to approach the Indian National Congress for support. His envoy was no other than Pandit Sahadeo. The fact that Pandit Sahadeo was not a professional helped him tremendously because he came nearer to the labourers. His merits were:

- He knew Hindi and Hindustani;
- He could speak as a seasoned orator;
- He was conversant with Hindu philosophy;
- He knew mass psychology;
- He showed goodwill for the labourers.

Pandit Sahadeo had full command over simple Hindi and always addressed a gathering in a forceful language. He used to refer to the great leader, Mahatma Gandhi, in his speeches. Dr. Maurice Curé rightly assessed the worth of Pandit Sahadeo and concluded that the latter's work could create great impact. It was more with the labourers' strength created by Pandit Sahadeo that Curé reinforced the Labour Party.

2.2.6.5 Spreading rumours to trap Dr. Curé and end the Labour Party

On the insistence of his supporters, Curé had earlier agreed that 25 cents would be collected from every member. It was a fact that money was needed for a proper structure of the party. In a short time, a substantial amount of money was collected. However, no bank accepted that an account be opened in the name of the Labour Party. To overcome the problem, Curé formed a society called «La Société de Bienfaisance des Travailleurs de L'île Maurice.» Only then it was possible to open an account in a local bank for the party. It is said that Curé had a flourishing profession as Medical Practitioner in Plaines Wilhems. But his association with the labouring class cost him a lot in the sense that some damaging propaganda was made against him. The number of patients coming to see him consequently quickly dwindled. The capitalists with the help of some people fabricated some rumours saying that Curé had appropriated and used the membership fees so far collected. Even if these were only rumours, Curé felt disgraced in the eyes of his own supporters and co-workers. To make matters worse, the Government ordered an inquiry into the activities and finance of «La Société de Bienfaisance des Travailleurs de L'île Maurice» to find out how the membership fees were spent and if the allegation, that he had misappropriated its funds, was true. That decision was a serious blow to him compromising his character as leader and president of the party. Paid hooligans were also instructed to ridicule and harass him so much so that it became difficult for him to lead a normal life. Shattered by all these incidents and hurt by the loss of popularity as a Medical Practitioner, Curé resigned from the presidency of the party on a 1st May 1941. This is how ended the stormy campaign of Curé to organize the workers as a strong political force. His resignation was interpreted as a voluntary exile and Emmanuel Anquetil was made president of the party.

2.2.7 Emmanuel Anquetil: Father of Trade Unionism

Born in the year 1885 on a sugar estate at Beau-Bassin, Emmanuel Anquetil, attaining a maturing age, immediately understood the supremacy in which his father was working at

Highlands. At the age of 17 Emmanuel Anquetil left Mauritius for Europe as a sailor. He went to countries like France and America before setting up in Wales. There he worked with trade unions such as the National Union of Shipwrights and the Union of Cord Workers. He was also very active in social organizations handling problems like unemployment. He worked with politicians of the Labour Party in Britain. The strike of Dockers and Miners in that country helped him forge his confrontational and argumentative character. He was present in all campaigns designed to elect British candidates. After 25 years of his life abroad, he returned to Mauritius in December 1936, and was shocked by the state of things in the country, more particularly by the rise of the labourers' consciousness.

2.2.7.1 Emmanuel Anquetil and the Labour Party

On 27th March 1937, Emmanuel Anquetil was invited to speak at a meeting organized by the Labour Party at Camp De Masque Pavé which he inevitably accepted. His objectives were molded while listening to the members of the party delivering their speeches. His battles were against the colonial government and the oligarchy and aristocracy of the State, and became, by and by, an important member of the Party. After a while, he was nominated as an Executive Member of the party. Emmanuel Anquetil was convinced that Mauritius needed a holistic change in its social and political climate which would be possible only with a powerful political drive. Like Karl Marx, he believed that trade unions had the potential to bring radical social change and his Marxist cry "Travailleurs Débout" fell on eager ears. His enthusiasm and the way in which it was delivered were understood and workers began to trust him. The state of mind that he was propagating really boosted the morale of the working class. The workers themselves saw this sequence of events worthwhile for them. They requested the amendment of the constitution, insisted on their voting rights, representation of the working class at the Legislative Council, the creation of a Labour Bureau, and lastly the right to be unionized. Though the requests suggested by the party were difficult to accede to, Anquetil had that bold attitude to claim for all these rights from the government. For the workers, the

slavery system was still present, although slavery has been abolished years back, and, focused on this, workers were determined to change this sort of conduct for good.

2.2.7.2 Emmanuel Anquetil and the formation of the “Groupe de Chômeurs Intellectuels”

On 31st March 1937, he was an unexpected guest speaker at a meeting of a group of workless people at La Flore Nationale found in Port-Louis. From this group of people he decided to create the “Groupe de Chômeurs Intellectuels.”

2.2.7.3 Martyrs who have marked history

The 1930s were categorized by a severe economic slump. The sugar industry which was understood to be the backbone of the economy was affected by international events. The consequences were low prices of sugar followed by low wages resulting in discontentment among the labouring class. Labourers were compelled to work for a mere pittance, well below the minimum wage level. This led to malnutrition and diseases among the workers. This restlessness of the labourers was vented through a number of strikes.

On 13th August 1937, a strike was organized at Union Flacq. The owners of the sugar estates could not tolerate such revolts and they fired at the gathering. But the strikes did not stop because workers believed that even if they had to pay this liberty with their blood, they had better accept the deal for the sake of future generations. On 16th August of the same year, it was at Triolet that the police shot to death any person engaged in strikes. This spirit of mobilization and fight for better conditions of work and treatment spread to Port employees where the harbour dockers went on a strike, paralyzing the heart of the country's economy. 17 Dockers were arrested and inflicted with various condemnations. The immediate cause of the strike at the Port was the sudden dismissal of a docker because there were only a few ships at the Port, hence less work. The

dockers wanted their colleague to be re-integrated before they resumed work. In addition, they asked for a rise in wages and a reduction in their hours of work. The Director of Labour failed to bring them to an understanding, and a strike took place. The police organized themselves and got orders to fire at sight, resulting in much bloodshed.

The circumstances were such that it became urgent to set up a Royal Commission that would look in the matter seriously in order to remedy the situation which was worsening by the day. The Commission was presided by C.A.Hooper, who was nominated to shed light upon such a jumble in the workforce and to consider recommendations made by the Labour Party.

2.2.7.4 The Hooper Commission of Enquiry

On 18th August 1937, a Commission was set up with C.A. Hooper in the Chair, with the following terms of reference:

- 1) To inquire into the causes of the unrest on the sugar estates;
- 2) To submit a strong recommendations, which were as follows:
 - The introduction of a suitable legislation for the setting up of industrial associations to protect workers;
 - The adoption of the principle of minimum wage;
 - The setting up of a Labour Statistics Bureau;
 - The appointment of District Labour Officers to:
 - ✓ Carry out inspection and determine wages;
 - ✓ Investigate into workers grievances;
 - ✓ To help trade unionists to negotiate with employers in cases of trade disputes.

The Hooper Commission noted the following complaints:

- Insufficiency of wages;
- Inferior quality and quantity in the distribution of ration;
- Unjustified deduction of wages and ration on account of absenteeism;

- Poor housing accommodation;
- Poor hospital and medical treatment;
- Wrong computation of overtime .

The Hooper Commission concluded that the strikes carried out were justified and that there were no proper laws that were applicable to the labour force of the colony. The Commission submitted its recommendations as follows:

- The “Corvée System” (Compulsory work on Sundays without remuneration) should be abolished;
- 10% rise in wages of workers of the sugar cane fields;
- Better quality of rice and pulses to be made available at the ration shops;
- Payment of old age pension, sickness and insurance;
- Creation of a Labour and Social Welfare Department;
- Appointment of two labour representatives at the Council of Government to represent workers;
- Setting up of industrial units.

2.2.7.5 Industrial Associations Ordinance of 1938 as per the Hooper Commission

This was the first legislation aimed at providing a comprehensive framework for industrial relations in the country. It was implemented just after the Hooper Commission of 1937 after the tragic events of the same year. The 1938 Ordinance was modeled on the South African Industrial Conciliation Act.36 of 1937. The Ordinance was divided into three parts; part 1 dealing with industrial associations and parts 2 and 3 with conciliation boards and courts of arbitration.

As far as Industrial Associations were concerned, the law required that they be registered with the Registry of Association within one month of their formation. All existing ones before the setting up of the Ordinance were also required to register. Registration was important and failure to do so amounted to an offence. The Registrar, however, could

refuse registration where he was satisfied that other associations registered in the same area were sufficiently representative. Upon registration, the association became a body corporate. It remained, however, under the close scrutiny of the Registrar who was entitled to make inquiries into the affairs of the Association. More importantly however, industrial associations could only be registered with respect to geographical area, the aim being to ensure “localization of industrial disputes” and thereby avoiding general strikes. With regard to industrial disputes, the Ordinance provided for the establishment of Conciliation Boards either upon the application of a party to the dispute or upon the initiative of the Director of Labour himself.

2.2.7.6 Emmanuel Anquetil and the celebration of Labour Day

In 1938, the Labour Party with its great leaders like Dr. Maurice Curé and Emmanuel Anquetil organized for the first time in Mauritius, the celebration of Labour Day. A large meeting was held on that occasion at the Champ de Mars, attended by an unprecedented crowd of some 35,000 workers. Anquetil declared in his speech: “For the authority to hear the voice of the workers and their grievances there needs to be worthwhile workers’ representatives at the Legislative Council. The government should agree to this right which would enable the working class to find its way, to be empowered and emancipated.” Caste, creed, colour barriers were broken and the workers cemented themselves in a common bond of brotherhood. Mobilisation of the workers was taking significant importance and on 17th May 1938 or 16 days just after the Labour Day, the Legislative Council acceded to the recommendations of the Hooper Commission and put in force the Industrial Relations Ordinance. Thirteen associations were then created, of which the main ones were:

- The Central Rivière Du Rempart Labourers Industrial Association;
- The Northern Rivière Du Rempart Labourers Industrial Association;
- Moka Labourers Industrial Association;
- The Central Flacq Labourers Industrial association;
- Chemin Grenier Labourers Industrial Association;

- The Agricultural Labourers Union.

2.2.7.7 Benefits of the Hooper Commission

(1) The IR Ordinance of 1938 brought to workers some Indian festivals which were proclaimed Public Holidays by the State. The Minimum Wages Ordinance was put in force in the same year but its operation was restricted to the region of Moka as a pilot study, after which it was extended all over the island.

(2) The Labour Department was also created in the year 1938 with a director appointed with such functions as to examine the finance and activities of the industrial associations.

2.2.7.8 Harryparsad Ramnarain

Ramnarain is considered to be a pioneer of the trade union movement, and most precisely of the agricultural sector. After the Hooper Commission, Ramnarain became the secretary of the Central Rivière Du Rempart Labourers Industrial Association. He was very active in the social and trade union fields, playing an important role in the 1938 strike. In the year 1943, he went on a hunger strike after the manslaughter at Belle Vue Harel to claim the institution of a Commission of inquiry, which was subsequently undertaken by Moody. In 1944, he launched an anti-alcoholic campaign to fight against the devastating effects of alcoholism amongst the working class. He also set up the Mauritius Amalgamated Labourers Association, which became hence a powerful agricultural trade union.

2.2.7.9 Growth of Industrial Associations

By the end of the year 1938, there were approximately 47 trade unions formed and registered in the following sectors: sugar, building, bakery, shipping, printing, and transport. To work effectively, trade unions leaders divided up the fields of activity. For instance, Anquetil was more active in the Port (Docks, Wharves & Harbour Workers

Association) whereas Ramnarain was more concerned about the interests of the plantation workers.

2.2.7.10 Deportation of Emmanuel Anquetil

The only sectors assembled by Anquetil were the sugar industry and the port. But he believed that he needed more followers to pursue this battle and be able to shake the colonial authority. At a meeting at Mahebourg, Anquetil delivered a moving speech aiming at ruining the colonial administration and the capitalists. The Governor of the time Sir Bede Clifford decided that as Anquetil was the cleverest and the predominantly dangerous agitator, it was he who would have to be removed and be expelled in safe place and put wholesome fear of a similar fate into the minds of others. On September 1938, Anquetil was deported to Rodrigues for an unlimited period.

On November 1938, under the tension and pressure exercised by the Labour Party, the government was forced to return Anquetil back to Mauritius. His convictions and objectives remained unshakable and his thirst for justice even bigger. With the help of Dr Curé, Emmanuel Anquetil launched a newspaper entitled as “Le Peuple Mauricien” with the motto “*Pour Le Roi, Le Peuple et La Patrie.*” Though, physically frail and weak with no financial resources, Anquetil strongly believed in his struggle and that powered him to move further.

2.2.7.11 Anquetil: President of the Labour Party

In 1941, Emmanuel Anquetil acceded to the presidency of the party at a congress organized at the theatre of Port-Louis. This period was marked by the Second World War; where the cost of living in Mauritius had undergone a fatalistic rise. The Moka Labourers Industrial Association and the Central Rivière du Rempart Labourers Industrial Association protested to such rise. As a result, the Government instituted the Minimum Wage Board. Unfortunately, the employers of the time did not work according to this instance. In 1943, Ramnarain, an active member of the Central Rivière du Rempart

Labourers Industrial Association, decided to go on strike with other patriots. They demanded a revision of their salaries and humanization of working conditions. Protest marches and hunger strikes were among the prime activities organized at different parts of the island namely at Belle Vue Harel, Grand Baie, Triolet and other places in the North. Little by little, the strike extended to the whole island, despite the repression of the colonial masters. This expressed protestation was marked by incidents such as, on 27th September at Belle Vue Harel police officers beat up workers who were saying prayers in a “baitka.” Police officers also fired at a child of 10 years and on a pregnant woman named Anjalay Coopen and at two men. Hurrypersad Ramnarain thus started an unlimited hunger strike at the temple of Chandramowleswanaden of Goodlands; to pressurize the governor to set up a commission of enquiry on the shooting at Bell Vue Harel.

Under such pressure, the governor of the time, Sir Donald Mackenzie-Kennedy, instituted on the same year of 1945 the very first Joint Consultative Committee to discuss the changes to be brought to the Constitution. It was only in 1947, two years after the Committee was set up, that the Constitution was modified, giving all workers, irrespective of their colour, race and religion, the right to vote.

2.2.7.12 The creation of more unions

Meanwhile, Anquetil was organizing meetings in succession. On a public meeting at the Rose Hill District Court, Anquetil urged for the creation of a common association for artisans named as *The Artisans and General Workers' Union* and also another union called as *the Mauritius Engineering and Technical Workers Union*. He went forward with the gathering of workers of the Dock, Shipping, Boatmen and the harbour under the name of *General Port and Harbour Workers' Union*. He also set up *the Mauritius Government Railways Workers' Union*. On February 1946, he even sought the help of International bodies and succeeded in obtaining the affiliation of the General Port and Harbour Workers' Union and the Mauritius Engineering and Technical Workers' Union to World Trade Union International.

2.2.7.13 Anquetil, Baker and the Mauritius Trade Union Congress

At beginning of 1945, there was a report published by Major Orde-Browne on the events of 1943. In her report, Major Orde-Browne highlighted the deep causes of “Le Mal Mauricien.” She compared the incident of 1943 as someone who caught a sudden fever and maintained this state for a period of time. As long as the conditions of the patient remained stable this would evidently create an outbreak in the locality. Based on this analogy she described the Mauritian society as a place of continuous dilemma. This alarmed the British government and to clear things, Mr. Kenneth Baker was sent to Mauritius to help in the organization of Trade Unionism in the country on a solid and lasting basis. Through him, trade unionism in the country was deeply marked by “British Fabianism”, made up of reformist and empirical socialism advised by the Fabian Society of London. Baker did much to consolidate the structure of the trade union movement and he believed of the regrouping of all the unions under a main body, such as the Mauritius Trade Union Congress, similar to the British model. On 5th May 1946, Anquetil publicly and forcefully asked at a meeting in the yard of the Rose Hill District Court that 1st May be proclaimed as a national public holiday. This eventually materialized in the year 1950. On the 17th November 1946, Anquetil founded the Mauritius Trade Union Congress, proposed by Baker, at the Rose Hill Town Hall in the presence of the Governor, Sir Donald Mackenzie-Kennedy and the Trade Union adviser, Mr. Kenneth Baker, sixteen associations adhered to it.

2.2.7.14 Trade Unions in The Public Sector

It was only after the post-war years that the trade union movement made its way into the public sector. Before the arrival of Baker, there was only one association of workers in this sector, “the Non-Pensionable Government Trade Operatives.” This organization, however, was not registered under the Industrial Relations Associations Ordinance but under the Friendly Societies Ordinance of 1874. Baker recommended the leaders of the Public association to set up a “clerical association” and two or more “non-clerical

associations” to gather railway workers and other manual workers. He also advised to create an association such as a “First Division Civil Servants.”

Following the recommendations of Baker, a “Central Whitley Council” (CWC) based on the British model was created to settle industrial disputes in the Civil Service. Following conflicts over the representation of the different categories of workers within the CWC, the “Federation Des Syndicats Du Service Civil” , a union made up of a number of unions in the civil service, was given the exclusive right to nominate its representatives in the CWC.

2.2.7.15 The introduction of the Sickness Benefit Fund and a Pension scheme

For Anquetil, trade unionism was an instrument to reinforce the working class and equip them to be emancipated and to obtain their rights. At an annual meeting at one of the union he founded, the Mauritius Engineering and Technical Workers’ Union, he created the Sickness Benefit Fund, which was a form of social insurance for members of the union. He realized that people in this sector earned their daily bread while working in piteous, unhealthy and unsanitary conditions and often contracted malaria and dysentery. For him, the health and fitness of employees was one of the prime objectives of the trade union movement and he strongly affirmed that for an employee to be productive he needed to be mentally and physically in good health and equipped with a certain level of education depending on the work he was performing. This great man even instituted a pension scheme for labourers and artisans. The father of Mauritian Trade Unionism passed away in August 1946, after having worked with indisputable unselfishness for the development of trade unionism in the colony.

2.2.8 Class, Ethnic Politics and Dr. Ramgoolam

Despite repressive measures new industrial associations were set up. Anquetil and Curé were famous among the labouring class. Government viewed the movement as a hindrance and in its attempt to curtail it, boosted Dr. Ramgoolam and nominated him as

a member of the Legislative Council in 1940 in order to manipulatively draw the sympathy of the labouring class which was mostly made up of Hindus. This was a strategy used by the government to try to divide the working class and remove support given to the Labour Party. Their belief in the Caste system was used to bring disunity among the Indo-Mauritian population. The Labour Party was accused of being anti-Hindu. Anquetil was charged of favouring the Afro-Mauritian descendents to the detriment of the Indo-Mauritians who constituted the majority of agricultural workers. The struggle became very complex and right from 1940, the labour movement was split by the communal factor which employers tried to turn to their advantage, with a view to retain their old privileged position for as long as possible.

2.2.9 Dr. S. Ramgoolan and Trade Union Ordinance 1947

The debate was now on the nature of an industrial association and what differentiate it from a trade union. In the Parliament House, on 16th August 1945, Dr. S. Ramgoolam tabled a motion to replace the Industrial Association Ordinance by a Trade Union Ordinance as it was the case in England. This enactment would enable Industrial Associations to become trade unions. It was approved two years later, on 30th July 1947. Dr. S. Ramgoolam approved the amendments brought to the Industrial Association Ordinance in those words: *“Sir I welcome the new Bill that the Government is introducing into the Council as we should welcome any Bill whose nature is intended to make industrial relations smoother and any actions which will make our country go through better times.”*

2.2.9.1 Trade Union Ordinance of 1947

The changes introduced to the Industrial Association Ordinance of 1938 to form the Trade Union Ordinance of 1947 were as followed: A right to picket corresponding exactly to the English one, industrial disputes were settled through a Conciliation Board in the first instance and ultimately by a Court of Arbitration, strikes outside the parameters of the Ordinance remained criminal offences and a strike was legal only if

declared 21 days after the dispute has been reported to the Labour Commissioner. There was however no provision with regard to collective bargaining.

2.2.10 Guy Rozemont's contribution to Trade Unionism in Mauritius

In 1940, when Anquetil served "Le Peuple Mauricien," a newspaper started by Curé, Guy Rozemont began to help him in propagating the ideas of the party. He even worked as compositor, proof-reader and distributor as Curé was not in a position to pay anyone else. Anquetil and Rozemont continued to run the paper without being remunerated. They were simply provided with bread, "gateaux piment" and tea. That practice continued for a long time. When the paper subsequently ceased to appear, Anquetil and Rozemont stuck together to carry on the trade union work.

In 1947, after the death of Emmanuel Anquetil, Guy Rozemont became President of the Labour Party. The issues centrally analyzed by Rozemont were:

- Pension scheme for the workers;
- Medical facilities for workers;
- Unemployment benefits;
- Compulsory education;
- Nationalization of certain industries;
- Housing schemes for the workers;
- Co-operative system;
- Old-age pension.

Rozemont had an open mind and was also very frank. He had understood that it would not be wise on his part to dissociate himself from certain influential individuals. He wanted that all people willing to cooperate and work for the masses should meet on one platform. Emboldened by the idea that he would form part of the strong group, Rozemont began to mould a new future for the Labour Party.

2.2.10.1 Guy Rozemont and the elections of 1948

Sir Hilary Blood, governor of the time, announced that Council elections would be held on the 9th and 10th August 1948. Rozemont was 33 years old when he took part in the 1948 election of the Legislative Council. His goal was to defeat the Conservatives. He became a candidate in Port-Louis where the influence of the Conservatives was strong. Port-Louis, being the capital of the country and the seat of the Government, also carried the distinction of sheltering a prestigious institution like the Municipality where the Conservatives had reigned and ruled in their own interests for years. Therefore, the Conservatives were determined to mobilize all their resources to win the electoral seats in Port-Louis. This war between the Conservatives and Rozemont became very tough.

Rozemont was a powerful and convincing orator. He knew the psychology of the masses and talked to them in the language they appreciated the most, “Le Creole.” During his campaign, he mercilessly but justifiably attacked the capitalist system and pleaded for democracy. There was a need to bring a certain amount of social and economic justice for which purpose it was necessary to defeat the Conservatives.

It was anticipated that Rozemont would be elected. This was confirmed on 12th August 1948 where it was officially announced that he had topped the list of elected candidates. That result marked the triumph of the labouring class and a decisive chapter was opened in the political history of Mauritius.

2.2.10.2 Guy Rozemont and the reshaping of the Labour Party

The Labour Party needed to be reshaped into a dynamic institution. Realizing this important work, Rozemont did much to restore the party’s structure and prestige, and agreed with other progressive members to give a new shape to the Labour Party. In this connection he kept close contact with progressive members like Dr. Seewoosagur Ramgoolam, Renganaden Seeneevassen, Guy Forget and others.

2.2.10.3 Victories of the Labouring class

Municipal elections were again held in 1950. On that occasion only two groups opposed each other. These were the Labour Party and “Le Groupement” (operated under the aegis of the Conservatives). The Labour Party won an absolute majority in spite of some very vile propaganda of the Conservatives against the Party. Moreover, in a Council by-election held in Moka/Flacq of which a member of the Labour Party namely Veerasamy Ringadoo was candidate, got elected. That victory was hailed as the success of the Labourites over the Conservatives. With his vision and adaptability, Rozemont thereafter started making room for new members of the executive committee of the party to go for election. The Labour Party thus became a national party equipped and destined to lead the country to independence.

2.2.10.4 Accomplishments of the new government

The new government decreed Ordinance No. 57 which stated that employers should pay half-day to workers for tasks not performed due to bad weather. In 1952, the Mauritius Sugar Planters association (MSPA) agreed to give a paid leave to pregnant women as well as a bottle of milk daily for a period of three months. Workers henceforth were allowed forty-five days leave per annum on half pay. Ordinance No. 78 for its part provided for compensation for accidents which could result in permanent incapacitation of the employee.

2.2.10.5 Guy Rozemont, Dr. Ramgoolam and the 1953 elections

Rozemont and Ramgoolam constituted the strength of the Labour Party. Ramgoolam began to occupy the place of leader in the Labour Party while Rozemont was once more candidate in Port-Louis. The Labour Party fought the election on the following basis:

- Universal adult suffrage;

- Responsible Government.

The amended constitution of 1948 had given the right to vote to all those who could sign their name in any currently-used language in Mauritius. It meant that the right to vote depended largely on a literacy test. Such being the case, a number of unlettered workers were debarred from their legitimate right to vote. Therefore, it could not be said that democracy had been introduced into the country. It even appeared illogical to see classes of citizens living side by side, one enjoying all kinds of rights, the other being denied even elementary rights including the right to vote. Rozemont, who was a convinced and converted democrat, along with his close colleagues of the Labour Party, was struggling to secure full democracy for Mauritius by demanding universal adult suffrage. In this connection, he also wanted that the State give power to the elected representatives of the people without which democracy would be a mere farce. He therefore wanted that all elected members possess full power to manage the internal affairs of the country.

2.2.10.6 Delegation to provide universal voting rights

On 8th December 1953, Rozemont tabled a motion asking the Secretary of the State to receive a delegation to discuss with him some constitutional reforms to be brought. Introducing his motion he said he was not satisfied with the way the workers were deprived of their civic rights. Along with this suggestion, the Labour Party also asked for:

- Universal adult suffrage;
- Responsible Government;
- Ministerial system of Government;
- Decrease in the number of nominated seat in the Legislative Council by the Governor and as a matter of fact increase the number of elected seats;
- A speaker in the Legislative Council.

2.2.11 The 1953 Elections

On the political side, the association of class and ethnic factors with the social and economic structure presented favourable ground on which to promote nationalist and racist ideologies. After the 1948 elections, the conservatives and the sugar barons views were represented by the Noel Marrier d'Unienville (NMU). Ramgoolam for his part was becoming more and more influential in politics and was described as the symbol of oriental communism. The Ralliement Mauricien (RM) with Jules Koenig as leader was set up to prevent the so-called dictatorship of the majority (Hindus). The RM had political power as it had the support of the NMU. At the election of 1953, the RM secured only two seats against fourteen seats to the Labour Party. The RM changed its name to the Parti Mauricien which was later to be known as Parti Mauricien Social Democrate (PMSD). This was done largely because it was realized that, in order to have a future, it must attract more supporters from the non-white population, particularly from the Creoles.

In 1955, the new government tabled an agreement (Ordinance No. 42) that the Sugar Industry Pension Fund should pay a monthly pension to retired workers of the Sugar Industry.

2.2.12 The 1959 Elections

With the ultimate death of Guy Rozemont in 1956, Dr. Ramgoolam became the undisputed leader of the Labour Party. In spite of the existence of the two parties, NMU and PMSD, the Labour Party and the Independence Forward Block (IFB) party of Ramnarain were determined to attract the maximum votes from the Indian labourers. In the 1959 election of 40 elected seats, the Labour Party gained 24, the IFB won 6, the Comité d'Action Musulman (CAM) formed in 1958 secured 5 seats, NMU won 3 seats and the remaining 2 seats were for the independents. As a result of its decisive victory,

the Labour Party was in a strong position to press for an early realization of its final objective: self-government and independence. In fact, during the period of 1959 to 1967, the debate was focused on the political status of the island. The PMSD, the party representing Creoles and the Franco-Mauritian minority, however, was afraid of independence and of the political “hegemony” of Indo-Mauritians, which they believed would follow.

Two constitutional conferences were held in 1961 and 1965 to prepare Mauritius towards independence. It was agreed that self-government should be reached in two stages. In the first stage, effected in 1962, Dr. Ramgoolam took the title of Chief Minister. The governor of the time was to seek his advice on all ministerial appointments and on the question of the duration and date of dissolution of the Legislative Council. The second stage consisted of pre-poning the date of election from 1964 to 1963.

2.2.13 The 1963 Election

In the 1963 election, the Labour Party won 19 seats out of 40, losing its overall majority but still remaining the largest party. The PMSD made a recovery with 8 seats. The IFB secured 7 seats; the CAM got 4 seats and the independents 2 seats. The PMSD benefited from the charismatic personality of Gatëan Duval who succeeded Jules Koenig as leader of the party in 1966. In March 1964, Dr. Ramgoolam became Chief Minister and the Executive Council became a council of Ministers accountable to the Legislative Assembly.

2.2.13.1 The New Electoral System

The final advance to independence was delayed by difficulties in reaching an agreement on the new form of electoral system. The PMSD made the most of these disagreements. In the end, Mauritius was divided into 20 constituencies, each represented by members. The island of Rodrigues was to form the 21st constituency with two members representing the island. Eight seats were not contested on initial voting. The main

purpose of this “corrective machinery” was to ensure adequate representation of the minority group (known as the ‘Best Loser system’).

2.2.14 Introduction of the Wages Council

Meanwhile, the price of sugar on the world market rose following the collapse of the sugar industry in Cuba, which was among the largest producers of sugar in the world. This situation prompted government, for the first time, to institute a Wages Council under the chairmanship of Donald Chessworth so that the workers too could benefit from this sugar boom. The Plantation Workers Union solicited the help of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU) and as such got the expert help of a Swedish economist, Gas Edgreen. The Wages Council recommended an increase in salaries ranging between 23% and 63%. This huge victory was a major landmark in the destiny of all the sugar industry workers.

2.2.15 The creation of the Mauritius Labour Congress (MLC)

In 1963, another event which marked the trade union movement was the fusion of two major trade union organizations namely, the Mauritius Trade Union Congress (MTUC) founded by Anquetil and the Mauritius Confederation of Free Trade Unions (MCFTU) led by Descann. They merged to form the Mauritius Labour Congress (MLC). In 1965, with the support of the MLC, the government agreed that sugar industry workers who worked on Sundays and public holidays be paid thrice the normal rate. Workers who used to work on piece rate hours also benefited from a reduction from 39 hours to 35 hours.

2.2.16 The 1967 Elections

The “Independence” election was finally held in August 1967 under a complicated electoral system. Three parties, namely the Labour Party, the CAM and the IFB made a

common front known as the Independence Party. The PMSD led by Duval campaigned for nothing less than complete independence. The results were as follows: the Independence Party won 39 seats or 54.8% of the votes, and the PMSD won 23 seats or 43% of the votes. Independence Day was fixed on the 12 March 1968. It gave new hope to the working class which had backed the Independence Party for a new era and for a bright future.

2.3. The evolution of Mauritian Trade Unionism – the post-independence era

With the accession of the Labour Party to power and the attainment of the country to independence in March 1968, there were great expectations concerning changes that would favour the working class. However, the unfavourable economic conditions and the high level of unemployment did not help in the fulfillment of these aspirations. The Sugar industry, the major source of employment, was saturated and could not absorb new entries. The government resolved this problem by developing the system of relief work to ease the unemployment problem and set up plans to diversify the agricultural sector and to promote industrialization. That period was also characterised by massive employment in the public sector.

To strengthen the existing government, a coalition government composed of the Labour Party, the PMSD and CAM was formed and this had a serious impact both on the political and trade union fronts. The main leaders of trade unions were all members of Parliament. This process started after 1948 when trade union leaders began to take an active part in politics thereby giving less importance to trade union activities. This process reached its climax, when Ramnarain became Parliamentary Secretary at the Ministry of Agriculture. The 1969 coalition led to a vacuum at political and especially at trade union levels. This void was filled by the foundation of the Movement Militant Mauricien (MMM) and the General Workers Federation (GWF) which greatly modified the political and trade union landscapes of the country.

2.3.1 The emergence of the MMM and the GWF

Soon after it secured power, the Labour Party which was very influential among the working class before independence, had to face the reality of a new political party, the Mouvement Militant Mauricien (MMM) among the workers. It was formed from a group of foreign university students, of the “Club des Etudiants Militants.” They accused the government of abandoning their promises to the working class. At the time of its inception in 1969, the MMM was inspired among others by Marxist, Libertarian and anti-colonial concepts. According to the MMM, the working class had a “predominant” role to play to overcome the inequalities in society. To achieve this aim, it was imperative that workers be organised, educated and politically conscious. Once these objectives were achieved it was easy to evolve a political strategy based on class awareness. The slogan of MMM was “La lutte des classes doit remplacer la lutte des races” which had gained more ground during the past 20 years. This represented a new impetus to political and ideological struggles. To keep workers mobilized, the MMM set up unions in different sectors of the economy and practised a more aggressive trade unionism which was known as “le syndicalisme militant.” In order to keep the spirit of mobilization, a federation of trade unions, the General Workers Federation (GWF) was set up to which individual unions of MMM allegiance were affiliated.

The aim of MMM was to build a socialist society in Mauritius, and harshly condemned the Labour Party for betraying the ideals of the 1936 pioneers by compromising with the supporters of capitalism. In the same vein, the MLC was also discredited through its close association with the Labour Party. The GWF was a key instrument within the MMM’s strategy to achieve its ultimate goal, that is, the attainment of power. While the MMM was occupying the political field against the government, the GWF was very active in the economic field against capital. Soon the main sectors of the economy were won over by the MMM: the municipalities, public transport, the Central Electricity Board, Port and Harbour Workers.

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2.3.2 The 1971 strikes and the Ramphul award

The 1971's strike was marked by industrial unrest to protest against severe economic restrictions imposed by the Labour Party/PMSD government. The movement started in the public transport after the election of the MMM candidate, Dev Virahsawmy. This constituted a disavowal for the government. The strike in which the public transport workers were involved in was declared illegal and the government handled the situation with an iron hand. Unions affiliated to the GWF were not allowed to operate and the MLC was criticized by workers for remaining idle before the repression instigated towards workers and their representatives.

The industrial dispute was referred to an Arbitration Tribunal chaired by judge D. Ramphul. The latter concluded that the strike was legal and recommended a rise of 12% in wages. The recommendation was a significant victory for the MMM and the GWF which enhanced their influence. The strike movement spread out to other sectors, as workers claimed that the 12% increase in salary be extended to them as well. Among the sectors were the Port and harbour workers and the sugar industry workers which had been once the reason for the creation of the Labour Party.

2.3.3 Restrictive measures on trade unions

On the 29th October 1971, within a background of political agitation (with the death of F. Muttur an influent member of MMM which took place in dubious circumstances and the murder of Azor Adelaide, an active trade unionist), the Trade Union Ordinance was amended to enhance government control over trade unions.

On 8th December 1971, new amendments were brought in to restrain the right to strike particularly in the Port sector. Paul Raymond Berenger, negotiator for the GWF, analysed the situation as a matter of life and death for trade unions: “C’est une question de vie ou de mort pour le Syndicalisme Mauricien qui rend pratiquement toute grève illégale.” The GWF reacted by calling for a general strike which brought the main sector of the economy to a standstill. Government proclaimed a state of emergency. This repressive measure weakened the federation and the strike was called off. Thirteen unions affiliated to the GWF were suspended and the leaders of the MMM and that of GWF spent most of their time in prison. This episode brought back the reminiscences of the 1930’s where trade unions had to fight hard to implant themselves in the socio-economic context.

2.3.4 The Industrial Relations Act and the revival of Trade Union activity

Government had a hard time with the wave of worker unrest in the early 1970s. The existing mechanism of control was considered to be inadequate. A new framework was therefore devised. Its aim was to provide more stability in the state of industrial relations. In December 1973, the Industrial Relations Act (IRA) was introduced to regulate trade unions’ activities and employers’ practices and to provide for an orderly settlement of disputes. The right to strike was subject to a system of notice and to lengthy administrative procedures. Administrative red-tape also rendered extremely complex the registration and the recognition of trade unions. The IRA73 was based to a large extent on the English Industrial Relations Act of 1971 which itself was American-inspired. In fact it was designed as restrictive legislation with the aim of bringing industrial actions under the close control of the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations.

As with its predecessors, in order that a union enjoys a corporate personality, IRA73 required, and still does, that unions be registered with the Registry of Associations. Failure to register within three months of the creation of the union rendered its members

liable to criminal sanction. However, in contrast to its predecessors, the Act addresses the problem of collective bargaining. A mechanism for resolving recognized disputes was now provided. With regard to industrial action, the scheme provided by the Act was that strikes were unlawful unless the following procedure was followed scrupulously: The dispute would have to be firstly reported to the Minister of Labour; Secondly, 21 days must have elapsed; Thirdly, the dispute is sent to the IRC or PAT and finally the strike commences within 56 days from the day of receipt of the report by the Minister. Once the dispute has been reported to the Minister, the latter has wide powers of imposing arbitration on the parties with a view to prevent any lawful industrial action.

The main argument brought by the government was to create favourable conditions to attract foreign investors. The new framework was in line with the government's policy to create employment and to solve the Balance of Payments deficit. The activities of the Sugar Industry Labourers Union (SILU) and of the Union of Artisans of the Sugar Industry (UASI), two pro-MMM unions in the Sugar industry were thus obstructed. These two unions were allowed to be registered but were not given recognition by management.

2.3.5 IRA73 and the setting up of the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, the NRB, the PAT and the IRC

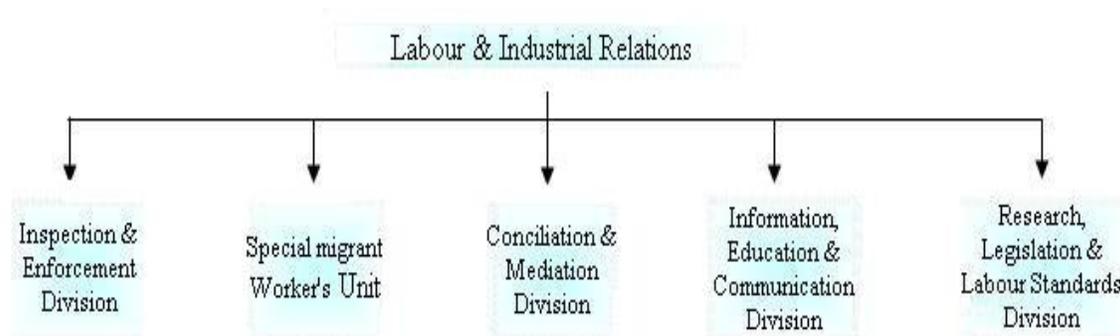
The institutions concerned with the regulation of industrial relations are: the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, the Industrial Relations Commission, The Permanent Arbitration Tribunal, and the Industrial Court. In addition to these institutions, there is also the National Remuneration Board. These are described below:

2.3.5.1 The Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations

It is the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations which administers labour laws. Its predecessor was the department of labour created in the year 1938 following the recommendations of the Hooper Commission. The labour Department of the time was

headed by a Director of Labour who also acted as advisor to the government on all labour issues. The services of the current Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations are now (2007) divided into the following four branches ((a) to (d)):

a) Labour & Industrial Relations



- Inspection & Enforcement Division;

- Responsible for the application of all labour legislation that regulates payment of remuneration and conditions of employment by carrying out regular inspections at the places of work;
- Register complaints of rights and look for settlement;
- Implementation of the Workmen's Compensation Ordinance in sectors where the National Pensions Act does not apply;
- Tendering advice to workers and employers and their respective organizations to understand their rights and obligations and to improve the labour relationship existing between them;

- Initiating civil and criminal proceedings on behalf of workers against employers who infringe individual employment rights.

-Conciliation & Mediation Division;

- The Conciliation and Mediation Division provides a conciliation service in cases of conflicts between employees (or trade unions of employees) and employers;
- It promotes sound industrial relations through enquiries and meetings on sites of work and at Head Office at Port Louis;
- It deals with reports of industrial disputes through conciliation and or/mediation. Unresolved disputes are referred either to the Industrial Relations Commission or Permanent Arbitration Tribunal, as provided in Part VII of the Industrial Relations Act 73;
- It enquires into representations/complaints relating to discriminatory practices at places of employment and brings parties to reach acceptable solutions.

-Information, Education & Communication Division;

- Engaged in the preparation, organization and implementation of courses, seminars, workshops and talks for the benefit of workers in general, middle management and managers for sensitization to the world of work;
- Carries out a preventive work in creating a better understanding between workers and employers for promoting harmonious industrial relations and creating among workers the awareness of their rights and responsibilities;
- Contribute to foster a better understanding among the social partners;
- Training of staff.

-Research, Legislations & Labour Standards;

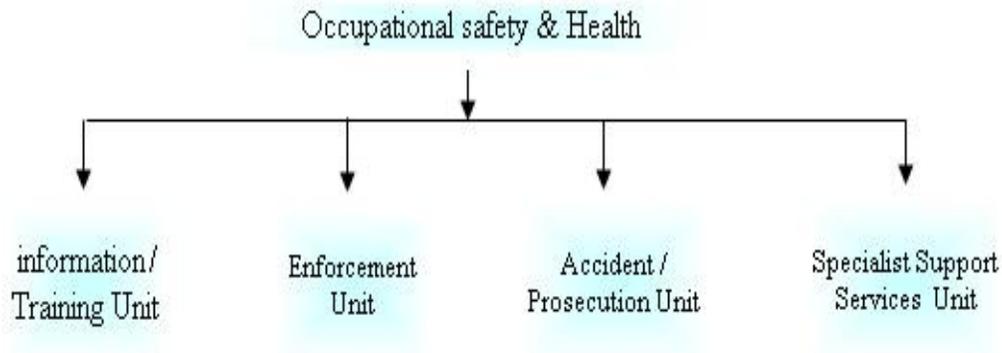
Legislation Section

- Responsible for the formulation of labour legislation;
- Maintaining a record of labour laws and enactment;
- Giving technical advice on labour legal matters.

ILO Section

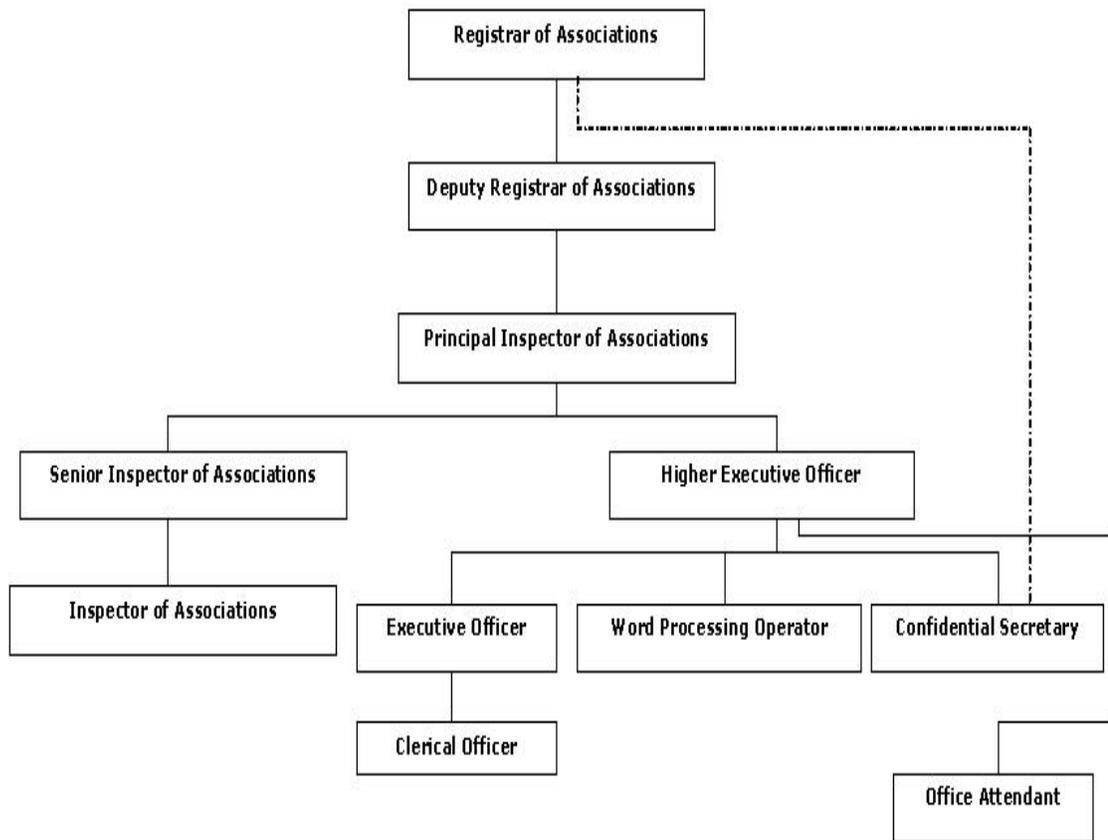
- Responsible for International Labour matters;
- Processing of labour standards and resolutions adopted at International Labour Conference;
- Prepares annual reports on ratified and unratified Conventions;
- Tabling of labour instruments adopted at International Labour Conferences in the National Assembly.

b) Occupational Safety & Health



The mission of the Occupational Safety and Health Inspectorate is to:

- Promote decent work;
- Protect the safety and health of any employee against any risk at his workplace;
- Vulgarise any information on safety and health.



c) Registry of Associations

Aims and Objectives

- To register associations, trade unions and superannuation funds and their respective rules to enable these organizations to have a legal status;
- To ensure that these organizations operate within their respective legal framework.

Services provided and Activities run:

- Registration of associations, trade unions and employees superannuation funds and their rules;
- Registration of amendments of the rules of registered associations, trade unions and employees superannuation funds;
- Keeping of:

- Register of Associations;
- Register of Trade Unions;
- Register of Employees Superannuation Funds;
- Provision on request by associations and trade unions for copies of rules and returns (accounts, committee members and so on.);
- Handling of complaints made by members of registered associations, trade unions and employees superannuation funds against their organisations;
- Inspection of books, accounts and records of associations, trade unions and employees superannuation funds;
- Publication of returns of trade unions registered on Permanent Register of trade unions;
- Computation of contribution payable by employees superannuation funds;
- Delivery of talks/training sessions on request.

d) Employment Division and Service

Work Permit Unit

To rationalize the employment of local and expatriate workers in line with policies of Government.

Employment Service

The Employment Service deals with the management of Employment Information Centers, registration, counseling, placement of jobseekers in employment work permit inspections and recommendations, collection and publication of statistics on the labour market, including employment and unemployment, provision of advice on matters related to employment, unemployment and training.

2.3.5.2 The Permanent Arbitration Tribunal (PAT)

The Industrial Relations Act 1973 also established the Permanent Arbitration Tribunal whose main function would be the settling of the industrial disputes through an arbitration process. The PAT was set up more precisely under the Trade Disputes Ordinance of 1954 and this scheme was continued under the IRA73. From the years 1938-1954, the arbitrator has been appointed on an *ad hoc* basis and as and when required. Along side the PAT, in the application of the Act to the public service and civil service unions, the Act also established a Civil Service Arbitration Tribunal (CSAT), also with an arbitration role. The President of the PAT is also the President of CSAT.

The PAT also has administrative functions: to order parties to adhere to agreed procedures, to utilize legal remedies, and to enforce recommendations of the IRC with regard to recognition. (Section 67 of the IRA73 states that a recognized union can make an application to the PAT for an order in its favour requiring the employer to deduct an agency fee from the wages of workers in a bargaining unit who are not members of the trade unions).

2.3.5.3 The Industrial Relations Commission (IRC)

The IRC was established under IRA73 as an agency charged for providing an independent conciliation service and for dealings in case of breakdown of industrial relations, with all problems where conciliation is preferred to the more formal arbitration procedures. As such the concept of the IRC was that it would be complementary to the PAT. However, more generally, it is also entrusted with the duty of making, at the request of the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations, recommendations for the improvement of industrial relations in any particular industry or generally.

The Act also bestows specific functions on the IRC. These relate to making recommendations for the recognition of trade unions by the employers, recommendations for the establishment of agency shop orders and recommendations for the establishment

of works councils. A substantial amount of the work done by the IRC concerns recognition issues.

In 1983, the Select Committee on IRA73 reported that the conciliation service had not materialized as a permanent and structured service, demonstrated by the fact that, when (informal) conciliation efforts failed at the Ministry level, the matter was directly referred to the PAT, by-passing the IRC.

The IRC was modeled on the English Commission on Industrial Relations established under the IRA71. The English Commission was conceived as a sort of government watchdog and a sort of “trouble shooter” to solve any industrial relations problems. Under the procedures established by the IRA73, it is provided that one stage of the dispute be referred to the Ministry. The Minister is authorized to attempt conciliation between the two parties. It is therefore inevitable that a large number of cases be settled by its services. The “trouble shooter” role of the IRC was only used where the services of the Ministry itself were unable to get positive results and where there was still hope of conciliation.

2.3.5.4 The Industrial Court

The Industrial Court was established in the year 1944 by the Industrial Court Ordinance. This Ordinance was repealed and was replaced in 1973 by the Industrial Court Act. Whether on the 1944 Ordinance or under the 1973 Act, the jurisdiction of the Court is limited to the application of those laws mentioned in the schedule of the Ordinance or Act. Under 1944 Ordinance, the Industrial Associations Ordinance of 1938, and the subsequent ordinances dealing with trade unions and industrial relations, were among the laws where the Court had exclusive jurisdiction. However, under IRA73, the jurisdiction of the Court is limited to cases as: compensation for having been refused employment because of a closed shop agreement (union membership as a precondition for employment), order for representations status, breach an agency shop order, prosecution for failure to abide by a Remuneration Order and prosecution with regard to strikes.

2.3.5.5 The National Remuneration Board (NRB)

Under IRA73, the NRB was made to replace the old Minimum Wage Advisory Boards which purported to implement ILO Convention No. 26. to address the question of wages in sectors where collective bargaining was weak. This new Remuneration Board fixed a minimum remuneration for the various categories of workers, governing the terms and the conditions of employment in no less than 29 different industries covering about 85% of employees in the private sector.

The procedures for promulgating a Remuneration Order is as follows: if the Minister of Labour and Industrial Relations views that it is convenient to fix a minimum remuneration in respect to a specific category of workers, he makes a request to the NRB to make a recommendation. He may also do so at the request of a joint council or negotiating body composed of representatives of employees and employers in a particular industry. The NRB has the task of making investigations and considering any documentation before submitting its recommendations to the Minister. Upon receipt of the recommendations, the Minister may implement it by way of a Remuneration Order, he may also reject it altogether or refer it back to the NRB or even make the Remuneration Order as he thinks will suit the industry, the employees and employers. Although it is not unknown for the Minister to reduce the recommended minimum wage, the usual practice is that he follows the recommendation of the NRB.

2.3.6 GWF and IRA 73

The General Workers Federation adjusted easily to the new legislation. It set up new trade unions, amongst which was the Textiles Clothes Manufacturing Workers Union (TCMWU) in the fast-growing Export Processing Zone. In 1974, Duval who formed the PMSD launched the “Confédération Nationale des Travailleurs” after being ousted from the coalition government. This new organization also got unions affiliated to it, of which the very active “Syndicats Populaire” of the EPZ.

On 1st April 1975, the GWF held its first public meeting since December 1971. The SILU, UASI and the Tea Industry Workers Union increased their trade union activities. Strikes and demonstrations were organized in sectors such as public transport, port and harbour workers, catering, printing and tea to claim recognition, but to no avail. Considering their objective to press for general elections, the MMM and the PMSD overlooked their ideological differences, and set up a common front. A major piece of legislation, the Labour Act, was also introduced in the same year, that is, in 1975 to consolidate existing labour legislation.

2.3.7 The General elections

During the 1976 General elections, MMM reaped the highest results because of its commitment towards the working class. It secured 30 out of 62 seats, with nearly 50% of its members elected in rural constituencies, making the party the most influential national Opposition Party. The negotiator of the GWF, Mr. Paul Berenger, became one of the leaders of the Opposition and represented the medium through which workers could voice their opinions in Parliament.

2.3.8 Tripartite negotiations

In 1977, the government introduced the concept of Tripartite negotiations amongst social partners to determine annually the quantum of inflation and then to compensate for the rise in the cost of living. This type of collective bargaining brought the different trade unions to unite under the Front Syndical National (FSN). However, for historical and ideological reasons the GWF and the MLC decided not to join the FSN. The FSN consisted mainly of FSSC, FSCC and other trade unions.

2.3.9 GWF AND THE FTU

The industrialization process undertaken by the government led to the massive entry of cheap labour into the EPZ. Unfortunately, working conditions were not at all satisfactory. The General Workers' Federation intensified its activities in the EPZ sector together with the Federation des Travailleurs Unis (FTU), which was launched in 1978 by another political party, the Movement Militant Socialiste et Progressiste (MMSP). The affiliations of the MMSP and the MMM to the FTU and GWF respectively was an indirect means for both to participate in extra-parliamentary action. On 27th November 1978, the GWF/FTU front called for one day's strike as a sign of protest. This strategy allowed both political parties to proclaim that they represented the interest of the masses, while government, for its part, was portrayed as being close to capitalists.

2.3.10 THE 1979 STRIKE

During the time that Mauritius was confronted with economic stagnation (that is, since 1977), the unions were not satisfied with the outcomes of the tripartite negotiations. The trade union movement were unable, however to develop a unified strategy because of their lack of unity. The members of the SILU and UASI went on an unlimited strike to claim:

- recognition by management;
- a full wage compensation;
- the introduction of the 5-day workweek for labourers and of the 40-hour workweek for artisans;
- a productivity bonus during the crop season.

Even though this led to a paralysis of the sugar industry, and to many other sectors – harbour, transport, EPZ – being affected, government was not prepared to accept the demands of the unions. Rioting occurred in Port-Louis and access was prohibited in

some sites of work and public places. Strikers were dismissed and prosecuted; the GWF had recourse to a hunger strike to press for the reinstatement of the dismissed workers.

An agreement was reached whereby the government conceded to the 40-hour week in the sugar industry. After some time, government negotiated for the postponing of the introduction on the grounds that the economic context was unfavourable. The matter was eventually referred to the Permanent Arbitration Tribunal and in June 1993, the PAT awarded that the 40-hour week be introduced during the inter-crop season.

The 1979 strike revealed the existence of various divisions within the GWF and the MMM. Sure enough, soon after the strike, Jack Bizlall, who was the negotiator for the CEB dissociated himself from the GWF and set up the Federation of Parastatal Bodies Union (FPBU).

2.3.11 The Parti Socialiste Mauricien

«La conviction se répand dans le pays que le PTr revendique une place dans la gauche mais gouverne à droite, défend l'ordre établi, gère le quotidien sans vision d'avenir pour les masses et se complait dans des attitudes de collaboration politique qui lui imposent un conservatisme grandissant et qui tuent chez lui toute audace» (Le Mauricien 2/5/81) is a statement that spoke volumes about the state of the Labour Party at the time. A dissident faction emerged as a new political party, the Parti Socialiste Mauricien (PSM) which made a common front with the MMM for the forthcoming general elections. Discontent was also expressed by the trade union movement against the government of the day. The Plantation Workers Union (PWU), one of the most influential trade unions in the agricultural sector withdrew its support of 43 years with the Labour Party. And last but not the least, the bad economic conditions prevailing in the country gave the finishing stroke to the Labour Party.

2.3.12 The 1982 General Elections

The 1982 General Elections brought the downfall of the Labour Party and shifted the balance of power in favour of the new coalition formed between MMM and the Parti Socialiste Mauricien (PSM) in a spectacular manner. The latter won all the 62 seats in Parliament and democracy voted for no Opposition. Various factors attributed to this defeat. The Labour Party was no longer considered as the protector of trade union rights and that of the working class. It was blamed for the introduction of unpopular laws such as the IRA and the POA which forbade the holding of public meetings without the authorization of the Commissioner of Police, while the Industrial Relations Act made all strikes illegal. This was seen as a strategy to obstruct the progression of the MMM and that of the GWF. The coalition of the Labour Party with the PMSD was viewed as a right-wing party which somehow restrained the socialist ideals of the Labour Party.

2.3.12.1 A new page for the best?

The new government had a very limited room to manoeuvre between the conditions of the IMF of the World Bank for structural economic adjustment and the expectations of the masses that had voted for change. However, it did manage to pay unemployment benefit and adopted a well-known open door policy with the trade unions. The strategy was to make the unions in particular and workers in general aware of the seriousness of the situation and to convince them to moderate their claims.

The unemployment problem became catastrophic and measures were taken to control employers' power to fire people. Hence, any employer intending to lay off workers was required to give notice of 120 days and should wait for the decision of the Termination of Contract Service Board, before taking any downsizing measures. The employer was also liable to pay wages and compensation to each worker for termination of employment. In that period of economic turmoil, a milestone event for the working class was the taking over by the workers of the defunct Metallurgic Workshop Cassis Ltd, and its renaming as LITRA.

2.3.13 Political dissent

Meanwhile, the economic policies of the Minister of Finance and other political factors led to dissent within the government. This brought about a series of political crises which led to the downfall of the government in March 1993. The MMM split up and some members joined the PSM to form the Movement Socialist Mauricien (MSM). An anti-MMM coalition was also created, comprising of PMSD, MSM and the Labour Party. New elections were held and the new party threw the MMM into the Opposition after securing 41 seats out of the 62.

After its defeat, the MMM decided to devote more time to GWF and to the trade union movement in general. However, after its short transition in power, MMM had lost its credibility vis-à-vis the left-wing trade union federations, except the GWF which openly supported the MMM right into the next electoral campaign.

2.3.14 Struggle for free trade union activities

The newly elected MSM-LP-PMSD government quickly set the tone concerning the way it intended to gear the economic advancement of the country. A stiff style was used against its political opponents and other pressure groups (such as trade unions). The trade union leaders subsequently analysed that the very survival of trade unions was at stake and criticized the government for its attitude. Mr. Alain Laridon from the FTU stated that: «le gouvernement semble oublié que le pays a hérité des traditions démocratiques et que la participation des syndicats a certaines décisions et importante....» The Front Syndical Uni (FSN) now composed of all the federations, namely, the FTU, GWF, FSN, MLC and FPU was launched to safeguard the interests of trade unionism and claimed the repeal of the IRA and POA which restricted their activities.

To maintain their position, the trade unions renewed their activities which consisted of strikes mainly at Jack Tellor and Leisure Garments. In 1985, the EPZ sector was crippled

by a general solidarity strike to protest against the repressive practices of managers. The strike was severely limited when government asked the association of employers to withdraw the recognition of the trade unions affiliated to the FTU. This move denied the fundamental right of freedom and right of association which was wholeheartedly condemned by the press and the trade unions.

2.3.15 MMM at Municipal elections

The victory of MMM at the Municipal elections on December 1985 was considered as a warning to the government. In 1986, Mrs. Bappoo was appointed as Minister of Labour after a reshuffle of the cabinet of Ministers. She, however, had a more flexible approach than her predecessor's and pleaded for better relations between employers and employees.

To strengthen their position, the trade unions decided, by concerted effort, to press on government for traditional claims (wage increase and improved conditions of work) so as to be on the safe side if ever economic measures resulted in employees being deprived of their benefits. Issues of national interest were also raised, for instance, the trade unions asked for a commission of enquiry on drugs at work and launched a sensitization campaign on various industrial diversification projects and their impact on health and safety at work. However, this apparent unity did not last long, and divergences of opinion got the better of the movement, culminating in the formation of two trade union fronts: the Mauritius Trade Unions Front (MTUF) which consisted of the MLC, GSA, FSCC and FTU; and the other, of GWF, the FSSC and the FPU.

2.3.16 The decreasing power of trade unions

Marred by inter-union conflicts and weakened by government's uncompromising stand, the trade union movement saw its strength dwindled when three leading trade unionists: S. Soodhun, A. Laridon and C. Geneviève of the FSCC were elected as MSM candidates at the 1987 General elections. A major philosophical shift was felt to have occurred from the time the trade union leaders were fighting for the workers' cause, to an orientation

towards power aspirations. At the start it is true that trade unions lacked power and their involvement in politics was a means to seize some form of power in order to foster changes in favour of the workforce but politics for politics' sake was the current that drove them away from their original objectives.

2.3.17 Concluding note on history

Political events in Mauritius exerted considerable influence on the evolution of trade unionism, as the movement became an integral part of the political system. While they were withheld political power, trade unions had played an extra-parliamentary role against government. The ambiguity of the dual role – where the trade union leader would be a political leader and also a spokesman for the working class - usually arose when the trade union leader was elected to the Legislative Council. This in fact occurred at the 1948 elections. As a force separate from the established political leadership, union leaders had been in a better position to oppose government.

2.4 The structure of unions in Mauritius

As we have seen in previous sections of this chapter, the creation of trade union organizations occurred mostly in an *ad hoc* manner, as and when the need arose and opportunity presented itself, the primary aim being to have a large number of trade unions which would be equivalent to a strong voice. This was not a bad idea in itself but the resulting structure of the movement today has been criticized as being wieldy and fragmented and in fact not helping in creating a unified force. Unity is a deep word and is very much used by trade unionists but the movement's structure reflects a different picture.

2.4.1 Rationale and Methodology

For the purpose of a national survey amongst unions, (*explained in section 6 of this chapter*), the Research team needed to have the address of each individual union registered with the Registry of Association, in order to send a questionnaire. At this stage it became evident that there was some confusion in the structure. This prompted the research team to draw up the factual, accurate picture of the structure of the movement. Although initially it was not part of the project objectives, the rationale for establishing with accuracy the structure of the union movement this was necessary due to the fact that there were unions that were not even known to federations. Annexed in this project are charts representing the structures of the three Confederations and their respective affiliates along with one Federation, which is not affiliated to any of the Confederations.

2.4.1.1 Steps involved in building the structure of the Trade Union Movement in Mauritius

According to 2005 data obtained from the Registry of Associations, there are 10 Federations and 3 Confederations in Mauritius, namely:

Confederations

- 1) Mauritius Labour Congress;
- 2) National Trade Union Confederation;
- 3) Mauritius Trade Union Congress.

Federations

- 1) Federation of Progressive Union;
- 2) Free Workers Federation;
- 3) Confederation Mauricienne des Travailleurs;
- 4) Mauritius Labour Federation;
- 5) Free Democratic Union Federation;
- 6) Federation of Parastatal Bodies and Other Unions;
- 7) Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions;

- 8) State Employees Federation;
- 9) General Workers Federation;
- 10) Federation des Travailleurs Unis.

Part 3 Sec 27 (sub1) of the IRA 73 states that two or more trade unions (including Federations) may combine together to form a Federation or amalgamate to form one trade union if the resolution for Federation or amalgamation is approved, by ballot, at a general meeting of every trade union concerned. The term “Confederation” is for its part not found in the IRA but our findings from the Key Informant Interviews suggest that a Confederation is understood to be a cluster of Federations. It is important to note that the new *Employment Relations Bill* provides a definition for a Confederation and for a Federation.

Having obtained the critical information on the number of Federations and Confederations in the island, the next step was to contact them for their list of members. Some organizations sent it to us by fax if the membership was large, while others preferred to give us the names of their members on the telephone itself. There were some organizations that were not very helpful but we did manage to meet our objective in the end.

Once the lists of membership of the thirteen (con)federations were at hand, a printout was made of our master list obtained from the Registry of Association. Each list of members was then reviewed one at a time in close consultation with the master list and each time the union’s name in the list was met in the master list, a note was put on the master list to denote that this union is affiliated to such and such organization. At the end of the day, the master list was dotted with unions with linkages to their respective affiliations. For instance, Airports of Mauritius employees was found to be affiliated to both the Federation of Civil service and Other Unions, and to the Free Democratic Union Federation.

Next, the Confederations' lists were considered. There were three in all. A certain amount of time was spent with each list, just enough to draw the structure of the Confederation and its affiliates in terms of unions and Federations.

The last step involved an examination of the master list, alongside the charts of the three Confederations one at a time to see if there was a possibility that one union could belong to more than one Federation/Confederation. If this was the case, a small figure was superscripted to the name of the union to indicate the number of organizations to which this union was affiliated.. Below are tables describing the 13 (con)federations' affiliates. To better understand the tables, the drawings should be consulted simultaneously, annexed herewith.

	Unions	Other Affiliation
MAURITIUS LABOUR CONGRESS	Agricultural Staff and Employees Union	-
	Association Travailleurs Transport Autobus	-
	Bank of Baroda Employees Association ²	FTU
	Bank of Baroda Staff Union	-
	Central Electricity Board Workers Union	-
	Commercial Banks Staff and Employees Association	-
	Development Works Corporation of foreman Union ²	FPBOU
	Docks and Wharves Staff & Employees Union	-
	Export Processing Zone Workers Union ²	MLF
	Government Teachers' Union	-
	Government Urdu Teachers' Union	-
	Grand Port Savanne Village Council Employees Union	-
	Habib Bank Staff Union	-
	Irrigation Authority Employees' Union ²	MTUC
	Local Authorities Employees Union	-
	Mauritius Bank Officers Guild	-
	Mauritius Labour Federation	-
	Mauritius Standard Bureau Employees Union ²	FPBOU
	Mauritius Telecom Employees Association	-
	National Computer Board Employees Union	-
National Trust Fund For Community Health Workers Union	-	
Nurses Union	-	
Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union ²	FPBOU	

	Roman Catholic Education Authority Caretaker and General Worker Union	-
	School Caretakers and Labourers Union	-
	Sugar Industry Staff & Employees Association	-
	Tea Industry Staff and Employees Union	-
	Telecommunications Employees and Staff Association	-
	Textile and Garments Workers Union (Mauritius)	-
	Textiles Industries Staff and Workers Union	-
	Cooperative Stores Workers Union	-
	Export Processing Zone Workers Union ²	MLC

	Unions	Other Affiliation
MAURITIUS TRADE UNION CONGRESS	Agricultural Marketing Board Staff Association	-
	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit Workers Union ²	FDUF
	District Council North Skilled and Non Skilled Workers Union	-
	<i>Free Democratic Union Federation</i>	-
	Industrial and Vocational Training Board Staff Union	-
	Irrigation Authority Employees' Union ²	MLC
	Irrigation Authority Staff Association	-
	Local Government Employees Association	-
	Mauritius Airline Pilots Association	-
	Mauritius Head Teachers Association ²	SEF
	Mauritius Meat Authority Employees Union	-
	Mauritius Union of Pre-School Educators	-
	Municipality Of Curepipe Workers Union	-
	National Women Council Employees Union	-
	Pre-Primary School Employees Union	-
	<i>State Employees Federation</i>	-
	State Informatics Ltd Staff Union ²	FDUF
	Sugar Industry Workers Association	-
	Sugar Planters Mechanical Pool Corporation Employees Union	-
	The Artisans and General Workers Union	-
	The Development Works Corporation Employees Association	-
	The Farmers Service Corporation Staff Association	-
	The General Purpose Teachers Union ²	SEF
	Transport Employees Union	-
	Union of Employees of Sugar Insurance Fund	-
	University Of Mauritius Staff Union	-
	Waste Water Management Authority Employees Union ²	FPBOU

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FREE DEMOCRATIC UNION FEDERATION	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit Workers Union ²	MTUC
	Airline Employees Association	-
	Airport of Mauritius LTD Employees Union ²	FCSOU
	Catering Restaurants and Hotel Employees Union	-
	Insurance Employees' Union	-
	Mauritius Private Security Guard Employees Union	-
	Petroleum and Gas Employees Union	-
	Private Tea Sector Employees Union	-
	State Informatics Ltd Staff Union ²	MTUC
	Textiles, Clothes and Other Manufacturing Workers Union	-
	The Mauritius Distributive and other Trades Employees Union	-
	United Bus Service Employees Union	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
STATE EMPLOYEES FEDERATION	Government Servants Association	-
	Mauritius Head Teachers Association ²	MTUC
	Medical and Health Officers Association	-
	The Deputy Head Teachers Association	-
	The General Purpose Teachers Union ²	MTUC
	Union of Non-Teaching Staff of Aided Secondary Schools	-
	Union of Public Personnel Officers	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF CIVIL SERVICE & OTHER UNIONS	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit Staff Union	-
	Airport of Mauritius LTD Employees Union ²	FDUF
	Association of Primary schools Health and Physical Education officers	-
	Central Statistical Office Staff Association	-
	Civil Aviation Employees Union	-
	Civil Service Architects Union	-

	Civil Status Officers Union	-
	Companies Division Technical Officers Union	-
	Cooperative Technical Staff Union	-
	Data Processing Division Staff Association	-
	Deputy Rectors' Union	-
	Disciplined Forces Workmen's class Workers Union	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF CIVIL SERVICE & OTHER UNIONS	Education Officers Grade "A" Union	-
	Electrical Services Division Workers Union	-
	Environment Technical Staff Union	-
	Financial Services Commission Staff Union	-
	Government General Services Union	-
	Government Labour Power Union	-
	Government Manual Workers Union	-
	Government Medical and Dental Officers Association	-
	Government Office Attendants Union	-
	Government Printing Workers' Union	-
	Government Professional Engineers Association	-
	Government Secondary Schools Teachers Union	-
	Income Tax Technical Staff	-
	Mahatma Gandhi Institute Employees Association	-
	Mauritius Archives Staff Union	-
	Mauritius Senior Civil Servants Association	-
	Mauritius Sugar Industry Arbitration and Control Board Technical Staff Association	-
	Mauritius Sugar Terminal Corporation Staff Association	-
	Medical Laboratory Technician Association	-
	Medical Records Staff Power Union	-
	Ministry of Agriculture Professionals' Union	-
	Ministry of Agriculture, Professional Scientific and Technical Officers Staff Union	-
	Ministry of Fisheries Professional Scientific and Technical Staff Union	-
	Ministry of Health Laboratory Attendants Union	-
	Ministry of Local Government Employees Union	-
	National Transport Authority Technical Staff Union	-
	National Transport Authority Vehicle Examiners Union	-
	Nurses Educators Union	-
	Nursing Association	-
	Post Office Administrative Staff Association	-
Postman Drivers Union	-	
Registrar General Technical Officers Union	-	

	Registry Of Association Inspectorate Staff Union	-
	Rodrigues Government Employees Association	-
	Rural Development Staff Union	-
	Secondary and Preparatory School Teachers Union	-
	State Secondary School Vocational Graduates Union	-
	Sugar Insurance Fund Board Senior Field Staff Association	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF CIVIL SERVICE & OTHER UNIONS	Syndicat des Travailleurs Unis de la Fonction Publique	-
	Telecommunications Workers Union	-
	The Audit Department Union	-
	The Auditors Union	-
	The Government Samplers Association	-
	The Primary School Inspectors Union	-
	The Private Secondary Schools Authority Employees Union	-
	The State Secondary Schools Teachers Union	-
	Union Des Travailleurs Du Ministère La Sante	-
	Union Of Customs and Excise Officers	-
	Union of Employees of Ministry of Agriculture and Other Ministries ²	CMT
	Union Of Finance Officers	-
	Union Of Government Economists	-
	Union of Post Office Workers	-
	Union of Primary School Teachers	-
	Union Of Private Secondary Education Employees ²	FPU
	Union Of Professional Education Officers	-
	Union Of Revenue Officers	-
	Union of Social Welfare Officers	-
	University Of Mauritius Technicians Union	-
University Of Technology Mauritius Employees union	-	

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF PROGRESSIVE UNIONS	Agricultural Marketing Board Employees Union	-
	Casino Employees Union	-
	Catering Industry workers Union	-
	Chemical Manufacturing and Connected Trade Employees Union	-
	Cigarette Manufacturing Employees Union	-
	Construction, Metal & Furniture Employees Union	-
	Diamond Cutting Factory Workers Union	-
	Food and Beverages Industry Employees Union	-
	Hotel and Restaurants Employees Union	-
	Kindergarten Teachers' Union	-
	Leather and Plastic Industry Workers Union	-
	Mauritius Civil Service Mutual Aid Association LTD Employees' Union	-
	Mauritius College of the Air Staff Association	-
	Mauritius Sugar Authority Employees Union	-
	Mauritius Sugar Terminal Corporation Employees Union	-
	Mechanical Pool Manual Workers Union	-
	MSIRI Manual Workers Union	-
	National Housing Development Company Employees Union	-
	Plaisance Air Transport Services Staff Union	-
	Private Bank Staff and Employees Association	-
	Private Enterprise Employees Union	-
	Private Firms Employees Union	-
	SMIDO Administrative, Technical Officers and Workers Association	-
	Soap and Detergents Workers Union	-
	State Trading Corporation Employees Union	-
	Technical School Management Trust Fund Employees Union	-
	The Maritime Transport and Port Employees Union	-
	The Newspaper and Printing Industry Employees Association	-

	The Shops and Duty Free Shops Employees Union	-
	The State Bank of Mauritius Staff Union	-
	Transport Industry Workers Union	-
	Union of Employees of Air Mauritius Ltd	-
	Union of Employees of the Catering Industry	-
	Union of Employees of the Central Electricity Board	-
	Union of Employees of the Central Water Authority	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FPU	Union of Municipalities Workers	-
	Union of Private Secondary Education Employees ²	FCSOU
	Union of Workers Of Packaging Industry Company Limited	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
GENERAL WORKERS FEDERATION	Beverage Industry Workers Union	-
	Building and General Construction Workers Union	-
	Butter and Margarine Industries Workers Union	-
	Construction and Allied Workers Union	-
	Domestic Employees Union	-
	Lorry Drivers and Helpers Union	-
	Mauritius Workshop Workers Union	-
	Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union	-
	Port-Louis Harbour and Docks Workers Union	-
	Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Workers Union	-
	Shoes and Sandals Manufacturing Workers Union	-
	Steel Rolling Workers Union	-
	Stevedoring and Marine Staff Employees Association	-
	Sugar Industry Labourers Union	-
	Tea Industry Workers Union	-
	The Central Electricity Board Staff Union	-
	The Livestock and Allied Industries Workers' Union	-
	The Salt Pans Workers Union	-
	Union of Artisans of the Sugar Industry	-
	Union of Bakery Employees, Biscuit Factory Workers and Pastry Cooks	-
Union of Bus Industry Workers	-	
Union of Workers of the Animal Farms	-	

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION DES TRAVAILLEURS UNIS	Bank of Baroda Employees Association ²	MLC
	Cold Storage Workers Union	-
	Export Enterprises Employees Union	-
	Farm Workers Union	-
	Le Grand Gaube Hotel Staff Union	-
	Organisation of Hotel and Catering Workers Unity	-
	Private Clubs Employees Union	-
	Syndicat des Travailleurs Des Etablissements Privés	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF FREE WORKERS	Organisation of Artisans Unity	-
	Organisation of EPZ Workers Unity	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
CONFEDERATION MAURICIENNE DES TRAVAILLEURS	Union of Employees of Ministry of Agriculture and other Ministries ²	FCSOU
	Union of Public Officers of Ex- TDA Workers	-

	Unions	Other Affiliation
FEDERATION OF PARASTATAL BODIES & OTHER UNIONS	Building Woodworking and Allied Workers Union	-
	Bank of Mauritius Employees Union	-
	Bus Industry Traffic Officers Union	-
	Central Housing Authority Employees Union	-
	Mauritius Broadcasting Service Staff Association	-
	Irrigation Authority Manual Workers Union	-
	Industrial and Vocational Training Board Training Office Instructors Union	-
	Development Works Corporation foreman Union ²	MLC
	Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board Staff and Employees Union	-
	Mauritius Institute of Education Staff Union	-
	The Mauritius Institute of Education Academic Staff Association	-
	Mauritius Housing Company Staff Association	-
	Association of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute Senior Staff	-
	Mahatma Gandhi Institute Staff Association	-
	Mauritius Examination Syndicate Staff Union	-
	State Trading Corporation Staff Union	-
	Outer Islands Development Corporation Staff and Employees Union	-
	National Transport Corporation Staff Association	-
	Mauritius Standard Bureau Employees Union ²	MLC
	Port Louis Municipal Inspectorate Union	-
	Tobacco Board Staff Union	-
	Mauritius Institute of Health Staff and Employees Union	-
	Transport Corporation Employees Union	-
	Tobacco Board Employees Union	-
	The Town and Country Planning Board Staff and Employees Union	-
	Technical School Management Trust Fund Staff Union	-

	The Statutory Bodies Employees Union	-
	The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Staff and Employees Union	-
	Union of workers of Local Government	-
	Union of Workers of Approved Services ²	MLC
	University of Mauritius Academic Staff Union	-
	WasteWater Management Authority Employees Union ²	MTUC
	Association of Officers of the Irrigation Authority	-
	Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union²	MLC
	Textile Manufacturing and Allied Industries Workers Union	-

As mentioned earlier, the data used to set up the diagrams are dated for the year 2005, therefore it is evident that some affiliates would be missing for certain con(federations). The details are:

- **MLC:** Mauritius Bank Officers (Hong Kong Bank Branch), Mauritius Examination Syndicate Employees' Union, Social Welfare & Community Centers Employees' Union and Triolet Bus Service Employees' Union.

- **MLF:** Old District Sugar Cane Workers Union and Metal Workers Union.

- **MTUC:** Sugar Planters Mechanical Pool Manual Workers Union

- **SEF:** Government Electrical Engineers' Association, Information, Communication, Technology Teachers' Union and Professional Association of Mentors.

Our diagrams combined with the tables displayed above are clear indications of a lack of rigour regarding the organization and the structuring of the trade union movement. For what purpose does a particular union find itself in a position to be affiliated to more than one Federation or Confederation? Or, what could drive an individual union to be directly affiliated to an umbrella body? Is it a matter of resources, that is, money, training or infrastructure? Findings are here to demonstrate same. During our in-depth interviews with Presidents of the Federations and Confederations (findings of which will be reported

on in detail in the next sections) highlighted the necessity for a radical change in the structure of Mauritian Trade Unionism. One option could involve, for instance, having Federations for specific sectors, all affiliated, supported and guided by one and only one Confederation with a full-time, paid general secretary, facilities and laws to support such a structure. With the present structure there is redundancy in work and a resulting wastage of resources and time. The structure could as well move to a structure, where “professional” or sector-wise unions (for instance, construction, chemical, transport, Port, Printing and so on) are regrouped to form about 10 large Federations. This will enable collective bargaining to be performed at national level instead of at enterprise level.

In Mauritius there are unions that are affiliated to more than one federation or confederation while there are also some unions that are not affiliated at all to any such bodies. Are they able to survive and be effective while being out of the mainstream? Are there any specific reason for their non-affiliation? These questions prompted the Research team to opt for a survey and to find the answers to this problematic.

2.5 Non-affiliated Unions

2.5.1 Rationale and Methodology

As described in the previous section, the Master list received from the Registry of Associations represented the backbone of information for the designing of the structure. At the end of the cross-checking exercise, it was surprising to notice that eighty (80) individual unions were not included in the list (annexed), suggesting that they are not affiliated to any con(federation) in the country. This new finding emerged as an interesting issue to be investigated, with a view to uncover the reasons, if any, for these unions’ decision to remain unaffiliated.

Having established the list of the non-affiliated unions, with their respective addresses, a significant risk became apparent, in that the accuracy of the addresses and the absence of contact numbers of the unions could not be depended on. Nevertheless, a survey

questionnaire was custom-designed for the non-affiliated unions. (annexed). A cover letter was attached to each questionnaire addressed to the Secretary of the Union asking him/her to complete the questionnaire or hand it over to another executive committee member.

2.5.2 Response rate – non-affiliated unions

Out of eighty (80) questionnaires that were launched for the survey, only eight (8) questionnaires returned to us duly filled, representing a 10% response rate. But in this project the qualitative nature of the data was more important than quantity and the Research team was already prepared for a poor response rate given the factors explained above. Moreover, while reviewing the completed questionnaires, two (2) out of the eight (8) questionnaires precise an important piece of information: they were actually affiliated to some national trade union organization. Although these two questionnaires were not discarded, the fact remained that our information source (the Federations' and Confederations' membership lists) was either not updated when given to us, or else it was the Federations or Confederations that were not aware of their exact membership.

2.5.3 Analysis and Interpretation

The analysis does not follow the question-wise approach. Over and above the inclusion of the same central themes addressed during the in-depth interviews with Federation and Confederation, the questionnaire specifically broached the research questions in connection with non-affiliation: (1) Why are some unions not affiliated to Federations or Confederations? (2) What are the perceived or real implications of being out of the mainstream?

2.5.3.1 Reasons for non-affiliation

This question reveals that respondents are satisfied that they are making their voices heard and their objectives are being attained in spite of being un-affiliated. In short, affiliation to national organizations is not a must to them as their requests and grievances seem to be well received by the employers who apparently do not care if the particular union is affiliated or not to con(federations). However, being disconnected from the mainstream poses a risk in the sense that, as long as matters are resolved in a way that suits both parties, there is no problem, but if ever larger or more complex or contentious issues arise, employers may be tempted to act unilaterally in the knowledge that the non-affiliated unions are weak and without support from the powerful federations or confederations.

The beliefs of such unions go further in expressing a view that federations and confederations seemed most of the time to have a hidden agenda, either personal or political. These unions claimed that they felt to be on the safe side by remaining far from these (con)federations, who, they say, do not understand nor appreciate the specificity of their sector anyway.. This indicates a severe lack of trust among members of the trade union movement. And so, even though, the response rate was low, it is believed that such an opinion is shared by a large majority of trade unionists, either affiliated or not to con(federations). A great bone of contention seems to be that members resent the 'high life' enjoyed by Presidents of these umbrella organizations such as time off facilities, traveling abroad, chairing boards, among others, which is perceived as inappropriate and contradict the values of a trade unionist. The media is not entirely innocent either, say our respondents. It is the mechanism through which such weaknesses are exposed and give a blow to the motivation and courage of unions, so that they prefer to remain unaffiliated.

Lack of transparency turned out to be another response put forward which is again not encouraging for the trade union movement at all. Today, the movement is seeking to recruit new members in order to increase the unionization rate in Mauritius, but this move is ill-conceived at the time when the movement is said to be internally sick itself.

In order to be affiliated to a federation or confederation, the union normally has a monthly affiliation/subscription fee to pay. This apparently acts as another barrier for unions to get affiliated. Added to that are the traveling expenses to reach the meeting venue at the Headquarters of the federations/confederations. This type of argument can be accepted for unions with small memberships and consequently small budgets, but for unions with medium or large membership base, presenting such an excuse would simply mean that affiliation is not important for the day-to-day running of the union and for its overall survival.

2.5.3.2 Connection of Trade Unions with Politics

Responses to this questions were set into two categories, non-affiliated unions are either for unions and politics or not at all. The answers put forward were that the connection between politics and unions renders the environment unhealthy and prevents unions from molding a proper identity. These are the general answers of the fervent trade unionists.

However, majority of responses were divergent, the unions believe that unionists would not be subject to any dictatorship or pressure as long as they are loyal to the government of the day. Respondents also disclosed that unions should be independent of political parties, but when need be, for instance, for national interest and for the progress and welfare of all workers, they can join a particular political party. Moreover, it is of the opinion that all unions should have close connection to political parties who are fair and deal with equal justice and maintain peace and who contribute to economic progress. These answers are different from those received during our interviews with Presidents of con(federations) (to be discussed later in this report). Politics, for the non-affiliated unions, are seen as a source of power without which they believe trade unionism would not be strong. It is also considered that the non-affiliated unions are very docile and weak in nature and this is why they seek the easy support of politicians.

2.5.3.3 Reasons for low level of unionization in the country

The low level of unionization in the country is considered to be a big problem for non-affiliated unions which is not the case for Presidents of con(federations)-which we will come to in the next section. They believe that if the government was more interested in the cause of trade unionists, this would help in raising the level of unionization in the country. Here again they reveal the connection that they wish to establish between unions and government, which prompts us to deduce that they are indeed fragile without their fellow trade unionists of the mainstream.

Others believed that the society we are living in has become more and more materialistic where everything is concentrated on power and money. Thus, at the non-affiliated unions' or con(federations') levels if there were more rotations to occupy leadership positions, this will help to boost unionization in the country as the present situation does not act as a motivating factor for people to join unions.

To explain the low level of unionization, some respondents believe that people are not interested to join unions for fear of reprisals such as being transferred to another department to undertake more complex work. As it is necessary for every student in a college to pay PTA fees every year, in the same vein, all workers in a particular company should join unions as when unionized workers progress and achieved results it is the whole lot of employees that benefit and not only unionized workers. This is an important statement and make us realize how non-affiliated unions are in fact not well documented on the state of things in companies. While the trend, local and international, is towards decrease in unionization rate how is it possible for organizations to go for **open-shop** agreement?

It is also believed that if unions received their registration and recognition on the same date, this could help in increasing the unionization rate in the country. This is explained in the following way: unions in Mauritius are often formed on an impulse for a particular matter at hand. At that point the membership for this newly born union can be high because people want to fight for this specific cause. But when the administrative

procedures for registration and recognition take weeks or even months this de-motivate the members who lose their enthusiasm to continue the struggle.

2.5.3.4 Opinions on the proposed new legislation

The Trade Union Common Platform (TUCP) is a standing forum where all the presidents of federations and confederations meet for analysis of important pieces of documents such as the two new Bills. The Common platform of trade unionists is categorically against the Employment Rights Bills (ErB) and the Employment Relations Bill (ERB) being proposed by Government. At the same time, it was surprising to analyze the findings of the non-affiliated unions with regard to this issue. They believe that the introduction of these two Bills is a good idea, that it was high time to change the old version of Labour and Industrial Laws of the country.

They present their arguments as follows: the ERB is an opportunity to generate respect of the employers for employees. It is the basis of good governance and paves the way for the Equal Opportunity Act. As for the Employment Rights bill, it is regarded as providing protection for employees and safeguarding their families, and the two Bills together are rather fine, even if they probably need to be more adapted to the Mauritian context. Analysis of such responses reveals that the non-affiliated unions are indeed out of the system and are therefore not able to realize the future consequences that these new bills would mean for the working class.

Some respondents admitted that they did not know much about the Bills and wished to be more informed. In fact, this statement can be generalized to the whole lot of trade unions that are not affiliated to national trade union organizations. If the Bills are viewed a first time by a lay man, they would indeed seem to be the best laws ever enacted for the protection of labour, relaxing the Industrial Relations atmosphere of the country. It would appear from these findings that the non-affiliated unions' reactions are more lay than technical and that the fact of being out of the mainstream robs them of information,

analysis, independence and the level of sophistication to fully comprehend the scope of these new pieces of legislation.

Another set of respondents stated that, since the two Bills are yet to be finalized, they need not be considered nor analysed so much, which is absurd in a democratic state such as ours, which allows for stakeholder opinions to be expressed early in the process of formulating and then implementing new legislation. The situation is even truer for labour legislation, since trade unions are critical partners in national development.

2.5.3.5 Services offered by the Ministry of Labour & Industrial Relations

<i>Services</i>	<i>Often (%)</i>	<i>Sometimes (%)</i>	<i>Never (%)</i>
Labour & Industrial Relations	25	50	12.5
Occupational Safety & Health	25	25	25
Employment Division and Service	12.5	12.5	37.5
Registry of Association	75	12.5	12.5

It can be observed from the table that it is mostly the non-affiliated unions who had recourse to the Registry of Association. 75% of them say that they use such these services frequently. We may explain this through the fact that , because they are most of the time isolated, they are likely to face obstacles from the Registrar and objections from fellow trade unionists who are well inside the system. The multiplicity of unions in Mauritius indicates the probability that non-affiliated unions may be the result of individuals forming unions in a field that is already ‘covered’ by established unions, one notable example is the education sector.

Another 50% of the respondents also using the Labour and Industrial Relations service are also likely to be conflict with their employers owing to the fact they have a weak voice vis-à-vis their employers. They are therefore likely to be spending much of their time in the Conciliation office for the settlement of disputes.

2.5.3.6 Role of trade unions in the current and future political-socio-economic landscape of the country

This question concerned power, and the focus on traditional aims and objectives of trade unions. Findings confirm that respondents believe that unions should remain the watchdogs of democracy and ensure that the socio-economic situation does not degenerate and adversely affect the working class. However, responses to the effect that the role of trade unions is to focus more on the individual worker, might suggest that, because non-affiliated unions are not sufficiently united as a force, they do not consider that they can occupy a watchdog position in the social and economic development of the country.

Nevertheless, respondents are of the view that in the future, non-affiliated trade unions ought to cooperate with other non-affiliated unions and the Federations to promote a close connection with government to maintain peace and economic progress.

2.5.3.7 The overall environment for Trade Unions to fulfill their roles optimally

Respondents considered that to fulfill their roles to the most, unions needed training courses to be run for them. Whereas in itself, training courses for trade unionists is a good idea, the fact that this is expected to be carried out by government officials is breeding ground for confusion, conflict of interest, and may be a threat to independence of the unions. Indeed, it is considered to be a way for the non-affiliated trade unionists to build close relationships with government, as we have seen previously.

Responses turned also to financial matters. The fact that non-affiliated unions do not receive any funds from the Trade Union Trust Fund (which provides funding to the movement through the Federations), they have to depend solely on the contributions of their members which might not be sufficient if they are small unions. Money is needed for registration of a union, for paying a lawyer, and also it takes around three years or sometimes more to get recognition, not to mention funds needed for running activities for and maintaining communication with members.

2.5.3.8 Future of Trade Unionism

The responses to this question suggest that non-affiliated unions are out of line in terms of true struggles and promises of the union movement to the labour force. Analysis leads us to say that non-affiliated unions in fact wish to differentiate themselves from the mainstream labour movement, their agenda seeming to focus on becoming closer to government and employers rather than their fellow trade unionists.

2.6 National survey of Federations and Confederations

At the very beginning of the project, the Research team conducted Key Informant interviews with major players in the field, that is, a sample of trade unionists, Registrar, President of MEF, Chairman of IRC and PAT and Assistant Director the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations. The rationale of these interviews was to become familiar with the environment in which trade unionism was evolving and to know, on a first-hand basis, the attitudes and perceptions of the players toward the trade union movement. In short, the interviews were a form of exploratory research that has helped to direct the following stages of the project. Although our key informant interviews displayed a very comprehensive picture of the state of Industrial Relations and of the trade union movement in Mauritius, the project was now aimed at a national coverage and so it was deemed important to collect the opinions of a wider range of informants and not just from a few pioneers of the movement.

2.6.1 Rationale and Methodology

To have the opinions of a wider range of respondents, the Research team considered that a survey approach of 935 questionnaires for 344 unions would help in achieving the end result mentioned, the various drawings and tables describing, as it were, the structure of unions in Mauritius did not satisfy our standard of rigour when we discovered the astounding complexity (and untidiness) of the said structure across the entire movement. Hence a drastic alteration of the project methodology. Added to this was the issue of the

survey approach – if ultimately employed – being far from satisfactory as a method of collecting rich data (meaning, qualitative). The nature of the role of a trade unionist, his or her likely rich field experience and likely need to share such experience, did not lend itself well to being administered a dry survey questionnaire that would constrain their responses. It was there and decided that an interviewing approach would be the most effective. But of who? Who could be representative of the whole population of unions in Mauritius and thus help us to achieve generally the same result as that of our initial survey methodology? It was concluded that it would be both convenient and appropriate to interview all the Presidents of all the federations and confederations, since three-quarters of unions in Mauritius are affiliated to some federation or confederation. The interview schedule and the list of interviewees are attached in the appendix.

2.6.2 Analysis

Each time an interview was over, the completed interview schedule was examined and the information gathered was organized into themes. As the interviews proceeded, we simply added the data and iterated the analysis for increasingly fuller meaning.

2.6.2.1 Employers

- *Evolution of employers*

According to our respondents, employers in Mauritius have not much evolved in their attitude toward workers and their people management generally. It would appear that in spite of the abundance of management education and the increasingly widening pool of management-educated cadres and executives, the tradition of autocratic managers persists, as does a negative attitude towards unions.

Some employers even go further as far as making employees sign a document which forbids them to join a union, evidence in itself of the persistent presence of backward industrial relations practices.

Interviewees had also shared with us information regarding management in certain 'hot spots' such as textiles and ICT, for instance. It seems that a large number of employers have not evolved at all in their people management practices, and that old school, autocratic approaches still prevail.

- *Transparency*

Lack of transparency and good governance in decision-making is also a major issue raised by all our respondents, especially regarding financial information. Typically, trade union leaders in federations and confederations do not possess the means to cross check if these financial data are genuine in their presentation of the financial situation of the firm. It is well-known that many employers do find ways of brushing a bleak picture of the financial situation and thus brandish the threat of closure if unions claim better pay and so on for the workers.

- *Management in ICT sector*

Employment in the ICT sector is mostly contractual, thus precarious. Employees tend to avoid confrontation with management for fear of reprisals or even loss of job. It is very difficult to attract employees to join or form a union. On top that, the contractual, therefore short-term nature of the jobs means that people are forever changing firms and this makes it very difficult for activists to organize them.

- *Management in the Textile sector*

Employers of the textile sector enjoy certain legal provisions which makes the task of being unionized difficult, and it appears that intimidation is rife.. The incident of La Compagnie Mauricienne du Textile (CMT) is a vivid example of what can happen to an unprotected, unionized worker who was purportedly forced to work when he was ill and died as a consequence. This sector is also characterized by the use of management spies who leak information to the management whenever there is an attempt to organize or to join an outside union.

- *Management in the Tourism sector*

The tourism sector has experienced a reorganization and it is not a problem to organize employees in this sector, although national-level collective bargaining is not allowed by the legal framework. Fortunately, 75% of hotel employees' unions are affiliated to some Federation regrouping private sector unions.

- *Management in the Construction sector*

The Construction sector is very competitive and skills of manual and technical workers are scarce and highly valued. Although it may seem that employers themselves cannot afford to lose employees and so promote sound employee relations, yet the short-duration contracts used for the majority of the workforce in this sector makes it difficult to keep track of the workers and to organize them. The work is also very hard with numerous health and safety issues occur.

- *Management in call centers*

The most frequent forms of employee hardship are related to sexual harassment and managerial intimidation. Interestingly, the comfortable working conditions (plush offices, air-conditions, etc) seem to be more important to the workers and so they are more often willing to tolerate and bear the "side effects" of the abuse and other malpractices for the sake of maintaining a certain idea of social status.

- *Employers terrorizing employees*

One trade union leader declared: *"we are all in the same boat, but "travailleurs ek patrons zamé pu capave être de la même classe...with 25 years as a fervent trade unionist, mo pas croire la dans..."* In the private sector, employees trying to get unionized are laid off. The trade unionist stated: *"après plusieurs reminders et lettres retournées des entreprises dont leur employés ne sont pas syndiqués, je me suis trouvé dans l'obligance d'aller dans des lieux comme le cimetière, sous les ponts ou même dans les champs de cannes pour faire remplir des formulaires a des gens qui voulaient être syndiqués mais avaient trop peur des patrons.»*

It is also considered that even today employers are not playing the game as a bona fide partner in the success of their firm..

- *Keeping good relationship with management*

However, some respondents also make it a must to maintain good relations with the management in the interest of employees and members of the organization. Concerning the National Tripartite Forum, it is believed to be a constructive initiative which con(federations) should take part as they would always be backed and sided by employers provided they continue to maintain a healthy relationship with them.

2.6.2.2 The Economy, Globalization, and the World Bank

The literature shows that in times of economic slump there is a greater tendency for workers to join unions while in a boom they are less likely to. However, in Mauritius the situation seems the opposite.

Our interviewees highlighted the impact of globalization on the trade union movement. With the opening up of the country to the global economy, Mauritius has transformed itself rapidly into a typical consumerist society. With the abundance of consumer goods, the proliferation of aggressive marketing campaigns as well as pressure to ‘catch up’ with lifestyles of the developed nations, the majority of the working class is drowning in debt and hostage to the hire-purchase system. When this combines with repressive or threatening employer attitudes, the result is that people feel they cannot afford to join unions because they cannot bear to think of risking their jobs.

Clearly there need for some form of harmonisation between economic development strategies linked to globalization, and the holistic welfare of citizens. As one trade unionist declared, «*C’est développement a visage inhumain. Grand dimoune pa pé*

capave boire du lait acoze ine vine tro chère, péna assé salaire pour nourrir toute la famille... Croissance économique pa vé dire nanien si li pa pé réflécté dans l'assiette travailleur la (...). Est-ce-que la croissance se limite a ce que quelqu'un voit quand on prend la route de l'aéroport, passant la Cybercité, Réduit, Paillet...c'est-à-dire verdure, cybertours, centre de conférences, autoroutes...! Je sillonne le pays tous les jours et je peux vous dire que quand on dit qu'il y a une baisse de chômage c'est totalement faux car il y a des gens qui vivent dans d'extrême pauvreté, par exemple, avec le projet IRS, il y a des personnes qui vivent carrément sur la plage ne sachant pas où aller.»

2.6.2.3 Leadership of trade unions

Some trade unionists revealed that in Mauritius, we have what we called “la Bourgeoisie Syndicale,” referring to the corporate or bureaucrat trade unionists, who allow themselves to be engulfed by a desire for status and power, leading a lifestyle which does not cohere with their philosophy to be ‘of’ and ‘with’ the working class. Some interviewees point out that some individuals remain President of Confederations or Federations year in, year out, for more than 20 years, enjoying all sorts of privileges such overseas meetings, conferences and training opportunities. Other leaders of Federations, however, are known to engage fully in capacity building for their membership by sharing such opportunities and ‘privileges’. All in all, however, the general impression created over the years is that the abundance of opportunities to evolve, be educated and to educate, provided by the large international unions to which our local Federations are affiliated, as well as by the ILO and other such organizations, have not been made good of and have not really helped the movement to evolve in line with new challenges. Other issues relating to leadership are: inability to plan for succession, lack of women empowerment for leadership, and sometimes, a poor sense of accountability to the membership.

In addition, some interviewees declared that some trade unionists leaders appear to excessively enjoy being in the limelight, appearing in the news, or rubbing shoulders with Ministers. Most, if not all, of our interviewees deplored these abovementioned shortcomings and felt it was very frustrating to stand by and watch it happen, given that

they could not bring it out in the open for fear of bringing disunity in the movement (which is the one thing they could never compromise on, since it was the backbone of any collective movement)

2.6.2.4 Views about NGOs

Interviewees also pointed out that, while voluntary workers of Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also ordinary workers working somewhere in an organization, difficulties and hurdles in their working life, the fact that NGOs receive a grant from the State prevents them from claiming their rights and making demands. In other words, the NGOs are so dependant on the Government that they have to meekly toe the line, whereas Trade Unions are independent in that build up their own funds from contributions of members, and sometimes the Federations also benefit from funds from the Trade Union Trust Fund, although they do not depend on it. The TUTF was clearly a bit of a controversial subject during our interviews. According to interviewees, the Trade Union Trust Fund's terms of reference is to promote worker empowerment, IR research and worker and unionist education, but all it has done - until it was frozen - was to distribute funds among Federations, typically for the running of training seminars in hotels.

Trade union leaders precise that the funds given to trade unions via the TUTF is far from being a favour meted out to unions by Government. Instead, it is an important institution that utilizes tax payers' money to promote democracy and an equilibrium of forces in the country. Of course, it was however the responsibility of unions to judiciously manage this precious money to achieve the different aims and objectives of the labour movement.

2.6.2.5 The Social Platform (for dialogue among social partners)

According to our interviewees, the ILO states that there is a need to promote social dialogue, but the trade unionists prefer tripartite negotiations. The question that trade unionists ask is: how can dialogue be instituted and engaged in by employers and

government when they cannot even achieve simple acts of respect towards workers like informing the latter and their union about financial problems and forthcoming layoffs. In fact, Management still views unions as the enemy, and repressive attitudes and actions are still very much present. This cannot be generalized, our respondents state, since there are a few individuals in management who are willing to treat unions as partners and are open to communication.

One glaring example of lack of consultation raised by our interviewees relates to the economic model imposed by government to transform the economy. Our respondents declare that at no point had there been any consultations with unions on the new programme, its implementation and its implications. This autocratic approach they say, gives little credence to government's willingness to engage in 'dialogue' and 'partnership'.

2.6.2.6 Unionization rate

The national rate of unionization is reported as 21 % of the working population. However, because of the poor penetration of unions in the private sector, this rate is not exactly reflective of the national state of labour organization. Trade union leaders believe that the reported rate of unionization rate is not a matter of concern. A higher or lower rate would not necessarily mean a more powerful political force. Take the example of France, who has a relatively 'low' rate of 10%, and where the movement is still able to rally masses of people around causes and expressions of disagreement with employers and government. Another example is Sweden with a 'high' rate of 90 percent, but where there is hardly any industrial action. In Brussels, unions are viewed as organizations in their own right, with their own banks, cooperatives, strike fund and many more facilities, all through the contributions of their members. Here in Mauritius, one wonders what can be realistically accomplished with the kind of meager membership contribution (between Rs. 10 and Rs. 50). To make matters worse, the people of Mauritius tend to be fearful and averse to industrial actions like picketing and strikes, preferring to remain anonymous and to criticize in private.

Some interviewees perform a lot of ground work and visit organizations that have recognized unions. To meet these unions, however, they require formal approval from the employer, for which they send letters or faxes. Unfortunately, Federation leaders report that most of the time the managers ignore such requests, deny the reception of such letters or faxes and simply turn a deaf ear. The result of this is a barrier between the workers and the union (or Federation, as the case may be) to which they are affiliated (in effect, with the leadership) , robbing the two of opportunities to discuss issues and problems in relation to pay , conditions of work and others.

2.6.2.7 Gender

Chapter Seven of this report describes in detail the issue of gender in unions and reports on our findings for Mauritius. Here we report on some global views of trade union leaders in particular. In some trade union Confederations, the gender distribution is: 70% women to 30% male members. Unfortunately, this proportion is very far from reflected in the leadership. At election time, for instance, not only do members tend to vote for men (based on an attitude men are better suited to union leadership), but capable women tend to shy away from leadership opportunities (and challenges), mostly because of the difficulty in reconcile their work and domestic responsibilities with the demands of union work. All our respondents, however, stated their support in favour of empowerment of women but little of what they said reflected a real effort to include or draw women into decision-making instances, and this, despite the demands from international and regional organizations (such as the ICFTU whose statutes stipulate that for every overseas delegation there must be at least 30% of women) .

2.6.2.8 Reactions to the Employment Rights Bill and the Employment Relations Bill

At the time of writing up this report, the Trade Union Common Platform has succeeded in making Government postpone the effective passing of the two new Bills. Expert

reactions are being awaited from the ILO and we are yet to discover the final version of these two Bills. During our interviews, the following reactions were noted:

- **The Employment Rights Bill**

- 1) *Section 10*-consideration for full time employment is given to part time worker. In the Labour Act there has never been such special provision. This section should be extended to workers working on contract for a definite period.
- 2) *Section 14*-Normal working hours should consist of 90 hours in a fortnight and 144 hours in a fortnight for a watchman. In the Labour Act it was under section 15 wherein no worker worked for more than six days a week and not more than 6 hours for a young person; not more than 8 hours for any worker and exceptionally, 12 hours for a watchman. It is proposed that hours of work should be 8 hours on any day of the week with a total of 40 hours per week for a normal worker; 12 hours a day with a total of 60 hours per week for a watchman.
- 3) The Bill stipulates that an employer can, with the employee's consent, require him/her to work 12 hours normal work or more. In the Labour Act, 8 hours is stipulated, and unions propose to maintain this.
- 4) *Section 14(b)*-Normal working hours may begin on any day of the week, whether or not the day is a public holiday. This is non-existent under the Labour Act. It is proposed that no worker should be forced to work on a public holiday except in circumstances where safety, health, and public exigencies where the work should start or continue on a that particular day.
- 5) *Section 16*-Overtime of 20 hours per fortnight is compulsory for every worker. Overtime is paid after completion of 90 hours for a fortnightly worker and 144 hours for a monthly worker. In the Labour Act this is under Section 16, where overtime is compulsory only for Free Zone worker, that is, 10 hours after 45 hours in a week. It is proposed that no overtime should be made compulsory for any

- worker, and that overtime be paid after completion of 8 hours on a week day and after 5 hours on Saturday for day worker and 8 hours for shift worker. It is also proposed that overtime be paid from the time the employee clocks in to the time the employee clocks out. Also taking into consideration that shift workers are marginalized in both family and social life, a shift allowance of 30% of their basic wage should be paid to them.
- 6) *Section 17 (3)*-Meal Allowance of Rs. 25 should be paid after performing at least 2 hours extending to at least 6.00 p.m or at least 7.00 p.m. This is non-existent under the Labour Act. Meal allowance should be increased to Rs. 50 and every year the amount should be reviewed in accordance with the CPI.
- 7) *Section 27- 20* Annual leaves and pro-rata basis for a part-time worker. In the Labour Act it is 14 Annual Leaves and 2 Optional Leaves. It is proposed to have 20 annual leaves including 2 Optional Leaves out of which 5 should be cumulative up to a total of 30. There is however no provision for contract workers in the Bill. It is proposed that all employees should benefit from Annual Leave on a pro-rata basis, even those having worked less than 12 months, as follows: $N \times W/A$; where N=Number of working months, W=Total annual leaves granted by law, A=12 months. As for the new clause that half of the number of Annual Leaves be fixed by the employer, the Trade Union Common Platform counter-proposes that no Annual Leaves be fixed by the employer.
- 8) *Section 28* - 15 days Sick Leaves and authorization to accumulate up to 90 days. In the Labour Act it is 21 days on full pay. It is proposed to maintain the 21 Sick Leaves and authorization to accumulate up to 90 days. The Bill again makes no provision for contract workers.
- 9) In the Bill, Maternity Leave and benefit is 12 weeks with an allowance of Rs. 2000. In the Labour Act it is 12 weeks. It is proposed to increase it to 14 weeks irrespective of length of service. The most recent international standard on

maternity protection is found in ILO Convention 183, which establishes a minimum duration of 14 weeks for maternity leaves.

- 10) Wedding leave- No provision made either in the old Labour Act nor the new Bill. It is proposed to introduce a Wedding Leave of 1 week on full pay and an allowance of Rs. 3000.
- 11) No provision for Mortality Leave either in the old Labour Act nor in the new Bill. It is proposed to introduce a Mortality Leave of 3 days.
- 12) It is proposed to introduce a Portable Severance Allowance Fund where one day's remuneration per month of service is contributed, which is payable at the age of 60.
- 13) Workfare programme- the new Bill establishes a Workfare programme to train, to fund an unemployment benefit of at least Rs.3000 for 12 months with from the Severance allowance. It is proposed that the unemployment benefit is most welcome but it should not be linked to the payment of severance allowance.

- **The Employment Relations Bill**

- 1) *Section 5*- Minimum of 30 members to register as a trade unions: Under the old IRA it is 7 members. It is proposed that flexibility in the application of this clause must be incorporated, so as to accommodate unions made up of a small membership (such as Air Pilots).
- 2) *Section 44*-Time-off facilities not specify for attending trade union international activities.
- 3) *Section 57*-Collective bargaining by a group of individuals: this undermines the role of trade unions. It is proposed that collective bargaining be done solely by a

- recognized trade union. Only recognized trade unions should be authorised to sign collective agreement.
- 4) *Sec 84-* Minimum Service should be established in procedural agreements between the union and management. It is proposed that minimum service be defined by law and be strictly related to health, safety and security.
 - 5) *Section 94-* The Bill stipulates that where a collective agreement exists and covers workers of a particular sector, the Minister will not refer any Remuneration Order for this specific sector for revision. Trade Unions propose that all collective agreements between employers and trade union representatives of that sector have to be applied to the whole sector and integrated in the relevant Remuneration Order.

Trade Union leaders believe that these two Bills represent a regression in the state of industrial relations in the country, destroying over 60 years of strife and struggle. The proposed new legislation will clearly jeopardize employment security and even the State, as an employer, is to practice flexible/part-time methods, and performance-based personnel management (in effect, a hire-and-fire type of people management approach).

The increase in contractual employment also means that it will increasingly difficult – and expensive – to get statistics and information on how many workers there are and where to find them.

The new legislation also includes a clause which is disputed by unions (even the ILO recommends that this must be discussed with unions first): The list of essential services has been extended to 14 (now including hotels, education and health) and if workers in these sectors cannot get unionized then democracy will well and truly die a slow death.

Moreover, these bills are based upon guidelines of IMF/World Bank which recommend any measures to lure foreign investors. Obviously, labour laws that favour the employer

against the worker are more attractive (to certain types of employers, anyway) and will probably be effective in enticing business in the short run, but will inevitably bring the working class to unprecedented levels of poverty, will crush the drive of the middle class, and serve to make the already rich even richer.

Union leaders furthermore draw our attention to the following flaws in the new legislation, pointing to ILO's own expressed concern over them:

Right to organize

Section 13(1)(b) and (c) of the Bill stipulate that to be a union member, an individual should be either engaged in an undertaking, business or occupation or have been a worker at any time for an aggregated period of not less than 18 months. Now, Article 2 of Convention No.87 of ILO referring to the right to organize, provides that workers without distinction whatsoever should have the right to establish and join unions.

Right of trade unions to organize their administration and activities

Section 22 of the Bill provides that the Registrar may, upon a complaint from a member of a trade union, conduct an enquiry into a possible misuse of funds and make an application to the District Court for appropriate remedial action. Article 3 of Convention 87, for its part, consists of the right of trade unions to organize their own administration and activities. The ILO experts suggest that instead of a single member, the legislation may provide for a percentage of members of the union, for instance, 5%. In addition, section 29 of the bill provides that the Registrar may investigate into the affairs and finances of the trade union, inspect its books and require information from trade union officers. ILO experts warn that these clauses might need to be streamlined to avoid duplication, always keeping in mind the need to avoid any interference in trade union affairs.

Dispute settlement

Part VI (sections 67-75) of the Bill provides for the following procedure for dispute settlement: A 90-day period for negotiation at the end of which one of the parties report

the case to the Supervising officer, following which another 20 days for conciliation before the Supervising officer. If the conciliation fails, another 30 days of conciliation or mediation is provided by a Commission for Conciliation and Mediation. After this, the party who first reported the case to the Supervising officer refers the dispute to the Employment Relations Tribunal for either arbitration or have recourse to strike or lock-out which should take place within 45 days. In case of strike, 10 days notice is also required. ILO experts suggest that once the conciliation (negotiation) fails, industrial action needs to be possible within a maximum period of one month.

Ballot

Section 81 (3) of the Bill provides that a ballot is considered successful where it obtains an absolute majority of the workers concerned by the dispute. The ILO experts consider that the requirement of over half of all the workers involved in order to declare a strike is excessive and could unnecessarily hinder the possibility of carrying out a strike, particularly in large enterprises. Majority requirements should therefore be limited to those workers who are voting.

Person not willing to take part in unlawful activities

Section 33 of the Bill provides that no person who refuses to participate in any unlawful strike or lock-out should be subject to disciplinary measures like expulsion from the trade union. Union leaders as well as ILO experts claim that this should be left to be determined in conformity with trade unions' rules, failing which the provision is tantamount to interfering with the right of trade unions to freely draw up their constitutions and rules and organize their administration and activities.

Forms of strike allowed

Section 79 (1) (a) of the Bill provides that every worker has the right to strike in relation to a labour dispute, and section 80 provides that no person shall take part in a strike where the labour dispute does not relate to the collective interest of a group of workers. Section 2 of the Bill defines a labour dispute as a dispute between a trade union and an employer which relates wholly or mainly to wages, terms and conditions of employment,

promotion and so on. However, these provisions do not allow for solidarity strikes or strikes related to matters of general economic policy, for instance, or even strikes related to negotiations above enterprise level. Even ILO experts have stated that trade unions ought to have recourse to protest strikes, for example for the purpose of criticizing government's economic and social policy. The right to strike should, therefore, not be limited solely to individual disputes that are likely to be resolved through the signing of a collective agreement.

Collective bargaining framework

Convention 98 of the Bill relates to the promotion of collective bargaining and makes a distinction between two types of collective agreements: (1) procedural agreements which relate to trade union facilities, procedures relating to grievances, the establishment of minimum service in certain sectors and so on, and (2) collective agreements which concern terms and conditions of employment. This distinction is superfluous, and is criticized by ILO. Indeed, parties should be able to negotiate the issues which form part of the procedural agreements just like issues pertaining to terms and conditions of work in the same collective bargaining framework. Allowing them to negotiate these issues together might be useful in enlarging the scope of collective bargaining and allowing for a give-and-take process to take place.

Bargaining levels

Section 2 of the Bill defines a collective agreement as an agreement which relates to terms and conditions of employment between a "recognized trade union" and an "employer." This provision seems to exclude negotiations above enterprise level. Union leaders as well as the ILO have pointed out that the right to collective bargaining should also be granted to Federations and Confederations and that the choice of bargaining level should be made by the social partners themselves, since they are in the best position to decide upon the bargaining level.

2.6.2.9 The future

One trade unionist stated: «*Le Mouvement Syndicale c'est la meilleure école démocratique.*» According to interviewees, the trade union movement in Mauritius is very dependant on other parties like the Ministry of Labour for statistics like CPI. When the data are received, no one in the movement can contest them for the sole reason that there is no trade unionist with expertise in such technical fields. The Movement is also deficient on resources to carry out R & D activities, for instance undergoing projects that could explain the low unionization rate in Mauritius. Taking all these factors into consideration with R & D for making sound and effective negotiations and having trained and flexible negotiators, the future of trade unionism needs to be prepared.

Interviewees also believe that Government and employers simply do not want unions in Mauritius but trade unions will have to continue assuming their role as a force for political, economic and social change, ensuring that workers are protected and that industrial democracy prevails in the country. Trade unionists are not against modernization and globalization, as many think. Their apparent focus on the 'basics' has often led them to be labelled «passéistes», but, faced with challenges on so many fronts, they must ensure that worker rights are respected and that there is no exploitation, all the while trying to move on to other contemporary issues as well to secure their relevance as well as build their membership base.

Sadly, past struggles of unionists which have yielded such important fruit as subsidies on essential foods, bread for schools, education, retirement pensions and so on, instead of being consolidated are being destroyed gradually. A simple example of how trust is being shattered is the hasty, and autocratic way in which the two new Bills have been introduced, as well as the very content within the Bills, which largely destroy much of what has been achieved by the union movement over the years.

At the same time, trade union leaders themselves recognize that the movement must engage in some introspection, innovate, re-position itself as a leader in political thought and change in the country, such that the world sees it is of added value in the economic and social landscape. The social movement unionism school does present itself as such a

type of approach, in that it maintains an independent, “fighting” role, all the while taking care not to regress into become a mere “welfare association.”

Youth are perceived to be uninterested and having no faith in trade unions because they simply have no idea of the rich history of the country and of the contribution of the labour movement over the generations, nor do they realize the relevance of being unionized.

At the heart of the weakness of the union movement is the intimidation tactics used by employers. It is clear that individuals being or feeling persistently threatened eventually get discouraged and become increasingly reluctant to continue engaging in union work. Government’s economic agenda is not helping either in creating a trusting climate. These challenges, and those that can be foreseen, will have to be met by unions, otherwise they will have only themselves to blame for their downfall. This realization by our interviewees is itself a good sign of proactive and clear thinking. However, many voice their apprehension that, without proper preparation of a new generation of responsible trade unionists, the new age of consumerism and individualism, privatization and contractual work, will breed a different, anarchic, unstructured type of unionism that will be characterized by ad-hoc revolts that may well get out of hand, naturally to the detriment of the whole country.

2.6.3 Conclusion

We are nothing without a past. To build a strong future one has necessarily to delve into one’s past to seek understanding, find solutions and remedies, to one’s problems. The history and evolution of trade unionism in Mauritius is a fabulous source of inspiration and a dedication to all those individuals, idealists and patriots who gave their lives to better those of the working class so that today workers in this country are able to enjoy decent work, decent pay and decent working conditions. The goals have been achieved

though not totally, since people in different parts of this country and in different economic sectors are still having to bear various degrees of malpractice in employment relations, often under the very nose of the authorities. In the past, the movement lacking strength and support, trade unionists mingled with the politicians and veered towards political unionism which was necessary at the time to free the country from British rule. This part of history has really marked the present form of unionism. Today, a layman would easily and unhesitatingly say that a trade unionist is like a politician. Today, the methods and approaches of old are being questioned, and the movement stands at a crossroads. In this sense, one should not be surprised to see the mess in which the structure of trade unions in Mauritius is. If they want to have a sustainable future as a force to be reckoned with, it is high time to restructure and reorganize the movement and to centralise resources with vision and drive. It is only the development of a new model that unions will feel that they are united in a cause and in a spirit of solidarity and brotherhood. In addition, there is a significant number of unions that is not affiliated to any Federation, drifting out of orbit and weakening the movement. Here again it is a malfunctioning of the structure to which leaders must pay particular attention, especially in the wake of the recent attempts to introduce new labour and industrial relations legislation without proper consultations.

Chapter 3

Unions in Rodrigues

3.1 Brief History of Rodrigues

Situated on the east coast of Madagascar, Rodrigues was seen in a Portuguese map in 1502 and was known as the “Dina a Robi.” In 1528, the pilot, Don Diego Rodriguez landed in Rodrigues while part of a fleet of ships was making its way across the Indian Ocean. He named the island Rodriguez, after his own name. Portugal did not claim any ownership then, but used the island as a mark of sail between South Africa and India. In 1601, the Dutch landed on the island of Rodrigues but never took possession or occupied the island. In those days agriculture was the main activity which included land cultivation, cattle and pig rearing, and fishing.

In the early 19th century, life was very hard in Rodrigues; there were no shops, only two or three traders operating in a very harsh and authoritarian system. They would buy fish and agricultural products to sell in Mauritius and bring back supplies to sell with a 150 to 300 percent mark up. Fishing and farming were considered to be the backbone of the island in those days. In fact, in 1803, the first commercial fishermen arrived on the island and settled in the south coast for one year before leaving again in 1804. In 1840 there were 56 people employed in fishing. Georges Jenner who was the second magistrate of Mauritius was concerned about the lack of control in the fisheries and therefore extended the Mauritian law to Rodrigues. In 1894, it became illegal to fish from December to February in any bay, creek and pass or in any part of the sea within 3 km of the coast.

In the late 19th century, Rodrigues’ economy took off with the cultivation of tobacco and in 1900, 104 tonnes of tobacco were exported. The Rodriguan tobacco, known as tabac bleu, was suitable for rolling cigarettes. In September 1901, the arrival of the Trans Indian Ocean cable brought a profound change in Rodrigues. The telegraph cable traveled from Zanzibar to Australia via Rodrigues and the Cocos-Keelings islands.

3.1.1 Rodrigues Autonomy

In October 2002, the Mauritian Parliament gave administrative autonomy to Rodrigues. A regional Assembly composed of eighteen members was elected with an Executive composed of seven Commissioners chaired by a Chief Commissioner:

- The Chief Commissioner is responsible for Central Administration; Civil Aviation (administration); Civil Status; Customs and Excise Duties (administration); Fisheries; Industrial Development; IT and Telecommunications; Judicial (administration); Legal Services; Marine Services (administration); Meteorology (administration); Postal Services (administration); Registration; State Lands; Statistics in respects of Rodrigues; Town and Country Planning Tourism; Trade, Commerce and Licensing (Price Fixing).
- The Commission of Arts and Culture; Consumer Protection; Education (Administration); Library Services; Museum, archives, historical sites and buildings; Vocation Training.
- The Commission of Child Development; Family Welfare; Social Security (Administration); Women's Affairs
- The Commission of Environment; Housing; Infrastructure including Highways and roads and Public Buildings and Utilities; Marine Parks; Transport
- The Commission of Labour and Industrial Relations; Youth and Sports; Employment
- The Commission of Community Development; Cooperatives; Fire Services; Health (Administration); Prisons and Reform Institutions (Administration)

- The Commission of Agriculture; Food Production; Forestry; Handicraft; Plant and animal quarantine; Water Resources

3.1.2 Economy

The main pillars of the Rodrigues economy are: Agriculture, Fishing, Tourism, Small-scale industries, and Handicrafts for exports. Rodrigues livestock production is used for domestic consumption and for export to Mauritius.

3.2 Background and Rationale to Survey

At the very beginning of the project, the idea of conducting a survey specifically for Rodrigues was not an issue due to the fact that Industrial Relations scene in Mauritius was assumed to normally reflect both mainland Mauritius and the island of Rodrigues. However, as the project progressed with our key informant survey, our first hand data from the latter revealed that industrial relations in Rodrigues was of a different nature than that in Mauritius and that it would be a matter of intellectual honesty to discover first-hand Rodrigues-specific data as a matter of course within the project. The first rationale was that industrial relations naturally follows the development path of a nation, and, given that Rodrigues is known to be somewhat economically under-developed, the very basis for judging the state of its industrial relations was flawed; secondly, and linked to the first, the low rate of employment also goes quite naturally to explain a rather under-developed industrial relations landscape, since so few individuals are concerned by employment; thirdly, the poor educational attainment profile of the population in general results in significant ignorance of people about their rights. Lastly, the Rodriguan ‘specificity’ had been so often mentioned in positive terms during our key informant survey that it appeared possible that first-hand Rodrigues data could well send certain lessons and “better-practices” to the Mauritian IR sector. The rationale was therefore very clear: Rodrigues had to be addressed as distinct from Mauritius, and a field visit was necessary to achieve this objective.

3.3 Process

To undertake the survey in Rodrigues, we first reviewed the latest annual report from the Registry of Associations (December 2005) to identify all the unions existing in Rodrigues so as to design a sample. Unfortunately, no list of Rodrigues trade unions existed at the Registry, and we were forced to go down the entire list to tease out those unions that were evidently operating in Rodrigues. Unfortunately, again, the Registry was unable to provide us with contact details of these unions. Our only recourse was to consult our partner, the GSA, who helped immensely by providing either exact or approximate contact details and telephone numbers.

It was also deemed necessary to add to this list, any individual or organization that could be considered as a 'key informant', such as Commissions. The list is given below and details in Table 3.1:

1. Government Servants Association Rodrigues branch
2. Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Union
3. Rodrigues Government Employees Association
4. Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union
5. Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union
6. Port Mathurin Harbour Workers' Union
7. The Commissioner, Commission for Industrial Relations
8. The Chief Commissioner

Table 3.1 Data received for the year 2005 from the Registry of Associations

Total	Male	Female	Trade Union organizations
N/AV	N/AV	N/AV	Rodrigues Port and Cargo Transport Employees Union
15	10	5	Rodrigues Tourism & Allied Industries Workers Union
1151	946	205	Rodrigues Government Employees Association
93	40	53	Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union
868	705	163	Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union
12	12	0	Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union
N/AV	N/AV	N/AV	Rodrigues- GSA

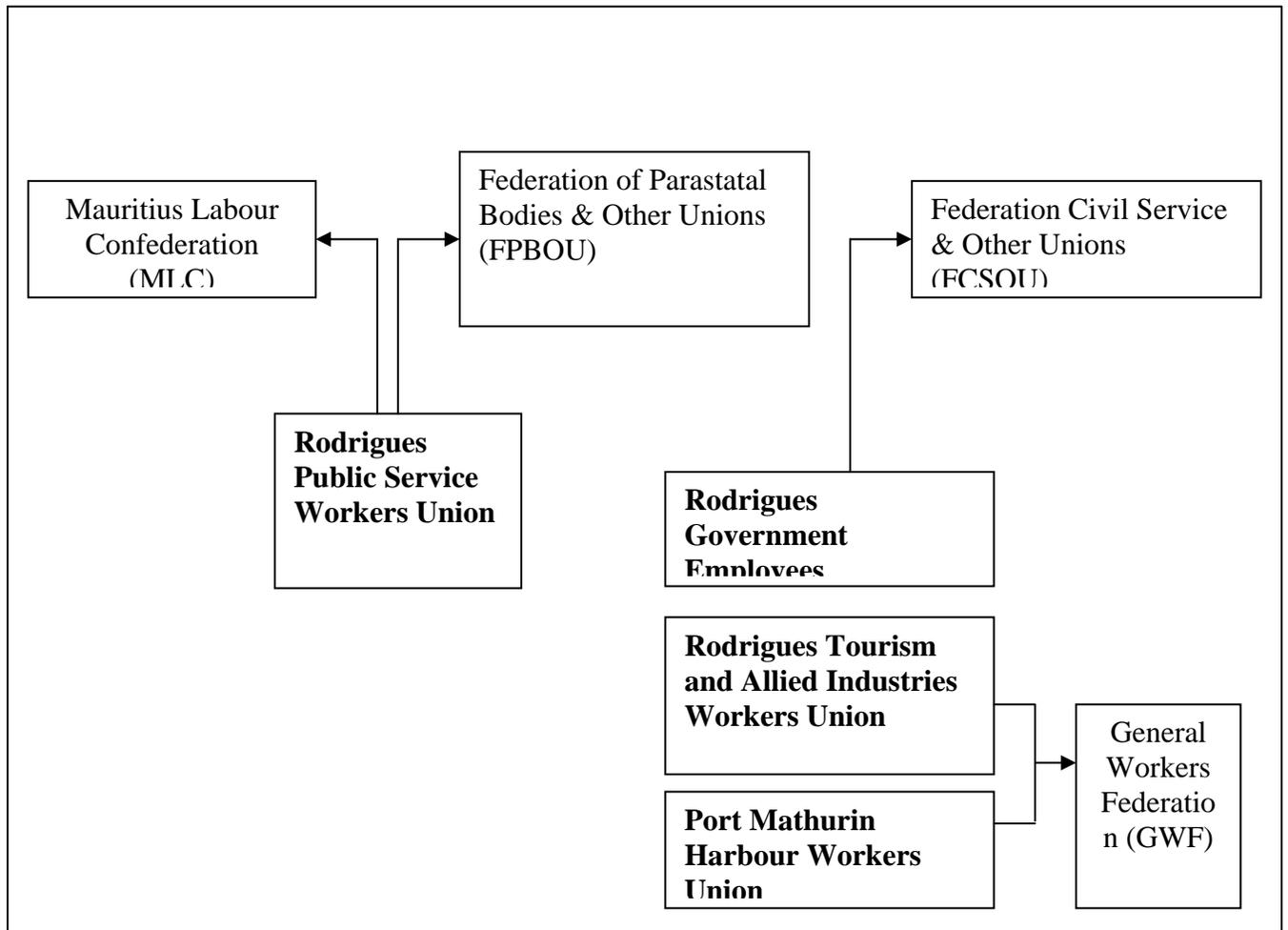


Figure 3.1 Structure of trade unions in Rodrigues and their affiliations to Mauritian trade union organization

Table 3.2 Data Received form IR Officer of Rodrigues

Organization	Contact person
Rodrigues Council of Social Service	Mr. W. Edouard
Rodrigues Construction, Metal, Wooden & Allied Industries Employees Union	Mr. Joseph Romel Farla
Rodrigues Private Sector Workers Association	Mr. John Milazar
Cooperative Division, Rodrigues	Mr. Manicon Anthony
Maritime Transport and Port Employees Union	Mr. Shirley Allas
UPSEE	Mr. K. Jeewon
Electrical & Mechanical Workers Union	Mr. Darwin Genave
Food & Beverages Industries Employees Union	Mr. Alain Augustin
CEB Staff Association	Mr. Gabrielle Speville
Union of Employees of the CEB	Mr. Marcellus Swee
Rodrigues Bus Owners Association	Mr. Jarlin Stephan
Association of Rodriguan Tourism Operators (ARTO)	Mr. William Auguste

Accordingly, all of these unions were contacted, as well as other key informants, by telephone and appointments were fixed. The necessary administrative arrangements were made to effect the trip to Rodrigues over the period 30th July to 3rd August 2007, which was estimated as the time necessary to conduct this number of interviews by the Research Assistant and the Principal Investigator, either jointly or separately.

This list being the total population, there was no necessity for sampling, and so it was arranged that every single member of the above list would be interviewed personally. Due to budgetary constraints, we had no means of transport at our disposal and thus we were obliged to move around Rodrigues on foot to meet our respondents.

Much to our surprise and near-panic, this list was by no means either the complete or the accurate list of trade unions of Rodrigues as it can be observed in Table 3.2. For, upon meeting with the Industrial Relations Officer of the Commission for Industrial Relations, we were to learn of the existence of a number of **Rodriguan unions**, as being different from **Mauritian unions with a Rodrigues branch**. We proceeded very quickly to get the full contact details of these Rodriguan unions and did our best to locate all of them during our brief visit. Evidently, we had to apologise for the extremely short notice in requesting

for an interview, but in general we were well received every time. We of course now had to meet many more individuals than planned. The final list of respondents to be contacted was thus:

1. Government Servants Association Rodrigues branch
2. Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Union
3. Rodrigues Government Employees Association (RGEA)
4. Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union
5. Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union
6. Port Mathurin Harbour Workers' Union
7. The Industrial Relations Officer, Commission for Industrial Relations
8. The Chief Commissioner
9. Rodrigues Council of Social Service (RCSS)
10. Rodrigues Construction, Metal, Wooden and Allied Industries Employees Union
11. Rodrigues Private Sector Workers Association
12. Cooperative Division, Rodrigues (not met)
13. Maritime Transport and Port Employees Union (not met)
14. UPSEE (not met)
15. Electrical & Mechanical Workers Union (not met)
16. Food & Beverages Industries Employees Union (not met)
17. CEB Staff Association (not met)
18. Union of Employees of the CEB (not met)
19. Rodrigues Bus Owners Association (not met)
20. Association of Rodriguan Tourism Operators (ARTO)

It is to be noted that four of the unions listed above being in fact branches of Mauritius-based unions, it was considered not absolutely essential that we interview them, especially in view of the fact that we would normally be meeting with the Mauritius union leaders during our forthcoming national survey. It was also deemed non-essential that the Maritime Transport and Port Employees Union be interviewed since we had already met and discussed lengthily with the Port Mathurin Harbour Workers' Union.

Interviews lasted between forty-five and sixty minutes and were conducted mostly in Creole. We were extremely pleased with the warm welcome and assistance extended to us by our respondents and this served to boost our morale and relieve our fatigue.

Since in-depth interviews were the data-collection method, no questionnaire as such was employed as instrument. Instead, based on the literature, on key informants' comments, and our background research, a list of questions formed the interview schedule, as follows:

(1) The Organization (When founded, Objectives and Roles)

(2) About Rodrigues (Who generates wealth in Rodrigues; The number of union organizations in Rodrigues, the influence of politicians, Who represent the employers; is the Dunlop model applicable to the Rodrigues context, that is, Government, unions and employers? Are there other stakeholders);

(3) History of Trade Union Movement (Did trade union movement in Rodrigues start at the same time as in Mauritius; Bases of unionization in Rodrigues; first institution established to regroup workers under one voice; Strikes or demonstrations that have marked history);

(4)The Legal and institutional provisions, (opinions) (Trade union laws, Labour Act, Industrial Relations Act, the New Employment Relations Bill);

(5) Unionization rate in Rodrigues. (If you were asked to rate the unionization rate in Rodrigues will it be high, medium or low, give your reasons; How would you describe the power and strength of unions in the private and the public sector;Between the public and the private sector, which is the most unionized and why);

(6) The rise of investment, business and SMEs (effects on employment, workers' rights and welfare);

(7) Gender, Ethnicity, and social issues (role of women in the economy, past, present and future/ are they represented well in the unions? Are they willing and interested in getting organized; Trade Unions involvement in the infrastructure of the country, Trade Unions involvement in the AIDS Program, Trade Unions and the welfare of employees at work and in their family/personal life, Trade unions and their devotion to eliminate poverty, Trade Unions and their initiative to promote peace and harmony among people of different race, religion, cultures etc.);

(8) Structures, Objectives and Goals of unions in Rodrigues.

(9) Unions as agents of development and change (Impact of unions on the economic development of the country, How do unions help to increase productivity and profitability in an organization; Globalisation and its impact on unions, New economic structures and its impact on trade unions);

These questions were extremely helpful in structuring the thoughts and responses of the respondents, who mostly expressed pleased surprise at the existence of our project and our initiative to address Rodrigues' issues separately. This meant that several respondents often preferred relating the history and evolution of their union, or yet others who preferred elaborating on the necessity to strengthen the union movement in Rodrigues independently of Mauritius. Several themes thus emerged which had not been foreseen and so the analysis of the survey data could not be done systematically along the lines of the pre-designed list of questions. It was thus decided to present the analysis in the following structure:

- Institutions – The Chief Commissioner, the Commission for Industrial relations, the RCSS
- The Rodrigues Specificity
- Private Sector unions
- Public Sector unions
- Other Sectors

3.4 Analysis and Discussion

3.4.1 Introduction

As mentioned above, the findings from the survey produced a set of data that was deemed more useful to be presented in a manner most authentic and representative of the preoccupations of the Rodriguan people and of the union movement.

3.4.2 Institutions

The Commission for Industrial Relations in Rodrigues exists since 1982. At the beginning the Commission was supervised by the Ministry of Labour. However, labour rights were an unknown quantity at that time and so there was a need to educate people about their rights as workers and citizens. To some extent, this objective has been attained, since it is apparent, according to union leaders, that workers are more aware of their rights and are even willing to militate for them. On estimation it is claimed that 50% of the working population is aware of their rights as workers. However, the education process is an ongoing one, especially in the light of difficult economic conditions prevailing, which deter workers from being in any way militant. This issue will be addressed later in this chapter.

At the Commission for Industrial Relations, we learnt that the Labour and Industrial Relations Officer has the responsibility to inspect “big” companies (50-100 employees) through surveys. Examples of such companies are: Mauritours hotels, Cotton Bay, Mourouk Ebony, the Construction companies such as Luxmanbai, and some companies in Trade, Commerce and Distribution. This was essentially the role of the Commission, who would then analyze the collected data and forward to the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations in Mauritius.

The general impression is that unions in Rodrigues meet and organize only in crisis situations. Unions in Rodrigues are characterized as being militant, with a marginal social role. According to the Chief Commissioner, unions do not represent a form of

strength in the country and are not taken seriously either by Government or the general public. There was also the idea that Unions are dependant on political parties, without which they would not exist.

However, this was vehemently denied by our responding union leaders. To some extent, however, the GSA and the Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union are relatively good examples of unions with political support while the Rodrigues Government Employees Association appears to exemplify an independent union. However, political affiliation could be just a convenient perception or it may be that some unions are in effect backed by political parties but to prove this relationship is a bit difficult.

3.4.3 The Rodrigues Specificity

3.4.3.1 Autonomy and Development

Before being granted political autonomy, Rodrigues operated under a paternalistic Mauritius government, who chose to support or not, and generally treated Rodrigues like a poor relative, leaving it unempowered and resource-starved. Therefore, from the very outset, there really were no structures present to enable economic and social autonomy of the island. The Rodrigues Regional Assembly receives an annual budget of about Rs. 1 Billion for its 37,000 population. This is itself a bone of contention, with some claiming that no economic development can happen with such ‘peanuts’, and others that the management of the island is key to managing what is considered as an adequate budgetary provision. The general impression is that Mauritius gave Rodrigues autonomy but with no vision, no guidance and no proper structure to go forward. In addition, although Rodrigues has received her autonomy, the centralized decision-making system remains with Mauritius, resulting not only in unnecessary delays but also a gap in sensitivity to and understanding of local needs and aspirations.

The cost of living in Rodrigues is also known to be higher than in Mauritius, given the cost of sea freight involved in bringing over commodities from mainland Mauritius. Coupled with an unemployment problem, (at best, one person works in a family) this

remains a sore contention of locals, who claim that central government refuses to see this reality; that the Central Statistics Office (CSO) calculations do not reflect the realities of Rodrigues, thus creating what is seen as overt discrimination. Issues of wages and salaries, (for a given job, Mauritians and Rodriguans earn the same wage or salary, in spite of the difference in cost of living) calculation of a local Consumer Price Index, and annual compensation are high on the unions' agendas. Medical care is not available in the pay package, and travel allowances, which are exactly as what is granted in Mauritius, are meaningless on an island with a mountainous topography and long travel distances between homes and Port-Mathurin or the hotels. Many locals see this as justifying the provision of something akin to a hardship allowance.

What is being decried is the model of economic development: the type of development needed for Rodrigues is said to be significantly different from that of Mauritius, which has depended on industrialization and export markets for its products. The Regional Assembly is now being taxed for its lack of vision and communication with regard to the long-term forecasts of investment, business development, and resource prioritization. Without realistic forecasts and plans, the civil service remains the only hope for finding employment. In terms of infrastructural development and investment in human resource development, here again there appears to be little effort. The very real 'brain drain' is also being felt by the island, as excellent young men and women simply leave to find work in Mauritius.

Another item of 'specificity' rests on the authentic simplicity of the Rodriguan lifestyle. The resulting laid-back and easy-going culture of Rodrigues is said to be the key to attracting tourists from around the world, but according to survey respondents this is draining away as well; acculturation is taking place whereby the Rodriguans are adopting European lifestyles, and whereby the youth are being driven away from the land and the sea, attracted by more modern lifestyles in Mauritius and overseas.

3.4.3.2 Mauritius Unions with a Rodrigues branch

A serious grudge held by local workers is that those trade unions which only have a branch in Rodrigues do not always respond as sensitively and as efficiently as they ought to, given the geographical and cultural distance involved. For this reason, several small unions have been formed without any affiliation with the large Mauritian unions. Some do not even associate with the 'plateforme syndicale'. In addition, when it comes to the recognition of unions, wherein instances such as the IRC (Industrial Relations Commission) have to be called upon, it seems that undue delays are experienced whereas this could be simplified if representatives of this institution could make a move and come to Rodrigues whenever they are needed.

3.4.3.3 Gender

Here is an issue where Rodrigues seems ahead of Mauritius. The Rodrigues national culture is characterized not only by more gender-neutrality (than Mauritius'), but also by a high degree of empowerment with regard to economic activity. As far as union work is concerned, even though the women and men interviewed stated that women preferred, voluntarily, not to take leadership positions, they were very much present and very active in the second row and their contributions were always openly and respectfully acknowledged.

3.4.3.4 Rodrigues Council of Social Service (RCSS)

In Rodrigues people are often grouped together to fight for a cause. The cause can vary; sometimes it can be for the conditions of work of people other times it can be for the community at large or it can also be both. The Rodrigues Council of Social Service has nothing to do with trade unions as such but the fact that it gives a sense to the notion of organization, drives us to know more about this organization with a view to better understand the specificity of Rodrigues and how the population goes about organizing itself.

The organization was founded in the year 1970 with the following objectives:

- To help in alleviating poverty and eradicating disease in villages;
- To facilitate community-based projects to enhance the quality of life of the people;
- To organize the construction of community centers in each village;
- To organize workshops and training sessions on key village development issues;
- To help government and agencies in carrying out development projects.

The organization receives a grant of Rs. 250,000 from the Rodrigues Regional Assembly and it has to support 96 village communities. The RCSS works on a system of zoning whereby the country is divided into 5 zones.

Much emphasis is on cleaning up the environment, training of office bearers, and addressing AIDS and poverty. People in Rodrigues are very keen to organize in order to improve their standard of living and the RCSS acts as a bridge between the people and government, for instance, in building of community centers and organizing leisure activities.

Each village community elects an Executive Committee and a President, and each village community works in close consultation with the other communities when working on different projects.

3.4.4 The Private Sector

The private sector of Rodrigues is not a solid one. Rodriguans openly prefer to work in the public sector but, until such an opportunity arises, they look for occasional jobs in the private sector to 'make ends meet'. What this means is that, should employees suffer some form of exploitation from the private-sector employers, they tend to cope with it stoically instead of risking their job by antagonizing their boss. Our survey suggests a general knowledge that workers (and especially union officials) of the private sector suffer various intimidation tactics from their employers, but that, out of fear of reprisals, they refrain from calling upon their union until the situation is really very serious. It is to be noted, however, that extenuating circumstances such as economic depression and

financial difficulty may explain away such exploitative practices by otherwise responsible employers.

3.4.4.1 Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union

To understand RCEA employees and the rationale behind their unionization, it is important to consider the specific characteristics of the employees themselves. The case in point of the legal query by the RCEA (Employees of the Rodrigues Catholic Education Authority) as to whether they were government employees or not explains their unique situation. The judgment – and subsequent law GN114 - was that the Rodrigues Catholic Education Authority (RCEA) employees are not civil servants.

The RCEA employees started to organize themselves around the years 1985-1990 and to claim their specificity. The real motivation of the members came about, although informally, during these years. However, communication was so difficult with Mauritius at the time that no concrete outcome was seen.

Around 2000-2001, an application was sent to the Registry of Association and in November 2004 the union got its full recognition. The union has held its first AGM in 2005 and constitutes now of 90 members approximately with 9 members at executive level. The Executive Committee has regular meetings with the employer, usually on a monthly basis, and claims to have adopted a partnership role and tries to use dialogue as far as possible.

The motto of the union is “*Une Sourire sur toutes les lèvres.*” But the President believes that to be able to apply the motto, the working environment of the staff has to be appropriate and motivating. The President is persuaded that all stakeholders are like links in a carbon chain and that they must all be strong; that management and unions should go hand in hand, and not view each other as adversaries but as partners. The President of the union is of the opinion that communication has to be improved between the employers and the employees to guarantee success in any organization.

Furthermore, the employees of this union are carrying out activities which could be considered as specific to Rodrigues. For instance, in Rodrigues, private tuition takes on a different meaning (from what it is known as in Mauritius), since only the few weaker pupils are grouped in a class and coached, usually for free.

Finally, one of the reasons that the President put forward to explain to us the reason why people moves out of union generally is that, there is only a maximum of 7 check off that is permitted on the pay slip of an employee.

3.4.4.2 The Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Workers Union

The union took birth on October 2003, at which time there was no union in this sector. The union consists now of 50 members out of an industry workforce of 600 employees. This union has joined the RGEA to be part of the “Plateforme Syndicale.” Workers of this sector fear being in a union because not only it is considered difficult to get a job in a hotel but also because the bosses of this sector are very autocratic and use intimidation to deter employees from joining a union. They are known not to spend even a minimum amount of time in communicating either with the union or directly with employees.

Employees therefore end up having recourse to the union only when they are in dire difficulties. Naturally, not being members, they do not receive the assistance of the union. Unions in this sector, and even elsewhere in Rodrigues, are qualified as being combative in nature.

3.4.4.3 The Rodrigues Construction, Metal, Wooden and Allied Industries Employees Union

The union is affiliated to the Federation of Progressive Unions in Mauritius. It has 80 members out of about 3000 employees of the sector. Due to the generally accepted notion that employers were exploiting employees and not respecting their rights, this represented the key ingredient to motivate the setting up of this union. The focus of action of this union is first and above all safety and technical training of the employees due to the rise of new technologies and work methods. The President is very optimistic about the union even though its membership base is poor.

As for training, FPU does the necessary for it to be carried out when needed. However, there are some matters which the union would like to deal with internally without going through the FPU, thus making it relatively difficult for the smooth running of the union. It is also noted that whenever a representative of the Government comes to Rodrigues for inspection purposes, they meet the employers and even the employees, but not the union. This often means that a certain number of problems known by unions only will not come to light.

It is also believed that in general Rodriguans do not know their rights and continue to feel a sense of panic at the sight of the employer whenever there is an issue to be discussed.

Today, nevertheless, there is a certain level of dialogue and understanding, so employers think twice before resigning people.

3.4.4.4 The Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union

This union was created in the year 2005 with 80 members. The motivation behind the setting up of this union was stated as basically due to the ill treatment by bosses and their violation of human rights. The union is affiliated to the General Workers Federation. Currently, the union is still working to receive its official recognition and to set up a procedural agreement. Salient issues on the agenda are welfare and medical care.

A series of activities are organized by the union for their members such as “bal troisième age”. To carry out these events, the President has his contacts for sponsorship and uses the subscription fees only when absolutely necessary. Also being very flexible in his approach, the union President stated that he does not hesitate to make the Mauritius – Rodrigues trip if it is deemed necessary to settle matters.

3.4.4.5 Rodrigues Private Sector Workers Association

This union is newly-formed (February 2007) and represents over 300 members from the transport industry, construction industry, agricultural industry and tourism sector. The union has not yet received recognition. The creation of the union begins with the current President:. Whilst in employment in the public sector and a member of the Rodrigues branch of the GSA, he realized that there were a lot of facilities that could have been offered to employees, and which were not. Asking himself what the point was to belong to a union if at the end of the day he was not satisfied with his job and his working environment. After his retirement, and rich with his experience in the public sector but also much knowledge about the private sector, he came to realize that in the private sector of Rodrigues, unions are scattered and they each did not have a membership base of more than 50 to 80 members on average. Such a situation naturally jeopardizes the strength and vitality of the union movement in that sector. He then formed a new union on the basis of regrouping all these small unions to form one strong conglomerate of unions to act as one voice to be heard and reckoned with.

It is important to note as well that employees in the private sector do not receive a payslip. Rectifying this anomaly is one main objective of this union. Additionally, employees of the private sector with four or five years employment experience were found to still be on probation, thus making them extremely vulnerable to exploitation as well as being more reluctant to join a union.

3.4.5 The Public Sector

3.4.5.1 The Rodrigues Government Employees Association (RGEA)

The Rodrigues Government Employees Association (RGEA) was set up in the year 1979. This union caters for all workers working in the public sector. The union sees itself as an agent of holistic change in Rodrigues. It has one main objective which is to end the discrimination between Mauritius and Rodrigues. The RGEA also has the vision of giving people stable jobs instead of giving them money on a short term basis. As such, one constant struggle is the investigation of unfilled vacant positions in the civil service. The union believed that if the unemployed can use their group called the “Movement Chômeurs”, this could help to create more pressure on Government to fill vacancies and create more jobs, thus boosting up employment in the country. There are also other organized groups of fishermen, employees in the Harbour and employees of the hotel sector that are affiliated to the union.

3.4.5.2 GSA-Rodrigues Branch

The Rodrigues branch of the Government Servants Association is not recognized as a union in its own right by the Registry of Association. The branch was set up in the year 1965, with its own Executive Committee, and with elections taking place every two years. The union has about 1045 members They do not have a proper “Assemblée de délégués”, but the branch carries out negotiations directly. They believe that their members are mostly interested in loans and provident funds and that is their focus of action.

3.4.5.3 The Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union (RPSWU)

This union was registered in the year 1996. It has around 900 members and elections are held every two years. It is believed that employees nowadays are not interested in bread-

and-butter issues only but also in broader issues that affect the society and the community in which these employees live. Accordingly, the union makes it a must to expand its traditional objectives and incorporate the salient issues which touch the lives of the people, such as:

- To defend the rights of workers;
- To fight for better conditions of work;
- Addressing the growing problem of STDs, HIV/AIDS. On the basis that the health of the employee is the health of the country, these issues are regarded as objectives of organizations like trade unions (this aim is attained by training and encouraging people to take the HIV test voluntarily). However this type of initiative requires approval from government which sometimes takes weeks or months.
- Addressing the questionable quality of public services. The union has placed this item on its agenda to fight for the cause of the public officers;
- Fighting against poverty; to this effect, focus is currently on the action to counter government's decision to privatize the distribution of water. The union is formally against such a move and is acting as a pressure group to stop the progress of the project;
- Addressing the issue of gender imbalance: By targeting a 50% representation, the union wishes to meet the objective of their international affiliation to Public Service International.
- Training of both trade unionist officials and workers through the help of workshops.

3.4.6 Other Sectors

Sectors like fishing, farming and so on are defined as cooperative rather as public or private sectors. In informal sectors such as craft, farming, agriculture, and fishing, it is

seen that a large number of women are active and also organize themselves for the purpose of selling their products. These can be termed subsistence activities or the 'survival sector'.

3.5 Conclusion

The Rodrigues chapter of our national study on unionization has served to throw valuable light on the specificity of Rodrigues island not only in employment and unionization terms but in broad national terms as well. It is confirmed that the vitality of the union movement does bear a strong association with the national development stage of a country, but also that the very development of a country also depends on a healthy, productive, and expanding employment situation, which can really only be achieved through the active and collaborative efforts of all partners. Unions in Rodrigues have been found to be relatively combative on one hand, especially given the putative autocratic or exploitative tendencies of employers of the private sector in particular, as well as the difficulty of operating in an atmosphere of worker reluctance or even apathy. On the other hand, union leaders interviewed overwhelmingly demonstrate a high degree of patriotic fervour, considering themselves on a mission to assist the island lift herself out of the current developmental crisis. These values augur a favourable future of the union movement in Rodrigues, provided the educational and training process is sustained and that workers and the population in general learn to understand the democratic values enshrined in the Republic and that union leaders continue to toil in favour of national development, both economic and social. Their engagement in a wide range of issues, from micro workplace negotiations to national threats such as water shortage or HIV/AIDS, these leaders command respect and indeed can be held up as models of what unions of tomorrow must be.

CHAPTER 4

A Cross-cultural view of Trade Unionism

4.1 Introduction

One very important difference between developed and the developing countries is that developing countries cannot sustain as high a level of unionism as that of developed countries. This is because unions are agents of employees, while in the less developed or developing countries, a large fraction of workers are not employees but rather self-employed workers and small business entrepreneurs, and these are most of the time geographically scattered. This makes it very difficult and costly for local unions to organize this type of workforce. As such, unions in these developing countries prefer to concentrate their efforts in the more urbanized regions where large and conspicuous enterprises exist. Therefore, so-called formal sector is really the only one that can be organized. The consequence is that the fraction of the economy's labour force that is potentially unionizable is smaller compared to the developed countries. According to the World Bank (2004), countries in the world can be classified into four categories depending upon their gross national income (GNI) per capita. These classifications are: countries with *Low* income economies, countries with *Lower Middle* income economies, countries with *Upper Middle* income economies and countries with *High* income economies. To be representative to each category, the Research team has chosen the following countries for the comparative analysis: Philippines, South Africa, UK and India which will be compared and even contrasted with Mauritius. Our country falls under the Upper Middle income economies group along with South Africa, while India is a Low income economy, Philippines a Lower Middle income economy and lastly UK is known to be a High income economy. It has been decided that dimensions such as collective bargaining, the legal system, the situation of women trade unionists and management-

labour relations among others will be discussed in conjunction with the different dimensions of the Hofstede model¹.

4.2 The Dunlop Model

Dunlop's (1958) Industrial Relations Systems made a pioneering contribution to help understand the industrial relations theory. In fact, an industrial relations system is an abstraction comprised of certain actors, certain contexts, an ideology that binds the system together and a body of rules that governs the actors in the workplace and in the work community. The ideology can be defined as a body of common ideas that is created by the system which defines the role of each actor and the ideas and views which each holds toward the place and function of the other(s). The ideology or 'shared understanding' of a stable IR system involves a congruence or compatibility among those views with the rest of the system which is sometimes difficult to achieve within a given set of social, cultural and structural factors.

4.3 The evolution of Employee and Industrial Relations internationally

In reviewing the evolution of employee relations in some countries, Clarke, Bamber and Lansbury (1998), remarked the legal reforms in the Industrial Relations of Britain; and that of France. Katz (1993) argues that bargaining structure is becoming more decentralized in countries like Sweden, Australia, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States. Flanagan (1999), using data on collective bargaining structure from 1980-1994, also suggests there was bargaining decentralization in many countries, as well as a decline in union density rates outside of Canada and the Scandinavian countries. It was also observed that there were widespread changes in the balance between employers and unions within the systems, reflecting the changed economic environment. Likewise,

¹ Geert Hofstede analyzed a large data base of employee values scores collected by IBM between 1967 and 1973 covering more than 70 countries. From the initial results, Hofstede developed a model that identifies four primary dimensions to assist in differentiating cultures: Power Distance - PDI, Individualism - IDV, Masculinity - MAS, and Uncertainty Avoidance - UAI.

Wallerstein, Golden and Lange (1997) found more stability and rigidity in industrial relations institutions. Bamber and Lansbury (1998) argue that various factors such as technology, economic policies, laws and culture can determine the type of employment relations systems adopted by different countries.

4.4 Cultural explanations to unions' behaviours

Lipset (1961) was among the first to provide a cultural explanation for the differences in unions' behaviour. For instance, American society is typified as being achievement-orientated with a belief in equality and individualism, having lack of class consciousness, militant by nature, with high wage differentials and lack of interest in participative management. These characteristics exemplified the behaviour of American unions as well.

Crozier (1964) covers the French industrial relations system. He identified the basic problem of French industrial relations whose characteristics are deeply rooted in the French society. Difficulties concern direct communication between workers and their unions, and between workers and management. This parallels the fear of face-to-face relationships, and the isolation of social groups, which again has its roots in French culture. The IR system in this country accounts a lot for the importance of the state and bureaucratic centralization and for the lack of negotiated cooperation through collective bargaining. It explains the reliance on national political action, rather than on local bargaining.

4.5 Hofstede's model

In order to understand the behaviours of unions worldwide and to operationalise the comparisons, a model is used which is an adaptation and an extension of that developed by Hofstede to explain cultural differences between nations and to explain how national

cultural impacts on institutions, relations, structures and individuals, here, in our case, industrial relations systems and unionism..

4.5.1 What is National Culture?

For Hofstede, the collective programming of the mind is applied to entire societies or nations. It includes systems of values and norms which are among the building blocks of culture (1984). National cultures have very old roots in history and their origins lie in a variety of factors that have influenced the environment, including economic and technological development. For Hofstede, these systems of values and norms have resulted in the development and pattern maintenance of institutions in society with a particular structure and way of functioning. These institutions could include educational systems, the family, politics and so on. Even if Hofstede pays little attention to labour markets, it is argued here that systems of societal values and norms will, in a similar manner, also influence the shape of industrial relations systems such as laws, the structure of bargaining, the amount of federation and government involvement, the existence of works councils and the pay structure (Figure 4.1).

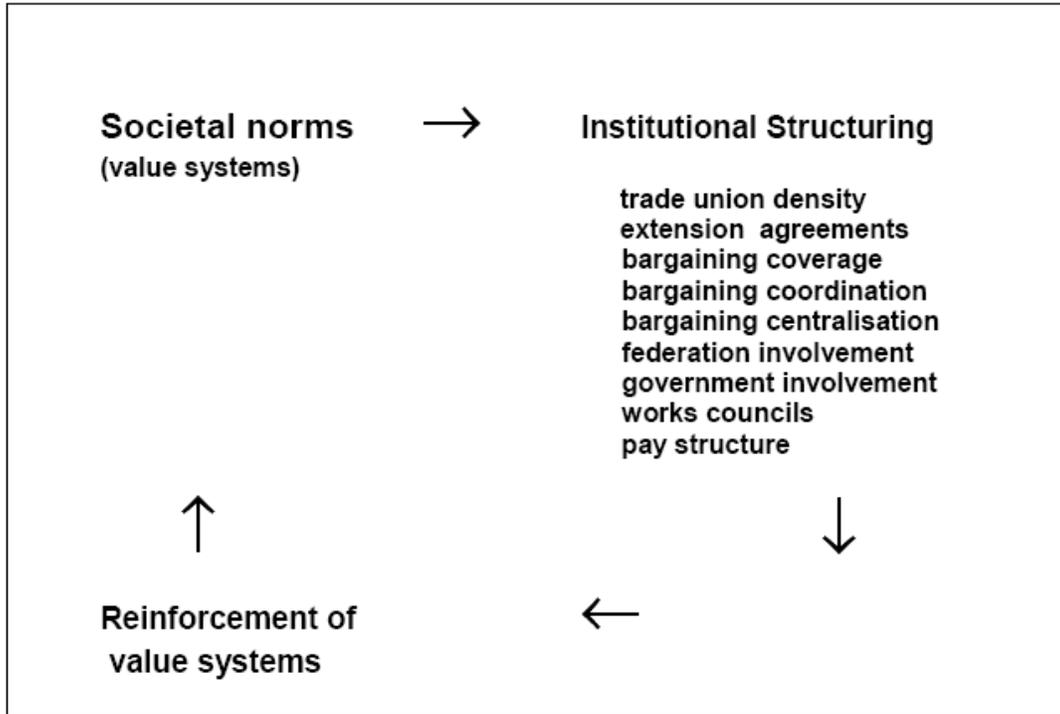


Figure 4.1 System of values affecting the Industrial Relations System

Hofstede's thesis is that the IR system, once it has become a fact or reality, not only reflects but also reinforces the societal values and norms. As a result the system become very stable and remained unchanged even if the institutions or laws are changed, a view supported by Child (1981). The result will be that the persistent influence of the value system will smooth the new institutions and laws until their functioning become well adapted to the rooted societal values and norms.

4.5.2 Hofstede dimensions

Hofstede (1984) aimed to identify the main dimensions of national culture that would highlight the differences between societies. He proposed four basic dimensions: Power-Distance (PDI), Uncertainty Avoidance (UAI), Individualism versus Collectivism (IDV) and Masculinity versus Femininity (MAS), each of which is expressed in an index ranging from 0 to 100-110. His dimensions have, however, been subjected to vigorous criticism and debate (Triandis, 1994; Todeva 1999). However, the use of Hofstede's

dimensions in this chapter is justified on the grounds that, whatever their deficiencies, they remain the best measures of national culture available.

4.6 Comparing and Contrasting

The different indices that Hofstede calculated for the countries of interest in the chapter are mentioned in Table 4.1 below except for Mauritius (Ramguttty-Wong, 2004).

Table 4.1 Scores for India, Philippines, South Africa, UK & Mauritius

Country	Power Distance Index	Individualism Index	Masculinity Index	Uncertainty Avoidance Index
India	77	48	56	40
Philippines	94	32	64	44
South Africa	49	65	63	49
United Kingdom	35	89	66	35
Mauritius	Moderately High	High	Medium	Moderately High

The Power and the Masculinity indices are considered to be associated with centralized bargaining structure, government interventions, work councils and a proliferation of federations. Likewise, Masculinity is considered to be associated to an uncooperative environment. It is suggested that employees in high UAI countries may be reluctant to join trade unions for fear of disrupting established procedures and possibly threatening their employment. Also it is suggested that societies that prefer structured situations will wish to minimize uncertainty so that if they do engage in bargaining they will want the agreement to cover all the firms in the industry and will prefer to have extension agreements in place and will have greater collective bargaining coverage. While highly individualist societies is suggested to be more apt for the development of bilateral relationships between managers and employees and undermine unions.

4.6.1 Power Distance and Masculinity

Power Distance (PD) can be described as the degree of inequality among people that the population of a country consider normal. This ranges from relatively equal (low PD) to relatively large (high PD). While Masculinity, as per Hofstede, is the degree to which values such as assertiveness, earnings and performance, which in nearly all societies are associated with the role of men, prevail over values such as the quality of life, caring for the weak, and maintaining warm personal relationships, which tend to be associated with women. Power Distance and Masculinity were taken together as dimensions because they complement each other. From the above table, Mauritius, India and Philippines can be put in the same boat of high PD with Philippines marking a distinction of a very high PD. However, South Africa and UK have relatively low power distance. In terms of Masculinity, Mauritius and India can be ranked as Medium while Philippines, South Africa and UK are moderately high. The higher the scores of these two dimensions, the more the IR scene is expected to be confrontational, aggressive, and 'macho' where the presence of women is rarely felt or acknowledge. There is a constant struggle for power which is often associated with the involvement of unions in politics as being the only way to achieve effective power.

4.6.1.1 Power and colonial government

In this part, it is intended to explain colonization and the tendency to have an ascribed high or low Power Distance which would result in a country's state of industrial relations. According to Ramguttty-Wong, Mauritius has a moderate to high Power Distance. This tendency is ingrained in the history of the country. In fact, Mauritius has for long been a British colony with an amalgam of different ethnicities resulting from slaves and immigrants coming from countries such as India, Africa, Madagascar and so on. In Mauritius, trade unionism mainly started in the form of masses of individuals protesting against the capitalist system. These were geographically spread in the country and later they become industrial associations and then trade unions. People were given wages which varied between 30 and 40 cents per day; they were required to give a certain

percentage of their earnings to their supervisors; they were often abused and ill-treated while at work; and they were dismissed on flimsy grounds or even without reason. Some workers accepted their plight silently given that they were being brainwashed by the British rulers whom they were made to consider as their god and they believed they were born to serve them. But with the arrival of prominent political figures like Mahatma Gandhi and Manilall Doctor, Emmanuel Anquetil, Dr. Maurice Curé, Ramgoolam and Guy Rozemont, the working class underwent a transformation and resulted in massive organized movements under the leadership of these charismatic patriots.

The birth of the trade union movement in India was in some ways similar to the Mauritian case. Essentially, Indian unionism in its primary form was the Guild (just like in UK) which was confined to individuals and families like craftsmen and artisans. They used to have expertise and specialized skills which were transferred from generation to generation and thus maintaining the tradition. With the emergence and growth of Capitalist enterprises, unions in India arose due to the working and living conditions of the labour which were poor and their working hours were long. Capitalists were only interested in productivity and profit. In addition to long working hours, their wages were low and general economic conditions were poor. The communist-led All India Trade Union Congress (AITUC) dominated the organized labour movement in this period organizing workers on a rank and file basis. As opposed to Mauritius, where unions were created one by one in various regions, AITUC started itself as a Federation regrouping unions of all categories. The domination of the British on the Indian labourers was sorely felt and their only hope was to have a decent job and a decent salary. This is approximately where the high Power Distance of India originated.

This form of colonization has also been witnessed by countries such as South Africa and Philippines, with the latter experiencing a dual colonization, being in turn a Spanish and American colony. In Philippines the rise of the trade union movement was basically fostered by political unionism, hence the primary motive was to free the country from the clutches of US. This form of motivation was later to be found in Mauritius and India through independence. The father of unionism of this country was De los Reyes, who

could not tolerate the limited powers of the country under an American governor with US military forces establishing a major base. In 1934 the US administration withdrew and the Philippines became a free 'Commonwealth', self-governing over internal matters, but subject still to American 'protection' and military presence. Self governing but still dependant on the autocratic US government was too much for the trade unionist, he decided to mobilize people in the printing, tobacco and stevedoring industries, clerks, woodworkers, carpenters and barbers to form the first trade union movement. Assassinations, assaults and intimidations were the order of the day to weaken the movement. Fortunately, the movement went on increasing in strength to fight back the repression of the US government. An important insight to be gained from the history of countries that faced repressions and fight-backs is that broadening the gap of power distance results in very sad consequences given that no one in the battle wants to give up nor compromise, the exception being South Africa, where repression and manslaughter were very much present in the IR scene of the colonization period yet it experienced a reverse effect with a low Power Distance score as compared to countries like Mauritius, India and Philippines which have reinforced their high PD index. In South Africa, the case was traumatizing in those early days with the introduction of the Apartheid Legislation which was a series of different laws and acts passed to help the apartheid-government enforced the segregation of different races and cement the power and the dominance by the Whites - of substantially European descent - over the other racial groups. United Nations has described apartheid as a crime against humanity. However, in this definition the real nature of the apartheid system is being masked. To be more precise about this definition, apartheid should therefore be defined as a crime against the working class. In the struggle for a democratic South Africa, free from all forms of exploitation and oppression, the Black working class has been the driving force of the country's revolution. They organized industrially into structured disciplined and militant trade unions, and they, as a class, mobilized against the ruling class and its imperialist partners at all possible levels. Their participation, spirit of militancy and leadership has not only shaped the parameters of struggle but also the contours of a liberated South Africa and a readiness to cooperate if need be, thus possibly accounting for this now low PD.

Lastly, UK though passing on a high Power Distance index to its colonies, remained herself quite a low Power Distance country (see Table 4.1) which is quite disconcerting. This fact can be explained by the phenomenon of Thatcherism. Margaret Thatcher was known as a dictator and a “poison” for the trade union movement. After her Prime Ministership between the years 1980 and 1993, the movement experienced its worst blow. Afterwards, the country’s unionism made a drastic turn in the opposite direction toward a ‘New Unionism’ characterized by more participation and cooperation, explaining somewhat the low PD score.

4.6.1.2 Politics and power

Politics is considered as the key factor in establishing the gap between government and workers and even between trade unionists and workers. In Chapter two we observed that unions of the past were created for specific reasons such as to be massively organized against the capitalists but their ultimate aim was to achieve independence and at the same time take over the dominance of power used against the working class. In the quest for a better future, at some point in time, the Mauritian Labour Party came into power but they eventually behaved no better than the capitalists. This story was also repeated when the MMM came into power. In fact this indicates that when politicians or ex-unionist leaders came to power, they marked their territories between them and the working class. The power distance gap gets broadened and the cycle continues on and on to this day. In short, employees and the entire working class are systematically manipulated to create the necessary ambience and environment during elections campaign but once in power they forget their promises vis-à-vis those who got them elected.

In India, the capital-labour relationship is dominated by a paternalistic and profit making labour relations system based on the belief that the state knows more and better about workers’ needs than they do themselves. For instance, during economic slump, new forms of protest by government and management, such as the “hartal” (go-slow) were adopted, this method was used quite frequently and effectively to their own advantage,

leading to a significant outflow of capital to other parts of the country and corresponding worker lay offs. In addition, at a particular time in the past, there was only the All Indian Trade Union Congress (AITUC) that had dominated the labour movement but to weaken the movement the Indian Trade Union Congress (INTUC) was imposed on the labour movement. The foundation of the INTUC on May 3, 1947, was of historical essence, necessitated by forceful ideologies opposed to peaceful and democratic ones. The British Rulers of the time were responsible for this emergence, since their objective was to get hold on the country's Trade Union Movement. The ineffectiveness and inappropriate use of internal practices by the INTUC, led to a proliferation of unions affiliated to political organizations, the beginning of which started with INTUC. Workers sought that they needed more skilled politicians and negotiators to lead their struggles and to achieve independence. Two demographic factors may be associated with this change in worker preferences and mindset: a) a growing proportion of workers were young people who had not participated in the pre-independence labour struggles; and b) (probably more important), the leaders of these unions at this time were mostly not party politicians but committed lawyers and student activists, well-versed in the bureaucratic procedures of the Indian industrial relations system. So we see that the association of politics and unions can be vital to achieve power. In Mauritius, for instance, unions in the sugar industry were affiliated to the Labour Party and the General Workers Federation was affiliated to the Movement Militant Mauricien (MMM), two examples among others.

The case was slightly different in South Africa which has a relatively low power distance, the score being 49. .Could we say that in South Africa there is no involvement of unions in politics and that there is more cooperation between partners such as unionists, government and politicians? To answer yes to such a question would confirm Hofstede's low power distance index but the facts of events cannot be neglected and they tend to portray the contrary. Three distinct political traditions appeared in the labor movement in the 1970's, with different perspectives on broader political issues with the major aim of supporting the working class. First, shop floor unions, particularly those affiliated with the Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) developed a cautious policy towards political involvement. Their leaders believed it was important to avoid the path

taken by the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), whose close identification with a political organization, the Congress Alliance, and its unsuccessful campaign in the 1950s resulted in the decline in its membership. The Federation of South African Trade Unions (FOSATU) emphasized, instead, the building of democratic shop floor structures around the principles of worker control, accountability, and mandatory representation. They saw this as the basis for developing working class leadership in factories. A second political alternative, the national democratic tradition, emerged in unions such as the South African Allied Workers Union (SAAWU). These “community unions,” following in the steps of the South African Trade Union, argued that labour had an obligation to address socio-economic issues because workers’ struggles in the factories and in townships were indivisible. Many of these unions were affiliated to a political organization called the United Democratic Front (UDF) formed in 1983. They increasingly became involved in actions such as rent control, transportation, and local elections. Many of the unions were unable to survive intense State repression, arguably because of their weakness and premature confrontations with the State and management. Both management and the State embarked on concerted attempts to contain the union movement and reassert managerial prerogatives. Conflict between the state and the trade unions reached a climax in 1987 as management of the mines restricted union activities and dismissed 50,000 striking miners. The South African government played an increasingly repressive role as it tried to contain labour’s growing involvement in political issues. The headquarters of certain trade unions were blown up under mysterious circumstances, and many regional offices suffered arson attacks, which, according to union sources, represented government’s acts of repression. The third political tradition developed from the Africanist and black-consciousness movements: The Pan African Congress (PAC), which broke away from African National Congress (ANC) confederation in 1959 because of the latter’s multi-racial definition of the nation, articulated the Africanist ideology, which emphasized blackness as a common bond, to the exclusion of other races. The American black power movement influenced the African black consciousness movement with its emphasis on racial categories. The demand of the trade unions for black leadership distinguishes the black consciousness tradition from other traditions.

Compared to Mauritius, Philippines, for its part, demonstrates a very high Power Distance and compared to Mauritius has endured more agitated politics and industrial relations. This power distance is basically determined by management and government and imposed on the trade union leaders and the working class. Because one of the main aims of the trade union movement was independence, leaders veered towards what was termed as political unionism and lobbied for nationalism, early independence and elections. This was the concept of political unionism that was advocated by the father of unionism in Philippines, De los Reyes. To counter reactions of the movement such as strikes, management representatives threatened union leaders with assassination and arrests. Determined as he was and supported by massive activists, De los Reyes was elected to the legislative assembly because he was of the upper-class elite. The class criterion was the only factor considered for election. However, in Mauritius this form of election did not exist. In fact, the Mauritian labour class did not have any representative in the legislative council until the Guy Rozemont began the fight. This Filipino practice of exerting management and government's anger onto unions is not a thing of the past as it is unfortunately still being practiced today in the Philippines. Recently, seventy-seven trade unionists were killed and workers' fundamental right to organize and to collectively bargain is continuously being violated. Trade unions are considered as "factory terrorists" and thus, efforts to organize workers into unions are being nipped in the bud. Workers picket lines are being attacked and military troops are deployed in workers' communities purportedly to maintain "peace and order." The widespread and often violent attacks on workers in the Philippines have earned the country a rating as the second most dangerous country in the world for union organizing, according to the International Trade Union Confederation (ITUC). In the year 2006, Philippine trade unionists and labour activists experienced 110 assaults on picket lines, 102 physical assaults and injuries, 41 instances of torture, 33 killings, 40 abductions, 48 instances of intimidation, 946 "grave threats," 159 illegal arrests or detentions, and 1,097 instances of blocking, breaking up or violently dispersing demonstrations.

For its part, the UK exhibits a low power distance just like South Africa. Unionists, politicians and the government were more cooperative after Margaret Thatcher's term. One of the first attempts of union leaders to engage in political actions came about in the 1830s with the Reform Act of 1832 where unionists joined members of Parliament and drew up petitions for universal male suffrage. This became part of the Chartist platforms (Chartism was the first specifically working-class national movement in Britain and was concerned mainly with electoral reforms) and trade unions played an important part in these activities. The members of the trade unions even won seats in the first Royal Commission on trade union matters that the Parliament set up in 1869. But the working class did not emerge as a major political force until the miners' entry into the political arena. In 1900, the Trades Union Congress co-operated with the Independent Labour Party (founded in 1893) to establish the Labour Representation Committee, (LRC). Six years later, 29 LRC members were elected in Parliament and in 1918 the LRC was renamed as the Labour Party. After the Second World War, Labour Party campaigned on a programme of nationalisation, reconstruction and the establishment of extended public welfare services; it won a resounding victory. They won the 1950 election with just five seats more than the Conservatives, to whom they lost power a year later.

4.6.1.3 Centralized laws and Power

In Mauritius, every labour law passed reflected government's objective of intervention in labour matters and to have control over the workers. Always done without consultation and introduced out of nothing and often without any basis, often simply an *ad hoc*, fire-fighting strategy. This can be explained by the Power Distance dimension. In fact the moderately high power distance of Mauritius may impact on the IR scene through the use of centralized laws. For instance, the Labour laws of 1878 were introduced because of the "vagabondage" of the immigrants. It included the governor's power to control the absences of the workers wherein more than 3 days of absenteeism resulted in imprisonment at the vagrant depot. Afterwards, due to the suffering of martyrs in 1936 required the introduction of an Industrial Ordinance in the year 1938 after the setting up of the Hooper Commission. The Registrar was given the power to refuse registration

where he was satisfied that other Associations registered in the same area were sufficiently representative. The Registrar was also entitled to make inquiries into the affairs of the Association. But more importantly the Registrar could see to it that industrial associations could only be registered with respect to geographical areas. The aim was to ensure “localization of industrial disputes” and thereby avoiding general strikes. With regard to industrial disputes, the Director of Labour was given exclusive rights to appoint the Conciliation if he considered that the dispute had to be resolved. After which there was the main piece of legislation which was the Industrial Relations Act of 1973 introduced due to the hard time faced by the government from the wave of individual unrest in the early 1970s. In contrast to its predecessors, the Act addresses the problem of collective bargaining. A mechanism for resolving recognized disputes was now provided. With regard to industrial action, the scheme provided by the Act was that strikes are unlawful unless the industrial dispute has been firstly reported to the Minister of Labour, secondly 21 days have to elapse, thirdly the dispute is sent to the IRC or PAT and lastly the strike commences within 56 days from the day of receipt of the report by the Minister. Once the dispute has been reported to the Minister, the latter has wide powers of imposing arbitration on the parties to prevent any lawful industrial action being undertaken.

In the Philippines, historically, compulsory arbitration was the cornerstone of the IR system. Since the Court of Industrial Relations (CIR) was given comprehensive powers to handle all industrial relations (and agrarian) cases in 1936, and settle them compulsorily on behalf of the state, industrial relations resolution was handled like any other court case. This was the first step in maintaining a high Power Distance between government and the union members. The labor movement’s demand for less government and foreign (US) intervention in trade union activities led to the enactment of the Industrial Peace Act (or the Magna Carta of Labor) in 1953. This new labour legislation was patterned after the US labor relations law, the Wagner Act where collective bargaining was more a reality and collective agreements increased thrice. But this did not make the relationship between partners of the IR field less tense; in fact it went on deteriorating. After the 1953 Industrial Peace Act, lawyers took the lead role in the

bargaining process, reducing the process of bargaining to a question of law rather than of negotiation. This legalistic tendency in collective bargaining was reinforced by the continuing central role of the CIR in dispute settlement, including the settlement of issues involving unionized companies such as union recognition, collective bargaining deadlocks, unfair labor practices, strikes and lockouts.

In India, the relatively high Power Distance can be demonstrated essentially from the employer's perspective. The Trade Union Act 1926 was introduced to give immunity to the trade unions against certain forms of civil and criminal action. Apart from this aspect the Trade Union Act also facilitates registration and internal democracy. The Trade Union Act facilitates unionization both in the organised and the non-organised sectors. It is through this law that the freedom of association, which is a fundamental right under the Constitution of India, is realized. All this may sound like a very fine thing but the applicability of these laws remains a question mark given that the right to register a trade union does not mean that the employer must recognise the union; there is in fact no law which provides for recognition of trade unions and consequently no legal compulsion for employers, even in the organised sector, to enter into collective bargaining. Yet in reality because of the strength of particular trade unions there is fairly widespread collective bargaining, especially in the organised sector. Wage determination in India has been achieved by various instruments. For the non-organised sector the most useful instrument is the Minimum Wages Act 1948. This law governs the methods to fix minimum wages in scheduled industries (which may vary from state to state) by using either a committee method or a notification method. A Tripartite Advisory Committee with an independent Chairperson advises the Government on the minimum wage. In practice unfortunately, the minimum wage is so low that in many industries there is erosion of real earnings. In Mauritius, the National Remuneration Board provides such a service in the private sector, but the Prime Minister can still intervene to increase or decrease the minimum wages. In India, workers have the right to strike, even without notice unless it involves a public utility service; employers have the right to lockout, subject to the same conditions as a strike. The parties may sort out their differences either bilaterally, or through a conciliation officer who can facilitate but not compel a

settlement which is legally binding on the parties, even when a strike or a lockout is in progress. But if these methods do not resolve a dispute, government may refer the dispute to compulsory adjudication and ban the strike or lockout.

The UK government's desire to control trade union organization and activities is a relatively recent phenomenon. Indeed, the traditional approach of the UK government to industrial relations was "hands-off" or in Kahn-Freund's terms "collective *laissez-faire*." Trade unions and employers were largely allowed to manage their negotiations by themselves, and trade unions regulated their internal affairs through their rulebooks. However, following the Conservatives' electoral victory in 1979, Margaret Thatcher's government embarked on a wide ranging and ideologically-driven reform of the legal framework for trade unions; John Major continued this in turn. These reforms included the introduction of substantial legal regulation of, and intervention in, the way trade unions made their decisions and conducted their affairs. The Conservatives believed strongly that trade unions had too much power: their specific aims were to remove the "distortions" from the labour market caused by trade unions' collective bargaining activities and to reassert individual "freedom". The practices introduced were complex procedures for the election of officials and legislations introduced on the right not to be refused employment on the ground of not being a trade union member among others. Perhaps no other country in recent years has witnessed major shifts in its collective bargaining framework than the UK. This has occurred in three parts. The first part was conventionally described as 'anti-union,' that was enacted by successive Conservative administrations between 1980 and 1993, and links them to the subsequent decline in unionism. The second part was the accession of 'New Labour' and the reviewing of the union's reform agenda, today still largely in place. That agenda comprises two general pieces of employment and employment relations law plus a new national minimum wage. These changes have implied an increase in union membership. However, the third part consists of the social policy agenda of the European Union. Almost immediately upon taking office, New Labour signed up to the social chapter. This means that a slew of new legislation seeking to regulate the employment relation (mostly decided by qualified majority) is now an immediate prospect. The Table 4.2 below gives a brief review of

conservative and recent legislations. It indicates that these gradual developments in the laws have made it more easy and union-friendly. This is likely to account for the low Power Distance in that country.

Table 4.2 Conservative and Recent legislations of the UK Industrial Relations

Legislations	Content
1974 and 1976, Trade Union & Labour Relations Acts	Repealed the right <i>not</i> to be a union member (except for genuine religious belief). Where a firm and a union negotiate a union membership agreement (closed shop), dismissal of workers for non-membership of union deemed fair. Also, worker had no right to appeal to Industrial Tribunal when dismissed for non-membership in union.
1975, Employment Protection Act	Established a Trade Union Certification Officer to certify union independence from management. Established an Advisory, Conciliation and Arbitration (ACAS) Service to investigate, report, and make recommendations for union recognition. Also set up Central Arbitration Committee with enforcement role in recognition procedure and to hear claims from unions in support of extension of terms and conditions of collective agreements.
1980, Employment Act	Statutory union recognition procedures abolished. <i>New</i> union membership agreements required to be approved in secret ballot by at least 80 per cent of those entitled to vote. Picketing away from own workplace made unlawful.
1988, Employment Act	Established a Commissioner for the Rights of Trade Union Members (CROTUM) to assist union members with advice and in applications to the High Court. It became unfair to dismiss a worker for non-membership of a union irrespective of whether the closed shop had been supported by a ballot.
1990, Employment Act	It was now unlawful to discriminate against non-union members (or union members) at the time of recruitment. Job advertisements could not specify union membership. Any practice under which employment was afforded only to union members presumed to be discriminatory. Unions had to repudiate unofficial industrial action; unofficial strikers could be summarily dismissed; and immunity for industrial action in support of dismissed strikers removed.
1993, Trade Union and Employment Rights Act	No union could refuse to accept anyone into membership (or expel anyone) unless on grounds of the individual's conduct. The union dues check-off to be authorized in writing by each member every three years. Established a Commissioner for Protection against Unlawful Industrial Action (COPUIA) to advise and finance individuals claiming to have been affected by unlawful industrial action who could apply to the High Court for an order against the union to discontinue that action. Tighter restrictions on strike ballots. Wages Councils abolished.
1999, Employment Relations Act	Establishes a statutory union recognition procedure for firms employing more than 20 workers; makes it automatically unfair to dismiss strikers during first 8 weeks of industrial action; weakens strike balloting rules; and gives the right to be accompanied by a union official in disciplinary interviews. The penalty for unfair dismissal also rose from £12,000 to £50,000.

In South Africa, the Labor Relations Act (LRA) amendments was seen by the labour movement as another insidious attempt by the State to curtail growing labour power. Instead of involving the union movement as a partner in the industrial relations system, the amendments have cause industrial protest and labour militancy which have drawn the Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU) and the National Council of Trade Unions (NCOTU) closer together in joint support for scrapping the onerous elements of the Labour Relations Act. Despite a vigorous and intense state of offensive acts against the laws, the labour movement emerged very resilient. Indeed, far from distancing itself from politics in response to the banning and repression of political organizations, the trade unions took on a leading role in internal resistance to apartheid. The implications of the state's recent removal of bans on the African National Congress, Pan African Congress, and South African Communist Party are unclear with regard to unions' role in the negotiating process and future political arrangements. In fact, political parties and trade unions are very supportive in their acts of solidarity and this contributed to quite a low PowerDistance index for the country's industrial relations but with particular reference to this specific area.

4.6.1.4 Masculinity Index

The higher the country ranks in this Masculinity dimension, the greater the gap between values of men and women, the more competitive, ambitious and challenge-driven the society. Countries scoring low on Masculinity, on the other had, endorse the values of cooperativeness, security, intuition, where sex roles are minimized, and where more women tend to be in qualified and in decision-making jobs. All the indices of the countries under consideration demonstrate a moderate to high index of Masculinity. All the aspects of this score cannot be analysed here, but it is important to note that so far, in all the countries under study for industrial relations using the Hofstede model, women's significant involvement in this area has not been observed at any moment in time. They

entered the picture much later, after the main struggles, for instance, for independence, voting, and universal suffrage. The fact that they found their place in the movement after such national achievements, it seems evident that their place and role be marginalized as primarily men have been perceived as the heroes in the industrial relations field.

In fact, all the assaults and assassinations that occurred in the different countries drive men to take the lead in dealing with these matters given their aggressive and confrontational ways whereas women, with their nurturing and compassionate attitudes and styles would be of no use within the authoritative management and government styles. At first, men's "protective arms" designed robust and rigid Industrial Relations structures where they were the ones to enjoy power. In India, for instance, it is only in recent years that some of the national trade union centers have demanded that their affiliates send female nominations for representation at various decision-making levels in the union hierarchy. Another example could be traced from South Africa's SACTU which open activities for women to play a major part in the struggle for a better quality of life for South African workers generally. African women, like their male co-workers, continued to defy the legislation which prohibited them from taking part in strikes. Nothing could deter these women from playing an active part in the progressive trade union movement. By taking the stand they did, they rejected the role normally tagged to them and instead stood up against the employers and the State in their struggle against oppression as Africans, as workers and as women. In contrast to South Africa where an aggressive and determined women trade union movement evolved, Mauritian women unionists have not known the hurdles and difficulties of living in regions like Bantustan and being separated from their spouses for months and living in piteous conditions. The Mauritian women's movement therefore tends to be less active and certainly less combative. In UK as well the predominant form of unionism in these enterprises has long been centralized and hierarchical, built around the shop steward form of representation. In the past, these unions were often locked into district and industry structures, where wage levels were set and then implemented, enterprise by enterprise, giving rise to locally-based forms of unionism within broader organizational and representative structures. Such unions had built themselves on the basis of male, manual

and full-time workforces where women could hardly find their place. However, the situation is evolving and in the near future the place of women in trade unions is expected to improve but this requires a concerted effort from the male counterparts to realize such objectives.

4.6.2 Uncertainty avoidance

This dimension is described as the degree to which people in a country prefer structured to unstructured situations. People in a high Uncertainty Avoidance (UA) society will prefer clear rules as to how one should behave thus avoiding uncertainty and ambiguity. On the lower end of this ranking, the culture may be more open to unstructured ideas and situations. The population may have fewer rules and regulations to attempt control of every unknown and unexpected event or situation. To draw a high level of union avoidance in the industrial relations context is to define countries with resistance to change and which have experienced stability and continuity in their institutions. On the contrary, countries with low level of uncertainty avoidance have a tendency to experience decentralization in their IR institutions. The countries of interest demonstrate relative low UA compared to Mauritius which scores moderately high. The simple example that can reinforce this dimension is the existence of the IRA 73 for over more than 30 years and at the same time institutions like the Industrial Relations Commission, Permanent Arbitration Tribunal and the National Remuneration Board. Every government that has come to power throughout all these years expressed the intention to change and update the laws but were finally were reluctant to face the consequence of a real change. So, even though there were well-known problems with the laws and institutions, the knowledge that the existing framework kept the country safe from strikes and helped maintain profits for the employers, everybody was satisfied except for the working class and the trade unionists. Trade unions in Mauritius represent in themselves symbols for holistic change but trapped in the legal framework that exhibits a moderate to high level of Uncertainty Avoidance they are forced to go along with the laws and institutions that guide the flow of activities of the union activists.

In addition, a high percentage (some 80%) of the workforce in Mauritius is not unionized. This too can be explained by means of the moderate to high Uncertainty Avoidance, since workers in Mauritius are known to be fearful (of bosses, of reprisals, of losing their job) and to criticize only in the safety of private environments.

By contrast to countries like India, the uncertainty avoidance is low in the UK, South Africa and the Philippines. Take the example of Philippines, as recently as the year 2006, the International Confederations of Free Trade Unions has noted brutality and repression towards unions. This repression is answered by more strikes and demonstrations even if it goes against the rules and laws of the country. Unfairness is still the order of the day and is done bluntly and therefore trade unionists have no choice than to devise their own risky ways of fighting back. Other countries like India and South Africa have more stable Industrial Relations laws but keeping in mind the atrocities and the exploitation of the past, they are always in a spirit of risk taking and of adventure, ready to retort to malpractices of government and of employers. The UK case is different. The low Uncertainty Avoidance can be explained by the cooperation and partnership that exists among actors of the Industrial Relations field. Where members of a trade union are in a position to vent their grievances and where their perspective is taken into consideration, this will also mean that the laws and the entire legal framework are made more flexible for the promotion of unions and of their independence.

4.6.3 Individualism/Collectivism

This dimension can be described as the degree to which people in a country prefer to act as individuals rather than as members of groups. The opposite of individualism (low IDV) is collectivism. This dimension is becoming a hard reality for unions to face. High individualism is witnessed either as a decrease in union membership or on the other extreme can cause a proliferation of unions (individualization of values and ideologies). UK, South Africa and Mauritius have a high Individualism index with the exception of UK (extremely high), while India and Philippines demonstrate quite a low individualism which reflects a tendency to act in collective ways. The UK is ranked as the country with

the highest individualism. For a country that has gone through the worst form of industrial relations in the forms of legislations that has destroyed unions' activities to quasi-nil level, it could be expected that a more aggressive and confrontational form of unionism would have arise . But with the New Unionism and New Labour Party and pieces of legislations that were union-friendly as we have seen earlier, unions were treated as partners. Today, the field is characterized by one-to-one relationships, with the emergence of the new type of workers in many parts of the world such as knowledge workers who are more interested in individual bargaining, negotiating their pay packet and other kinds of compensations and rewards directly with the manager rather as seeking the help of a union. Furthermore, adapting to such situations, human resource managers and managers in general are offering very attractive remuneration packages and HR systems that can discourage employees to join a union. This form of practice is gradually becoming a reality in UK with the subsequent fall in union membership. In India, presently, Indian managers are increasingly equipping themselves with innovative management techniques designed to be helpful in maintaining good Employment Relations such as career development, appraisal, cafeteria-style benefits, attractive reward systems, participative leadership styles and a array of welfare or 'quality of work life' services. Further, serious consideration is being given to the development of human resources in Indian organisations. The adoption of human resource practices cropped up due to the emergence of the new workforce. This has resulted in a general decrease in membership of Federations coupled by a decrease in the number of lock-outs, duration of strikes and industrial disputes. However, unions still significantly influence Employment Relations in Indian organizations as the introduction of such management methods is a recent phenomenon. In the Philippines, the case is rather different and can be explained by the very high Power Distance that has long existed. This would inevitably mean that the interests of workers are not being cared for and individual bargaining would certainly be useless. This is why workers tend to resort to collective voice and action in order to be heard and respected.

Mauritius and South Africa demonstrate a relatively high level of Individualism. This cannot be wholly explained through the extensive use of management practices to create

a bilateral relationship between employees and employers; in fact, moderately high individualism is also explained by the proliferation of diverse union organizations because of a tendency to follow with certain ideologies and practices such as communism, radicalism, socialism, or nationalism. For instance in South Africa, there are a number of national trade union organizations: Congress of South African Trade Unions (COSATU), Federations of Unions of South Africa (FEDUSA), National Council of Trade Unions (NACTU) and the South African Congress of Trade Unions (SACTU), among others with different philosophies and different ways of operating. In the same vein, Mauritius has also been characterized by a multiplicity of unions, Federations and Confederations, many of which are criticized as being sometimes created out of the blue or 'phantom' unions, and because of conflicting interests amongst Federations seeking to represent the same category of workers.

4.7 Conclusion

And so we note that the national culture of a country impacts on its industrial relations. We conclude that Mauritius has a long way to go in its trade union movement. However, the problems encountered by the trade union organizations in Mauritius do not represent a unique country case since other countries, namely the Philippines and South Africa have endured difficulties a hundred times more severe, the positive side of which is a more assertive, perseverant, determined and strong trade union movement. The involvement of trade unions in politics is an issue common to all the countries under study including Mauritius, the difference being the extent of association. While some use unions just as a support to build up their own identity, others provoke the creation of unions to meet their political goals and objectives. The latter being the Mauritian case and the former the UK case. The marginalization of women issue is a common case for all the countries; the only difference being that this lack of concern of tackling women's matters has awakened an enthusiastic spirit of mobilization in countries like UK, South Africa and India. In contrast, Mauritius is known to have a sluggish women's union movement. Mauritius is also more concerned in the individualization of values and

ideologies (more from the trade unions' side) than in the individualization of relationship compared to UK. However, significant efforts need to be made by government, trade unionists, management and politicians generally to establish the conditions for proper growth of all the actors that play important roles in the industrial relations system.

Chapter 5

A Management perspective to Industrial Relations in Mauritius

5.1 Introduction

When the public hears or reads about strikes, lock-outs, militancy, wild layoffs, or even riots in the news media, they often presume that all labour-management relationships are antagonistic, strike-prone and they begin to think negatively of the people involved in such practices, namely, management and unions. But in today's modern era, organizations and unions cannot continue to please the media with smashing news like this. Globalization and technological advancement are affecting every sphere of life, and these developments must now impact-positively-on Industrial Relations practices in organizations. Today, to cope with global competitive pressures, organizations must transform the way they used to manage the organization as well as their very business objectives. Likewise, they stand to gain by fostering closer relationships with the workforce and unions, for the simple reason that neither can ignore the necessity to work together for the welfare of the workforce and the success of the organisation.

5.2 Management Theory and its relation to Industrial Relations

The first and earliest theory of Management is to be found within the Scientific Management school (best represented by **F. Taylor**), which viewed the worker as a mere cog in a wheel, replaceable, existing to obey commands of management and to maximize productivity. Since, according to Scientific Management, the worker does not possess creative ability let alone intelligence and wisdom, the elements of a human-oriented management system which promotes sound industrial relations such as communication, consultation and participation, have no place in this approach. The hallmarks of organizations based on this model are: centralized power, clear lines of authority, a high

degree of specialization, a distinct division of labour, numerous rules pertaining to authority and responsibility, and close supervision. This concept of management can be seen as an ideal breeding ground for an industrial relations system based on conflict rather than on cooperation.

The opposite theory, which is adopted by more and more firms nowadays, was put forward by a celebrated exponent of Human Relations, Douglas McGregor. McGregor gave an impetus to the development of a management theory which focused more on the human being as part of an enterprise, which, in turn, was viewed as a biological system, rather than as a machine. Harmonious human relations, trust, delegation of authority, motivation and recognition are some of the features of this approach. Table 5.1 below gives an indication of the different management practices of these two management theories and their consequent impact on the workforce.

Table 5.1 The reinvention of employment	
The reinvention of employment: a summary of the changes in work	
PAST	PRESENT
Division of Labour	Empowerment of employees
Division and simplification of work	Enriched work, employees engaged in multiple task and expanding their knowledge
Lowest-cost workers	Highest-value workers
Taylorism	Kaizen
Workers thought not to have an important effect on quality	Quality considered everyone's job
Workers not knowledgeable about the work process	Employees participating in designing work routines
Management giving orders, workers obeying without argument	Participating in management, self-managed teams
One "best" way to do work defined by management	All employees learning continually and contributing to enterprise learning
Cost of labour minimized through standard work steps	Training and initiative of every employee to ensure their greatest possible contribution
Most tasks simple	Sophisticated use of creative tools and computers
Work is dehumanizing	Work that gives self-respect and self-actualization
Most workers not expected to think	All workers expected to use their ingenuity
Hierarchical management	Flat organizations, cross-functional teams
Formal channels for information	Free access to information

The question that we can ask ourselves is how does the development from Scientific Management to Human Relations Management relate to Industrial Relations? In essence, this move heightened the importance of the basic concepts of information sharing, consultation, and two-way communication. The effectiveness of the procedures and systems which are established for better information flow, understanding and, where possible, consensus-building, is critical today to the successful managing of enterprises and for achieving competitiveness. As such, the basic ingredients of sound Industrial Relations are inseparable from some of the essentials for managing an enterprise in today's globalized environment. These developments have had an impact on ways of

motivating workers, and on the structures of organizations. Reduced hierarchical layers of management facilitate communication. Management today is more an activity rather than a badge of status or class within an organization, and this change provides a wider professional base to Management. Human Resource Management is one such form of professionalism in management, emerged to treat employees as assets of the organization and at the same time molding a new facet of Industrial Relations. At the same time, given that unions' agendas focus on management's actions towards workers, the literature raises the question: If management becomes so good at managing, what scope of action is left for unions?

5.3 Conflicting interests between HRM and IR

By definition, Human Resource Management refers to a constellation of policies and activities associated with the management and organization of labour power. Following [Storey \(1992\)](#) this is an approach which rests on the individualization of these relations, rather than a reliance on the collective forms of organization. It does not encompass any third party (the State) unlike in Industrial Relations. It is bipartite but essentially individual-focused as is evident from the key HRM practices areas such as selection and recruitment, induction, development and training, leadership and motivation, performance management and retention of staff through intrinsic and extrinsic rewards.

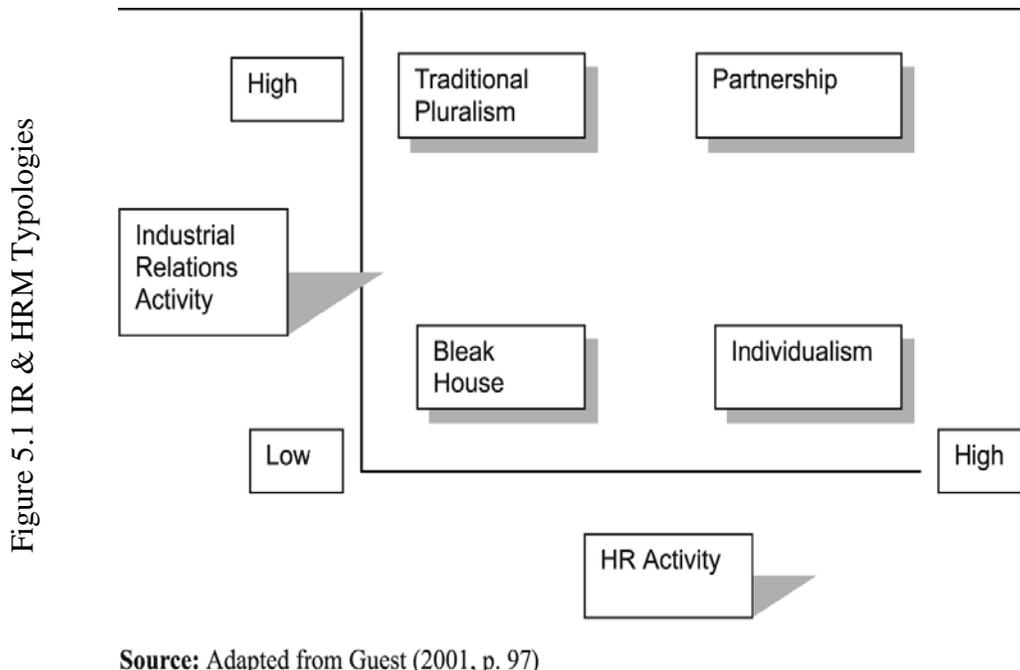
Industrial Relations is essentially collectivist and pluralist in outlook, dealing with relations between employers and unions, and between them and the State. The collective aspect of IR is reflected in some of the central features of an IR system such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, right to strike, trade unionism and dispute settlement.

Given such conditions, Human Resource Management attempts to recast employment relations in terms of the individual rather than the collective of workers. It is on this basis that trade unionism can be undermined, since such managerial practices imply that

workers should no longer have access to the resources of collective power. However, this does not mean the end of trade unionism but it does suggest that the forms of trade unionism which are based on the pursuit of wage increases and better conditions of work, may become a thing of the past. Following this line of argument, HRM is a discipline that lay the foundation for the creation of consensual relations which makes traditional forms of trade unionism less important or marginal. The overall approach recommended by the British Trade Union Congress (TUC, 1994) is that unions should develop their skills in negotiation and thus approach the HRM question in a more positive way, negotiating and bargaining a positive involvement in these managerial practices.

5.4 Perspectives on New Industrial Relations

It is only through partnership that Human Resource Management and Industrial Relations can coexist and work together. One way to examine partnership between HRM and IR is to draw on Guest’s (1995, 2001) combination of IR and HRM typologies (Figure 5.1). He pointed to four perspectives for considering the relationship between the philosophies and practices of HRM and those of IR.



5.4.1 Traditional Pluralism

As **Guest (2001)** suggests, IR activity may be thought of as high in “traditional pluralism” where unions and their representatives are recognized for collective bargaining and consultation. There may be some kind of sophisticated works council arrangement in larger firms. It is a situation in which the union and the employer are in open conflict. Each challenges the other’s actions and motivations, cooperation is non-existent, and work stoppages are frequent and bitter. It is defined by few or no HR policies and practices and little or no integration into organizational thinking.

5.4.2 Partnership

The other extreme, “Partnership” is defined by no form of collective representation that involves independent trade unions. HRM can be thought of as sophisticated where there is evidence of a large number of progressive HR practices being, at least partly, integrated into the organization’s business strategy. It is an indication of union-management cooperation. In this situation the two sides not only respect each other but look to the other to help resolve common problems. Conflict is limited, so that the overall quality of the cooperative relationship is not undermined.

5.4.2.1 The context: A sophisticated HRM environment

In Partnership, a sophisticated HRM with a unitarist philosophy has the potential to negate the very existence of trade unions by focusing on a unified commitment of employees to the organization. This would certainly have serious impact on trade unions because they would be in an obligation to re-think their strategies in order to counter the employer-led policies of union avoidance and exclusion.

With the decline in trade unionism in countries such as the UK, Australia and others and with the emergence of this new HRM, there has been a dramatic shift from a pluralist

perspective to a more unitarist form of employment relations. This new relationship is more directly between the employer and the employee, which therefore tend to marginalize the roles that unions used to play and thus leads to an environment of union avoidance both from *the employers and the employees* (Beaumont & Townled, 1985; Guest & Rosenthal, 1995; Holland, Nelson & Fisher, 2000).

Storey (1992) nevertheless states that HRM practices and trade unions can successfully co-exist. An increasing body of knowledge in UK and the US indicates that HRM policies have been put in place by companies as union substitution strategies (Kochan, 1980; Fiorito, Lowman & Nelson, 1987; Dundon, 2002; Gall, 2002). Gall (2002), identified two forms of tactics: a strategy used by management which is based on fear and intimidation, seeking to create a perception that the union is “bad” or a source of “trouble” while the second tactic is concentrated on the usage of non-union channels for communication (i.e. avoid unions’ representatives to communicate an information), this being a form of unions boycotting or marginalization. In this configuration, unions have to fight their way in order to survive. A change of strategy and mindset of unions are the primary requirements of trade unions as well as keeping good relations with the employer. This implies that union members accept a role in enhancing economic and organizational performance, which in turn means that they accept the validity of the purported HRM-performance link. The implication is that the mutual gains for employees arise regardless of the presence of a union. Guest and Conway (1999) report research that bore this out, observing that a high rate of adoption of HRM practices was associated with higher job satisfaction and commitment and reduced intentions to leave the organization regardless of the unionization status.

5.4.3 Bleak Houses

A bleak house is a typology which follows a relative growth of non-unionism as a conscious alternative of employers for organising the employment relationship (Millward et al 1992, Marginson et al 1993). Non-unionism and union derecognition have been shown to embody not the practices and techniques of human resource management

(HRM) but a kind of “bleak house” or “black hole” of “no industrial relations and no HRM” (Guest 1995, Sisson 1993). These “bleak houses” are characterised as comprising fewer disciplinary procedures, fewer health and safety representatives and fewer channels of organised information and consultation, compared to unionised workplaces. Flowing from this are higher levels of dismissals, compulsory redundancies, labour turnover and industrial accidents and a greater incidence of low pay and performance-related pay than unionised workplaces (Millward et al 1992, Millward 1994).

5.4.3.1 Strategy: Union Busting in bleak house environment

Companies in certain countries, often in collusion with governments, continuously develop techniques, in the absence of HRM, to sideline or smash union representatives if they do succeed in organizing workers. Wrecking methods vary from outright violence and intimidation to administrative measures, especially those backed by the law or lack of law.

In such an environment, if ever a union is formed it may be corrupt from its very creation and pay lip-service to labour principles but serve a tool to enforce autocratic management discipline. Such unions are called ‘yellow’ or ‘sweetheart’ unions. Below are the ways in which these manipulative practices can take place:

- A common approach to make a union compliant is for managers to form or help form a union, and then to insist on recognising only that union for collective bargaining. This method is even more effective if the law says only one union can represent an enterprise workforce, showing that union organizing does not take place in a vacuum; it is first and foremost limited by law and controlled by government.
- Laws are said to be regulators of social activity to prevent excesses, but most labour legislation is heavily biased towards employers’ interests, despite 80 years of international labour laws. The law limits union activity by defining who may

form unions, who can join them, and how they must be registered and conduct representation. In violation of the rights of assembly and bargaining but uncontested by the International Labour Organisation (ILO), many governments now rule on the minimum percentage of a workforce that is required for union formation to be permitted, a form of union busting that nips them in the bud.

- Another legal tactic is to permit union formation with very few members while limiting organization at enterprise level with strict rules on who can affiliate to umbrella unions (or union centers). This allows many unions into a single enterprise workforce union, leaving managers to cherry-pick the most docile union centers and allows the government to have a certain control over the unions through the unions' centers. Many organizations get away with repeated violations because the ILO has no legal sanctions to punish offending governments that do not enforce the labour standards ratified by that same government. Other ILO member governments simply do not ratify ILO conventions.
- Privatisation is an essential element of globalization and is also considered to be another administrative tool to bust unions; with privatised companies insisting on new working conditions. Contracting work out (or outsourcing) is one of the conditions of state owned companies. This is a form of privatisation that weakens unions by breaking up workforces into units. Outsourcing work increases informal working and because informals are not usually covered by labour laws, this provides a golden opportunity for government and employers to exploit them fully. As the number of informal workers is increasing at an epidemic rate internationally, employers take full advantage of the fact that they are not unionized, implying that they have "no opinion" on wages and conditions .

5.4.4 Individualism

The individualism typology results in a situation with low Industrial Relations and well-developed Human Resource Management. [Storey and Bacon \(1993\)](#) have identified three areas of individualism: *procedural individualization* which refers to removal of collective

mechanisms for determining terms and conditions of employment; *Substantive individualization*, which is the differentiation of individual employees' employment contracts like pay and non-pay terms and conditions of employment (Brown et. al., 1998), and *Functional individualization* which focuses on the technical and social organization of work that control features of the job operation and relationship to authority. This is a one-to-one relationship between management and employee that prevails in a situation of sophisticated Human Resource Management with little or no context in which Industrial Relations can infiltrate.

5.4.4.1 Strategy: A HRM-substitution explanation of union decline

The adoption of HRM practices is introduced to provide a basis for a new win-win relationship between workers and managers. It is argued that these practices offer management improved performance on the part of employees and at the same time improving workers' job satisfaction, security, and perhaps pay and benefits. Modern HRM methods enhance workers' satisfaction; but consequently might be expected to reduce the demand for trade unions. This possibility forms the basis of what has become known as the HRM or substitution explanation of union decline. The argument is that unions may become redundant in the eyes of workers and employers because of the effects that positive employer practices have in reducing the *causes (the real reasons for the existence of trade unions)* of unionism, that is, worker dissatisfaction (Fiorito 2001:335). HRM was often assumed to be antithetical to trade unionism, and hence much of the subtext of the debate concerned the future of industrial relations as a field (Godard and Delaney 2000). Sisson (1993) summed up that many organizations regard unions as "at best unnecessary and at worst to be avoided."

According to a British commenter, an organization pursuing HRM will almost always prefer a non-union path, emphasizing individual rather than collective arrangements (Guest 1989:48). Yet while HRM might be associated with non-unionism, the opposite does not hold. This means that if an organization applies HRM fully then it will prefer a

non-unionized workforce but it can also be produced in the presence of autocratic management styles with no HRM, much like a bleak house.

Kochan (1980:183) made the distinction on the basis that direct union suppression involved “hard line opposition” through, for example, the use of blacklists, while union substitution is made more indirectly through the growth of personnel/HR management. More recently, Fiorito (2001:335) similarly made the distinction on the basis that union suppression refers to direct attacks on symptoms (the ‘why’) of unionism (pro-union attitudes, intentions or actions) among workers. While union substitution refers to employer practices designed to offer good pay and conditions or certain kinds of employee involvement, which is often conceived at reducing worker dissatisfaction primarily. According to Fiorito (2001:335) the adoption of such practices does not have to be consciously motivated by anti-unionism motives, but the fact that any increase in the use of developed HR practices does enhance job satisfaction and discourages unionism, and this is what union substitution is all about.

Guest (1995) admitted the co-existence of unionism and HRM, but implied that this could reflect that one or the other was in a weak form: either the trade unionism was not robust or the HRM was fragmented or limited (Guest 1995:121). Moreover, statistical results could, to some extent, be mirroring the rise of industrial relations situations in which neither HRM nor unionism existed; this is what Guest (1995:125–27) called the black hole cases or bleak houses.

The practices that most directly constitute alternatives to unions are those that can replace collective bargaining and Voice roles. More specifically, there are two core substitutes for unions: (a) forms of individualized pay determination like individual bargaining or imposed merit and performance-related pay awards, and (b) methods of communication that purport to give workers a direct voice and avoid any third party such as union representatives. Under individualized pay determination, individuals negotiate without the strength of their fellow workers. Direct or non-union representative communication methods provide consultation rather than bargaining.

5.5 The extreme of Partnership: what's in it for everyone?

Evidence from recent large-scale surveys (Cully et al., 1999; Millward et al., 2000), has pointed to the bulk of UK private sector companies qualifying as bleak houses, with little in the way of sophisticated HR and almost no union representation. Furthermore, there is also little evidence of companies falling into the partnership category (probably no more than 4 per cent of workplaces in the survey), which leads some to question the benefits of partnership arrangements. Such a concern, however, is predicated on what we mean by partnership strategies, and as Guest (2001) and others (Hayes and Allen, 2001; Oxenbridge and Brown, 2002) have pointed out, it is usually associated with four commitments:

- (1) A recognition of some degree of employment security or work protection for employees,
- (2) Sharing financial and non-financial success,
- (3) Widespread communications and consultation at all levels in the organization,
- (4) Provision of effective and independent representation (usually, although not exclusively, through local trade union representatives).

Ackers and Payne (1998, p. 546) believe that partnership can be viewed as a vehicle for unions' renewal, enabling them to "swim among the fishes and re-enter the mainstream of employment relations." In contrast to this position, Martinez, Lucio and Stuart (2000) and Kelly (1998) warned that partnership agreements may serve to undermine workplace unionism and weaken the union movement as a whole. And so, is partnership a vehicle for strengthening the union-employer relationship, or for reducing union power in the workplace? (Bacon and Storey, 2000; Marks et al., 1998; Martinez Lucio and Stuart, 2000) point the evidence demonstrating that partnership may result in concession bargaining, a narrowing of the bargaining agenda and the introduction of new (often non-union) consultative committees that displace or weaken the very essence of collective associations.

There has been an evaluation about whether partnership delivers equal or uneven benefits to employers, unions and employees. Most research of this type concludes that most benefits go to management. Studies also showed that partnership does not necessarily lead to increase union membership, or enhance union influence, better wages and conditions or job security guarantees. Publications produced by the [British Trade Union Congress \(2002\)](#) cite the enhanced productivity and profitability, lower turnover and absenteeism, and more secure and fulfilling jobs as the positive outcomes of partnerships.

5.6 Reconciling the disciplines of Management and IR

Can the apparent incompatibility between HRM and IR be reconciled? Reconciliation can be explored only on the assumption that ultimately both HRM and IR are prepared to recognize the need for enterprise and employee growth and that their objectives are necessarily inter-linked. It is evident that these two disciplines have divergent interests, but there is a need to find a point of common interest for mutual survival. For example, in many countries employers and employees are perceived as two interest groups with generally opposing interests and as belonging to different classes. In the past the relevance of employees to enterprise and national competitiveness was less significant, but the level of employees' knowledge and skills has never been as crucial as it is today, suggesting a convergence of interests between employers and employees. Below are some action areas to enable the reconciliation to take place:

- Changes in both management and union attitudes;
- Recognizing that employer and employee interests (such as productivity) are not divergent but may be common;
- Both Management and IR should be prepared to accommodate the other. At present IR seems to view management as its nemesis;

- IR needs to open its doors to other social disciplines (e.g. organizational behaviour and psychology, industrial sociology) with consequent attention to teamwork and new forms of work organization;
- IR has to embrace the whole employment relationship, and not only its collective aspects;
- Managements should be willing to involve unions in designing their initiatives. Workplace cooperation mechanisms, for instance, tend to be more effective where, in a unionized environment, unions are consulted, and
- Redesigning collective bargaining to accommodate more workplace issues (as is already occurring).

5.7 Rationale and Methodology of the project

The main reason for pursuing a survey of this subject were to investigate the style of management adopted by organizations in Mauritius that drives employees to organize themselves into unions, or not. We also wished to investigate whether employers are employee-oriented and concerned about the needs of the employees, and finally to explore the possibility that management and unions could work hand in hand to solve organizational and people problems without being in constant conflict. These were the broad items that formed the basis of this chapter and the rationale to carry out a survey.

At the very beginning of this project the Research team has chosen “the applicability of a strategic human resource management (SHRM) perspective to industrial relations in Mauritius;” as the title of this chapter. But our Key informant survey highlighted an interesting issue. For trade unionists, their primary source of distress is senior management and not Human Resource Managers. This is where our attention was

captured and we realized that the focus needed to shift on to management, inevitably encompassing the entire management team, including HR managers.

At the very outset, the target population for management was planned to consist only of Top 100 companies and companies from the Association of Human Resource Professionals (AHRP). The list of Top 100 companies was obtained for the year 2005, it was also verified that the data was not that obsolete compared to the updated version of 2007. However, to obtain the list of members affiliated to the Association of Human Resource Professionals was difficult and complex. The site for the Association of Human Resource Professionals <http://www.ahrpmauritius.com/> was believed to be the right place for retrieving such data. Unfortunately, the only useful information we retrieved was the name of the President and the fact that he was employed in a media company. We contacted him as soon as possible and he asked us to make our request formal. We subsequently had to resort to contacting the Public Relations officer who then asked us to contact the Secretary. The list was finally sent to us three weeks later. To complete the picture, the said list contained many names without addresses and many email addresses that did not work.. The list, as it was, consisted of 145 companies but only 63 companies were finally considered as having valid contact addresses, either by post or e-mail.

A survey approach was chosen for both the Association of Human Resource Professionals and Top 100 companies. For Top 100 companies the survey was carried out by post with a cover letter for each questionnaire addressed to either the Chairman, Directors or Chief Executives (sample questionnaire in Appendix). For the Association of Human Resource Professionals, it was deemed important to go through both post and e-mail survey with 29 questionnaires being sent by post and 34 by email. A cover letter was attached to each postal questionnaire and a formal mail was typed for the mail survey. The survey letter was addressed to the Human Resource Managers (sample questionnaire in Appendix).

Further to the two lists, our consideration was drawn to other players who embrace the functions of Management, that is, leading, organizing, controlling and planning. As such,

they are obviously managers in the public and parastatal sectors of the Mauritian economy. At this point, we decided to broaden our population to include all parastatal organizations and Ministries. Lists of which were obtained on the official government site. A postal survey approach was chosen for both sectors, using the same questionnaire with cover letters addressing it to Permanent Secretaries of Ministries and Directors of parastatal organizations. Details of the four lists may be found in the Appendix.

5.8 Response Rate

The response rate for the general survey on management and Industrial Relations did not reflect a very high enthusiasm and motivation on the part of our respondents. As per our initial lists, the Private sector consisted of 100 companies from the Top-100 companies and 63 companies from AHRP list, totaling 163 companies. Unfortunately, the response rate for this sector turned out to be only 21 from Top-100 and 3 from AHRP (shown in Table 5.2) representing an overall response rate of approximately 15%. As for the Public sector, 20 questionnaires were sent, the list of which is attached to the report. The response rate for this sector was a return of 8 questionnaires or 40% which was deemed satisfactory. Finally, the Parastatal sector which was composed of 51 organizations produced a response of 20 questionnaires returned to us or about 39%. Table 5.2 below summarize this information:

Table 5.2 Response rates from the Public, Private and Parastatal sectors

<i>Sector</i>	<i>Number returned</i>
<i>Private sector-Top 100</i>	21
<i>Private sector-AHRP</i>	3
<i>Public sector</i>	8
<i>Parastatal sector</i>	20
<i>Total</i>	52

The different response rates reveal that the Public sector has been more responsible and keen to participate in the survey. The same attitude was not matched by the Private sector and worse, by the AHRP. The Parastatal sector showed an honourable response rate; two organizations namely, Mauritius Council of Registered Librarians and National

Heritage Trust Fund sent us a letter informing us that the staff they have is small and that they are not unionized. The Permanent Secretary of the Ministry of Tourism was for his part abroad and could not fill our questionnaire. A few private companies called to tell us that the questionnaire could not be sent to the chairman or executive director because he were too busy but they would make a must to at least send it to the HR Manager.

The profile in terms of hierarchical position of our survey respondents are: Human Resource Director, CEO/Deputy CEO, Executive Director, Managing Director, Administrative Manager, Company Secretary, General Manager-HR, Chairman, HRM, Assistant manager-HR, Pay and Benefits Officer, Senior Executive, Registrar, Director, Permanent Secretary (PS), Supervising Officer and Divisional Manager. Table 5.3 lists all the industries/organizations in the three sectors.

Table 5.3 The categorization of the different organizations in terms of Public, Private and Parastatal sectors

	Private Sector (Top 100 + AHRP)	Public sector	Parastatal sector
Textile	3	0	0
Building/Civil Engineering	3	0	0
Financial Services	3	0	0
Retailing & Trade	3	0	1
Petroleum Marketing	2	0	0
Services	2	0	1
Agro Industry	3	0	4
Catering & Tourism Industry	2	0	0
Aviation	1	0	0
Cement Industry	1	0	0
Telecommunications	1	0	0
Education	0	0	5
Transport	0	0	1
Weather Forecasting	0	0	1
Training & Research	0	0	2
Tea industry	0	0	1
Public Utilities	0	0	1
Regulatory body	0	0	1
Ministry-Public infrastructure	0	1	0
Ministry-Civil reforms	0	1	0
Ministry-Local Government	0	1	0
Ministry-Labour & IR	0	1	0

Ministry-Environment	0	1	0
Municipality	0	1	0
Ministry-Attorney general	0	1	0
Ministry-Arts & Culture	0	1	0
Prevention and treatment	0	0	1
Distribution	0	0	1

5.9 Analysis of Findings

One week after the survey was launched, only five questionnaires returned to us duly completed. A follow-up strategy ensued, whereby all the respondents were called by telephone at least once. The following responses made to us were the most typical: the chairman was abroad but the necessary would be done to get the questionnaire filled by the HR Manager; or else it was simply that they did not receive our questionnaire therefore we so an second questionnaire was sent again either by fax or post; some even asked if they could bypass the questionnaire if they are not interested in the survey. After three weeks of such follow-ups, a slight increase in the return rate was noted, after which the data began to be organized and entered into a SPSS file for analysis. Analysis was carried out in a theme-wise fashion by grouping the answers to some questions. Frequencies and cross tabulations are used to analyze the data along with tables and charts. This is presented in the following section.

5.9.1 Presence of unions

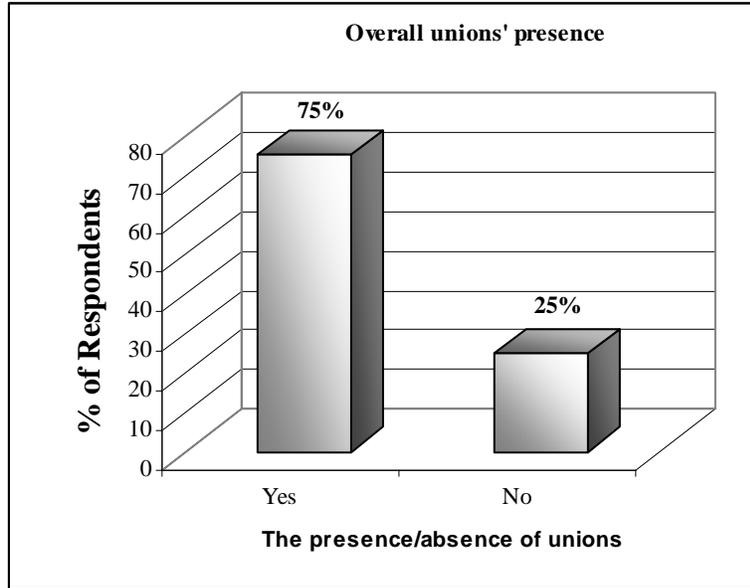


Figure 5.2 Unionisation rate

Figure 5.2 reveals that the overall unionization rate is high (75%) meaning that three-quarters of all the organizations that filled our questionnaire were unionized.

Table 5.4 Presence of unions in the different sectors under study

	Is your organization unionized?		Total
	Yes	No	
Private	58.3%	41.7%	100.0%
Public	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Parastatal	85.0%	15.0%	100.0%
Total	75.0%	25.0%	100.0%

Table 5.5 Presence of a union by industry/type of organisation

	Unionized %	Non- unionized %	Total %
Textile	33.3	66.7	100.0
Building/Civil Engineering	100.0	.0	100.0
Financial Services	33.3	66.7	100.0
Retailing & Trade	50.0	50.0	100.0
Petroleum Marketing	50.0	50.0	100.0
Services	33.3	66.7	100.0
Agro Industry	100.0	.0	100.0
Catering & Tourism Industry	100.0	.0	100.0
Aviation	100.0	.0	100.0
Cement Industry	.0	100.0	100.0
Telecommunications	100.0	.0	100.0
Education	100.0	.0	100.0
Transport	100.0	.0	100.0
Weather Forecasting	100.0	.0	100.0
Training & Research	50.0	50.0	100.0
Tea industry	100.0	.0	100.0
Public Utilities	100.0	.0	100.0
Regulatory body	.0	100.0	100.0
Ministry-Public infrastructure	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Civil reforms	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Local Government	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Labour & IR	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Environment	100.0	.0	100.0
Municipality	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Attorney general	100.0	.0	100.0
Ministry-Arts & Culture	100.0	.0	100.0
Prevention and treatment	.0	100.0	100.0
Distribution	100.0	.0	100.0

From table 5.5, it is clear that the low level of unionization in the private sector is derived from industries like Textile, Financial services, Services, Cement, Retail and trade, Petroleum among others. Among the unions present in the private sector, are:

- ✓ Artisans and General Workers Union,
- ✓ Mauritius Housing Corporation Staff Association,
- ✓ Construction Metal & Furniture Employees Union,
- ✓ Construction, Metal, Wooden & Related Industries Employees Union,
- ✓ Federation of Progressive Union (FPU),
- ✓ FBEU,
- ✓ Hotel, Restaurant & Employees Union,
- ✓ Catering Industry Workers Union,
- ✓ Plantation Workers Union,
- ✓ Sugar Industry Labourers Union,
- ✓ Union of Artisans of the Sugar Industry,
- ✓ Organization of Artisans Unity,
- ✓ Sugar Industry Overseas Association,
- ✓ Sugar Industry Staff Employees Association,
- ✓ Air Mauritius Staff Association,
- ✓ Air Mauritius Cabin Crew Association,
- ✓ Private Transport Employees Union,
- ✓ Union of Employees of Air Mauritius,
- ✓ Air Mauritius Employees Association,
- ✓ Mauritius Airline Pilots Association, and
- ✓ Mauritius Telecom Employees Association and Telecom Workers Union.

All public sector organizations that responded to our survey were unionized. The unions present in this sector are:

- ✓ Government Professional Engineers Association,
- ✓ Government General Services Union,
- ✓ Civil Service Architects' Union,
- ✓ Mauritius Senior Civil Servants' Association,
- ✓ Government Servants' Association,
- ✓ Union of Public Personnel Officers,
- ✓ Union of Finance Officers,

- ✓ Federation of Civil Service & Other Unions,
- ✓ State Employees Federation,
- ✓ Government Office Attendants Union,
- ✓ Ministry of Local Government Employees Union,
- ✓ Syndicat des Travailleurs Unis de la Fonction Publique,
- ✓ Registry of Association Inspectorate Union,
- ✓ Local Authorities Employees Union,
- ✓ Union of Municipalities Workers, and
- ✓ Environmental Technical Staff Union,

However, the Parastatal bodies within industries like the Agro and Education account for a moderately high unionization rate. Some of the unions dominating the sector are:

- ✓ University of Technology Employees Union,
- ✓ Union of Workers of Approved services,
- ✓ Farmers Service Corporation Staff Association,
- ✓ Union of Postal Workers Branch No.1,
- ✓ Union of Postal Workers Branch No.2,
- ✓ Post & Administrative Staff Association,
- ✓ Postman Drivers Union,
- ✓ Bus Industry Traffic Officers' Union,
- ✓ Transport Corporation Employees Union,
- ✓ Union of Bus Industry Workers,
- ✓ Transport Industry Workers' Union,
- ✓ National Transport Corporation Staff Association,
- ✓ Mauritius College of the Air Staff Association,
- ✓ Government Servant Association,
- ✓ Senior Civil Servants Union,
- ✓ Mauritius Examination Syndicate,
- ✓ Mauritius Examination Syndicate Senior Staff Association,
- ✓ Mauritius Examination Syndicate Staff Association,

- ✓ Tea Industry Staff and Employees Union,
- ✓ Mauritius Institute of Health Employees Union,
- ✓ Tea Board Staff Union,
- ✓ Tea Board Employees Union,
- ✓ State Trading Corporation Staff Union,
- ✓ State Trading Corporation Employees Union,
- ✓ Agricultural Research & Extension Unit Staff Union,
- ✓ Agricultural Research & Extension Unit Workers Union,
- ✓ Central Electricity Board Staff Association,
- ✓ Union of Employees of the Central Electricity Board,
- ✓ Central Electricity Board Workers Union,
- ✓ the Private Enterprise Employees Union,
- ✓ Mahatma Gandhi Institute Staff Association,
- ✓ Mahatma Gandhi Institute Employees Union,
- ✓ Association of Mahatma Gandhi Institute Senior Staff,
- ✓ IVTB Staff Union & Instructors Union, and
- ✓ Cold Storage & Farm Workers Union.

5.9.1.1 Reasons for being unionized

In this section, we wanted to know more about the sector/industry, that is, what drove workers to join unions and whether it is densely unionized or not.

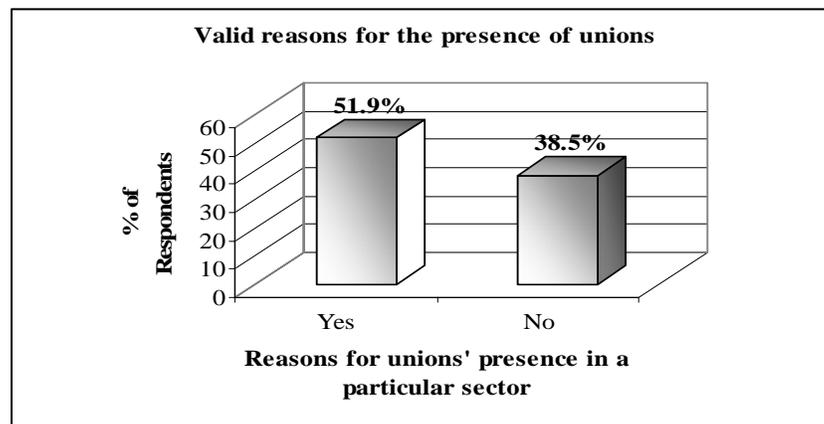


Figure 5.3 Are there valid reasons for union presence in this sector

Figure 5.3 reflects the fact that some 51.9% of managers participating in the survey believe that there are indeed valid reasons that account for the existence of unions in their respective sectors. Respondents were furthermore asked what they thought were the reasons that drove employees/workers to get unionized, a set of answers were obtained, as shown below:

Table 5.6 Reasons to get unionized

Private Sector	Retailing & Trade	No individual recognition hence drives employees to organize.
	Textile	Canvassing form of union representative
	Financial Services	For collective bargaining and negotiations
	Agro Industry	Collective expression is historically dated and to secure better conditions of service.
	Building & Construction	The precarity of employment, Canvassing, and better working conditions and salary reviews.
	Telecommunication	To safeguard their interests.
	Oil & Petroleum Marketing	Lack of communication between top management and workers.
	Catering & Tourism	Mis-management and salaries and conditions of work were quite harsh until early 90's, there has been great improvements since.
Parastatal Sector	Services	Safeguard the interests of its members and protecting their rights.
	Transport	Security of employment.
	Public Utilities	Management meet constraints and is not in a position to meet all demands of employees hence join unions.
	Education	The inevitable perception that a union is a guarantee towards employee protection.
	Weather Forecasting	To ensure adequate pay and conditions of service.
	Tea	To safeguard employees' rights and have bargaining power with management.
	Training & Research	Job security and welfare.

Most of the answers for the different industries mentioned in table 5.6 are for interests, rights and benefits of employees. This indicates that management views the motives of employees to join a union as being limited to issues of better pay and conditions of work.

Or if we try to view the matter the other way round, it might be because management rewards and benefits are not up to the standard expected by employees this is why employees have to turn to unions for support. Some respondents also mentioned that it has historically been “like that” which might suggest a very limited perspective to the role of unions in the total workplace environment.

The public sector managers, however, stated that employees of the public service are motivated to form unions in order to be in a better position to bring all matters and grievances, and more particularly those affecting their working environment and conditions of service, to the management to obtain redress. Here too, several manager stated that being unionized was merely “common practice” in government organizations. Certain respondents stressed that there was a need for workers to have a structured forum to voice out their grievances and develop common positions.

5.9.1.2 Potency of unions

Overall, 57.7% of the managers believed that unions in their sector were moderately potent. About half of the respondents thought that unions in their sector were weak Table 5.8 shows the results:

Table 5.8 Potency of unions in the different sector

	How potent are unions in your sector?					Total
	Very Strong	Moderat	Weak	Not Applicabl	Missing	
Private	4.2%	50.0%	29.2%	8.3%	8.3%	100.0%
Public	12.5%	75.0%	12.5%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Parastata	20.0%	60.0%	15.0%	5.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total	11.5%	57.7%	21.2%	5.8%	3.8%	100.0%

As observed from Table 5.8, all the three sectors are seen as managers to have moderate potency Only the Parastatal sector and to some extent the Public sector exhibit a small percentage of respondents stating that the unions were very strong in their area.

5.9.2 Presence of Collective Agreement with Union

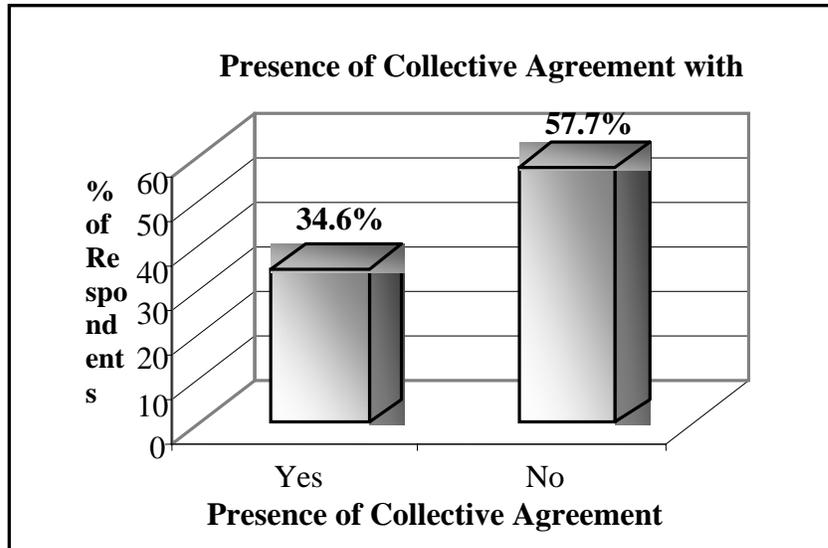


Figure 5.6 Presence of Collective Agreement with union

A collective agreement is the end result of a collective bargaining process with the initial objective of regulating the terms and conditions of employment of members of a union. Figure 5.6 illustrates the relatively high percentage (57.7%) of managers who stated that they do not have collective agreements with the unions in their organization

Table 5.9 Collective agreement and the different sectors in which the organizations operate

	Do you have a collective agreement with the union?				Total
	Not Applicable	Yes	No	Missing Value	
Private	.0%	33.3%	58.3%	8.3%	100%
Public	.0%	25.0%	75.0%	.0%	100%
Parastata	5.0%	40.0%	50.0%	5.0%	100%
Total	1.9%	34.6%	57.7%	5.8%	100%

75% of the managers from the Public sector state that they do not have a collective agreement with their union(s). Quite a moderate percentage is also scored by the Parastatal and the Private sectors. Of the managers who said that they had a collective

agreement with their unions, they were asked to mention the items on the agreement. Table 5.10 presents the results for the Private and the Parastatal sectors.

Table 5.10 Collective agreements for different Industries

	Sector of activity	Items in the Agreement
Private Sector	Retail & Trade	Mutual respect, transparency, good conduct, no stealing, respect for all and promote the interests of both Investors and Employees.
	Textile	Cooperation in order to solve any kind of problem.
	Financial Services	Procedures for grievances settlement are clearly established- Joint Negotiating Council.
	Agro Industry	Time-off for trade union meetings, salaries and conditions of service, refund on traveling for officers claiming mileage and Remuneration protocols.
	Building & Construction	Collective bargaining takes place at the level of the industry.
	Aviation	Salary and general conditions of service.
	Telecommunication	Terms and conditions of service, salary and grading.
	Oil & Petroleum Marketing	Terms and conditions of service.
Parastatal Sector	Services	Salaries and conditions of employment, disputes, grievance handling and meetings with manager.
	Transport	Protection of employees' rights, security of employment, check off agreement, grievance and dispute handling, collective disputes, disciplinary procedures, sanctions and appeal, appointment/promotions, redundancy and others.
	Public Utilities	Health and safety, welfare, conditions of service, major reforms, training and development, performance management, performance appraisals and so on.

It is surprising to note that sectors like “Retail and Trade” and “Textile” have a form of collective agreement which is not very focused. For instance, abstract notions like mutual respect, transparency and good conduct are very sound notions to be promoted in an organization, but how operationable are they? This would tend to suggest that either respondents did not understand the term “collective agreement” or they simply do not have one with the union(s). Yet others mention interesting items in their collective agreement, for instance, apart from the traditional salary and conditions of service, the Agro industry has items such as time-off for trade union meetings and refund on traveling for officers claiming mileage. Public Utilities includes health and safety at work which is very appropriate given the hard physical working conditions in that sector.

As for the public sector, which is not mentioned in table 5.10, the only answers received for this question was that there is “Department Whitley Council” established under the Labour Act and applicable to the whole public service for issues of collective bargaining.

5.9.3 Roles and Objectives of unions

This part analyzes the views of managers with regard to the roles that unions play in relation to their members and to the organization as a whole. Respondents were also asked whether they were aware or not that there were many unions engaged on national issues that are positively affecting the lives of employees/workers . We also question them on the evolving role of unions in the changing business environment.

5.9.3.1 Unions' roles with regard to employees they represent

Table 5.11 Roles of unions with regard to employees they represent

	Sector of activity	Roles of unions vis-à-vis members
Private Sector	Retailing & Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discreet as management has been continuously exceeding their expectations.
	Textile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> To protect and defend their rights, union emphasizes on workers' welfare e.g. good mess room and clean toilets There is no role that union plays on this aspect of working life.
	Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Foster good relationship among members.
	Agro Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate for better conditions of service Assist workers on disciplinary committees and grievances handling, Negotiation and implementation on issues at plant level, Promotion of two-way communication.
	Building & Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discussion with management on disputes settlement Assistance during disciplinary proceedings among others, Act as watchdog Brief the rights and privileges of employees as specified by labour laws and remuneration orders.
	Telecommunication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate with management on conditions of work and grievances.
	Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Collective bargaining for better conditions of service.
	Oil & Petroleum Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Education of their members.
	Catering & Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Problem solving if any Assist team leaders during disciplinary proceedings, Report conflicts between head of departments and employees Negotiate for better conditions of work.
Parastatal	Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protecting the rights of employees.
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safeguard the interests of workers Better working conditions in the workplace.
	Public Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Act as a watchdog to safeguard the rights and interests of their members.

Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Act as watch dogs against any abuse • Make very constructive suggestions • Work in collaboration with management for the welfare of the staff • Make representations regarding grievances and working conditions • Give their opinions about schemes of service and posts.
Weather Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiation with management at times.
Tea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The union makes hardly any representation for its members.
Training and Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Looks after conditions of work of its employees.

Table 5.11 gives a summary of all the responses from the questionnaires about the roles of unions with regard to their members. Most managers responded that unions' roles revolved around the protection of their members against malpractices of management. As a matter of fact unions are widely viewed as "watchdogs." While in the Tea sector, unions are not considered as important as they hardly made any representation on behalf of their members, in the Oil and Petroleum Marketing sector, union representatives are present mainly to educate their members which tends to protect an image of a more 'partnership' nature, and respondents from the Education sector precise that suggestions shared are quite constructive. However, some respondents of the Textile sector believed that union leaders have no role to play at all which provokes us to conclude that managers of this sector have a propensity or preference to work without unions. Finally, in the Retail and Trade sector, unionists are seen as having a discreet role because management always exceeds their (workers' and unionists') expectations which tends to make them docile.

As for the Public sector, unions are seen to step in when grievances are expressed by their members. Thereupon, unions request for meetings with management to address the problems in matters relating to discipline and conditions of service or others. They also act as watchdogs against malpractices and injustices and they stand by the employees whenever they feel that the latter's interests are at stake.

5.9.3.2 Unions' roles with regard to the organization

Whereas the roles of unions have been most of the time summarized as being confined to safeguard the interests of their members, managers believe that such actions directly or indirectly affect organizational issues, be it in a positive or negative manner.

Table 5.12 Roles of unions with regard to the organization

	Sector of activity	Types of responses
Private Sector	Retail & Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management deals with organizational issues directly with the staff and employees at all levels so no need for union interference in this matter. • Regarded as partners.
	Textile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “In our experience, there is no role from union’s part on the forefront of organizational issues”.
	Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They participate in decision making at the Board of directors • They participate in health and safety issues.
	Agro Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A positive impact to reduce turnover of employees, • Making proposals to reduce theft at work, limiting the abuse of local and sick leaves • Negotiation on behalf of members at the corporate/sectorial level. • They display the team spirit and work towards the achievement of the organization’s objectives but often the limiting factor is the “acquired rights” of employees. • Generally the roles are restricted to negotiations with Management on pay, grading structures, and conditions of service of its members.
	Building & Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discussions regarding productivity, overtime work and so on so as to better meet the clients’ needs.
	Telecommunication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited role
	Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very limited role
Paras	Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration and participation
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To have an equal share in the profit of the organization on behalf of employees.

	Public Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The unions are more interested to meet the demands of employees than the needs of the organization; hence, through productivity bonus the employees are encouraged through unions to increase productivity.
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • They make constructive recommendations for organizational development and advancement as and when the need arise. • They support management in promoting the organization with various stakeholders and organize training sessions for the employees.

Table 5.12 gives a clear indication of the different roles of unions within the organization, as perceived by managers. The Retail and Trade sector responses suggest that unions are not considered as playing any kind of organizationally relevant role. The way the responses are structured tend to make us believe that there is constantly a feeling of “us and them” where unions’ roles are strictly limited to issues concerning the employees. In the same sector, however, extreme answers were also given suggesting that unions are treated as partners. The textile sector also shares the same opinions saying that there is no role on the union’s part with organizational concerns. This is also the case in sectors like Telecommunications and Aviation. This prompts us to conclude that either unions are being boycotted regarding the expansion of their roles to fully embrace a broader range of objectives and roles or simply the unions’ representatives themselves are not very interested to go to such an extent given that their minimum roles are not bearing the outcomes they had wished. Conversely, the Agro industry seems to have trade union representatives who foster team spirit among employees and help to work towards the achievement of the organization’s objectives.

In the Public sector, the case is somehow different. Management is said to normally consult unions on broad organizational issues. For instance, with the implementation of the Performance Management System (PMS) issues like structural review, conditions of service and amendment of scheme of service are discussed thoroughly. Unions make proposals to management and work in collaboration on important issues. According to our respondents, employees are considered first then, organizational issues.

5.9.3.3 Expanding roles of unions

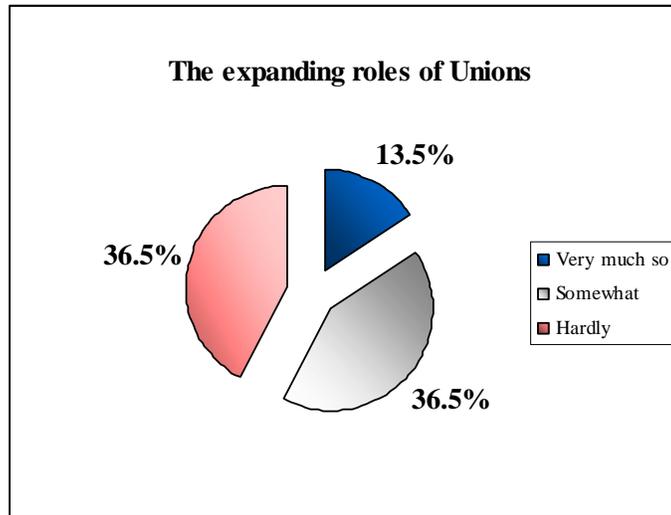


Figure 5.7 Expanding roles of unions

Just as in other countries like the UK where trade unions are shifting their roles to broader ones by adopting the organizing model (vs. the traditional servicing model) of trade unionism, Managers were questioned on the expanding role of unions in Mauritius. Very few managers perceived that unions were “Very much” expanding their roles.. 37% of respondents stated that trade unions were “somewhat” or “hardly” moving to issues other than pay and conditions of work. This analysis is further deepened when the respondents were asked if they were aware or not that unions have been generally active in a wide range of national issues such as job security, health and safety, education among others:

Table 5.13 Level of awareness regarding unions’ engagement on national issues

<i>Are you aware that unions are engaged on a number of national issues?</i>		
	No.	Percentage
Yes, I am aware	46	88.5
No, not aware	4	7.7
Missing	2	3.8
Total	52	100.0

A very high percentage of respondents or some 88.5% acknowledged that unions do engage in activities of national concern. The question then arises: how come an important percentage of respondents (Figure 5.7) states that unions are hardly or “somewhat” expanding their roles? In fact, Mauritian Trade Unionism is very alert and alive to issues that affect the working lives of workers/employees or dependants and families directly, such as educational policy, fiscal policy, non-transmissible diseases, HIV/AIDs, price increases, consumer protection, and so on. The national issues on which they have been engaging so far reflects such a role.

Moreover, the respondents were asked if they believe that unions are knowledgeable about the changing business environment.

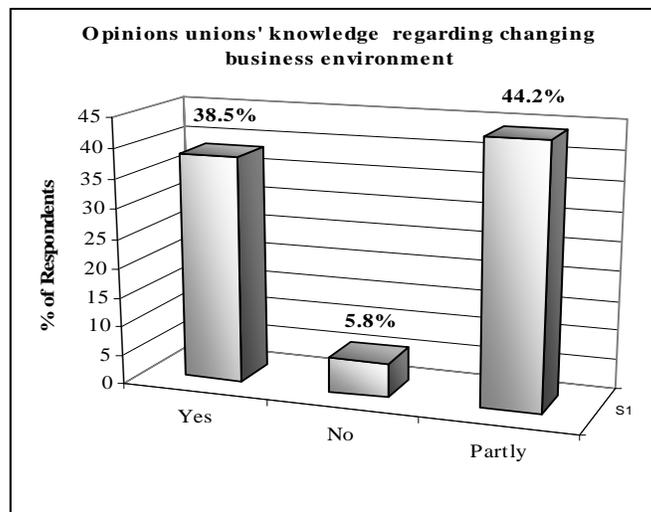


Figure 5.8 Opinions of Respondents regarding unions' knowledge on changing business environment

Figure 5.8 shows that a high proportion of the respondents (44.2%) believe that unions are only somewhat knowledgeable and sensitive to the changing business environment and that is why they are termed as “passéistes,”(meaning that they live in the past and are not “business aware.”) It can also be that organizations themselves do not give unions the opportunity to learn about the business environment in which companies are evolving, preferring to deal with unions as unequal, weak, partners.

5.9.4 Union-Management Relationship

The union-management relationship was considered by managers to be an uneasy one and sometimes conflictual with no evolution at all. Our previous findings also help us to ascertain that the relationship reflects some facets of traditional pluralism. As Guest (2001) suggests, it is a form of relationship where IR activity may be thought of as high and where unions and their representatives are recognized for collective bargaining and consultation. According to our respondents, the strategies they use are aimed at ostensibly welcoming unions as partners or to deal directly with individual employers as a substitution strategy.

Table 5.14 Union-devised strategies used by management

Strategy concerning unions	Percentage response (%)
We maintain a strong relationship with employees so as to reduce the risk of a union forming/union becoming stronger	34.6
We accept one or more unions in our organization	19.2
We welcome unions as partners in our organization's success.	44.2
We prevent or try to prevent employees from forming or joining a union	.0
Missing	1.9
Total	100.0

No manager responded to the strategy “We prevent or try to prevent employees from forming or joining a union.” A considerable proportion of respondents (44.2%) welcome unions as partners for the success of the organization and 34.6% wish to maintain a strong employer-employee relationship in order to reduce the risk of union formation. From that point it is deemed important to know more concerning these strategies, that is, to what extent are these strategies being used by the different sectors under study. A cross tabulation was considered to be of some help.

Table 5.15 Strategies used by management concerning unions

Strategy concerning unions			
	We maintain a strong relationship with employees so as to reduce the risk of union forming or becoming stronger (% responding)	We accept one or more unions in our organization (% responding)	We welcome unions as partners in our organisation's success (% responding)
Private sector	54.2	16.7	25
Public service	25	25	50
Parastatals	15	20	65
Total	34.6	19.2	44.2

It is evident that the Private sector scores the highest percentage (54.2%) in the use of the union avoidance and even substitution strategy, adopting Human Resource Management practices and providing the kinds of employee benefits which people usually value. This kind of strategy usually undermines unions such that the employees themselves feel that the role of unions is redundant. The Public and the Parastatal sector responses tend more towards what we call a partnership strategy as they claim they are prepared to treat unions as partners. 50% and 65% respondents from the Public and Parastatal sectors respectively adopt a co-existence strategy, with HRM practices existing alongside unions

Table 5.16 Strategies concerning unions by sector of activity

	Strategy concerning unions				Total
	We maintain a strong relationship with employees	We accept one or more unions in our organisation	We welcome unions as partners	Missing Value	
Textile	66.7%	.0%	33.3%	.0%	100.0%
Building/Civil Engineering	33.3%	33.3%	33.3%	.0%	100.0%
Financial Services	33.3%	.0%	66.7%	.0%	100.0%
Retailing & Trade	50.0%	25.0%	25.0%	.0%	100.0%
Petroleum Marketing	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Services	33.3%	.0%	33.3%	33.3%	100.0%
Agro Industry	14.3%	42.9%	42.9%	.0%	100.0%
Catering & Tourism	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Aviation	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Cement Industry	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Telecommunications	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Education	.0%	40.0%	60.0%	.0%	100.0%
Transport	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Weather Forecasting	.0%	.0%	0	.0%	100.0%
Training & Research	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Tea industry	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Public Utilities	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Regulatory body	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Public	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Civil reforms	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Local	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Labour & IR	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Environment	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Municipality	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-attorney general	.0%	100.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Ministry-Arts & Culture	.0%	.0%	100.0%	.0%	100.0%
Prevention and treatment	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Distriubution	100.0%	.0%	.0%	.0%	100.0%
Total	34.6%	19.2%	44.2%	1.9%	100.0%

From table 5.16 we see that the sector that mostly uses the substitution strategy. In addition, based on findings received from interviews with Presidents of (con) federations, we discovered that the Textile sector is one of the sectors where management tries hard to remain union-free. The maintenance of strong relationships with employees in this industry can, therefore, be described as a fire-fighting strategy, which means that

whenever there is a crisis, management tends to provide some innovative benefits so as to pacify the employees, such that when the crisis is over, the keenness to form a union does not arise until the next crisis. Other sectors also trying hard to remain non-unionized are Retail and Trade, and Building and Civil Engineering among others.

However, most of the Parastatal sectors like Education, Financial Services and the Agro industries among others describe their approach towards unions as a partnership approach. In the Public sector also it is the case, such as in Ministries like Ministry of Local Government, Ministry of Labour & Industrial Relations and the Ministry of Environment and Financial Services. All respondents of the following sectors also used this strategy: Petroleum Marketing, Catering and Tourism, Cement, Public Utilities, and Municipalities, Distribution, and the Ministry of Public Infrastructure..

5.9.4.1 Culture of the organization and the promotion of good employer-employee relationship

The culture of organizations helps us to understand management's approach vis-à-vis employee representatives and employees in general. In the Private and Parastatal sectors, employees are considered as the centre for development and the organizations adopt open door policies based on mutual respect and on the promotion of harmonious industrial relations. According to our respondents, the culture is that of work, people oriented-ness and participation where employees are encouraged to develop themselves through 'tough-love.' Trade unionists are respected and their collaboration valued. Furthermore, open communication with employees at all levels is promoted within strict respect for rules and regulations. The relationship is also guided by the highest standards of professional ethics, being results-oriented and committed to provide services of the highest quality in a timely manner. Teamwork is fostered and the sharing of resources is a priority. There is also equitable and efficient treatment to each and everyone. This type of culture is very conducive to harmonious Industrial Relations, but the facts seemed varied and contradictory at least for some sectors, namely, Textile where unions are known to be persistently kept out or marginalized.

In the Public sector, transparency and good governance prevail and a high level of discipline is maintained in order to attain the objective of providing efficient service to the satisfaction of clients. Good communication and efficiency are very much present. Moreover, the organizational culture tends towards a more consultative and participatory approach, with a very strong culture of open-door policy and where every employee is considered an important link in the quality and service chain. This type of culture promotes trade unionism, as emphasized in previous parts of this report.

5.9.4.2 The generally preferred type of dealing with employees

Over and above the existing culture and the strategy used, this question seeks to establish what is the preferred type of Industrial Relations dealings of our respondents, that is, either direct dealing with employees or through negotiations with unions. Table 5.17 gives us the preferences of responding managers.

Table 5.17 Strategies used by management

	Sector of activity	Preferred type of employment relations- managers' reponses
Private Sector	Retailing & Trade	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management is considered as fair, hence deal directly with employees.
	Textile	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We prefer direct negotiation because we do not believe that unions contribute much to negotiations.
	Financial Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We are satisfied with our existing arrangements, that is, no intermediaries.
	Oil & Petroleum Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct dealings to avoid misunderstanding through union's representative.
	Agro Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due to our good management practices, the rate of unionization is drastically decreasing. • Social peace within the organization is promoted through management techniques instead of making collective agreements with trade unions who are not business friendly. • Unions bring coherence in dealings. .
	Catering & Tourism	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Because we believe in the establishment of a direct and trusting relationship with our team members and therefore do not see the need for intermediaries. Also, to avoid delays in solving of problems.
	Building & Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sometimes negotiations through unions are helpful because of numbers of employees employed. But direct dealings with employees have always worked well, and are still practiced.
	Cement Industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct negotiations with employees.
	Telecommunication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Negotiations through unions.
Aviation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer unions because of the number of employees involved. 	
Parastatal Sector	Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Direct dealings, however union members (President and executive members) have a great influence on employees, thus going through the unions will make $\frac{3}{4}$ of the people move in the agreed path.
	Transport	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deal with representatives of unions because of the large number of employees.
	Public Utilities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It depends on the situation. For individual cases, negotiations on an individual basis are more cordial and decisions are reached faster.
	Training & Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Through unions in order to have a collective approach to problems.
	Weather Forecasting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer direct dealings with employees.
	Tea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer direct dealings with employees.
	Regulatory Body	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prefer direct dealings with employees.
	Education	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both are very useful and constructive.

5.9.4.3 The characteristic of employer-employee relationship

In this section the respondents are asked whether their relationship with the employees and unions is an adversarial one. They are also asked to rate the employer-employee relationship of the sector in which they are operating. Figure 5.9 shows the responses received:

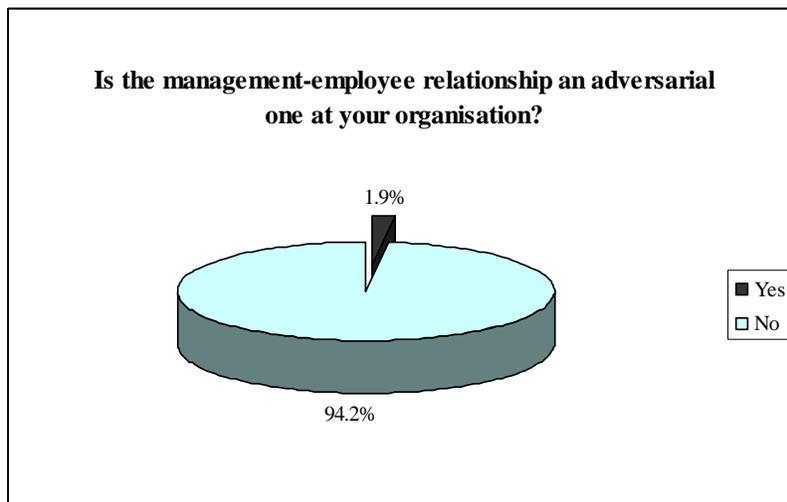


Figure 5.9 Management-employee relationships at the organization

The majority of the respondents denied that they adopt any form of adversarial relationship. Indeed most of them acknowledge that they enjoy a cooperative relationship instead of an adversarial one.

Table 5.18 The management-employee relationship in the sector

Type of employment relationship	Number of responses	Percent
Essentially adversarial	3	5.8
Essentially co-operative	41	78.8
Not Applicable	4	7.7
Missing	4	7.7
Total	52	100.0

Findings show that the Private and the Parastatal sectors account for the small percentage of organizations (13.3%) that admitted to the presence of adversarial relationship between management and unions.

We also sought to determine the relationship between the leader of the trade union and the management. Here are some verbatim responses given to describe the relationship: cordial, good, courteous, mutually respectful, social partners, excellent, frank/honest, based on trust, collaborative, professional and harmonious. This, however, reflects an ideal situation that is expected between the two parties but a different picture is painted by previous data in this report. For example, management of some sectors like Financial Services stated that they treat unions' representative as partners but when it comes to negotiations management prefer to deal directly with employees. In order to know more about the relationship between unions and management, a question was asked on the frequency of meetings between parties: Table 5.20 summarizes the responses for the Private and Parastatal managers:

Table 5.20 The frequency of meetings with the union

	Sector of activity	Frequency of meetings with the union
Private Sector	Retailing & Trade	Usually thrice a year.
	Textile	Every six months or whenever there is an issue to be discussed and in other cases there is the presence of work council meetings every two months consisting of employees of the organization, not unions' representatives.
	Financial Services	At least once a year through the joint negotiating council. There are also ad hoc meetings to discuss specific issues as and when required.
	Oil & Petroleum Marketing	On an ad hoc basis.
	Agro Industry	Unions meetings are held rarely and in other cases it is 6-8 meetings a year or done at the enterprise level with shop stewards, 6-8 meetings in a year.
	Catering & Tourism	One every two months and in other cases it is rare as they only manifest themselves when there is a problem.
	Building & Construction	As and when required. In other cases it is very rare, only in case of conflict or held every two months.
	Telecommunication	Once a month.
	Aviation	At least one meeting every six months.
Parastatal Sector	Services	Monthly, but sometimes earlier if, for instance, there are urgent decisions to be made.
	Transport	Compulsory-Joint Negotiating Council once a month and as and when required.
	Public Utilities	Every two months.
	Training & Research	As and when the need arise.
	Weather Forecasting	Ad hoc but at least once a year.
	Tea	Once every three months.
	Education	Meetings are held at the request of unions as far as possible and in other cases it is done monthly. Also, the Whitley council meetings are held on average twice yearly, consultative meetings are held as and when required.

For the Private sector, more precisely in the Catering and Tourism sector, meetings are held only in crisis situations when there are problems. This information is similar for the Oil and Petroleum Marketing sector where it is qualified as an *ad hoc* approach. In the Agro sector, meetings are reported to be held rarely, as in Building and construction. In

the Agro sector these are held at enterprise level which is believed to be less than effective since individual organizational problems are more difficult to voice out and address.

In the Parastatal sector, for instance in the Transport and Education industries, there is the presence of Joint Negotiating Council and Whitley Council respectively whose meetings are held on a monthly basis, as well as whenever required. This is an amalgam of both unstructured and structured meetings which are thought to produce fruitful results.

Furthermore, in the Public sector there is the Departmental Whitley Council to which unions in this sector send their requests. However, it is believed that more often than not, union representatives have meetings directly with management and, following amicable discussions of conflicts and grievances, the latter are resolved to the satisfaction of both parties.

5.9.5 Unions' place in the HRM system

5.9.5.1 Are unions complementary to HRM functions?

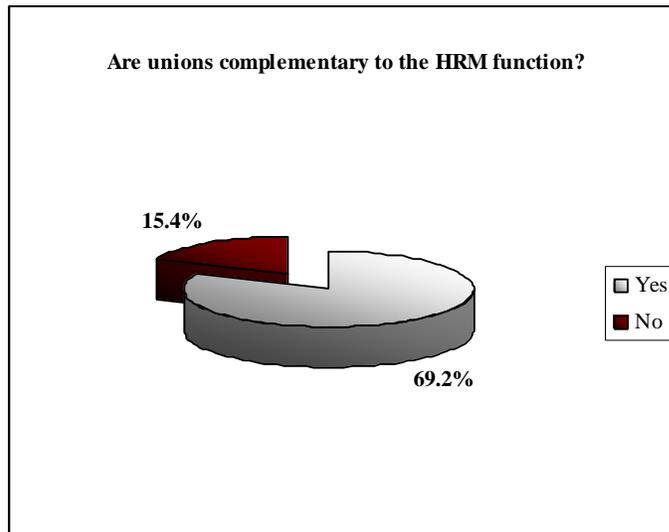


Figure 5.10 Are unions complementary to the HRM function?

This question was put in order to know the importance that unions play in the wider context of Human Resource Management. As both disciplines are interrelated and seek to achieve a number of common objectives, it was necessary to determine if tasks or responsibilities or roles are being shared or otherwise. Figure 5.10 shows that some 15.4% of the respondents completely distinguish trade unions from the overall HRM function while a much larger proportion (69.2%) accept trade unions into the HRM function and as such treat unions as partners in the business.

Table 5.21 The extent to which unions are seen as complementary to HRM

	Are HRM and unions complementary?				Total
	Yes	No	Not Applicabl	Missing	
Privat	62.5%	16.7%	12.5%	8.3%	100.0
Publi	87.5%	.0%	12.5%	.0%	100.0
Parastat	70.0%	20.0%	10.0%	.0%	100.0
Total	69.2%	15.4%	11.5%	3.8%	100.0

All the three sectors showed a high integration of Trade Unions within the wider HRM role. However, some 20% and 16.7% mitigated responses from the Parastatal and Private sectors respectively show that they do not see such integration. If we consider the model devised by Guest (2001), these organizations favour more individualistic relationships or so-called bilateral relationships where unions are not present or else in a marginal role. It is important to note that in the Mauritian context, the individualistic relationship can be realized by union substitution strategies; this means giving all sorts of arguments for people to either lose faith in unions or else view them as unnecessary. Still applying the Guest model, where unions are accepted and treated as partners, the majority of responding managers claim to practice cooperation and partnership. The disadvantage associated with this type of relationship is that unions might turn out into “yes” people and ultimately develop loyalty based on vested interests. In short, unions may stand to lose in terms of their identity and role.

5.9.5.2 Presence of employee services in organizations

A series of employee services was listed for the respondents to state which, if any, apply to their respective organization.

Table 5.22 Presence of different employee services present in organizations

Employee services offered		Responses			Total %
		Yes %	No %	Missing %	
a.	A employee Welfare policy/programme/office	75.0	23.1	1.9	100.0
b.	A Wellness/Quality of Work Life Programme	40.4	51.9	7.7	100.0
c.	A Health and Safety policy that is well communicated	80.8	17.3	1.9	100.0
d.	A work-life balance policy and strategy	40.4	42.3	17.3	100.0
e.	An Ethics policy and programme	63.5	28.8	7.7	100.0
f.	A Corporate Social Responsibility policy and programme	50.0	36.5	13.5	100.0
g.	A Communications strategy	75.0	17.3	7.7	100.0
h.	A Quality Management system, incorporating employee participation	53.8	36.5	9.6	100.0
i.	Regular employee attitude or job satisfaction surveys	32.7	55.8	11.5	100.0
j.	A HRM function staffed by highly competent and qualified individuals	67.3	26.9	5.8	100.0
k.	A HRM strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy	69.2	26.9	3.8	100.0
l.	A HRD strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy	63.5	26.9	9.6	100.0

Most of the HR practices are generally being applied by all the sectors. A well communicated Health and Safety policy was one service cited by a large number of managers. However, Wellness Programmes, job satisfaction surveys and work-life balance strategies are not very much practiced.

Table 5.23 Presence of different employee services by sector

Services offered		Private sector		Public Service		Parastatals	
		Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %	Yes %	No %
I	A HRM function staffed by highly competent and qualified individuals	54.2	37.5	12.5	75.0	15.0	70.0
J	A HRM strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy	87.5	8.3	75.0	25.0	40.0	50.0
K	A HRD strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy	87.5	8.3	62.5	25.0	50.0	50.0

75% of respondents from the Public sector stated that they do not have an HRM function staffed with competent and qualified individuals. This is evident because of the presence of the Public Service Commission which centrally carries out most of the HRM, that is, recruitment, selection and promotion. The PSC is in fact the HR department of practically all Public organizations. This form of structure, with the “HRM” being “far from” the organization, encourages the growth of unions as the PSC has strict terms of reference and cannot carry out the soft aspect of HRM, that is, welfare of employees. The roles of unions are not exactly compromised since they have specific roles to engage in vis-à-vis workers. This can also be explained by the high rate of unionization in this sector. The same situation is to be found in Parastatal bodies which account for the 70% responses, confirming that no HRM function exists. Furthermore, 75% respondents from the Public sector acknowledge that there is an integration between the HRM strategy and the corporate strategy, that is, here HRM is considered to be strategic which is believed to be a difficult task to execute given that the HRM function itself is taken over centrally by a remote third party. Now, if this is really the case then this leaves room for unions to operate freely on more basic issues of work. This is also the case to some extent with the Parastatal bodies where 40% of respondents claim that there is a form of integration between HRM strategy and the corporate strategy. However, in this very sector, another 50% denies such integration which could mean that HRM encompasses more department-level issues, as such compromising to some extent the potency of unions.

Concerning the Human Resource Development strategy being linked to the corporate strategy, the 62.5% of responses from the Public sector reveal that this is indeed the case. This would mean that education of workers through training courses, seminars and talks in the interest of increasing the workers' knowledge and skills are undertaken by the organization to meet the corporate' goals and objectives. In such cases, trade unions' roles would be redundant if they also organized such activities. In the Parastatal sector, 50% claim and the other 50% deny any links between HRD and the corporate strategy.

In the Private sector the situation is clearly different. Because this sector is dominated by many multinational organizations and local owners of large firms, they have full rights to devise their own approach to treating employees. This is why approximately 54.2% of the respondents favour the existence of an HRM function, 87.5% responses believe that there is an integration of HRM function with the corporate strategy and the same percentage believe that there is a link between HRD and corporate strategy. Like it has been reported earlier, the strategic functions of HRM sometimes leave trade unions free space to carry out their activities but the facts speak otherwise. HRM normally is viewed as a cost centre in an organization, more so when it is not strategic, but when this is the case HRM tries to become oriented towards organizational objectives and tries to build commitment to the bottom line only and any opposition to this goal, as embodied by trade unions, is not well regarded.

5.9.5.3 Presence of organizational policies

In this section managers were presented with a list of policies and they were to state policies exist or not in their organization to provide a way of knowing and being aware of the conditions in which the employees work and also to position the existence or even the roles of unions in these organizations.

Table 5.24 Presence of organizational policies

Policies		Percentage responses			
		Exist	Not exist	Missing value	Total
a.	Prevent discrimination against any employee in hiring, promotions, benefits	78.8	15.4	5.8	100.0
b.	Prevent workplace harassment in all its forms	76.9	15.4	7.7	100.0
c.	Ensure that supervisors and managers adopt participative, collaborative styles of leadership	86.5	7.7	5.8	100.0
d.	Ensure that employees enjoy high motivation and job satisfaction	75.0	17.3	7.7	100.0
e.	Ensure that employees are provided with adequate, pleasant and modern resources and environment for their work	84.6	9.6	5.8	100.0
f.	Ensure that employees are provided with opportunities to participate in and influence decision-making in the organization	55.8	36.5	7.7	100.0

It is to be noted from the table that 36.5% of the respondents stated that there is no policy in place that permits the employee to participate in and influence decision-making in the organization. This would mean that unions' representatives are not being treated as partners because partnership is sharing the task and stimulating views and opinions that, at the end of the day, contribute to the making of a decision, major or minor.

Table 5.25 Presence of Organizational policies on a sector wise basis

Policies		Private sector		Public Services		Parastatals	
		Exist %	Not exist %	Exist %	Not exist %	Exist %	Not exist %
a.	Prevent discrimination against any employee in hiring, promotions, benefits	83.3	8.3	75.0	12.5	75.0	25.0
b.	Prevent workplace harassment in all its	83.3	8.3	75.0	12.5	70.0	25.0

	forms						
c.	Ensure that supervisors and managers adopt participative, collaborative styles of leadership	83.3	8.3	87.5	.0	90.0	10.0
d.	Ensure that employees enjoy high motivation and job satisfaction	79.2	12.5	87.5	.0	65.0	30.0
e.	Ensure that employees are provided with adequate, pleasant and modern resources and environment for their work	79.2	12.5	87.5	.0	84.6	9.6
f.	Ensure that employees are provided with opportunities to participate in and influence decision-making in the organization	54.2	37.5	50.0	37.5	60.0	35.0

In the Private sector, policies for providing employees with opportunities to participate in and influence decision making in organizations are claimed by 37.5% of the respondents to be inexistent. This can suggest autocratic forms of management and a lack of workplace democracy since neither employees nor their representatives are consulted in the formulation of policies and strategies and in the implementation of decisions, even though in our previous data they were said to be treated as partners. The same percentage is to be noted in the Public sector and some 35% for the Parastatal sector.

Furthermore the Parastatal sector also denotes some deficiencies in the establishment of policies pertaining to the prevention of discrimination. Prevention of harassment revealed by some 25% respondents and 30% of the respondents of this sector stated that there was no policy for ensuring high motivation and job satisfaction of employees. This would mean that issues that trade unions have to tackle are actually broader than in other sectors.

5.9.6 Future of Trade Unionism

Unions are seen as important partners who can help in the education of employees and also help management in taking decisions as it is believed that management does not have all solutions to business problems. Unions are also viewed as a movement which should participate positively in national issues as it is seen as one of the major stakeholders in the promotion of socio-economic development in the country. With the emergence of more employer-employee friendly practices, unions will be regarded more as a business partner working for a healthy work environment. Unions are also considered to be important, even necessary, but a lot still has to be done by both parties (management and unions) to understand each other and establish a real and credible basis for cooperation.

Managers state that unions have for long been viewed as backward, dormant and not credible hence considered as having a bleak future ahead. In relation to the new economic model, a modern enterprise can no longer rely on the traditional Mauritian model of employee relations, they say. There needs to be a rapid change in mindset, that is, trade union leaders must become business sensitive and grow to be more professional themselves. With Globalization trade union leaders will have no choice than to be more professional and to take on board issues such as: competitiveness, productivity, quality, flexible employment, multi-skilling, flexi time and life long learning. These are the opinions expressed by responding managers. They believe that unions are condemned to sink if they continue to keep a narrow view of their roles and of contribution they can make to business.

Managers assert that various sectors are increasingly adopting a more democratic style of management, and so it might be more appropriate to have workers council instead of formal trade union organizations. Respondents state that with improvements brought about in organizations, unions have hardly any significant complaints to bring forward. The general trend is towards a decline in union potency and presence due to the changing economic environment, increasingly individualistic values, adherence to teams instead of unions and so on. However, unions may survive if they are willing to accept change,

commitment to high quality work, adhere to being results oriented instead of focusing on the limits posed by the infamous “schemes of service”. Management wishes that unions encourage flexibility both in attitudes and work practices and call upon them to approach employee relations issues in a proactive manner with a view to improving the conditions of employment of workers, whilst preserving jobs and also supporting job creation. The unions, they say, should be aware of the global changes and participate in national issues for example, job creation, productivity, energy crisis, climate changes and so on.

5.10 Conclusion

Industrial Relations is no doubt going to undergo changes, but it is by no means an irrelevant concept. In fact when we state changes in IR, it does not always imply a radical change, but rather a change of emphasis. For instance, the idea of negotiation on which collective bargaining is based, continues to be valid even if the trend is towards decentralized bargaining. Nor is there anything in HRM that contradicts the value of negotiation. HRM undoubtedly poses a challenge to IR as we have seen. But democracy and pluralism are based on the recognition of different interest groups within a society, each acting as a check and balance in relation to the other to prevent a centralization or abuse of power. Since HRM is enterprise-focused, there is a need for a system which can deal with critical issues arising in the labour market. Traditional IR mechanisms such as freedom of association, collective bargaining, and dispute settlement mechanisms continue to be relevant. The fact that some traditional IR features may need to be reviewed, does not imply that they are irrelevant, as some managers seem to think; the need for a greater enterprise focus does not imply the absence of a national focus as well. Likewise, in Mauritius, findings from the management survey portrayed that trade unions are viewed as a nuisance and that their roles are disturbing the normal functioning of the enterprise. Stating that unions are their partners is clearly a mere politically-correct phrase. A contradiction is obvious, and it is believed that for the development of a healthy relationship, to understand each other based on real, mature, mutual trust, Trade Unions must also not go to the extent of forming “one” with management and instead maintain their own role, status and identity.

CHAPTER 6

GOVERNMENT SERVANTS' ASSOCIATION (GSA): A CASE STUDY

6.1 Introduction

This section of the project is focused on a case study, namely the Government Servants' Association. This workers' organisation is chosen because it is our partner in the project. The vision of the GSA is to be a respected leader and a reference in trade unionism in Mauritius; its mission is to be at the forefront of change leadership and sound industrial relations. For this chapter, a brief story and evolution of GSA will be elaborated and its status as a progressive association will also be evaluated and discussed in relation to other forms of trade union federations that are present in the country.

6.2 Definition of Progressivism

Progressivism is open to a variety of ways to combat oppression. Considering the varieties of oppression that exist in this world, resistance must take on many forms, from social to cultural to organizational. Struggle occurs on many levels, all of which are important in the overall battle. Now, progressivism is not only a struggle against systemic oppression, but also tries to move forward and build, to change the conditions and systems that further oppression. To effect change, progressivism needs to build a broad and mass-based movement. To "advocate progress" or to "favour progress," progressivism admits that change cannot come about by an individual's goodwill and intentions alone, but through the united struggle of people who oppose and act against various forms of oppression. This is a movement that understands that in unity there is strength, but also that, in order to grow and change there must also be diversity among those united.

The main criteria put forward for the identification of progressive organizations are: Inspiring leaders, networking opportunities for women, innovative form of recruitment and external reputation.

6.3 The case study

6.3.1 History

Government Servants' Association was founded in the year 1945 by a group of dedicated persons who felt the need to organize themselves with the aim of defending, protecting and improving the conditions of work and the living standard of workers, regardless of their status, function, colour or creed. The Association took the name of Mauritius Government and Employees Association and was registered on 3rd October 1945. It was re-registered as Government Servants and Other Employees Association under the Ordinance 36 of 1954 and finally was again re-registered as Government Servants' Association under the Industrial Act No.67 of 1973. The Association formed through a breakdown of the Government Teachers' Association and the Government Railway Workers. While the two other unions catered for workers of specific grades, the GS & OEA had a greater ambition and recruited workforce from different grades of the administrative level (for instance, clerical, professional, technical and manual grades) all from both public and private sectors. The Association became the most representative with some 14, 000 members across over 100 grades.

The GSA was created with a membership of 2, 700 in 1945, experienced a fall in 1965 to 1,162, and again a rise in 1970 at 2,914; The following table shows the evolution in membership to date:

Table 6.1 Membership of GSA 1945-2006

Year	1945	1965	1970	1975	1980	1985	2005	2006
Membership	2 700	1 162	2 914	8 990	11 761	14 500	11 217	11 998

In terms of presidency, the GSA has had a number of General Presidents, namely: Yves Lefebure, Hedley Sakir, Gabriel Avice, Serge Claverie, José Moutia, Abdool Raman Abdool, Luc François, Malleck Amode and at present, Radhakrishna Sadien.

6.3.2 Structure

At present, the GSA is structured into some 184 branches including one in Rodrigues. A Branch is defined as a category of workers based on a certain grades, for instance, ushers in education, office assistants at the Ministry of Social Security, drivers, clerks, and so on. The complete list of all the branches of GSA in the Appendix. Each branch has its executive committee consisted of a President, Secretary and 'delegates'. The number of members in the executive committee is always at an odd number with minimum members being 5 and maximum 13. The number of 'delegates' accepted by a branch depends on the number of members in that specific branch. For instance, for less than 100 members only one delegate is accepted, two for a membership of up to 200, and three for a membership of over two hundred. The Rodrigues branch has five delegates. A delegate has the power to vote through ballot. The Managing Committee is made up of 11 members under the Chairmanship of a General President. The Managing Committee is supported by an Executive Council of 25 members elected every two years at the Annual General Meeting (AGM).

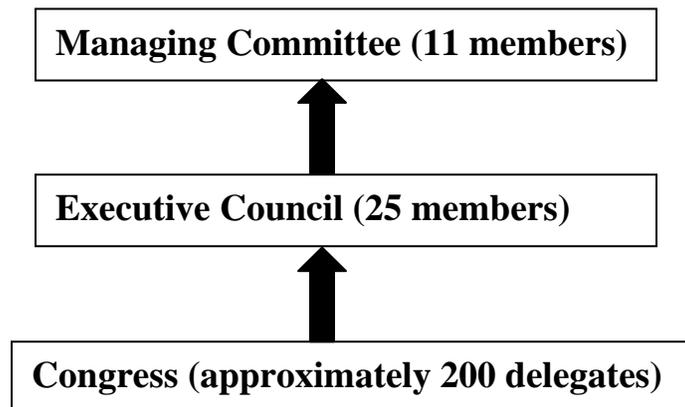


Figure 6.1 Structure of GSA

With their dedication, integrity and hard work, their sense of sacrifice and of honour, the successive leaders of the GSA have ensured that, following their own retirement from the leadership, their successors are animated with the same spirit. This is how the Government Servants' Association is renowned for its contribution in the overall development of the country.

6.3.3 Affiliations

- *International*

Consistent with its policy of openness at the international level, the association is affiliated to several international organizations sharing the same fundamental principles of democracy as the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU). These affiliations proved to be beneficial in terms of training, education, documentation, health and safety, and in general capacity building for its members. The G.S.A. is also affiliated to a series of international organizations, namely the International Trade Secretariat (I.T.S); Public Services International (PSI); International Union of Food (IUF); Union Network International (UNI); International Federation of Building Wood Workers (IFBWW) and the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF).

- *Regional*

The G.S.A. is also involved in regional initiatives with a view to building a network of solidarity in the region, and has developed collaboration with unions in South Africa, namely: National Education Health & Allied Workers Union (NEHAWU) and Hospital Personnel of South Africa (HOSPERSA), Civil Service Employees Association of Zimbabwe, Trade Unions in Reunion Island, Madagascar, Seychelles and the Comoros Island. The Union has also protocol agreement with HEHAW of South Africa and Confederation General du Travail (C.G.T) Action Sociale of France.

- *Locally*

Locally the Association is affiliated to the State Employees Federation (SEF) and the Mauritius Quality Institute (MQI). The GSA is also affiliated to the Mauritius Trade Union Congress (MTUC) through the SEF. The GSA has participated actively in improving the quality of life of its members and their families in the fight against substance abuse, the promotion of cooperatives and the protection of the environment. By participating at policy level, the union has also contributed toward influencing policies at such institutions as: the Industrial and Vocational Training Board (IVTB), the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), the National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC), the National Agency for the Treatment and Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers (NATRESA), the National Savings Fund, the Mauritius Civil Service Mutual Aid Association Ltd., the National Economic and Social Council (NESC), The Mauritius Quality Institute (MQI), Task Forces on Public Service Reforms and the Steering Committee on the Training Needs Analysis for the Public Sector.

6.3.4 The Rodrigues Branch

The Rodrigues branch of the Association is manned by an Executive Committee, at a point in time chaired by Gravel Collet, who was then succeeded by Francis Clair and then Kenel Begué respectively, both activists who, as Presidents of that branch, have greatly contributed towards the improvement of the lot of the Rodriguan people. Noteworthy is the fact that the GSA is the first workers' organization to have organized the workforce in Mauritius as well as Rodrigues as well being the first to raise a voice against malpractices and maladministration of the State. The Association is known to have been at the forefront of the overall development of Rodrigues, and a pioneer of the concept of "Rodriguanisation" of the island. The GSA had also played a major role in the training of the Rodriguan members through seminars and workshops under the aegis of Public Services International (PSI) and the Internal Federation of Plantation, Agricultural and Allied Workers.

6.3.5 Historical accomplishments

- In its desire to be a representative, strong and stable union, the GSA sought and obtained affiliation with the Mauritius Labour Congress. Through that body, pressure was exercised on the Government to remove sub-section 3 of section 19 of the Constitution Order which authorized the Government to include restrictions on the right of association of civil servants which was in blatant violation of ILO Conventions.
- The Industrial Relations Act No. 67 of 1973 denied trade unions the right to form a National Centre grouping trade unions of both the public and private sectors such that the GSA found itself outside the mainstream trade unions movement. Since the law was anti-constitutional and against the ILO convention No. 87, both the MLC and GSA met the Prime Minister and urged him to remove the restriction. This was achieved by an amendment of the IRA in 1979.
- In collaboration with the Government Railway Workers Union and the Government Teachers Union, GSA obtained an increase in the war bonus after a strike threat.
- The Central Whitley Council was set up only after the Government Teachers Union, Government Railway Workers Union and the GSA rejected Government's proposal to have a Joint Consultative Committee. The first meeting of the Central Whitley Council took place on 23rd March 1949 with two representatives of each of the abovementioned unions. However, the CWC was wretched due to some diehard attitudes of some of the union representatives. Although the GSA was withdrawn from the council at the time. Around the same period the idea of forming a federation for public officers came about to enable a better coordination between the different unions of the sector. At the forefront of the attempt was Mr. Eddy Norton, secretary of the GSA. His objective was achieved three years later, that is, in 1957 where the Federation of Servants of the

Service Civil (FSSC). The federation was the only one to designate representatives to be on council.

- The organization was also among, if not the first, to give equal opportunities to the women to take on responsibilities such as branch presidents and to Executive Committee members and delegates. At least ten women were elected as Head of branches and nine at Executive Committee level.
- GSA is the first workers' organization to have enrolled as a member of the Mauritius Quality Institute and to compete for ISO certification.

6.3.6 Activities of the Association

- *Education and Training*

The success and the power of a trade union is measured by the strength of its members to remain in unity, by the capacity of its leaders to negotiate and also by the degree of awareness of its members on issues pertaining to their welfare. Driven by these motives, the GSA invests heavily in the education and training of its members. The Association runs an Education Center where regular courses, workshops and seminars are organized.

- *Provident Fund and the Benevolent Fund*

With the idea of embarking on other causes than traditional or conventional issues and also to pursue the objective of being a dynamic, innovative and lively organization, the GSA launched two projects: the Provident Fund and the Benevolent Fund. The Provident Fund which was initially meant for Savings for a Retirement Benefit has, in time, turned into a financial institution providing loan facilities to members, thus enabling them to cater for exams, health care, housing improvement or wedding expenses. The Provident Fund has, for the year 2004 alone, disbursed Rs. 12,345,000 benefiting some 820 members and has also paid Rs. 3,179,516 as retirement benefits and Rs. 211,529 as death

grants. The Provident Fund has also assisted the union financially for the construction of its own magnificent headquarters building at Beau Bassin. The Benevolent Fund was set up in the mid 1970's to assist members during funeral time by providing them a death grant, for their spouse, children and other dependants. In the year 2004 alone, the Fund has paid up Rs. 491, 900.00 to bereaved members of the union. During the CPE "Ranking" period, the Fund allocated bursaries to the members' children who ranked well at the CPE examinations.

- *Membership Fidelity cards*

Fidelity card was introduced to help raise the standard of living of members whereby the cards enable them to discounted prices at a series of retail stores, namely the Laboratoire Medicales Des Villes Soeurs; Pizza Hut; Manisa hotel; IBL Domestic Appliances; Gold Crest; Gold nest; Gold beach hotel; Le Water Park Leisure Village; Mille et Mille Chaussures; Mauvilac; IBL health care; Rainbow Insurance group; Mauritius Post and Cooperative Credit Union; Cathay Tours; Joonas and Co.ltd.; Casela; Farook Hossen Medic Optics Ltd., and K. Optics Ltd.

- *Social Activities*

Apart from negotiating better pay and better conditions of work, the Association is also involved in a series of social activities. Its Social Hall, which is placed at the disposal of its members for weddings and other family or social gatherings. In addition, Christmas celebrations are also organized for children of GSA members and their families. The Association has also launched a Senior Citizens' Association for its retired members, which organizes activities such as indoor games, outings, overseas trips and so on.

6.4 Comparative Analysis of GSA

It would not be an overstatement to assert that the GSA is on the right track of achieving status as a progressive workers' organization. At the same time, it would be preposterous

to position it as the only progressive union. Through our interviews with presidents of federations and confederations, it was refreshing to note the number of accomplishments achieved by some organizations which prompted the Research team to categorize them as progressive organizations as well. The dimensions which emerged to support this assertion are shown hereunder.

- **Education/training/workshops/seminars**

Like the GSA, the General workers Federation (GWF) caters for its members' training and education needs by the running workshops and training sessions. The Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions (FCSOU) has set up a computer training centre at Coromandel and is also engaged in training/workshop of newly-elected trade union officers, covering issues pertaining to legislation governing civil servants, customer care, handling of grievances, negotiation techniques and health and safety among others. Furthermore, the Federation of Parastatal Bodies and Other Unions (FPBOU) possesses a pool of negotiators who are trained by representatives of PSI and are brought with the President on each negotiation meeting to better empower them. For its part, the Federation of Progressive Unions (FPU) has also engaged in building of an IT centre to help members whose children have failed CPE and for everybody in general and also in improving the literacy level of members or people in the vicinity who are interested to improve themselves.

- **Communication**

Just like GSA has a structured form of communication, the GWF is also composed of an Executive Committee that meets monthly. The GWF also has an Assembly of Delegates which takes place every three months. The National Trade Union Confederation (NTUC) and the Federation des Travailleurs Unis (FTU) have regular meetings with the Federations' presidents and unions' president respectively. NTUC also organizes awareness and sensitization meetings and it also carries out meetings at the site of work. For the FCSOU, communication is carried out through faxes, email and telephone. The

secretariat at the seat of this Federation is very effective and members are easily contacted. Also, elections at the Federation are done on a two year basis which is considered as important to maintain unity among leaders and members. While for the FPBOU, the Executive Committee meets at two-month intervals. The Rodrigues Public Service Association affiliated to the Federation is informed of decisions through mails and letters. The FPU's General Assembly consists of about 900 delegates (all the Executive members [15 for each union] of the different unions affiliated to the Federation). This is carried out twice a year. Elections at the FPU are held every two years, at which are elected a President, Secretary and Treasury; monthly meetings are also held (40+3 members); there are also 15 "Militant Actifs;" weekly meetings are held using the concept of a "think-tank" comprising 15 members selected from the (40+3+15) group; the communication at the FPU is mostly effective through SMS for local communications and through email for international communications.

While GSA's accomplishment has been in the past associated very closely to workers' causes directly, it is now slightly more broadly oriented, such as the fidelity cards, Funds, and social activities. FCSOU's accomplishments, for their part, have remained focused on problems that touched employees more deeply, such as the PRB (it was not every year that people in the past benefited from a full one-month's end of year bonus, sometimes being only 25% of their salary and other times 50%; the Federation fought this cause fervently and today everybody benefits from full month's end of year bonus), duty remission on purchase of cars; vacation leave; sick leave refund; medical scheme for MRA officers, as well as bitter battles fought in favour of the ex-Development Works Corporation workers.

In the same vein, FPU's achievements are most noteworthy: the lengthy campaign to ban Asbestos from the workplace; designing a framework for Health and Safety at work; the campaign to review OSHWA; the ongoing struggle to review noise control regulations; efforts in organising labour in the 'newer' sector characterized by short-term contractual working arrangements (such as ICT); Lump Sum at the age of 60; better terms and conditions of work; recognition of unions in "risky sectors" where the need for unions is

even more necessary. The FPU also has a vision for future projects: training school, credit union for members, sponsorship for outdoor activities for members, polyvalent center, cooking courses for men; promoting social integration; fighting for the rights of foreign workers, and devising a means to create a 'strike fund', to name the most salient.

6.5 Conclusion

It can safely be said that the Government Servants' Association is a leading union, even if not the only one, in engaging in increasingly broad causes and issues whilst at the same time remaining close to the core concerns of workers, in other words, pay and working conditions of workers. It is important to highlight the accomplishments and efforts of the GSA as well as other Federations in relentlessly pursuing their cause, often with extremely limited resources. So, is it a mark of progressivism to be ISO certified? To be extensively affiliated to regional and international trade unions organizations? To cater for a wide range of non-work activities and facilities for members? Judging by an examination of our case study, its 11,998-strong membership, its balanced focus between traditional causes and wider non-work issues, its regional and international network and positive image, the GSA can be upheld as a leader in the trade union movement. By paying attention to maintaining this balanced focus and not straying too far into an accumulation of 'facilities' to members which represents a risk of turning into a welfare organization of sorts.

CHAPTER 7

GENDER ISSUES IN INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

7.1 Introduction

It is no secret that the Industrial Relations tradition has kept women in the periphery of discussions about issues pertaining to Industrial Relations. In Mauritius specifically, the industrial relations area is a reflection of a male perspective not only of work, organizations, and the trade union movement, but also of the general state of gender issues in the wider society. This chapter elaborates the theoretical and practical issues where industrial relations are being dominated by a so-called macho culture. One of the most obvious examples is that of the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), where, out of the total membership of 156 million in some 148 countries, women account for only about 61 million. Women are even more seriously under-represented in trade union leadership. While they make up about 39 per cent of global union membership, they represent only one per cent of the decision-making bodies of unions. Gender equality is far from being a reality within the trade union movement.

7.2 Theoretical Framework to explain the emergence of Gendered Industrial Relations

In a workplace situation there have been a lot of positional and environmental requirements for jobholders that have traditionally excluded women around issues of gender (Colgan & Ledwith, 2000). This can be one way to explain why women are under-represented in industrial relations leadership roles, within the power elites that deal with industrial relations issues (Kirton & Healy, 1999; Healy and Kirton, 2000). For instance, women have traditionally been stereotyped as being emotionally unsuitable for trade union leadership (Cockburn, 1991, 1983). This stereotyping helps to explain how female characteristics have become associated with lower workplace status (Schwarzkopf, 2004). Stereotyping has also helped to limit women's opportunities to progress into positions where they are able to challenge the existing masculine notions of industrial relations and this explains how women's specific interest as workers have become subordinated to their male

colleague' needs. However, this position may be changing in some organizations as there are equitable power relations shift between men and women (Sayce, Green, & Ackers 2006).

Bourdieu (1985) conceives power in terms of access to capital, which is defined as the skills and resources that men and women bring to interactions (Silva, 2005). Thus, he has devised a theory of habitus and capital, which could provide a dynamic theoretical framework to analyze the shift in power relations between men and women within a country's industrial relations.

7.2.1 What is Habitus and how is it related to industrial relations?

In Bourdieu (1985)'s work, habitus can be defined as a system of durable and transposable "dispositions" (lasting, acquired schemes of perception, thought and action). The individual agent develops these dispositions in response to the determining structures (such as class, family, and education) and external conditions (field/s, for instance, sports, professional life, art, and so on) they encounter.

The habitus provides the practical skills and dispositions necessary to navigate within different fields and guides the choices of the individual without ever being strictly reducible to prescribed, formal rules. At the same time, the habitus is constantly and iteratively remade by these navigations and choices.

In the field of organizations and trade unions, the "objective" culture is naturally seen to be male. Men being masculine in nature do not have any difficulty to cope with the dominant masculine culture because they find themselves in harmony with it. In fact, men hold the greatest amount of both capital and power and this is even reflected in the high level of success that men have during negotiations in the field of industrial relations.

In the context of industrial relations, the hard work of adjusting habitus to get a hold of the industrial relations field is exclusively women's. For example, environmental factors such as family responsibilities have made it difficult for women to be involved in union work. In addition

the macho style and language used by men in negotiations may also make women reluctant to take on more senior positions in trade unions (Cunnison & Stageman, 1995; Ledwith & Colgan, 2002).

7.2.2 What is capital and how is it related to industrial relations?

Bourdieu states that capital is a representation of power. There are different forms of capital, namely, economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital (Silva, 2005).

Economic Capital

Economic capital is connected to the command that one has over economic resources such as cash and assets. It is a commodity that can be traded for individual power.

Social Capital

Social capital is used by players to consolidate their position in the game of industrial relations. Players recognize and utilize relationships and acquaintances that will respond to favours. Thus, social networks become a resource to be used to increase one's entry and standing in the game of industrial relations. However, there may be men-only networks that can feel exclusionary for outsiders like women, who would certainly be uncomfortable accessing this kind of network that help to support the masculine nature of industrial relations.

Cultural Capital

Cultural capital is about explaining the social differences between men and women through the production of knowledge thereby permitting the differences to be established as "natural" rather than socially constructed. The inheritance of cultural capital has been transmitted from generation to generation and this is what gives a person his or her sense of identity and belonging. However, it happens that over generations the transmission of cultural capital in terms of knowledge and ability has resulted in the assignment of female characteristics as subordinate in the fields of industrial relations.

Symbolic Capital

As its name itself suggests, symbolic capital is a powerful outcome of the interaction of economic, social and cultural capital. Its power is related to how it is recognized in the field of industrial relations.

7.2.3 Men, Women, Capital and Industrial Relations

As stated earlier, the dominant “objective” culture is masculine. Men possess the capital in all its forms, which influences their opportunities for success. Industrial relations rules and boundaries have historically been established by men. However, women’s increasing organic involvement and progression in trade union roles has allowed them slowly to increase their economic, social, cultural and symbolic capital which will enable them to participate as representatives or members in their trade unions. This slow but sure shift in power relations will subtly alter the rules of the industrial relations game by placing women’s concerns such as child care arrangements on trade union’s agenda (Danieli & Greene, 2003; Kirton & Healy, 1999).

7.3 The Realities of Women worldwide

From its very founding meeting in the year 1919, the International Labour Organisation (ILO) excluded women. Women labour leaders from the Women Trade Union League (WTUL) and the Young Women Christian Association (YWCA), alarmed by this development, organized in the same year the International Congress of Working Women as a women’s labour shadow conference to the ILO meeting. Ever since, historical traditions in industrial relations, including research in industrial relations, have been challenged by women workers, women trade unionists, managers and researchers, for the heavy male bias persistently demonstrated in their conceptual and practical bases.

However, there are countries where women are really marginalized mainly through the quality and level of jobs which they hold, particularly in developing countries, which are as poor as the attention that is given to their right to organize in order to defend themselves better. Evidences of such treatment can be seen in the export processing zones (EPZs), in the sweatshops of Asia, in

Latin America and even in some of the more vulnerable areas of Europe and United States where women are suffering not only inequalities but very often sexual and other types of harassment. (International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, 1998).

7.4 Barriers to women's participation in Unions

The barriers to women's poor participation in trade unions' activities are now well-known. These are elaborated in the box below:

Table 7.1 Barriers to women's participation in trade unions' activities

- *Women do not understand or appreciate how unions can benefit them;*
- *Women fear reprisals from employers (including losing their jobs) for joining unions;*
- *Women do not have time to join or participate in union activities because of conflicting family responsibilities, and childcare obligations;*
- *Women often lack the confidence to join unions or to aspire to leadership positions;*
- *Religious and cultural norms and traditions prevent women from joining unions;*
- *Women face objections from their spouses or families;*
- *The male-dominated culture or activities of the union or hostile reactions from male members discourage women from joining unions;*
- *Stereotyped ideas persist about women's abilities, preferences and roles;*
- *Unions are not sensitive to the needs of women workers;*
- *Women are more likely than men to be in atypical forms of work or in the informal sector where they are difficult to reach and organize;*
- *Entrenched union rules and structures are not conducive to women's participation and advancement to leadership positions;*
- *Informal procedures in the unions for nominations or appointments rely on established male networks.*

7.5 Situation in Mauritius

Ramgooty-Wong (2004) states that the current framework of industrial relations in Mauritius is neither adequately enabling nor particularly repressive, and various speeches and reports have stressed the need for greater partnership and ‘gender responsibility’ on the part of all parties, but the discourse has so far hardly touched on the specific issue of women’s participation, visibility and status in the world of trade unions in Mauritius. SADC (2001) reported that some trade unions blocks did not have a single female on their executive board, and that there was no woman president of any trade union in Mauritius, even in sectors where the workforce was female-dominated in numbers, such as the EPZ (Export Processing Zone).

Millennium development goals clearly include nations’ commitments to eliminate discriminatory practices in employment, and work towards equitable access to political institutions. In the latest Country Assessment document to the UN, Mauritius was reported to have an increasing female labour force, which nevertheless did not translate into access to higher status or better-paid jobs, nor into reduced discrimination as compared to men in the workforce. A recent study on the low rate of unionization in Mauritius also confirmed that female representation in trade unions was marginal, even if leaders expressed the awareness that the situation needed a reversal.

In Mauritius, the stated goals of the national gender policy (2005: 7) are: a) to promote gender quality and empowerment of women through mainstreaming gender in national development process and b) to improve the socio-economic, legal, civic as well as political conditions of women, men and children in the Republic of Mauritius. The same document lists the gender concerns identified as current “priority” and which illustrate key problems experienced as follows:

- Gender and economic empowerment;
- Gender, education and training;
- Gender and health;
- Gender, human rights, violence against women and legal issues;
- Gender, power and decision making;
- Gender, agriculture, fisheries and environment;

- Gender, the media and tourism.

Recently, micro-credit and other entrepreneurship development efforts were noted as focusing on women, and a recent survey has also thrown some light on the situation of women at board level, but the middle-management level of women in organizations has not benefited from much active attention so far. As far as the trade union movement is concerned, the low rate of unionization has compelled trade union leaders to develop strategies to increase their membership, and part of that strategy has been to target women as an important group, given their higher participation in the labour market. Time will now tell if the national gender policy's written strategy to "increase knowledge of gender concerns within the union activities" by "strengthening skills of trade unionists in gender analysis" and promoting "actions that enable more women to participate in trade union activities" (2005, p.37) will be borne out through a convergence with trade unionist's strategies. The report on Low Rate of Unionization produced by the University of Mauritius, rated it at 22 percent in 2002 and forwarded some causal factors which included the marginal representation of women in union activities, and the long hours of work and difficulties in securing release and time-off, intimidation by Management and the fear of being watched, bureaucracy and delaying tactics on the part of Management, and negative public image of unions, to mention but a few.

7.6 Gender Equality Bargaining

Green & Kurton (2002) argue that women's participation and involvement must increase in order that women can develop policies and agendas to address their specific representational concerns. This view has also been put forward by Colling & Dickens (1989) and Sinclair (1996), contending that women's experiences of trade unions must be improved if more women are to be encouraged to join and participate in unions. The only way to achieve such an objective is for trade unions to present other issues, apart the traditional ones, in collective bargaining meetings.

According to ILO (2001) unions are nearly unlimited in the types of issues, which they might present for negotiations. Every worker, irrespective of sex, race, colour, religion, political opinion,

national or social origin, age, sexual orientation or disability has the right to an equitable, fair and safe working environment as well as the right to be able to fulfill responsibilities relating to his/her personal and family life. As such, any issue which is identified as eliminating direct or indirect discrimination, promoting equality of opportunity and treatment or more effectively balancing work and family responsibilities is a legitimate issue for collective bargaining. Unions are only limited by restrictions which are articulated through national or local legislation or by employer attitudes. Through gender equality bargaining, unions can either reinforce existing rights in legislations or by means of collective agreements by negotiating with the employers on working life issues which have traditionally been ignored. Unions should be in a position to choose these issues strategically which will affect their bargaining leverage and success. Issues that can form part of this bargaining process are:

- Non-discrimination and dignity at the workplace such as: policies against sex discrimination; sexual harassment; violence at the workplace; equal opportunities in hiring and promotion; equal access to education and training programmes and affirmative action to give women a voice at all levels in the company.
- Wages and benefits: equal pay, job classification, pensions, transport benefits, medical benefits, overtime entitlements, bonus systems, housing benefits and dependent allowances.
- Maternity protection and family responsibilities: non-discrimination against pregnant and nursing women, maternity leave and cash benefits, job security, reproductive health care, leave for prenatal checkups, rights of pregnant and nursing mothers, paternity leave, parental leave, family leave, child care facilities, care of the elderly or disabled and protection against discrimination or victimization.
- Hours of work: basic hours and overtime, night work, part-time work, flexible working time, job sharing for expectant and nursing mothers and time offs for family.
- Leaves of absence: paid annual leave, compassionate or grievance leave, maternity/paternity/parental leave, medical or sick leave, paid education or training leave and other personal leave (for marriage, and so on).

- Health, safety and the work environment: health and environmental hazards, ergonomics, health and safety committees and safety representatives, personal protective equipment, welfare facilities and services, disabled workers, duty to accommodate reproductive health, HIV and AIDS information and impact of new technologies.
- Defending rights of non-permanent (casual, temporary, task workers, seasonal, contract, part-time, rural, home-workers, domestic, migrant, indigenous and tribal) and vulnerable workers: extend general conditions to such workers, eliminate child labour.

Unions must take steps to overcome the barriers to female participation and to ensure that women are visible and active in all aspects of union life, for instance, as members, activists and leaders. If trade unions are to champion gender equality in employment as a basic human and workers' right, then first and foremost they have to show that equality is an integral part of their own internal policies and structures. Unions cannot be credible unless women are adequately represented and fully involved in all union structures and business. It is important that trade unions formulate specific statements of policy on gender equality. Such statements could be in the form of resolutions and policy documents adopted by executive boards, special publications, position papers, equality plans and guidelines on gender. The policy statement can then serve as a benchmark for future union action. Implementation of that policy can be effective only when treated as a mainstream union issue rather than a “women only” issue.

7.7 Rationale and Methodology of the study

With the newly industrialized nation status acquired by Mauritius within the last ten years or so, the formal employment sector now consists of about 50% women, with as many girls as boys finishing secondary education. In spite of this, the representation of women in decision-making and managerial positions is far from representative of their actual numerical participation in the entire workforce. Here are some statistics that indicate the under representation and the inferiority of women: in the year 2000, the number of women elected in the National Assembly was 4 against 62 males; in the year 2001 a household survey indicated that the employment income was

significantly lower for women than for men; for the year 2006; the primary sector included 11.1% males against 6.1% females; Communications included 8.7% males against 2.6% females, Public Administration and defense included 9.0 males against 5.8 females and finally the hotels and restaurants sector included 7.7% males against 6.0 females.

In order to closely examine the situation of women in industrial relations, and to identify the areas for change, two activities were organized:

- A Small postal survey;
- A consultative workshop/Focus group.

7.7.1 The postal Survey

The following process was adopted for constructing the sample for this survey of limited scope:

- Four sectors of activity were chosen selectively out of the master list generated for the national survey. These are: Education, Industry and Commerce, Media and Other Unions namely: Union Of Government Economists, Union Of Public Officers of Ex-TDA Workers, Union of Municipalities Workers, Union Of Workers of Approved Services, Union Of Workers Of The Development Works Corporation, Government Professional Engineers Association, Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board Staff and Employees Union, Civil Status Officers Union, Port-Louis Harbour and Docks Workers Union, National Women Council Employees Union and The Rural Local Government Staff Association;
- Twelve (12) unions were considered to represent the sectors stated above;
- From each of the 12 unions in each sector, 12 members were selected. This was performed on a random basis;
- Note that the 12 members from each union were to be a mix of males and females. In fact, it was considered fair to have an equal number (6 each) of male and female members;

- A letter was sent to the Secretary of each union requesting that one male and one female member be handed over a copy of the questionnaire.

Tables 7.2 to 7.5 below show the unions selected in each of the four sectors. The media sector having only four unions, all four were selected for the survey. Each union of this sector was required to request three members to fill in the questionnaire instead of just one. A questionnaire was designed for the survey with the basis grounded both in the literature review and in the valuable insights gained from the key informant interviews.

Table 7.2 Unions participating in the mini-survey on Gender in IR: Education Sector

Sector	No. of unions selected	Unions that formed part of the Mini-Survey	Male / Female
Education	12	Education Officers Grade "A" Union	1 F
		Government Secondary Schools Teachers Union	1 F
		Government Teachers' Union	1 F
		Industrial and Vocational Training Board Training Officers and Instructors Union	1 F
		Mahatma Gandhi Staff Association	1 F
		Mauritius Examination Syndicate Senior Staff Association	1 F
		Pre-Primary School Employees Union	1 M
		Technical School Management Trust Fund Lecturers' Union	1 M
		The Managers Of Private Secondary Schools Union	1 M
		The State Secondary Schools Teachers Union	1 M
		University Of Mauritius Staff Union	1 M
		Roman Catholic Secondary Schools Union	1 M

Table 7.3 Unions participating in the mini-survey on Gender in IR: Media Sector

Sector	No. of unions selected	Unions that formed part of the Mini-Survey	Male / Female
Media	12	Association of MBC Journalists	3 F
		Mauritius Broadcasting Service Staff Association	3 F
		The Newspaper and Printing Industry Employees Association	3 M
		Union Of the Personnel Of Media	3 M

Table 7.4 Unions participating in the mini-survey on Gender in IR: Industry & Commerce Sector

Sector	unions selected	Unions that formed part of the Mini-Survey	Male / Female
Industry and Commerce	12	Building and General Construction Workers Union	1 M
		Building and Civil Engineering Contractors Association	1 M
		Chemical Manufacturing and Connected Trade Employees Union	1 F
		Export Processing Zone Workers Union	1 F
		Food and Beverages Industry Employees Union	1 F
		Government Printing Workers' Union	1 F
		Mauritius Meat Authority Employees Union	1 M
		Organisation Of Artisans Unity	1 M
		Building and General Construction Workers Union	1 M
		Building and Civil Engineering Contractors Association	1 M
		Chemical Manufacturing and Connected Trade Employees Union	1 F
		Export Processing Zone Workers Union	1 F

Table 7.5 Unions participating in the mini-survey on Gender in IR: Others

Sector	No. of unions selected	Unions that formed part of the Mini-Survey	Male / Female
Others	12	Union Of Government Economists Union	1 F
		Union Of Public Officers of Ex-TDA Workers	1 F
		Union of Municipalities Workers	1 F
		Union Of Workers of Approved Services	1 F
		Union Of Workers Of The Development Works Corporation	1 F
		Government Professional Engineers Association	1 M
		Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board Staff and Employees Union	1 M
		Civil Status Officers Union	1 M
		Port-Louis Harbour and Docks Workers Union	1 M
		National Women Council Employees Union	1 M
		The Rural Local Government Staff Association	1 M
		Union Of Government Economists Union	1 F

7.7.2 Focus Group/ Consultative Workshop

The overall objective of the Focus group/Workshop was to gain a more in-depth, qualitative perspective to the issue of women in unions, in order to complement the mini-survey, especially given that we had no control over the response rate of the postal survey. The main goals of this initiative were set out as:

- ❖ To evaluate what has been achieved in Mauritius with regard to gender/equality and addressing the issue of marginalization of women from unions' leadership and agendas;
- ❖ To evaluate the leadership and organizing skills of women unionists;
- ❖ To gauge women unionists' views regarding style and orientation of unions in Mauritius (i.e. whether combative or collaborative unions).

The Focus group/Workshop was held in May 2007 at the University of Mauritius. The invitees, all female, selected for this activity are listed in Appendices. There were twenty (20) women

unionists selected for the activity. The female-only nature of the activity is justified due to its qualitative dimension, the rationale being that the deeper problems faced specifically by women in the workforce in general, and by women in the union movement in particular, are so intricately linked to men – their natures, their cultures, and their environments – as to warrant an all-female data-gathering approach so as to enable as full expression of opinion and feeling as possible.

It was finally decided that a small focus group or two would not give the activity the kind of valence that a full consultative workshop would. So, for instance, instead of having two or three separate focus groups of 8 participants each, we have run a higher-level consultative meeting with approximately 20 participants who had expressed their readiness to participate actively in this component of the project.

As mentioned earlier, the half-day activity took place in a lecture room at the University of Mauritius. A list of themes was prepared to guide the operation of the activity, annexed herewith. In order to maintain attention and interaction, the activity was divided into three parts, namely a first introductory, plenary part, a second syndicate group discussion part, and a third plenary, integrating and synthesis part to round up the discussion around consensus areas.

7.8 Response Rate for postal Survey

Of the 48 questionnaires sent by post for the survey, only thirteen return to us satisfactorily completed. It is important to note that the addresses of the different unions selected for the survey were found in the master list of the Registry of Association where there was no contact number to effect the necessary follow-ups. When these details were asked of the staff of the organization, they simply could not help us as such details were found in piles of files and were classified as confidential. 13 questionnaires or 21% was the response rate for the survey, of which 38 percent were males, even though the initial objective was to have an equivalent number males and females as respondents to the survey.

7.9 Analysis of Findings

After three weeks only thirteen questionnaires were returned. Having reached the cut-off date for beginning the analysis of data regarding Gender, and considering that this response rate as an acceptable minimum, data organization and coding processes were begun, followed by variable and data input into a SPSS file.

Note that the Focus group/Workshop consisted of three main themes: style of unions, union leadership capabilities and marginalisation of women's issues. The analysis of the questionnaire was undertaken on a question- wise basis following the structure of the questionnaire. In addition to that, each time a question was analyzed, the notes from the workshop were reviewed and integrated to ensure that the data was well understood and interpreted and that each set was either reinforcing the other or else disconfirming data from the other.

7.9.1 The Marginalization of women from the union movement

From the questionnaire, responses from questions A and I were synthesized and integrated to form a coherent set of analysis regarding the issue of marginalization of women from the union movement. Table 7.7 explicitly demonstrates the overwhelming confirmation that women have indeed been marginalized from the core and leadership of unions and that barriers still exist and are expected to persist, in maintaining this status quo.

Table 7.7 Marginalization of women

	Very much so %	Quite %	Some what %	A little %	Not at all %	Mean
(1) Do you believe that Trade Unions in Mauritius have marginalized women (i.e. do women feel that Trade Unions have not done much for them)?	7.7	46.2	15.4	7.7	23.1	2.9231
(2) Do you think Trade Unions recognize the importance of tackling this issue?	15.4	23.1	15.4	38.5	7.7	3.0000
(3) Do you agree that women lack leadership skills to be in decision-making positions within Unions?	15.4	15.4	15.4	-	53.8	3.6154
(4) Do you agree that women lack self-esteem and self-confidence, as compared to men?	7.7	7.7	-	23.1	61.5	4.2308
(5) Do you agree that predominantly, women remain voiceless?	-	23.1	30.8	23.1	23.1	3.4615
(6) Do you agree that Trade Unions in Mauritius are male-dominated and that the norm is strongly masculine?	46.2	15.4	30.8	-	7.7	2.0769
(7) Do you consider that the prevailing societal norm of women at work is that women are the ones who need to change, to adapt to the male norm?	23.1	15.4	23.1	7.7	30.8	3.0769

From the different means displayed by table 7.7, an overall mean was calculated $([2.9231+3.0000+3.6154+4.2308+3.4615+2.0769+3.0769] / 7) = 3.1978$. The overall mean is found to be close to statements like “Trade Unions recognize the importance of tackling this issue” (3.0000) and “women are the ones who need to change, to adapt to the male norm” (3.0769). Therefore, the overall mean reflects women’s marginalization issues in the Mauritian context.

Table 7.8 Forms of marginalization

	Yes %	No %	Not at all %	Missing Value	Total
(1) No time-off to attend meetings.	61.5	30.8		7.7	100.0
(2) Intimidation and bullying by men who don't want women in leadership positions.	61.5	15.4	15.4	7.7	100.0
(3) Time and style of meetings not convenient for women.	53.8	23.1	15.4	7.7	100.0
(4) No flexible working hours that will enable women to cope both with her unions' activities and family obligations.	84.6	7.7	-	7.7	100.0

Most respondents also believed that male trade unionists employ bullying methods to discourage and intimidate women, who usually dislike confrontation that borders on crude language and conduct and so end up being excluded. This is exacerbated by the style and timing of meetings that are frequently not agreeable to women, with 54% from table 7.8 stating that this in effect represents a form of marginalization. Worse still, 85% state that it is extremely problematic to get involved in union activities at the executive level given the inflexibility of working hours and the traditional demands of the family.

From Table 7.7, some 61.5% of respondents do not agree with the suggestion that women lack leadership skills, self-esteem and self-confidence. This data is, however, contradicted by the workshop data which emphasizes that males 'accaparate' leadership and simply neither wish for nor help women into leadership positions. Findings from the workshop also reveal that women were considered to lack assertiveness. This was believed to act as a major barrier for women to communicate in public or to take leadership roles. At the same time, it was recognised that both self-confidence and leadership are 'skills' that can be learnt, and that several qualities specific to women ought to be valued and made more visible, such as their integrity, analytical skills, and their un-prejudiced approach in negotiations. This contradiction turned out to be an issue in itself, since the facts tend to follow the data gathered through the workshop and not otherwise.

Furthermore, Table 7.7 shows that 30.8% of respondents supposed that women remain predominantly voiceless, possibly linked to the fact that a large proportion of the female workforce remains non-unionised, compounded to the fact that so few women are in leadership positions where they could make the female voice heard.

Finally, 46.2% of the respondents claimed that it was important to say that the unions are male dominated. Of these, 23.1% believe that to make themselves a place in these unions, women must simply adapt to the male norm. Some debate was sparked on this issue during the workshop, with the classic debate of social gender conditioning arising to explain gender-segregated roles created throughout childhood and the formative years, whereby the boy child was brought up to be tough and take leadership and the girl child to take on a nurturing, submissive role. There was some consensus around the agenda for tomorrow, with women themselves voting to stop spoiling their male children and viewing them as little princes to be waited upon hand and foot.

Table 7.9 Marginalization of women on a gender-wise basis

	Unions have marginalized women %		Important to tackle the issue %		Women lack leadership skills %		Women lack self-esteem & self-confidence %		Women remain voiceless %		Unions are male dominated %		Women have to adapt to the norm %	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Very much so	.0	12.5	40.0	.0	.0	25.0	.0	12.5	-	-	20.0	62.5	.0	37.5
Quite	20.0	62.5	.0	37.5	20.0	12.5	.0	12.5	.0	37.5	20.0	12.5	20.0	12.5
Somewhat	.0	25.0	40.0	.0	.0	25.0	-		40.0	25.0	60.0	12.5	40.0	12.5
A little	20.0	.0	20.0	50.0	-	-	20.0	25.0	20.0	25.0	-	-	20.0	.0
Not at all	60.0	.0	.0	12.5	80.0	37.5	80.0	50.0	40.0	12.5	.0	12.5	20.0	37.5

The cross tabulation between the variable “gender” and the different issues of marginalization of question 1 resulted in the table 7.9. It is interesting to note that a high proportion of males (60%) revealed that the marginalization of women is not a problem at all while 62.5% of women claim the contrary. This might suggest that the issue of marginalization of women is not even on the minds of many. Moreover, while some 50% of women believe, even if it is not very convincing, that the issue of marginalization should be tackled, some 40% of males believe strongly that the

matter should be tackled. The question to be asked here is what issue are they (men) going to tackle if they themselves believe that it is not even an issue. Furthermore, both men and women believed strongly that women do not lack either leadership skills or self-confidence and self-assertiveness skills. This is in complete contradiction to the workshop data as explained above. But for men to emphasize same prompts us to believe that either they are not aware of the issue and the situation or that they prefer to pretend the problem does not exist. Adding to that, 40% of male respondents believe that women remain voiceless and an equal percentage consider that it is not the case. While 37.5% of women, acknowledge that they remain to a small extent voiceless, participants at the workshop were of the opinion that their small numbers in places that count explained their weak 'voice'. Finally, 60% of the male respondents stated that the macho culture somewhat prevalent in unions may be because they are so used to be in that culture that they could not affirm this fact strongly.

7.9.2 Barriers to women's participation in unions' activities

From Table 7.10 below, the overall mean is $(2.3077+2.2308+1.9231+3.0769+3.0769+2.4615) = 2.5128$. The overall mean is closer to barriers like "Stereotyped ideas about women's abilities, roles and preferences" (2.3077) and "Women bear the brunt of combining work and family responsibilities, and they have difficulties to cope with both" (2.4615) and hence these two barriers are considered to be the main ones that prevent Mauritian women trade unionists to participate in unions' activities.

Table 7.10 Barriers to women's participation in unions' activities

	Strongly Agree %	Agree %	Neutral %	Disagree %	Strongly Disagree %	Mean
(1) Stereotyped ideas about women's abilities, roles and preferences.	23.1	38.5	23.1	15.4	-	2.3077
(2) Discouragement and hostile reactions from colleagues and family members.	15.4	61.5	7.7	15.4	-	2.2308
(3) Informal procedures for the election of women leaders which depend a lot on the male networks of the woman.	30.8	53.8	7.7	7.7	-	1.9231
(4) Women lack self-confidence and assertiveness to address leadership positions.	15.4	23.1	7.7	46.2	7.7	3.0769
(5) Women are inadequately covered by labour legislation in this country.	7.7	30.8	7.7	53.8	-	3.0769
(6) Women bear the brunt of combining work and family responsibilities, and they have difficulties to cope with both.	23.1	53.8	-	-	23.1	2.4615

In fact, some 38.5% of respondents believe that stereotyped ideas about women's abilities, roles and preferences could be categorized as a form of barrier that prevent women from being fully active in unions. Today, even though many women are trying hard to break through this barrier, the change of mindset in society is very difficult to achieve in what is well-known as our 'macho' society. The majority of women, in spite of the progress made in their economic independence and in the sharing of domestic tasks, still endorse the "mommy track" by doing their best to juggle their various roles all at once, to avoid being stigmatized by society.

Some 61.5% of our respondents reacted by saying that the barrier could also come from discouragement by family members and colleagues. Data from our workshop also confirmed this. In fact, lack of support from family members and lack of collaboration between women themselves were seen as a demotivating factor to take up the challenge of engaging in union work. It was also

suggested that women among themselves nurture a spirit of competitiveness and jealousy which does not help at all, which is probably an idea that is socially constructed anyway.

Importantly, 53.8% of the respondents considered that the largely informal procedures of election were a barrier for women. Women were not very apt at developing informal networks and this was seen as a typically male 'skill' which served them well when it comes to lobbying for elections. The question now arises as to whether the governance structures ought to change or whether women ought to learn how to operate in this informal fashion, no matter how improper they considered it to be, apart from being time-consuming.

46.2% of respondents disagreed with the idea that lack of self-confidence and assertiveness could work as a barrier. The workshop data, however, showed us that women have much to accomplish in this domain. Nevertheless, it was made out that women have other qualities to bring to the union movement, and that it may not be a solution to resemble men in characteristics when it comes to leading the movement in the future.

53.8% of survey respondents disagree with the idea of not being well covered by labour legislation. This data disconfirms the workshop discussions, wherein some shortcomings in the labour legislations concerning women were brought to light. An example was exposed as an illustration: in case of divorce, the responsibility of everything that follows will almost inevitably lie with the mother. Another example is the maternity leave which officially has been extended to fourteen weeks but whose implementation is still stuck to twelve weeks. Here is one rationale, if needed, of the value of triangulating data, especially by combining quantitative sources with qualitative ones. In terms of process, anyway, we found that the workshop proceedings as well as the outcomes were much richer and more fruitful what was gathered through the survey questionnaire.

Table 7.11 Barriers to women's participation in unions activities on a gender basis

	Stereotyped ideas about women %		Hostile reactions from family %		Informal procedures for election of women %		Lack of self-confidence & assertiveness for leadership positions %		Inadequacy of labour legislation for women %		Coping with family responsibilities %	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Strongly Agree	.0	37.5	.0	25.0	.0	50.0	.0	25.0	.0	12.5	.0	37.5
Agree	20.0	50.0	60.0	62.5	60.0	50.0	20.0	25.0	.0	50.0	80.0	37.5
Neutral	60.0	.0	20.0	.0	20.0	.0	.0	12.5	.0	12.5	-	-
Disagree	20.0	12.5	20.0	12.5	20.0	.0	80.0	25.0	100.0	25.0	-	-
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	.0	12.5	-	-	20.0	25.0

From Table 7.11, we see that 50% of women participating in the survey agreed that stereotyped ideas is a significant barrier to women’s participation in unions’ activities. This statistic corroborates with our overall mean recognizing it as a national barrier for women while most male respondents (60%) remain neutral on the matter. However, the barrier concerning hostile reactions from family members, are acknowledged by both sexes, by 60% and 62.5% females, as an important barrier. Same is to be observed for the other barrier which is informal procedures for the election of women where 60% males and 50% females agree with this idea. However, 80% of male respondents disagreed with the idea that lack of self-confidence and assertiveness for leadership positions can be a barrier against women’s participation in unions. Their view is that women do have the skills and that no-one is stopping them from claiming or occupying such positions. This correlates with the previous question where the male respondents believe that women do possess those skills. Finally, both men and women (80% males and 37.5% females) agree that family responsibilities act as a strong barrier. This is mostly emphasized by men.

7.9.3 Level of Awareness and Knowledge

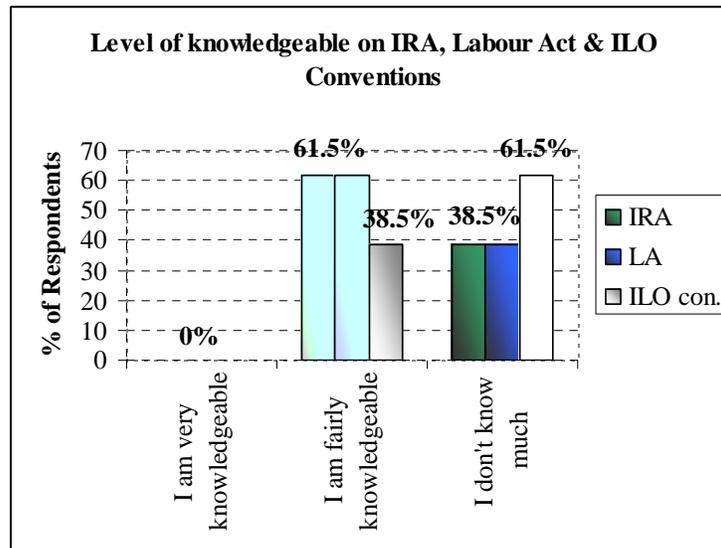


Figure 7.1 Level of knowledge on IRA. Labour Act & ILO Conventions

Even if credit is due to respondents for their candidness in responding to these questions, the figures below demonstrate the generally low level of mastery of the most important pieces of legislation with regard to industrial relations, and this is alarming. This warrants some attention for its implication on education, information and empowerment of workers in general and of trade unionists in particular. What evolution in thinking and action, what constructive contributions, can be expected of trade unions if a thorough knowledge of the ins and outs of the existing legal provisions on industrial relations are not acquired? To know more about the awareness and knowledge of the respondents, a cross tabulation was carried out, results are shown in Table 7.12.

Table 7.12 Awareness and knowledge on a gender wise basis

	IRA73 %		Labour Act %		ILO Conventions %	
	M	F	M	F	M	F
I am very knowledgeable	.0		20.0	.0	.0	.0
I am fairly knowledgeable	80.0	50.0	60.0	62.5	60.0	25.0
I don't know much	20.0	50.0	20.0	37.5	40.0	75.0

From table 7.12, it seems obvious that women are at a disadvantage compared to men when it comes to their level of knowledge concerning these pieces of legislation. Not a single woman is “very knowledgeable” on the three legislations compared to men (20%) who said they were. There are

also more men than women being “fairly knowledgeable” with the exception of the Labour Act where there is a slight increase of responses being 62.5% compared to only 60% of men. However, for the option “I don’t know much” again the women topped the score. From this point it is clear that the situation of women is quite serious. As Bourdieu (1985) suggests, cultural capital is about explaining the social differences between men and women through the production of knowledge thereby permitting the differences to be established as “natural” rather than socially constructed. The inheritance of cultural capital has been transmitted from generation to generation and this is what gives a person a sense of identity and belonging. However, it happens that over generations the transmission of cultural capital in terms of knowledge and ability has resulted in the assignment of female characteristics as subordinate in the fields of industrial relations and this is what is happening in the IR scene of Mauritius, where we find that generally women are not at all knowledgeable.

Table 7.13 Applications of gender specific ILO Conventions in organizations

	Yes %	No %	Don’t Know %	Missing value %	Total %
Convention 100, concerning Equal remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.	46.2	7.7	46.2	-	100
Convention 111, concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation.	15.4	23.1	53.8	7.7	100
Convention 156, concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities.	23.1	15.4	61.5	-	100.0

Here too, regarding the obligations of Mauritius as a member of the ILO and a signatory of a whole plethora of ILO Conventions, it appears that our trade unionists fall well short of the level of knowledge of these provisions, judging by the findings from our survey. Most respondents simply did not know about the various conventions specifically regarding gender.

Concerning the convention 100, some respondents stated that it is not applicable to industries like Textiles and Sugar, while others believed that though it has been ratified, it is not fully respected.

Moreover, for convention 111, it is believed that discrimination still exists in various sectors of Mauritius and that men are considered to be more efficient than women, who are being penalized through, for instance, unequal pay. Again, maternity leave is 14 weeks' duration but Mauritius has not applied it yet. It is also stated that five remuneration orders need to be amended to be in line with this convention.

7.9.4 The Provisions for a healthy working environment and Unions' concerns about these matters

It would not be unreasonable to ask of trade union that issues of health, safety and work environment be high on their agenda. Mauritian laws and ILO conventions generally provide the fundamentals in these areas, but we nevertheless sought to know from our trade unionists whether certain more contemporary, modern provisions were being considered by employers in Mauritius. This would form the basis for an analysis of the range of issues and actions of unions in Mauritius with regard to the evolution of workers' needs in matters of health, safety, working environment and other such issues. We find that several worthwhile benefits are simply not provided for by Mauritian employers, such as workers' relative control over their hours of work; on-site (or subsidized childcare); some form of health plan; policies on sexual harassment; and policies on gender discrimination, with some mitigated responses on the existence of paid leave or permission to attend to old or sick family members. However, this finding was not as alarming as the fact of such issues not being on the unions' agenda! The findings are explicit from a reading of Table 7.14.

Table 7.14 Provisions for a healthy environment

	Available %	Not Available %	Currently on Union's negotiating agenda %	Missing value %	Total %
(1) Control over hours of work (e.g. through flexible work schedules)	30.8	61.5	7.7	-	100
(2) Child care (e.g. at the site or subsidized)	15.4	84.6	-	-	100
(3) Pension and retirement benefits	84.6	7.7	7.7	-	100
(4) Health Insurance or some other form of Health plan	23.1	76.9	-	-	100
(5) Equal pay for equal work	76.9	15.4	7.7	-	100
(6) Paid vacation	92.3	-	7.7	-	100
(7) Paid sick leave	92.3	-	7.7	-	100
(8) Paid leave and/or permission to care for family members who are old or sick	46.2	46.2	7.7	-	100
(9) Recognition of female health/ pregnancy/ breastfeeding realities	84.6	7.7	7.7	-	100
(10) Clear policy on Sexual Harassment	30.8	69.2	-	-	100
(11) Clear policy on gender discrimination	23.1	69.2	7.7	-	100

7.9.5 Organizing

In this part of the questionnaire, respondents were asked through open-ended questions, if women would prefer to be in a mainstream union where “women empowerment” would be present in some form or another on the union’s agenda, or would they prefer to be in a women-only union. Our data revealed that most of the answers were for the mainstream union option, but not of the conventional type (e.g ‘women’s wing’), because:

- a) Women have special problems which need to be discussed in specific forums;
- b) Women lack the sense of independence in decision-making, therefore if they are left a bit on their own this would work out the problem;
- c) Women should be able to voice out their opinions in the union itself not in some sort of women’s wing because this is not regarded as a form of empowerment but rather a form of marginalization. The learning to make women good leaders and able to stand on their own feet should start in the union itself;
- d) This would enhance their knowledge and their capacity;
- e) This is regarded as an opportunity for both men and women to work together and share their ideas and this would avoid to a large extent sexual discrimination;
- f) This would send a positive signal to women and give them more confidence;
- g) To nurture the character of women into good leaders and decision-makers, this strategy sounds to be perfect.
- h) Some are against the idea because it is believed that positive discrimination is better than segregation and that men and women should be treated as equals.

With regard to preference for all-women unions, responses supporting this were as follows:

- Women will always suffer from their specific needs as long as men are around;
- The idea of having this form of arrangement for women simply sounds wonderful;
- To have a separate organization that cater for women’s specific circumstances and needs is regarded as a possibility to be envisaged in the near future and is not an impossible thing to do as the new era is dotted with women in different fields, for instance, pilots, bus drivers and Prime Ministers.

7.9.6 Strategies to motivate women to join a union

The recent literature provided a sound foundation of ‘best practices’ seen in the more developed and active unionized world. Specifically, unions and civil society generally are increasingly taking on the role of a Third Force alongside – and often against – the state and the free market. In this contemporary and proactive perspective, unions have adopted a role whereby they have begun offering a range of valued services to their members, who would otherwise not have benefited from them had they depended on their employers or the state. The findings from Mauritius show that trade unionists generally endorse such strategies even though some sets of responses suggest that our respondents are not quite ‘ready’ and still consider as too bold some of the measures being practiced elsewhere, such as unions purchasing household items in bulk for cheaper resale to their members, or unions providing special services to alleviate the heavy housework load (like laundry, cleaning and cooking) and unions acting as a pressure group to influence policy regarding opening hours of banks, shops, etc.

Table 7.15 Strategies to motivate women to join unions

	Yes %	No %	Total
(1) Unions providing free medical consultations for pregnant women and other female health issues.	69.2	30.8	100
(2) Unions providing scholarship facilities to children of retrenched workers.	76.9	23.1	100
(3) Unions providing special insurance for women and extra payment for maternity leave and child care.	61.5	38.5	100
(4) Unions purchasing household goods (e.g. rice, soap) in bulk to enable women members to get these goods at lower price.	46.2	53.8	100
(5) Unions providing services for working women in the neighborhood to alleviate their heavy workload at work and at home (e.g. laundry, cleaning, cooking).	46.2	53.8	100
(6) Unions providing child care facilities for working women near or at their place of work.	84.6	15.4	100
(7) Unions organizing training, talks and seminars on women-specific topics.	84.6	15.4	100
(8) Unions organizing commemorative day activities like Women's Day – (8 th March) and Violence against Women – (6 th December).	84.6	15.4	100
(9) Unions providing a Women's Network where women unionists meet regularly.	84.6	15.4	100
(10) Unions rewarding women for their contribution in unions' activities.	76.9	15.4	100
(11) Unions holding lunch hour meetings to feel the pulse of women's problems.	61.5	38.5	100
(12) Unions offering training on how to deal with sexual harassment.	84.6	15.4	100
(13) Unions promoting health and safety for women (breast cancer, family planning, parenting skills and so on).	76.9	23.1	100
(14) Unions provide measures to investigate on transport problems and solutions.	61.5	38.5	100
(15) Unions combined efforts to work at influencing policy concerning opening hours of services like banks, shops, dispensaries etc.	53.8	46.2	100
(16) Unions investigate street safety e.g. police presence and protection.	76.9	23.1	100
(17) Unions provide training in self-defense.	53.8	46.2	100

Table 7.15 shows that our Mauritian trade unions are very actively involved in the realization of these strategies but it seem like the strategies are not working because the movement is still deprived of women members. In fact, it is considered that unions assertively state their involvement in such activities because they want to make the world believe that they are active while in fact it is questionable. However, there are many countries that have applied these strategies and have experienced a significant rise in their female membership. For example, 53.8%

of our respondents suggest that unions do not offer services like purchasing household goods (e.g. rice, soap) in bulk to enable women members to get these goods at lower price and the laundry facilities. In fact as an organizing tool, unions in other countries are placing much emphasis on providing direct services to women workers. Such action is seen as necessary and important to address the specific needs of women and to help them understand in practical terms the benefits of unionization to them. The range of services that unions can provide is very wide, depending on the circumstances and needs of the intended target groups but keeping in mind to address issues that touch the lives of women more closely. This is certainly one area where unions can be very innovative in terms of the types and delivery of services and facilities for women workers.

"In Benin, trade unions have projects for:

- **setting up cooperatives whereby household goods are bought in bulk to enable women members to obtain them at lower prices;**
 - **laundry services for working women in their neighbourhood so as to alleviate their heavy workload at work and in the home and to also create employment for other women (operating the laundry services);**
- **facilities near the main market for children of women vendors to facilitate breastfeeding and childcare, while allowing the women to continue working;**
- **a women's theatre group which is helping to educate women not only on issues relating to unionization but also social issues such as family planning, health, education of girls, the disadvantages of polygamy. This is especially important because the majority of the women are illiterate."**

Furthermore, a major reason for women's low participation in unions regards the constraints they face in terms of family responsibilities, as we have seen earlier. For unions to be more "women-friendly", it is important that their own structures and policies are more family-friendly. 38.5% of our respondents stated that no such facilities exist. This kind of service directly meets the needs of women within and outside the workplace, allows women to feel comfortable participating, helping them to gain confidence, and making them feel that the union is relevant to them.

In India, unions arrange lunch hour meetings to "feel the pulse of women's problems."

It is also important to note that 15.4% of the respondents revealed

In Colombia, a special school has been set up to train women unionists for leadership positions. Three levels of courses are offered, and a maximum of 60 women can be enrolled in each course, which runs for a period of six months. The subjects which are taught with a gender perspective include Labour Economics, Labour Law, Politics, Communication Skills, Negotiation.

that unions do not provide training and talks for their women members, which could really enhance the knowledge of the women trade unionists to enable them to be more aware of the field pertaining to all industrial relations' issues, as is the case in Columbia.

Some 30.8% of our respondents also voice out that unions do not offer any medical facilities for pregnant women and overall women's health issues. However, in Philippines such facility is very much considered and is at the center of attention as such services are on great demand not only in Philippines but everywhere around the world.

In Philippines, the Trade Union Congress arranges free medical consultations for the women; this has been a relatively successful mobilizing tool as the women often cannot afford to seek medical attention.

These are but a few discussions of the facilities that some respondents believe are not being offered by unions in Mauritius. However, the 7.15 responses are a bit confusing and tend to suggest that most of the practices are in effect not being applied at all.

7.9.7 Strategies to increase women's presence in leadership positions

Respondents were asked to state whether any strategies were in place in their unions to increase women's presence in leadership positions. They were also requested to *rate* the eventual potential or impact of such strategies, even if these were not yet (or ever) on their own union's agenda. Findings revealed an interesting data set with regard to what unions were already doing and what they thought should be done, but the high rate of missing values also suggests that respondents were either uncomfortable in admitting their shortcomings or else did not understand the scope of the question.

Table 7.16 Strategies to increase women's presence in leadership positions

	Already Adopted by my union %	Must be adopted %	Rank terms of effectiveness		
			Most Effective %	Less Effective %	Not effective %
(1) Amending unions' constitution to provide for women's representation (reserved seats, proportionality, or quotas) at the Executive Committee.	15.4	69.2	23.1	7.7	7.7
2) Having a woman president at the head of the federation or confederation thus ensuring that women participate in decision making at the highest levels.	23.1	61.5	23.1	7.7	7.7
(3) Adoption and implementation of an equal opportunity policy having as prime objective equality in its membership, such that unions deviating from this policy will have to take corrective measures.	15.4	53.8	7.7	-	23.1
(4) Awareness-raising campaigns targeting male-dominated unions, informing them how adequate representation of women at all levels will benefit them.	15.4	84.6	15.4	15.4	-
(5) Giving increased visibility to women leaders.	7.7	84.6	23.1	7.7	-
(6) Using non-sexist language in all union documents and instances.	38.5	61.5	23.1	7.7	7.7
(7) Encouraging and providing funding for women's education, training and development.	30.8	61.5	30.8	7.7	-
(8) Providing training specifically in leadership development, confidence building, time management and assertive communication for women members.	30.8	61.5	46.2	-	-
(9) Conducting unions' meetings in a more friendly and accessible way to encourage wider participation by women.	38.5	61.5	46.2	-	-

In essence, the respondents revealed that all these strategies must be adopted in the form of affirmative action programmes or positive measures specifically to increase the participation of women in leadership positions since they are not practiced by trade unions. For instance, 84.6% of

respondents opted for giving increased visibility to women leaders, and the same percentage is shared by respondents regarding the organization of awareness-raising campaigns targeting male-dominated unions, informing them how adequate representation of women at all levels will benefit them. It is also important to note that sensitization campaigns are particularly important to eradicate stereotypes and traditional attitudes regarding the roles and capabilities of women. However, of these two strategies, 23.1% of the respondents rated the former as the most effective. Moreover, it is often necessary to amend the union's constitution or statutes to make structures more conducive to gender equality and "women-friendliness." By introducing changes in their rules and regulations, unions would demonstrate tangibly their commitment to the promotion of gender equality and allow positive measures to be more effectively implemented and this is what respondents of our survey wished to happen in Mauritian trade unions (69.2% wished for this and some 23.1% rated this strategy as potentially most effective).

Furthermore, the traditional thinking was that women should find their own place within existing union structures, but often these structures are rigid, rather bureaucratic, male-dominated and intimidating to women. Traditionally too, women's presence has been concentrated in those structures associated with female stereotypes, and so many of our respondents would like to see the adoption of strategies like having a woman president at the head of the (con)federation, or the using of non-sexist language in all union instances to enable women to find their place in leadership positions. In addition, 61.5% of respondents believe that conducting unions' meetings in a more friendly and accessible way to encourage wider participation by women is one of the measures that should be adopted (rated as potentially most effective by 46.2% respondents).

7.9.8 High-level Decision-making

In this section, the respondents were asked their opinions and any explanations they could forward regarding the absence of women at the National Tripartite Forum, National Pay Council, Leadership of unions and federations and at International events and Conferences. Their answers were as follows:

- Ego problem of men; they hog leadership everywhere they go;

- Women usually bring balance and a sensitive orientation to problems, but this is regarded as too much for men;
- Women are themselves not willing to take the front stage;
- An effective National Tripartite Forum does not exist for the time being, but still the absence of women is an issue to be considered as male representatives cannot, on their own, efficiently represent the voice, needs and problems of women;
- The National Pay Council itself is a controversial mechanism. Both men and women are marginalized here. But we agree that in an effective wage determining system, women should be present as they can better represent their own specificities;
- It is a must to have women leaders in unions and federations. There are only a small number of unions in Mauritius that have adopted this strategy. The contribution of women in such instances is extremely valuable and helpful since their perspective on issues can be very different from men's. Additionally, females tend to be less egoistical and autocratic in their approach, and this favours collective negotiations;
- The fact that for International events and Conferences, the atmosphere can be relatively tense and stressful, many male leaders think that women cannot handle this;
- The absence of women at the National Pay Council is not an issue as women are still hardly concerned about financial matters;
- Due to the lack of confidence, lack of leadership skills and inability to communicate effectively, it is not surprising not to see women at leadership positions in federations and unions;
- In all the instances mentioned, at least one women should be present;
- Women are not invited or are not interested to sit on those instances;
- The fact that the Government has chosen 5 male members to form part of the National Pay Council, it is the one to be blamed and not the Trade Union Movement;
- Leadership of Federations are so rarely renewed that the male leaders are not even ready to give their place to their female counterparts;
- Women *are* sometimes delegated to attend international events;
- The very fact that women do not hold important or 'prestigious' roles at the federations or confederations, they are not given the chance to participate in activities like the National Tripartite Forum;

- Women are also not given the opportunity to present themselves as candidates for the posts of leaders of federations or even unions.

7.9.9 Conclusion

This chapter proved a formidable eye-opener and a discovery of realities of the union scene, which might otherwise never have been uncovered. What can be concluded at this stage is that the union movement is still very much male-dominated and ruled by forces that are both internal to the movement and of a more societal reflection as well. All in all, education and empowerment are the two guaranteed routes – be they lengthy – to greater participation of women both as workers and as union leaders. Additionally, the wider employment situation prevailing in the country being relatively anti-union, one may be tempted to qualify the type of union leadership most apt to combat this would be the masculine-combative type. At the same time, however, the qualities of women as leaders and negotiators must be acknowledged as having enormous value-adding potential and unions would do well to consider concrete strategies to empower their female members. All of this notwithstanding the necessity to uphold the democratic values inherent in any strategy aimed at achieving greater social justice for the whole of the population by promoting and empowering women in all leadership and decision-making instances.

Chapter 8

Conclusion: What Future for Trade Unionism in Mauritius?

8.1 Introduction

Mauritius has a very rich history in unionism. If we look back a few decades ago, we will surely spot the reasons for the existence of a strong union movement to this day. We have seen that unionism in this country, as in all others, dates back to the earliest era of exploitation of the masses by slavemasters, those in government, and later, by employers. As the oppressed rebelled against their pitiful living conditions and inhumane treatment, an organized movement emerged, mobilizing the working class into action. In Mauritius, the labour movement can be traced back to the slavery and indentured labour period during which slaves and other immigrants, fed up of their daily torture, decided to uprising against the white bosses. At that time, the island was mostly an sugarcane economy and the role played by the newly born unions were very much applicable to an agricultural work context. With the passing of years and the modernization of the economy, the employment landscape has been revolutionized and manual or agricultural work has largely given way to white-collar and increasingly skilled occupational jobs. To many of such jobs, traditional union objectives are simply not relevant. Trade unions are now likewise being expected to modernize their structures and objectives, methods and focus in order to meet the challenges of the present and future.

8.2 A new Unionism model

Whereas much may be learnt from the history and evolution of unionism around the world, the birth of a new union model for Mauritius is a significant challenge in itself, and let history not forget that unionism is not about unions themselves but about

democracy, rights, and humanity. In this sense, the future of unionism is the business of all those concerned about the future of Mauritius: Government, of course, but also all the players of the free enterprise system, be they employers, workers, or consumers. This project has charted the developments in the union movement since its birth in the colonial era. Many would say that we have come full circle back to another type of colonization: that by multinationals and the so-called imperatives of globalization. The climate is one of pessimism and loss of faith in institutions, and this cannot be allowed to continue, for the country owes it to the entire world that its remarkable achievements on economic and social fronts be held up as a sustainable model of economic development with a human face. What is expected of unions in this new picture? Historical ties with political parties of the past may best be severed, but the ideology and philosophy of such ties must not. Today the relevance of unions is being questioned by employers and workers alike. Is that to say that the very basis for organized labour is not longer valid? One would hardly venture to that conclusion, and all our findings point to an unfortunate revival of autocratic and even repressive methods in organizations, coupled to which are trends in contractual work and other forms of unprotected employment practices. To allow this trend to persist is to allow a dangerous game to proceed, for, the checks and balances necessary in a globalization-oriented economic policy based on the free enterprise system in order to preserve democracy on one hand and social and human peace is a *sine qua non* condition for sustainable development over the long term. Yet unions are being made to feel responsible for their own declining popularity as if it were of no concern to other stakeholders of national development.

Our analysis reveals that accomplishments are numerous and weaknesses few, yet it is the latter that are held up as determinants of what unions are all about in Mauritius. We name them here: a structure that is characterised by : (a) a relatively large number of individual unions, many of which have been created on the spur of a crisis and representing but a handful of individual workers, (b) a significant number of unions operating out of the mainstream, that is, remaining unaffiliated to any Federation, and (c) a strange relationship between individual unions, Federations and Confederations, whereby some

unions are seen to be directly affiliated to a Confederation and whereby it is not clear why so many Confederations are necessary in the first place.

We also find that the *image* problem is multi-faceted: unions, and typically, their leaders who often find themselves in the limelight, are viewed as fighting for issues that are considered futile or "*passé*", pursuing the high life and disconnecting themselves from grassroots, and bickering amongst themselves. Now, succession is indeed a problem in many unions and appears exacerbated in Federations. This may be waved off by leaders (who like to stay in power and enjoy the perks) who claim that they are after all democratically elected and that it is the young and the women who do not come forward to stand for leadership. Arguably, equal opportunity does exist, but succession must be planned and new blood must be invited in. Secondly, with the meager member contributions, it would be unfair to try to compare what unions in some other countries are able to achieve. Union leaders themselves have emerged out of the working class, and cannot be expected to be legal experts, financial analysts, public relations officers, marketing managers, HR managers, negotiators, counselors, all in one package. Rich unions can afford to employ or contract out such expertise as and when needed, prepare solid dossiers to fight on level playing fields, but this is a far cry from Mauritian reality. In addition, autocratic management styles of employers and senior managers are usually accompanied by anti-union attitudes, which makes mature and open dialogue extremely difficult. This most often ends in heated conflict and no-win situations.

The literature reviewed shows that the service model of unionism (unions aim to satisfy members' immediate demands for resolving grievances, securing benefits and increasing salary). "organising model", which retains a certain element of union fundamentalism which finds expression in the desire to recreate labour as a social movement. Organizing unionism is defined by its emphasis on fostering collective identification and organisation amongst workers. For this reason, the favoured method is a "union-building" approach which goes beyond simple recruitment and seeks to encourage self-reliant organisation at workplace level (Fletcher and Hurd, 1998). The idea that "organizing" is necessary is relevant in today's environment because there is an assumption that capital and labour

interests remain sharply opposed and workers therefore require countervail power if they are to secure a more just settlement within the employment relationship. To some extent, the union movement in Mauritius is a hybrid of the service and the organizing model, but the latter could be a more relevant option in terms of philosophy. An attempt at operationalisation thereof could be through new or greater emphasis on:

- Fostering activism amongst the workforce;
- The use of “mapping” techniques to identify all members of the workforce and rank them systematically in terms of their propensity to become active in the union;
- The use of “actions” to mobilise the workforce, which can range from badge-wearing and the signing of a petition to street theatre and protest strikes;
- Use of “one-to-one” recruitment in which trained and volunteer recruiters, and not union officials, seek to persuade workers to join unions either by moving to their workplaces or through “house calls;”
- Reliance on the principle of “like-recruits-like”, such that recruiters have the same demographic and occupational identity to those being recruited;
- The development of community support so that the campaign extends beyond the workplace to embrace the wider community.

The organizing model is based on the assumption that the empowerment of workers will enable them to find solutions to their problems. The emphasis is, therefore, on collective action. This does not mean that the union does not provide services, on the contrary, it provides essential service functions such as compensation advice, delivery of social wage improvements and advocacy for new benefits. But this model devotes particular attention to mobilizing rank and file activists to do the work of organizing their co-workers. The emphasis is on active participation of members in campaigns and other forms of trade union action. Here, the union is not an external third party that ‘provides solutions’ to members’ problems; instead, members generate their own issues and organize to solve them together, viewing the union as themselves, such that an attack on the union is like an attack on themselves; here, workers are empowered to find solutions themselves

through education and support, instead of unions having to market themselves on the basis of services and insurance protection; Instead of relying wholly on employers for workplace access, unions can do the initial organizing outside work, in workers' homes, and so on. Importantly, whereas traditionally Management acted, then unions reacted, always defensively, the organizing has its own agenda – members are constantly involved, and this keeps management off balance – ultimately the image is positive, activist.

As a rejoinder to criticism that the union movement has remained entrenched in traditional 'bread-and-butter' battles, one could propose Social Movement Unionism as the most recent road into a modernization of the service model, for, in addition to organizing, unions of today and tomorrow must also *shape* the labour movement. Social movement unionism is a type of trade unionism that differs from the traditional unionism, emerging in the 1970s in countries such as Brazil, South Africa, Korea and Poland. This form of unionism goes beyond workplace struggles over wages and conditions to encompass campaigns about the living conditions of the working class as a whole, for example, housing and health, education, transport, and so on. Workplace structures are linked to the communities in which the workers and their families live, challenging governments as well as employers. As unions campaign on citizenship issues, strikes and other protests about workplace issues tend to receive stronger community support.

A re-emphasis on the social movement characteristic of unionism came with the realization that traditional trade unionism was losing ground and that sticking to the traditional objectives gained no benefit. This type sees workers' struggles as merely one of many efforts to qualitatively change the whole society. Therefore, it seeks alliances with other social movements on an equal basis, and tries to join them in practice when possible, both within the country and internationally. Interestingly, unions in Rodrigues seem to have instinctively seen this relationship and have focused their actions on issues which span society and the economy as a whole, instead of workplace issues only.

In this new movement, trade unionism is democratically controlled by the membership and not by any external organization, and there is recognition that the struggles for control over workers' daily work life, pay and conditions are intimately connected with and cannot be separated from the national socio-political-economic situation of a particular country. Countries like Brazil, the Philippines, South Africa and South Korea have taken the initiative to create this form of labour movement.

8.3 Realising a Trade Union Social Movement

Four factors have been elaborated to provide greater impetus to unions in order to realize a trade union social movement and thus expand their representativeness of the labour force. The operationalisation of these factors are amazingly appropriate to the Mauritian situation and may be heralded as 'the answer' to the union movement's crossroads dilemma. They consist of:

- A unification of actions and structures, thus avoiding various strands of unionism;
- An appropriate response in law and practice;
- Promoting social partnerships between and among organizations of workers, employers and the government;
- Organizing the efforts of social partners around the framework of "decent work" and "decent living".

Organizing differently and bargaining creatively require a variety of "new" trade union-social movement services to deliver to its (hopefully expanded) membership. Other than the traditional services of collective bargaining, grievance handling, legal defense and mutual aid programs, a trade union social movement should lead, and press government and employers to partner up in delivering these services for its membership:

- Competency-based education and training, including assessment and certification towards multi-skilling, workers' mobility in the labor market and enhanced earning power;

- Improve access to technology, market and credit for the informal sector, self-employed and workers or workers' families who have put up their own businesses;
- Establish support facilities for employment counseling, matching and Placement;
- Develop and deliver social protection schemes, including micro-health insurance and services, attendant to the more efficient delivery and enhancement of workers' benefits under institutional social insurance schemes.

There is no simple formula for union modernisation. The four areas in which changes are usually brought are: new structures, new strategies; new internationalism, and new union-management relations.

We have seen that the old industrial relations priorities have disappeared, and that alternative models are still being developed. Today we find an untidy set of ad hoc, pragmatic practices. Their effectiveness and their transferability between countries are uncertain and union strategies must be developed within the realities of national contexts.

Yet some conclusions can be drawn safely:

1. Fragmented, multi-union structures are a serious impediment to effective organisation. Although care must be taken to ensure that no distinctive voice is lost, the restructuring of movements into larger, industry-based unions must now be a key objective.
2. An active approach to organising is essential. While maintaining and reinforcing existing areas of strength, unions must also direct their attention beyond traditionally unionised groups of workers to those private-sector areas where union organisation has historically been difficult, and also to the fast-growing informal economy.
3. Union involvement in action beyond the workplace is essential to the maintenance of the vibrancy and attractiveness, as well as the effectiveness, of the labour movement. Increasing use of information and communication technologies in a wide range of unions' functions including education, service provision, research, campaigning and organizing.

International co-operation and solidarity between unions at every level is an increasingly important element in the success of the labour movement. Unions must generate the capacity to engage in this kind of action, whether this means cross-border co-operation between local union branches, or intervention in economic and financial governance institutions *via* unified global union federations. Mauritian Federations and Confederations do enjoy a wide network of such support, and perhaps now is the time to put to greater use this regional and international brotherhood. An observation of trends shows that one of the most distinctive new forms of unionism is international trade unionism. The increasing influence of international trade and financial regulation, on the one hand, and the increasing power of multinational corporations, on the other, points to a clear need for union action at a global level. Closely related to social movement unionism, is the emergence of international co-operation and cross-border unionism. One example is the “strategic organising alliance” established in 1992 between a US and a Mexican union. This alliance runs workers’ centers, educational, solidarity and cultural projects, an on-line monthly magazine, and so on. Another promising development is the unification of the labour movement at the international level. At the end of 2004, the ICFTU and the World Confederation of Labour (WCL), along with several national union federations currently affiliated to neither organisation, agreed in principle to unite at the global level. By the end of 2006, the world’s workers have spoken with an unprecedented unity.

Our international review of the literature has been an eye opener in revealing the role that unions can, and do play in the wider context of positive change at national levels in some countries. Even our study of Rodrigues drove home a few lessons in social movement unionism that ought to inspire unions of the mainland. And so, trade unions as a sort of third force (alongside the State and the free market system) play a huge role in insituting or enhancing good governance; since unions after all are about the struggle for justice, we hope to witness in the future a wave of widespread support for trade unions around the

world, whose work encourages and inspires others to protect and uphold the rights of workers and of citizens generally.

Examples of activism at national level are unions' fight against AIDS, helping achieve workplace testing and anti-retroviral programmes. Without the unions, who have the trust of the workers, some employers may not have been able to either introduce these programmes nor been able to campaign as closely with workers. Trade unions also play an important role in preventing discrimination against workers who are HIV-positive, for example, the International Transport Federation worked with local trade unions to get a ban on discrimination enshrined in its collective bargaining agreement for dock workers in Kenya and subway workers in Brazil.

Trade unions on the global front have also been significant in the Global Campaign for Education. In 2006, they ran a campaign in over 100 countries, with the slogan "send my friend to school." It was observed that there were over five million of them, representing children denied of education. They have also been actively involved in the eradication of poverty in many developing regions.

Unions at international level have also successfully pressed for changes in equal employment opportunity practices and helped to get rid of gender discrimination at the workplace. For a country like Mauritius, it may well be that unions will have to be the ones to lead the way to greater women empowerment, but more importantly, to press for changes in policy and practice in such national scourges as sexual harassment, sexual crime and violence against women and children.

8.4 The role of employers

The Mauritian employers and management teams in general should realize that they share a common interest with workers and their unions, and respond in new and innovative ways to keep the organisation viable and successful. By sustaining a no-win, adversarial

relationship, management inevitably stands to lose as not only are attention and resources diverted from other more important issues, but also there it runs the real risk of losing out on a valuable partner. The balance of power being such that it is up to management to build the bridge upon which a new relationship can be forged based on participation where both stand to benefit by coming together to address mutual issues on people and the performance of the enterprise. This new partnership, however, does require a fundamental paradigm shift, one that involves *sharing* and some relinquishing of the infamous ‘management prerogative’, giving way to transparency and open, honest and ego-free communications, each partner maintaining its role but establishing the ground on which matters of mutual concern will be discussed in a mature and honest fashion. After all, are militancy and partnership necessarily at odds?

8.5 The role of the State

Ramgooty-Wong (2004) concludes from a national study of HRM that the state of industrial relations in Mauritius is neither adequately facilitative nor particularly repressive. Who is the principal determinant of the state of employee relations? The answer is: the State, through the laws that it enacts and through the mechanisms it puts in place to ensure that such laws are actually applied in practice. Yet what do we see? Rallying against unions with support from employers (of the private sector), the State has consistently played an ambiguous role in maintaining the status quo and placed the blame on the union movement for *not reforming* itself. Successive governments promised to abolish the Industrial Relations Act but none had the nerve to do it. The right to strike had, in the IRA, been all but impossible in practice, but with the introduction of the new Employment Rights Bill, this right has been all but been squarely removed. Short-term agendas for attracting foreign investors find a reflection in government’s attitude towards unions, who they qualify as backward and uncomprehending of the ‘economic realities’ of the country. Alarmist rhetoric abounds, scaring workers into submission for fear of plant closures and mass layoffs. Welfare-state principles of the past are cast aside dismissively in the name of economic reform (seemingly at all costs); once-cherished democratic values of consultation and participation on a level-playing field are

substituted by autocratic, haughty contemptuousness. Now if unions as key partners in the development of Mauritius are to modernize and innovate, this can only be achieved in an environment where they are promoted as being *valuable*, where their ideas and contributions are welcomed and where they are always being consulted in major decisions of the country. For this to happen, Government need to value, accept and promote unionists and not systematically patronize or worse, humiliate them and ‘publicise’ them as uneducated, backward and irrelevant. Public Service International, and international confederation of unions, declares: “Trade unions (...) must demand to be treated as genuine social partners in all major social and economic planning and decision-making. nothing less. This demand applies to the workplace as well as to the corridors of power (...). Governments have to choose: either they want workers and their unions as part of the deal or they want them in united opposition”. If government is hostile to these principles, it must be made clear that the government has chosen to throw away a chance for a redesigned society and has asked for conflict.”

8.6 The role of unions

Trade unions in Mauritius are, as mentioned earlier in this chapter, in a hybrid state between servicing and organizing, but also, and especially so in the Rodriguan context, the social movement approach. As one trade unionist highlighted, the trade union movement cannot be a welfare association. From our interviews with Presidents of con(federations), the issue of broadening the scope of union action was very much emphasized. It is clear that, apart from basic struggles for pay and working conditions improvement, Mauritian unionists are very intent on ensuring that employees are not harassed and ill-treated. This reflects either a fact or a perception of unilateral, dictatorial attitudes of employers. They decry Government’s and employers’ rhetoric about promoting ‘dialogue’, such as by setting up a Social Platform for Dialogue, which, they say, these two have no moral right to speak about as it is in direct contradiction with most of what is currently going on in employment relations in the country.

Clearly, unions will have to adopt measures such as those mentioned above to develop more of a national role, and rally workers to take ownership of their workplace problems and solutions. As for actions on basic issues, how can unions be blamed, when so much is still to be achieved regarding “decent work” in Mauritius. Trade unions are independent, selfless organizations which now have to enlarge their scope and show the whole world how their active participation can influence work as well as wider issues. Social movement unionism is beginning to take hold in the industrialised world. Arguments often heard in Mauritius both at Government level and by employers, that unions should confine their actions to the workplace, leaving political action to political parties, are now seldom heard in the more developed parts of our world. The idea that unions should be more than mere interest groups, that they should play a major role in civil society as the voice of working people, is profoundly changing the nature of the labour movement. An introspective self-assessment is now called for, an examination of the bases for their achievements and strengths, but also of the sources of weaknesses and an analysis of challenges, and enter the big new world with drive and excitement, not pessimism and trepidation. By bravely broadening their scope for national impact and by harnessing the workforce for greater maturity and activism, the union movement will surely be a new force to be reckoned with, and perhaps even the greatest force to re-establish some equilibrium in the socio-economic scene of Mauritius. Our case study union, the GSA, is one example of excellent potential to undertake such a role.

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Master List Of Unions as per Dec 2005

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
AGRICULTURE	107	97	10	Agricultural Marketing Board Employees Union		
	35	28	7	Agricultural Marketing Board Staff Association		
	173	100	73	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit Staff Union		
	163	158	5	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit Workers Union		
	315	278	37	Agricultural Staff and Employees Union		
	30	14	16			Association of Officers of the Irrigation Authority
	166	164	2			Irrigation Authority Employees' Union
	146	146	0			Irrigation Authority Manual Workers Union
	51	41	10			Irrigation Authority Staff Association
	21	20	1		Mauritius Cooperative Agricultural Federation Staff and Employees Association	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
AGRICULTURE	32	23	9	Ministry of Agriculture Professionals' Union		
	146	98	48	Ministry of Agriculture, Professional Scientific and Technical Officers Staff Union		
	155	155	0	The Government Samplers Association		
	368	332	36	Union of Employees of Ministry of Agriculture and other Ministries		
	1908	1654	254			

Bank, Ins & Other Fin	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Association Des Employés de La Banque Nationale De Paris Intercontinentale	
	12	12	0		Bank of Baroda Staff Union	
	49	18	31		Bank of Baroda Employees Association	
	2	0	2		Bank Of Mauritius Employees Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Bank, Ins & Other Fin	39	37	2		Barclays Bank Managerial Staff Association	
	111	67	44		Commercial Banks Staff and Employees Association	
	235	124	111		DBM LTD Staff Association	
	33	24	9		Financial Services Commission Staff Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Habib Bank Limited Officers Association	
	20	9	11		Habib Bank Staff Union	
	155	84	71	Income Tax Technical Staff Union		
	23	10	13		Insurance and Employees' Union	
	179	58	121		Mauritius Bank Officers Guild	
	39	15	24			Mauritius Civil Service Mutual Aid Association LTD Employees' Union

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Bank, Ins & Other Fin	363	363	0		Mauritius Commercial Bank Messengers and other manual worker' union	
	127	78	49		Private Bank Staff and Employees Association	
	46	15	31		South East Asian Bank Employees Association	
	23	22	1		State Bank Managerial Grade Association	
	84	38	46	The Audit Department Union		
	34	18	16	The Auditors Union		
	9	2	7		The Indian Ocean General Assurance Employees Union	
	65	65	0		The Mauritius Banks Employees Union	
	1166	642	524		The Mauritius Commercial Bank Employees Association	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Bank, Ins & Other Fin	381	203	178		The State Bank of Mauritius Staff Union	
	400	181	219		Union Of Finance Officers	
	3595	2085	1510			

EDUCATION	47	27	20		Association of the Mahatma Gandhi Institute Senior Staff	
	32	30	2	Association of Primary schools Health and Physical Education		
	9	8	1	Deputy Rectors' Union		
	710	386	324	Education Officers Grade "A" Union		
	N/AP	N/AP	0		Federation Of Unions of Managers of Private Secondary Schools	
	554	272	282	Government Hindi Teachers Union		
	799	347	452	Government Secondary Schools Teachers Union		

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
EDUCATION	4450	2064	2386	Government Teachers' Union		
	220	105	115	Government Urdu Teachers' Union		
	311	233	78	Industrial and Vocational Training Board Staff Union		
	163	135	28	Industrial and Vocational Training Board Training Officers and Instructors Union		
	21	0	21		Kindergarten Teachers' Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Le Bocage High School Staff Association	
	35	8	27		Lycée Labourdonnais Employees Association	
	123	48	75		Mahatma Gandhi Institute Employees	
	284	159	125		Mahatma Gandhi Staff Association	
	133	68	65		Mauritius College of the Air Staff Association	
9	7	2			Mauritius Examination Syndicate Senior Staff Association	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
EDUCATION	211	119	92			Mauritius Examination Syndicate Staff Union
	91	56	35	Mauritius Head Teachers Association		
	188	99	89			Mauritius Institute of Education Staff Union
	14	4	10		Mauritius Union of Pre-School Educators	
	260	0	260		Pre-Primary School Employees Union	
	138	60	78	Primary School Clerks Union		
	165	36	129	Primary School Tamil Teachers' Union		
	11	0	11		Private Pre-Primary Schools Owners' Union	
	93	40	53		Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union	
	84	35	49		Roman Catholic Education Authority Caretaker and General Worker Union	
	18	7	11		Roman Catholic Secondary Schools Union	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
EDUCATION	723	628	95	School Caretakers and Labourers Union		
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Secondary and Preparatory School Teachers Union	
	19	12	7	State Secondary School Vocational Graduates Union		
	37	22	15			Technical School Management Trust Fund Employees Union
	26	14	12			Technical School Management Trust Fund Lecturers' Union
	162	129	33			Technical School Management Trust Fund Staff Union
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		The Association of Inspectors of the Private Secondary Schools Authority	
	280	179	101	The Deputy Head Teachers Association		
	1431	660	771	The General Purpose Teachers Union		
	15	12	3		The Managers Of Private Secondary Schools Union	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
EDUCATION	67	44	23			The Mauritius Institute of Education Academic Staff Association
	64	41	23	The Primary School Inspectors Union		
	75	37	38		The Private Secondary Schools Authority Employees Union	
	38	29	9	The State Secondary Schools Rectors Union		
	44	38	6	The State Secondary Schools Teachers Union		
	12	12	0		Union of Inspectors and Supervisors Of the Private Secondary Schools Authority	
	13	13	0		Union of Managers of Private "A" Secondary Schools	
	321	191	130		Union of Non-Teaching Staff of Aided Secondary Schools	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
EDUCATION	793	205	588	Union of Primary School Teachers		
	2767	1639	1128		Union Of Private Secondary Education Employees	
	33	26	7	Union Of Professional Education Officers		
	4	1	3		Union Of Roman Catholic Primary School Clerks	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Union Of Teachers and Other Employees Of the Private Pre-Primary Schools	
	161	100	61			University Of Mauritius Academic Staff Association
	452	294	158			University Of Mauritius Staff Union
	68	45	23			University Of Mauritius Technicians Union
	71	34	37		University Of Technology Mauritius Employees union	
	16849	8758	8091			

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	598	582	16		Beverage Industry Workers Union	
	14	14	0		Building and Civil Engineering Contractors Association	
	22	22	0		Building and General Construction Workers Union	
	24	22	2		Building Woodworking and Allied Workers Union	
	49	44	5		Butter and Margarine Industries Workers Union	
	534	496	38		Chemical Manufacturing and Connected Trade Employees Union	
	76	46	30		Cigarette Manufacturing Employees Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Cleaning and Laundry Workers Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	32	32	0		Cold Storage Workers Union	
	22	22	0		Construction and Allied Workers Union	
	1770	1770	0		Construction, Metal & Furniture Employees Union	
	70	54	16		Diamond Cutting Factory Workers Union	
	322	293	29		Distributive Trade Workers Union	
	613	267	346		Export Enterprises Employees Union	
	560	268	292		Export Processing Zone Workers Union	
	IPC	IPC	IPC		Export Processing Zones Development Authority Staff Association	
	234	200	34		Farm Workers Union	
	IPC	IPC	IPC		Fishing Vessels Workers Union	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						

	1001	948	53		Food and Beverages Industry Employees Union		
	204	191	13	Government Printing Workers' Union		<u>Appendix A</u>	
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	28	28	0		Imprimerie Commerciale Employees Union		
	67	66	1		Leather and Plastic Industry Workers Union		
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Mauritius Free Zone and Secondary Industries Employees Union		
	70	66	4			Mauritius Meat Authority Employees Union	
	120	120	0		Mauritius Metal Workers Union		
	39	39	0		Mechanical pool manual Workers Union		
	48	38	10	Ministry of Fisheries Professional Scientific and Technical Staff Union			
	Size	Gender			Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female				
	Sector						
COMMERCE	439	435	4		Organisation Of Artisans Unity		
	9	8	1		Organisation of EPZ Workers Unity		
	9	9	0		Shoes and Sandals Manufacturing Workers Union		
					SMIDO	308	
	12	7	5		Administrative, Technical Officers and Workers Association		

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	318	30	288		Textile Manufacturing and Allied Industries Workers Union	
	54	5	49		Textiles Industries Staff and Workers Union	
	1690	131	1559		Textiles, Clothes and Other Manufacturing Workers Union	
	2730	1989	741		The Artisans and General Workers Union	
	44	38	6			The Farmers Service Corporation Staff Association
	20	14	6		The Federation of Young Farmers Staff and Employees Union	
	33	29	4		The Livestock & Allied Industries Workers' Union	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	36	19	17		The Mauritius Distributive and other Trades Employees Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV			The Mauritius Export Development and Investment Authority Employees Union
	10	10	0		The Tailoring and Dressmaking Industry Workers Union	
	79	59	20		Tobacco Board Employees Union	
	17	14	3		Tobacco Board Staff Union	
	20	19	1		Union of Bakery Employees, Biscuit Factory Workers And Pastry Cooks	
	36	27	9		Union of Workers of the Animal Farms	
	80	78	2			Union Of Workers Of The Mauritius Meat Authority

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						

INDUSTRY AND COMMERCE	89	89	0		Union Of Workers Of Packaging Industry Company Limited		
	0	0	0		General Taxi Owners' Union	<u>Appendix A</u>	
	0	0	0		GIBB (Mauritius) Staff Union		
	448	271	177		IrelnD Blyth LTD Staff Association		
	12	0	12		Lorry Drivers and Helpers Union		
	0	0	0		Market Traders Association		
	13	6	7			National Handicraft Promotion Agency Employees Union	
	IPC	IPC	IPC			National Handicraft Promotion Agency Staff Union	
	14	8	6			Outer Islands Development Corporation Employees Union	
	209	209	0		Petroleum and Gas Employees Union		
	Size	Gender			Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female				
Sector							
IND & COM	191	188	3			State Trading Corporation Employees Union	
	47	30	17			State Trading Corporation Staff Union	
	730	730	0		The Taxi Proprietors Union		
	8	7	1			The Shops and Duty Free Shops Employees Union	
	14442	10441	4001				
&	552	388	164		Casino Employees Union		
						312	

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
LEISURE & HOTELS	78	76	2		Private Clubs Employees Union	
	15	10	5		Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Workers Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		St Geran Hotel Workers Union	
	2921	2697	224		Hotel and Restaurants Employees Union	
	133	102	31		Le Grand Gaube Hotel Staff Union	
	193	158	35		Organisation of Hotel and Catering Workers Unity	
	27	N/AP	N/AP		The Mauritius Association of IATA Travel Agents	
	208	181	27		Union of Employees of the Catering Industry	
	31	16	15		Union Of Workers Of The Hotel and Catering Industries	
	4457	3868	562			

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
SUGAR INDUSTRY	449	325	124		All District Sugar cane industry Workers Union	
	38	33	5		All Mauritius Village Council Workers Union	
	39	N/AP	N/AP		Cane Growers Association	
	16	10	6			Mauritius Sugar Authority Employees Union
	35	35	0			Mauritius Sugar Industry Arbitration and Control Board Technical Staff Association
	109	72	37		MSIRI Staff Association	
	126	120	6		MSIRI Manual Workers Union	
	32	N/AP	N/AP		Mauritius Sugar Producers' Association	
	75	67	8			Mauritius Sugar Terminal Corporation Employees Union
	7	7	0			Mauritius Sugar Terminal Corporation Staff Association
	4734	3656	1078		Plantation Workers Union	
	3220	2610	610		Sugar Industry Labourers Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
SUGAR INDUSTRY	737	636	101		Sugar Industry Staff Employees Association	
	702	601	101		Sugar Industry Workers Association	
	17	17	0		Sugar Insurance Fund Board Senior Field Staff Association	
	144	142	2		Sugar Planters Mechanical Pool Corporation Employees Union	
	354	262	92		The Sugar Industry Labour Welfare Fund Staff and Employees Union	
	563	562	1		The Sugar Industry Overseas Association	
	1747	1745	2		Union of Artisans of the Sugar Industry	
	268	213	55			Union of Employees of Sugar Insurance Fund
	13412	11113	2228			

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
MEDIA	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Association of MBC Journalists	
	326	258	68		Mauritius Broadcasting Service Staff Association	
	344	246	98		The Newspaper and Printing Industry Employees Association	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Union Of the Personnel Of Media	
	670	504	166			
TEA	13	13	0		Private Tea Sector Employees Union	
	11	9	2		Tea Industry Staff and Employees Union	
	256	222	34		Tea Industry Workers Union	
	280	244	36			

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
TRANSPORT	431	191	240		Air Mauritius Cabin Crew Association	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Air Mauritius Staff Association	
	0	0	0		Air Mauritius Supervisors and Managers Union	
	153	152	1		Airline Employees Association	
	324	287	37		Airport of Mauritius LTD Employees Union	
	917	894	23		Association Travailleurs Transport Autobus	
	43	36	7		Bus Industry Staff Association	
	161	161	0		Bus Industry Traffic Officers Union	
	226	214	12		Civil Aviation Employees Union	
	48	46	2		Mauritius Airline Pilots Association	
	41	41	0			National Transport Authority Technical Staff Union
	19	19	0			National Transport Authority Vehicle Examiners Union

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
TRANSPORT	37	25	12			National Transport Corporation Staff Association
	59	42	17		Plaisance Air Transport Services Staff Union	
	63	63	0		Private Transport Employees Union	
	35	35	0			Traffic Warden Staff Union
	978	977	1			Transport Corporation Employees Union
	97	97	0		Transport Employees Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Transport Industry Workers Union	
	22	9	13		Union Of Airlines and General Sales Agents Employees	
	2264	2264	0		Union Of Bus Industry Workers	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
TRANSPORT	557	522	35	Union Of Customs and Excise Officers		
	418	379	39		Union of Employees of Air Mauritius LTD	
	901	874	27		United Bus Service Employees Union	
	7794	7328	466			

MEDICAL	97	5	92		Clinic Employees Association	
	IPC	IPC	IPC	Community Health Nursing Officers Union		
	236	216	20	Government Medical and Dental Officers Association		
	23	20	3	Government Medical Consultants Association		
	16	16	0	Government Veterinary Officers Union		
	16	10	6			Mauritius Institute of Health Staff and Employees

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
MEDICAL	187	149	38	Medical and Health Officers Association		
	167	105	62	Medical Laboratory Technician Association		
	176	98	78		Medical Records Staff Power Union	
	50	29	21	Ministry of Health Laboratory Attendants Union		
	20	14	6			National Trust Fund For Community Health Workers Union
	8	3	5	Nurses Educators Union		
	2780	1155	1625	Nurses Union		
	2806	1111	1695	Nursing Association		
	36	31	5		Private Medical Practitioners Association	
	7	5	2		Professional Physiotherapists Association	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
MEDICAL	0	0	0		SSR Medical College Non-Academic Staff Union	
	1181	606	575	Union Des Travailleurs Du Ministère La Santé		
	7806	3573	4233			

ENVIRN	60	32	28	Environment Technical Staff Union		
	60	32	28			

TELECM	835	616	219		Mauritius Telecom Employees Association	
	10	7	3			National Computer Board Employees Union
	9	3	6	State Informatics LTD Staff Union		

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
TELECM	974	770	204		Telecommunications Employees and Staff Association	
	860	673	187		Telecommunications Workers Union	
	28	25	3		Union Of Telecommunications Engineers	
	2716	2094	622			

UTILITIES	326	326	0			Central Electricity Board Workers Union
	107	107	0			Central Water Authority Meter Readers Union
	119	119	0		Electrical Services Division Workers Union	
	899	808	91			The Central Electricity Board Staff Union
	522	519	3		The Electrical and Mechanical Workers Union	
	956	955	1			Union of Employees of the Central Electricity Board

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
UTILITIES	794	721	73			Union of Employees of the Central Water Authority
	132	106	26			Wastewater Management Authority Employees Union
	3855	3661	194			

LAW	85	67	18	The Court Officers Association		
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV	The Judicial Department Ushers Union		
	238	98	140	The Statutory Bodies Employees Union		
	323	165	158			

OTHER	9	7	2			The Town and Country Planning Board Staff and Employees Union
	57	33	24	Union Of Government Economists		

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	2374	2147	227			Union of Municipalities Workers
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV		Union of Post Office Workers	
	7	7	0			Union Of Professional Engineers
	475	455	20	Union Of Public Officers of Ex-TDA Workers		
	138	35	103	Union Of Public Personnel Officers		
	135	64	71			Union Of Revenue Officers
	18	8	10		Union of Social Welfare Officers	
	93	81	12			Union Of Workers of Approved Services
	22	4	18	Union Of Workers of Local Government		
	209	209	0			Union Of Workers Of The Development Works Corporation
	15	15	0		Assistant Postman Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	205	205	0		Central Housing Authority Employees Union	
	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV	Central Statistical Office Staff Association		
	388	371	17	Government Manual Workers Union		
	53	51	2		Post Office Administrative Staff Association	
	25	25	0		Postman Drivers Union	
	72	70	2	Government Professional Engineers Association		
	33	15	18		The Salt Pans Workers Union	
	21	19	2		Cooperative Stores Workers Union	
	63	58	5		Cooperative Technical Staff Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	23	19	4	Civil Service Architects Union		
	16	7	9		Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board Staff and Employees Union	
	63	59	4	Civil Status Officers Union		
	25	8	17		Companies Division Technical Officer Union	
	108	23	85		Data Processing Division Staff Association	
	130	120	10			Development Works Corporation Staff Union
	133	133	0	Disciplined Forces Workmen's class Workers Union		
	183	179	4		District Council North Skill and Non Skill Workers Union	
	141	125	16		Docks and Wharves Staff Employees Union	

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	16	6	10	Domestic Employees Union		
	313	311	2	Government Office Attendants Union		
	10	0	10		Grand Port Savanne Village Council Employees Union	
	1024	860	164			Local Authorities Employees Union
	273	246	27			Local Government Employees Association
	8	4	4	Mauritius Archives Staff Union		
	132	69	63			Mauritius Housing Company Staff Association
	289	278	11		Mauritius Private Security Guard Employees Union	
	69	39	30			National Housing Development Company Employees Union
	1090	1086	4		Port-Louis Harbour and Docks Workers Union	
12	12	0		Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union		

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	N/AV	N/AV	N/AV			Rodrigues Port and Cargo Transport Employees Union
	157	139	18		Stevedoring and Marine Staff Employees Association	
	898	841	57			The Maritime Transport and Port Employees Union
	3943	1141	2802	Government General Services Union		
	317	243	74	Mauritius Senior Civil Servants Association		
	59	38	21			Mauritius Standard Bureau Employees Union
	75	75	0		Mauritius Workshop Workers Union	
	21	21	0	Ministry of Local Government Employees Union		
	330	324	6			Municipality Of Curepipe Workers Union
	155	4	151			National Women Council Employees Union
	38	35	3			Port Louis Municipal Inspectorate Union

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
OTHER	1861	N/AV	N/AV		Private Enterprise Employees Union	
	72	16	56	Registrar General Technical Officers Union		
	20	9	11	Registrar Of Association Inspectorate Staff Union		
	1151	946	205	Rodrigues Government Employees Association		
	868	705	163	Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union		
	27	25	2		Rural Development Staff Union	
	249	92	157			Social Welfare Community Centers Employees Union
	284	284	0		The Development Works Corporation Employees Association	
	57	23	34		The District Council North Staff and Other Employees Association	
	7	6	1	The Mauritius Cooperative Union Staff and Employees Association		

Sector	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
OTHER	40	40	0			Development Works Corporation Foremen Union
	553	472	81	The Rural Local Government Staff Association		
	508	280	228	Government Labour Power Union		
	11217	N/AV	N/AV	Government Servants Association		
	61	58	3		Private Firms Employees Union	
	11	8	3		Private Firms Staff Union	
	790	747	43		Syndicat Des Travailleurs Des Etablissements Privés	
	628	628	0	Syndicat Des Travailleurs Unis De La Fonction Publique		
	32867	14663	5126			

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
ORGS	2	N/AP	N/AP	Confederation Mauricienne Des Travailleurs		
	8	N/AP	N/AP	Federation Des Travailleurs Unis		
	62	N/AP	N/AP	Federation of Civil Service and Other Unions		
	2	N/AP	N/AP	Federation Of Free Workers		
	36	N/AP	N/AP	Federation Of Progressive Unions		Federation Of Parastatal Bodies and Other Unions
	11	N/AP	N/AP	Free Democratic Unions Federation		
	19	N/AP	N/AP	General Workers Federation		
	52	N/AP	N/AP	Mauritius Labour Congress		
	4	N/AP	N/AP	Mauritius Labour Federation		
	20	N/AP	N/AP	Mauritius Trade Union Congress		

	Size	Gender		Unions in Public Organisations	Unions in Private Organisations	Unions in Parastatal Organisations
		Male	Female			
Sector						
ORGS	6	N/AP	N/AP	National Trade Union Confederation		
	5	N/AP	N/AP	State Employees Federation		
	268	N/AP	N/AP			

Appendix B: Participants of the Key Informant Interviews

Name of Interviewee/s	Name of interviewer/s	Date of Interview	Time of Interview	Place of Interview	Contact Number	Done
Prof. Torul, IRC	Peggy Veerapen and Dr. R. Wong	Wednesday 4 th of April 2007	09 hr 45 a.m	Industrial Relations Commission, crescent House, Port-Louis	213 – 3600	✓
Mr.R. Algoo	Peggy Veerapen and Dr. P. Bagwant	Friday the 6 th of April 2007	10 hr 30 a.m	National Remuneration Board, Crescent house, Port-Louis	Res: 288 – 8076 Mob : 917– 9346	✓
Mr. T.Benydin	Peggy Veerapen and Dr. P. Bagwant	Monday the 9 th of April 2007	10 hr 00 a.m	Jade Court, Port Louis	216 – 1977 or 258 – 1718	✓
Mr. Maleck Ahmod	Peggy Veerapen	Tuesday the 10 th of April 2007	10 hr 00 a.m	Telecom Tower, Port-Louis	265 – 7183	✓
Ministry Of Labour	Peggy Veerapen and Dr. R. Wong	Thursday the 12 th of April 2007	10 hr 00 a.m	Victoria house, Port-Louis	207 – 2600	✓
ROA- Mr. Sanasee, Principal Inspector	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Monday the 16 th of April 2007	13 hr 00	Crescent House, Port Louis	213 – 3600	✓

APPENDIX B

Name of Interviewee/s	Name of interviewer/s	Date of Interview	Time of Interview	Place of Interview	Contact Number	Done
Mr.R. Chuttoo and Ms J.Ragoo	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Monday the 23 rd of April 2007	13 hr 00	Palaais De Vennise, Rose Hill	464 – 3392	✓
ROA – Mr. Hookoom	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Wednesday the 25 th of April 2007	10 hr 00	Registrar of Association, Crescent House, Port Louis	213 3600	✓
Ms.Jane Ragoo – Federation of progressive union	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Monday the 23 rd of April 2007	13 hr 00	Rose Hill	464 – 3392 or 454 9919	✓
MEF –M. Gopal & Mr Dursun	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Monday the 30 th of April 2007	14 hr 30	MEF, Ebene	466 – 3600 or 211 8431	✓
Mr R.Sadien – GSA, MTUC, SEF	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Wednesday the 18 th	09 hr 30	University of Mauritius	464 – 4242	✓
Mr Y.Sooklall - Free Democratic Unions Federation	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Thursday the 19 th of April 2007	09 hr 45	HRDC, IVTB House Phoenix	252 – 0201	✓
Mr D. Lutchmun	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Friday the 20 th of April 2007	09 hr 30	University Of Mauritius	765 -0768 or 212 4070	✓
PAT- Mr.Rashid Hossen	Dr. R. Wong and Peggy Veerapen	Monday the 23 rd of April 2007	11 hr 00	Astor Court, Port Louis	208 – 0091 or 254 9403	✓

Appendix C: Interview Schedule for Key Informant Interviews

(a) Date of the Interview:

(b) Interviewed by :;;

(c) Name of the Key Informant:

(d) Name of the Institution:

(e) When was it founded?

.....
.....
.....

(f) What is the objective behind the setting up of this institution?

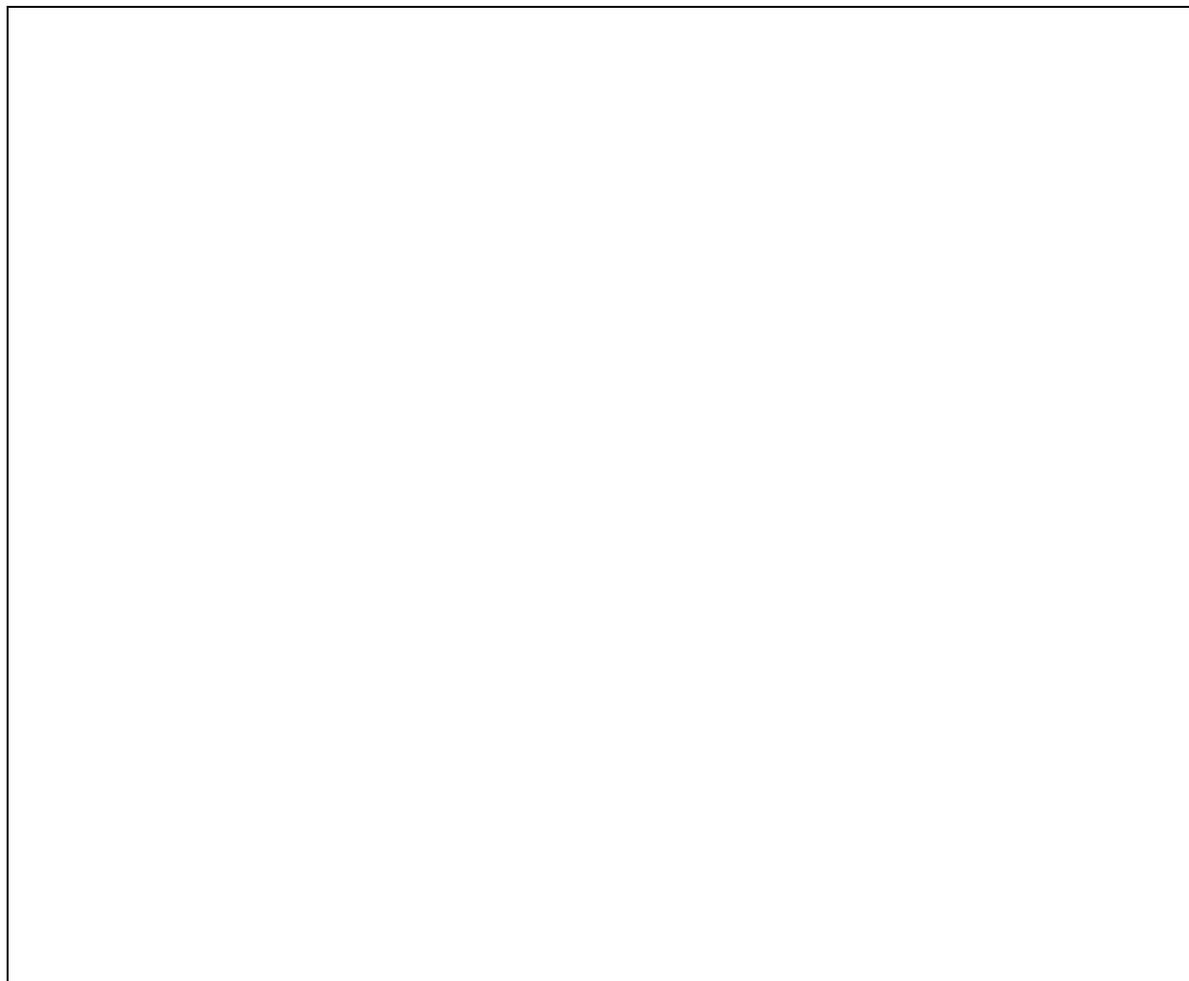
.....
.....
.....

(g) What is the role of the institution whenever trade unionism is concerned?

.....
.....
.....

(1) Theme : History of trade union movement

When did the first idea of trade union came into being in Mauritius and Rodrigues?



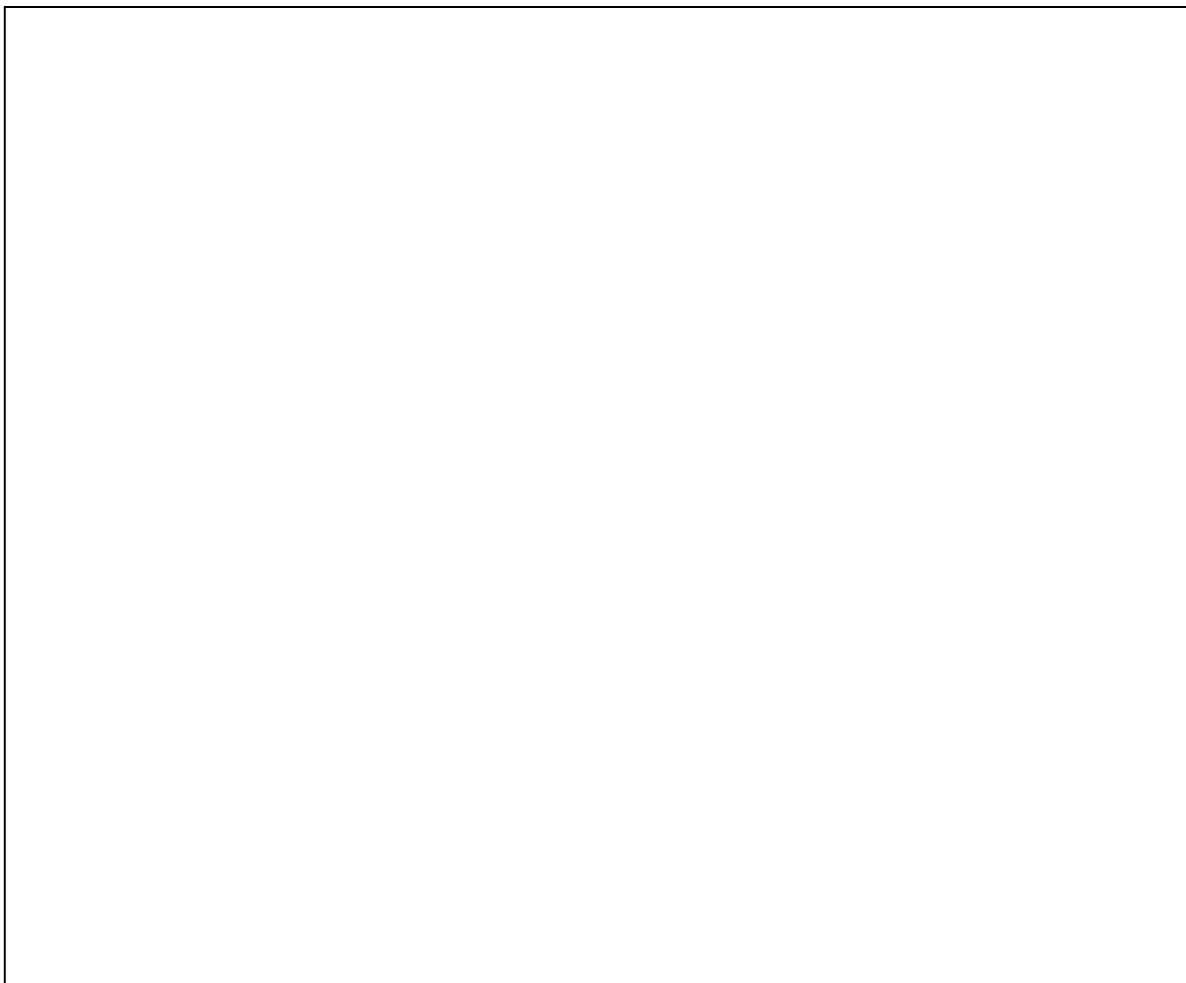
- The slavery time and the elevation of a stronger workforce;

- The Intervention of Adolphe Von De Plevitz

- The involvement of personalities like: Pandit Sahadeo, Emmanuel Anquetil, Pandit Ramnarain, Manilall Doctor, Dr. Maurice Curé and so on.

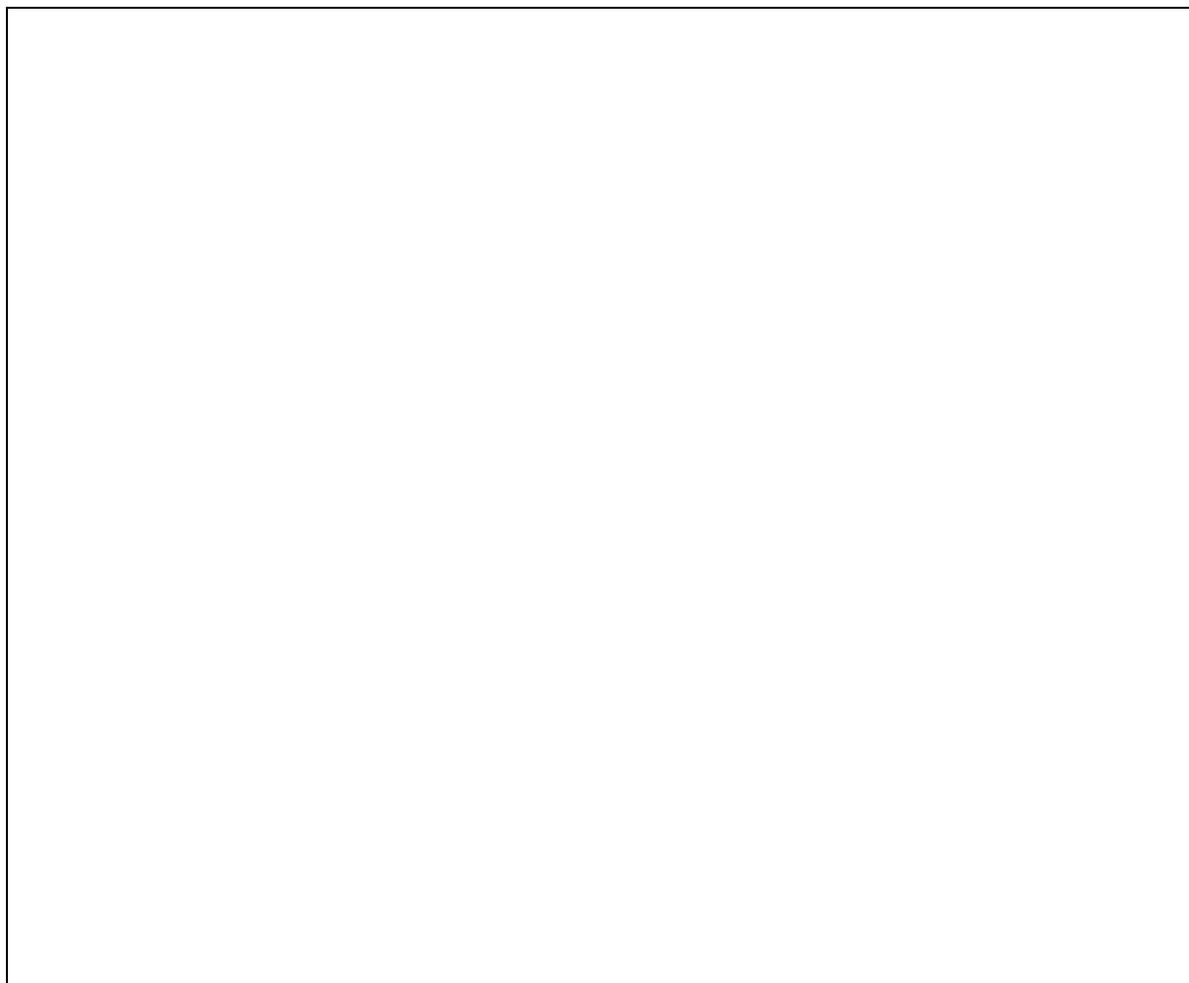
(2) Theme : The Industrial Relations climate

What were the reactions of the state and the employers in face of such revolution at that time?



(3) Theme : The Legal and institutional provisions (Trade union laws, Labour Act, Industrial Relations Act)

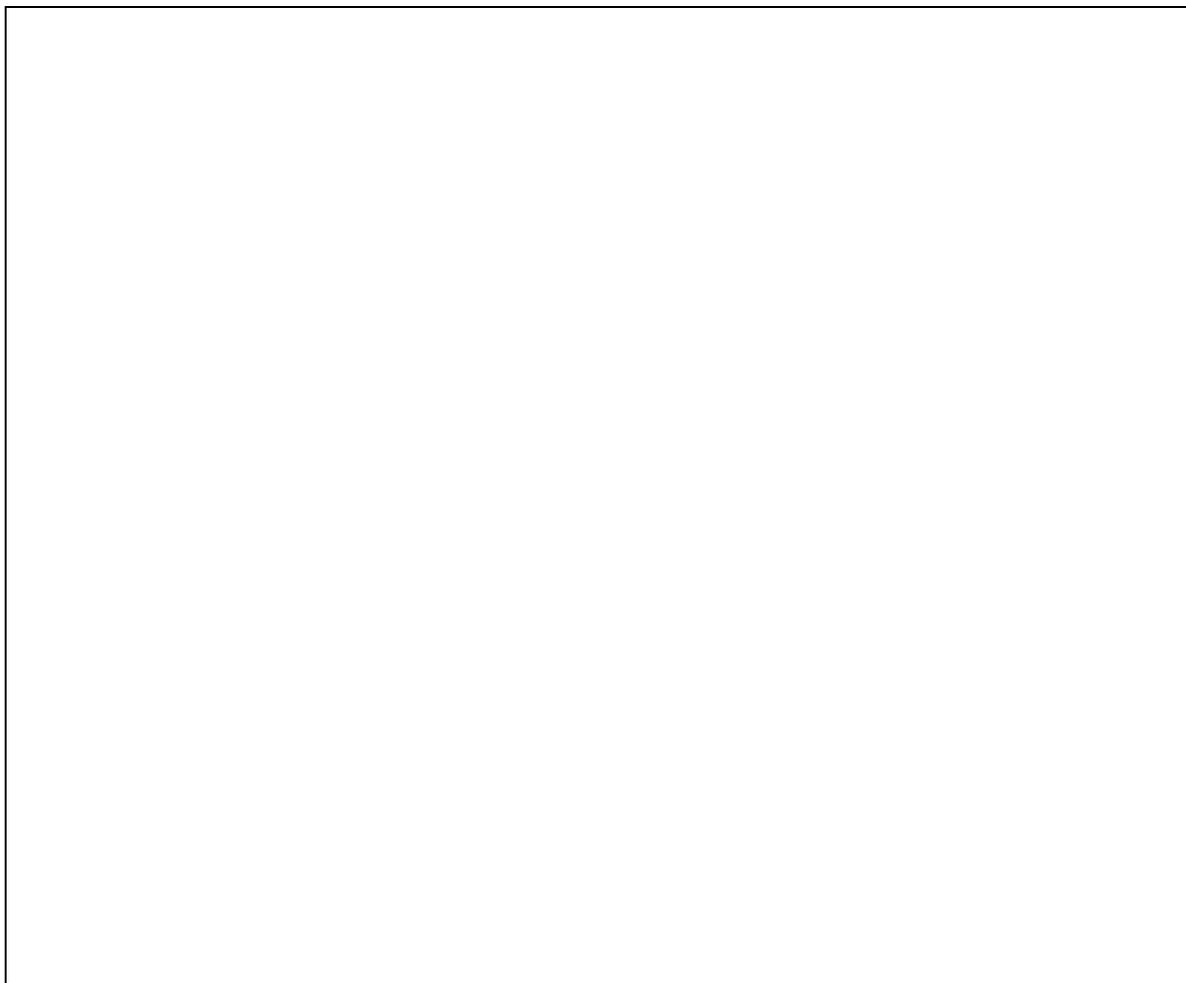
When did trade unions receive their legal rights in Mauritius as well as Rodrigues?



- The first Trade Union Bill;
- The Labour Act;
- The IRA.

(4) Theme : Major Industrial Relation events (strikes and their impacts/consequences)

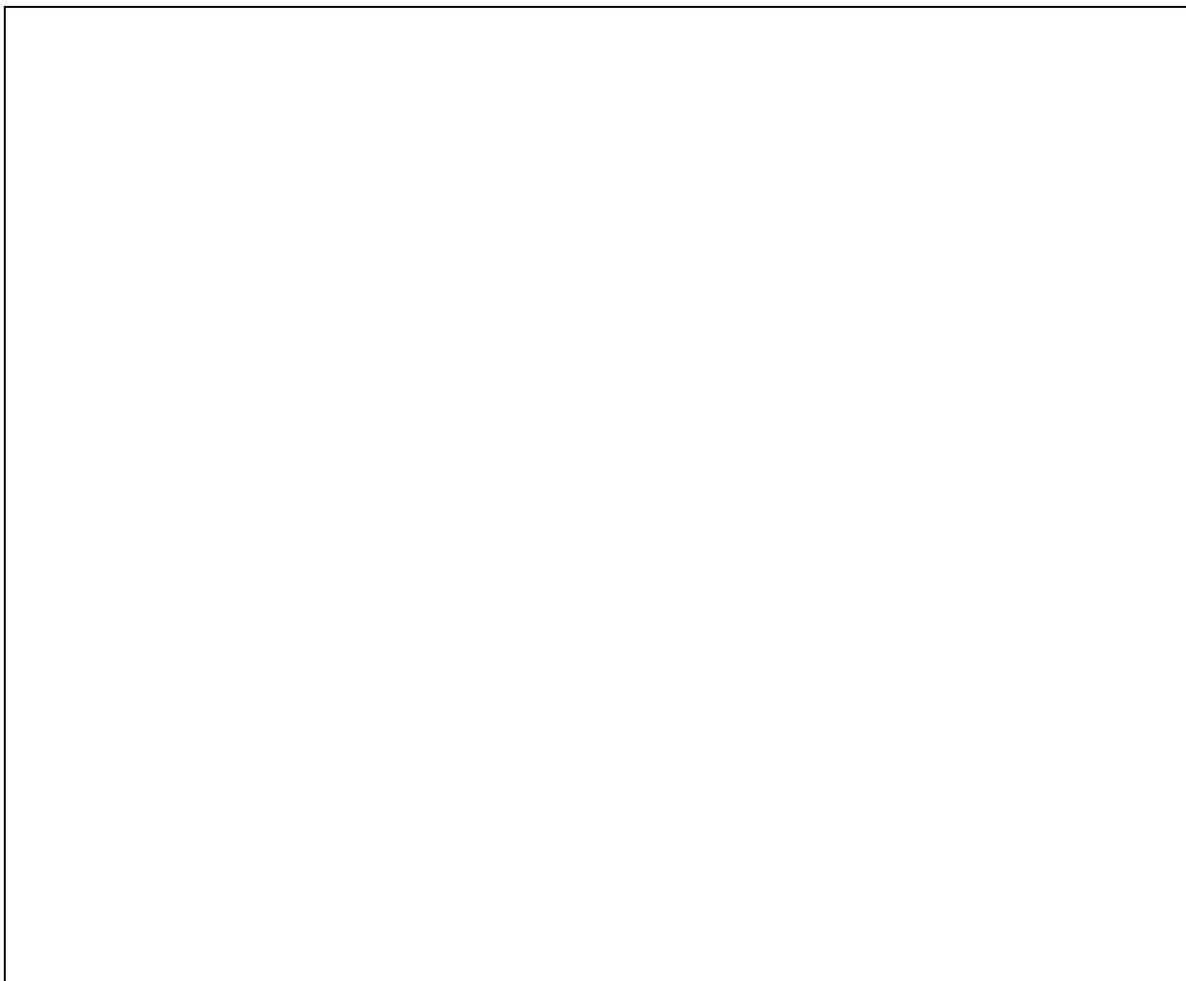
What were the major labour unrest that has marked the history of both Mauritius and Rodrigues?



- The Hooper Commission in 1937
- The War Bonus in the year 1939 - 1945
- The Dockers strike of 1912
- Plaine Lauzun Strike in 1912.

(5) Theme : Unions in the Public Sector

(a) Was there any particular reasons that obliged the public sector to get unionized? Are these reasons still valid today?

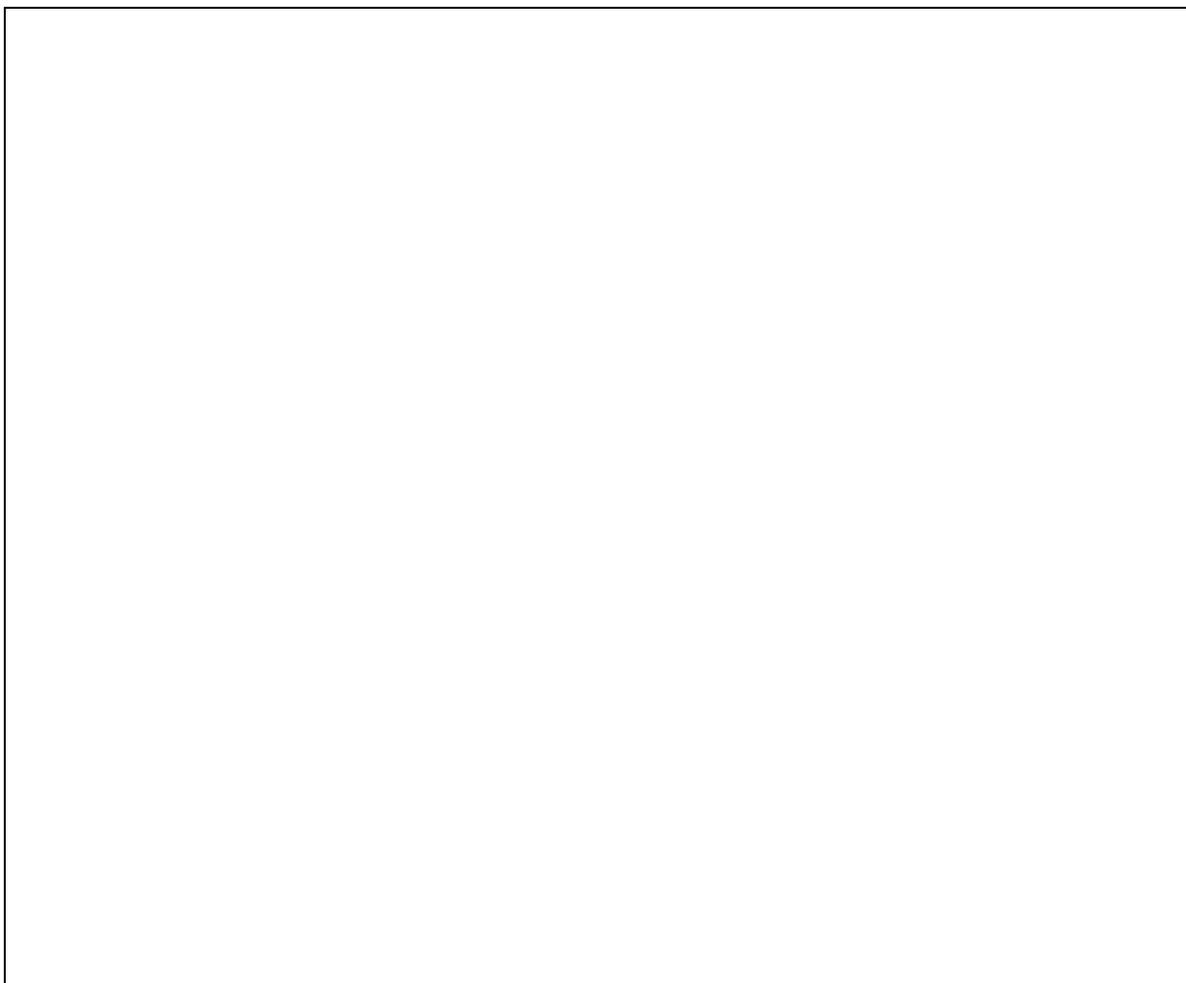


(b) How would you describe the strength/power of unions in the public sector?

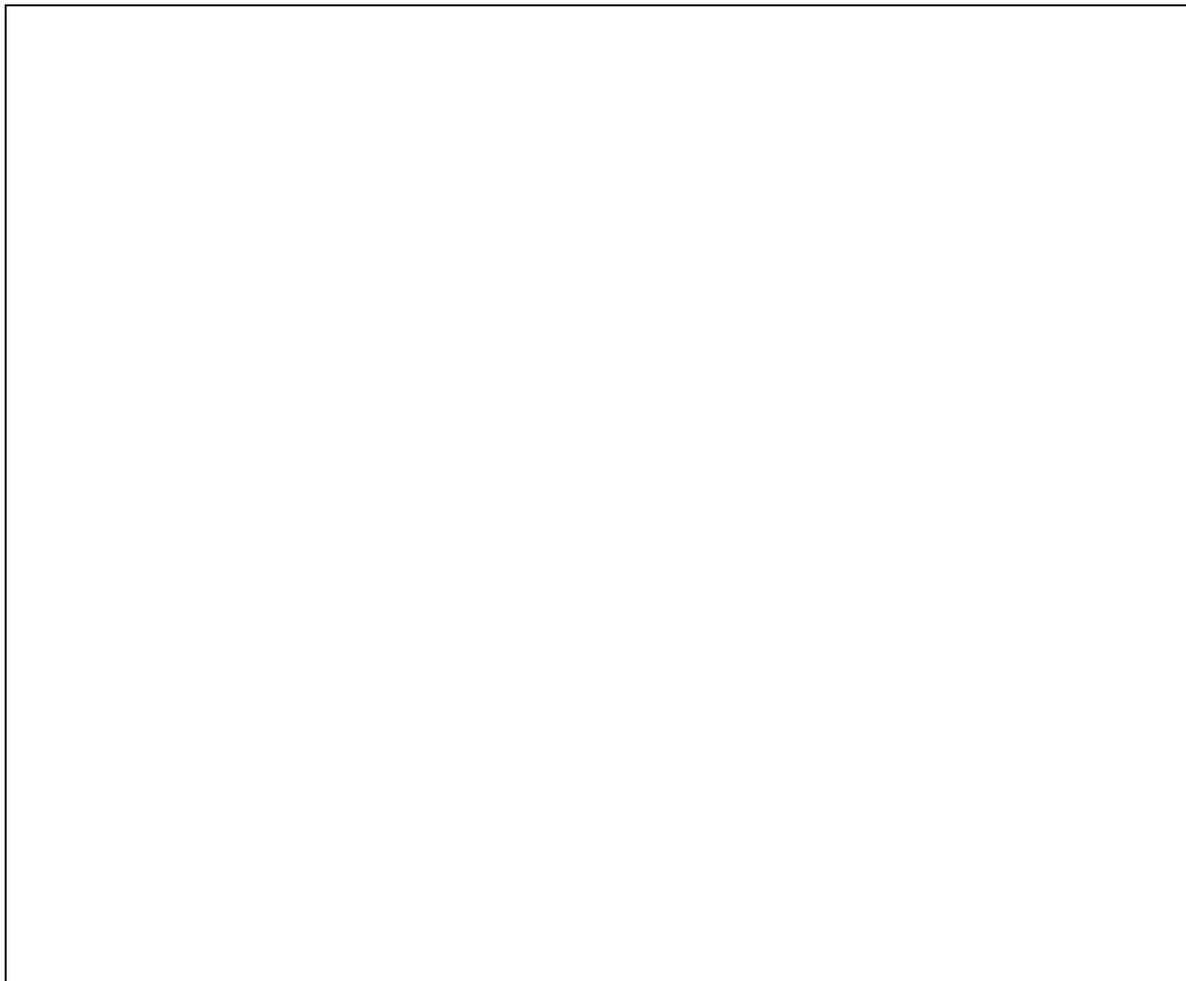


(6) Theme : The beginning of trade unions in the private sector

(a) Did trade union movement in the private sector start at the same time as the public sector?
What, according to you, prompted workers to organize themselves in the private sector?



(b) Explain the difference in the rate of unionization of both sectors.



General unionization rate:

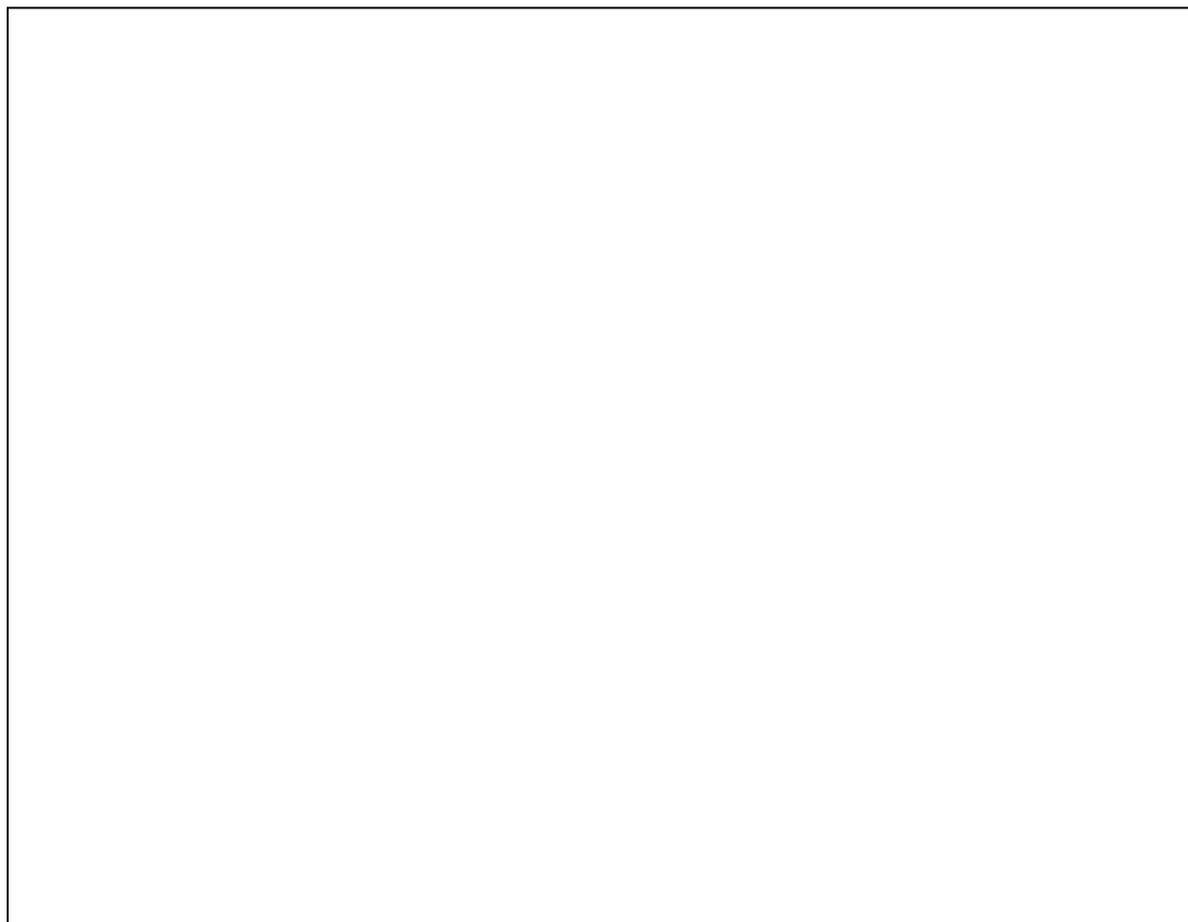
$$\frac{\text{Membership}}{\text{Workforce}} \times 100$$

$$= \frac{113982}{503000} \times 100$$

$$= 22.66 \text{ or } 23$$

(7) Theme : Development of Human Resource Management and its consequences for trade unions' importance

Human Resource Management (HRM) is concerned with the human side of the enterprise and factors that determine workers' relationships with their employing firms. It covers activities like: training, staff appraisal, job evaluation, promotion, rewards, and so on. Do you think that HRM is a threat to the existence of trade unions or vice versa? Do you think that there is a way for them to complement each other's functions?



(8) Theme : Industrial Relations and gender

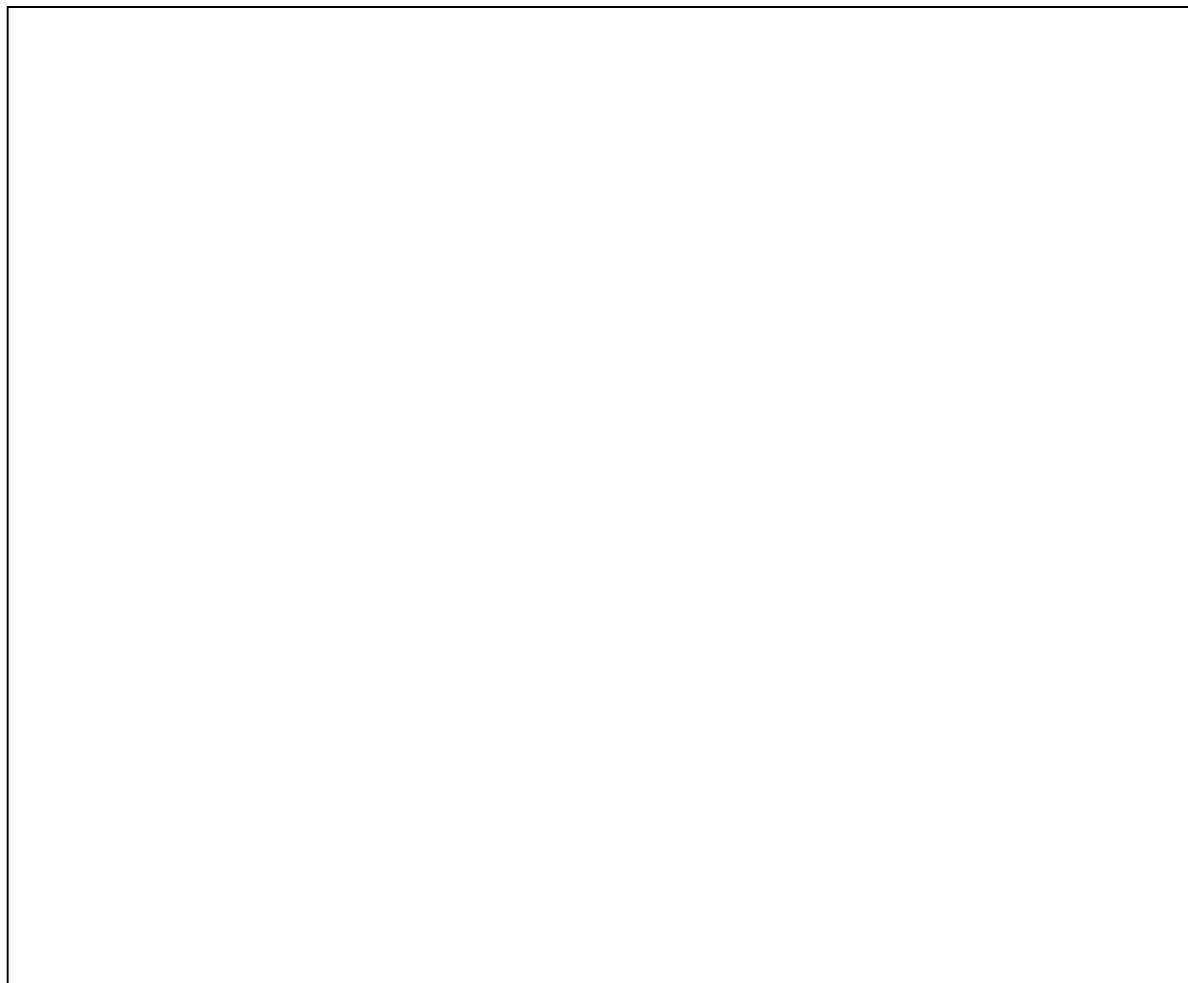
At what point in time did women first join unions?

Can you describe in some details what were the reasons behind such a move? Do Unions adequately represent the rights and the interests of their female members?



(9) Theme : Objectives, Structures and goals of unions

How would you describe the objectives and roles of trade unions in Mauritius as well as Rodrigues?



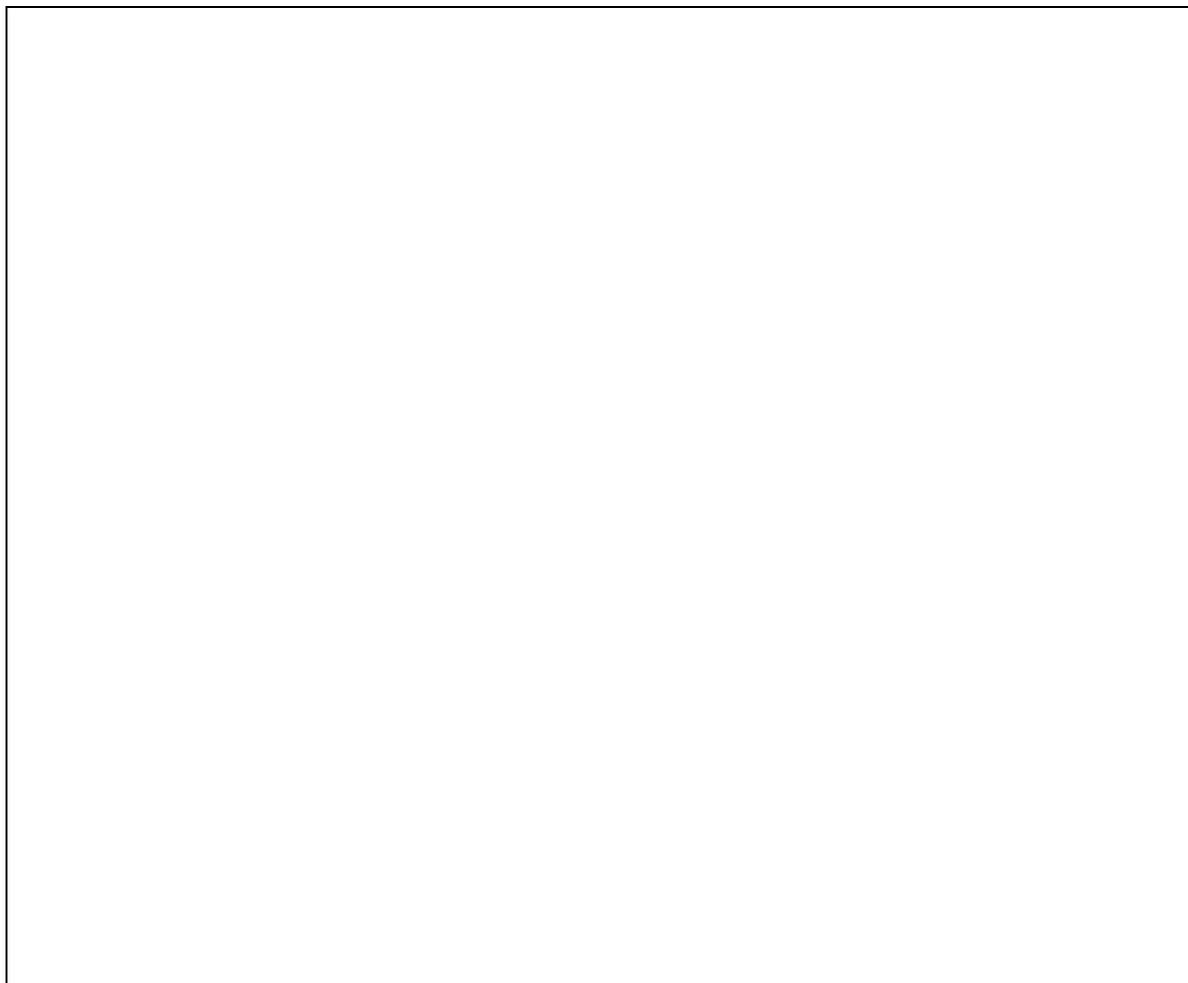
- The first National Trade Union Centre

- The structure of Trade Union Organisations in the past and now, is there any change? IF yes, what factors contribute to this change?

- Do trade Unions in Mauritius opt for the servicing model, trying to help and resolve employees' problems or the organizing model, empowering workers to effect change in the workplace?

(10) Theme : Unions and Politics

Are trade unions/their leaders in Mauritius and Rodrigues politically motivated and associated?



- Do Unions in Mauritius operate on their own or are they politically affiliated?

- If there are Unions that are politically affiliated, give us some examples?

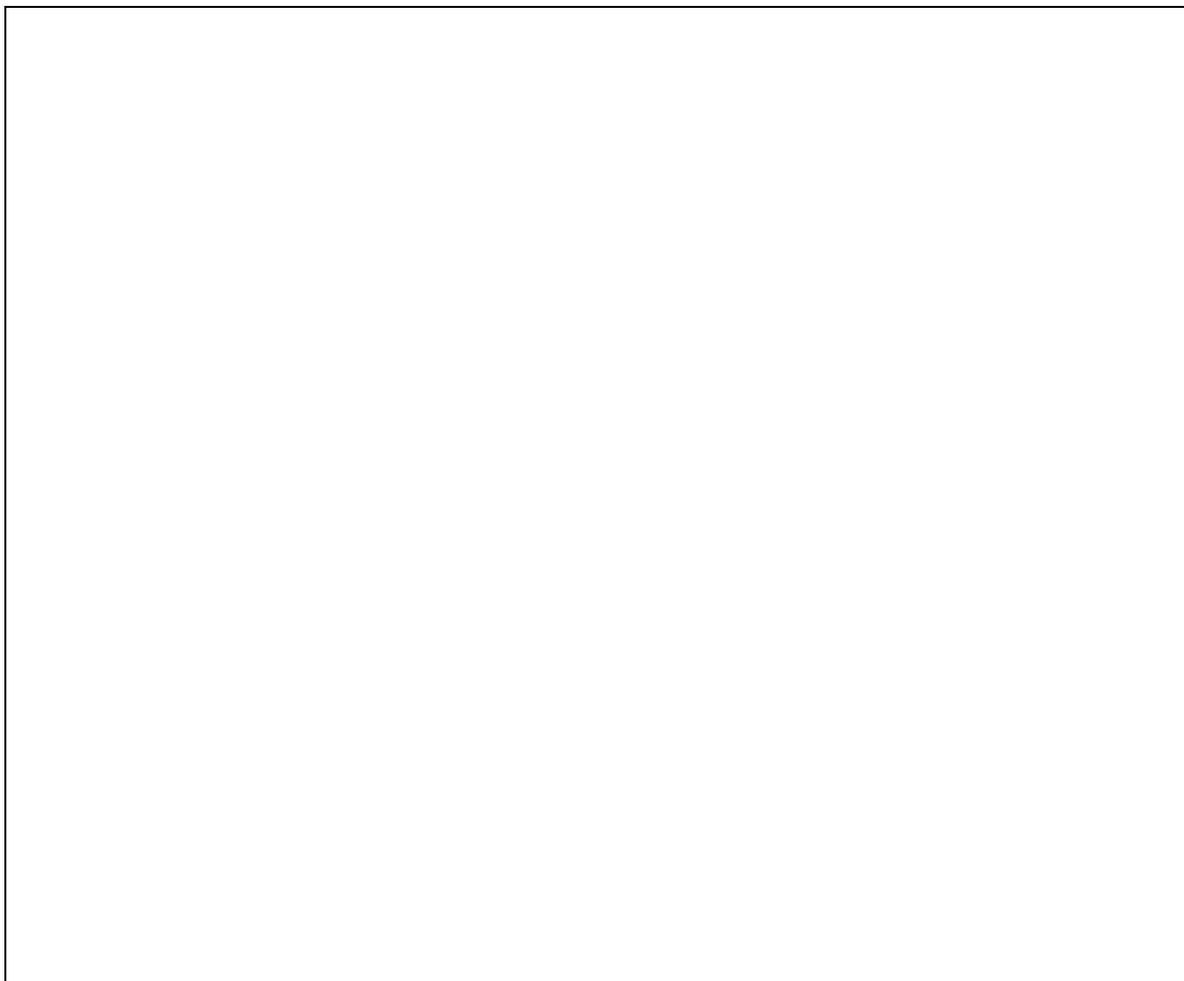
- Do you think that Unions work best when they are politically affiliated?

- What are the reasons that drive unions to be associated to political parties?

- The Labour Party.

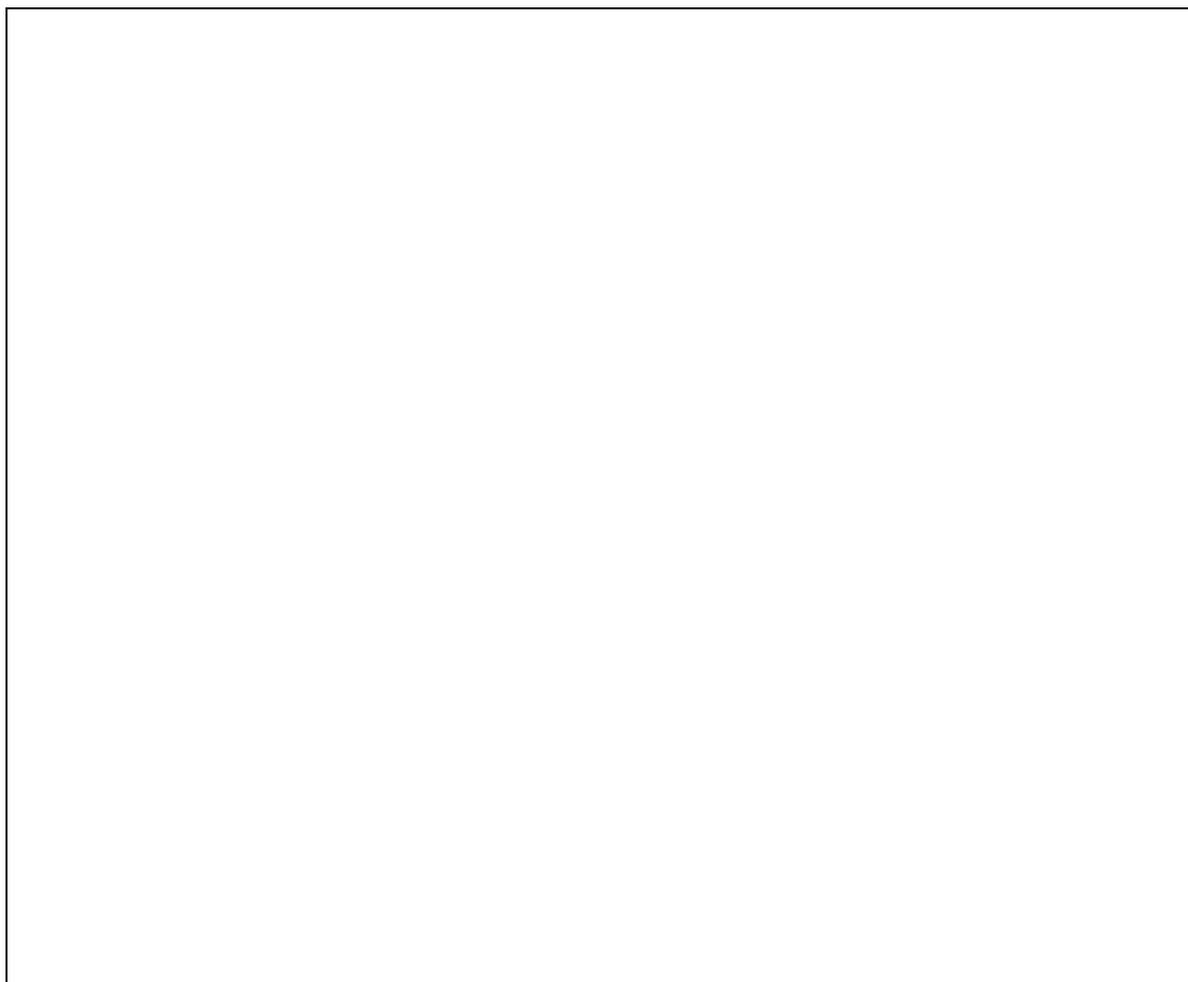
(11) Theme : Unions as agents of development and change

(a) What are the social implications of trade unions to the wider community (for both Rodrigues and Mauritius)?



- Trade Unions involvement in the infrastructure of the country;
- Trade Unions involvement in the AIDS Program;
- Trade Unions and the welfare of employees at work and in their family/personal life
- Trade unions and their devotion to eliminate poverty;
- Trade Unions and their initiative to promote peace and harmony among people of different race, religion, cultures etc.

(b) What is the impact of trade unions on the economic developments of the country or vice-versa for both islands?



- Trade unions and productivity of an organization, how do they help to increase productivity

- Trade unions and their influence on the profitability of an organisation;

- Trade unions and their impact on the economic performance of a country;

- Globalisation and its impact on unions;

New economic structures and its impact on trade unions

Appendix D: Interview Schedule for Interviews with Presidents of Federations and Confederations

(1) Name of the Federation/Confederation:

.....
.....

(2) Number of unions represented by the Federation?

.....
.....

(3) Sectors that are covered by your Federation/Confederation:

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

(4) With all the unions as members and from different sectors, how do you manage when it comes to making decisions, which have to be communicated to all of them? (Do you meet the presidents of the affiliated unions regularly? What is the frequency of meetings?)

(5) If you were to describe the managerial practices/styles in Mauritius, what would it be?

- Do such styles/practices promote or hinder trade unionism in the country? Tell us why you think so?

- Have you heard of the social platform the MEF is about to set up? What is your opinion about such a step on the employers' part?

- What, according to you, are the new forms of IR “partnership” that you will recommend for a better world where both management and trade unions can coexist?

(e.g. Participative management, more broad objectives on unions' part, more communication from both parties, and so on)

6) Your reactions on:

(i) The Employment Relations Bill (salient sections)-

- Application for Registration of Trade Unions;
- Registration of Trade Unions;
- Amalgamation of Trade Unions;
- Taking of Ballots;
- Application of funds;
- Powers of the Registrar in relation to accounts and records;
- Criteria for recognition of trade unions of workers;
- Time-off facilities;
- Bargaining process;
- Collective agreement;
- Right to strike;
- Institutions: like Employment Relations Tribunal, Commission for Conciliation and Mediation and NRB.

Others:

(ii) The Employment Rights Bill (salient sections)-

- Conditions of Work (Transport, annual leave, sick leave, medical facilities, maternity benefits, paternity leave and so on)
- Severance allowance;
- Workfare program;
- Hours of work;
- Remuneration.

Others:

(7) It is evident that there are very few women trade unionists (either as members or leaders), according to you, why is that so?

(8) Are you informed on the developments of Industrial Relations at the international level, more precisely in countries like UK, Africa, India and so on? (i.e. the state of the Industrial Relations System, the ILO Conventions ratified by these countries, and so on).

.....
.....

(9)How do you perceive the future of the trade union movement in Mauritius?

- What is needed for Trade Unions to fulfill their role to the most? (Legally or otherwise)

APPENDIX E: Presidents of Federations and Confederations participating in the national survey

	Name	Organization	Contact No.	Date of Interview	Time & Venue
1	Mr. T. Benydin	FCSU	216 – 1977 or 216-1475 258 – 1718	13 th Nov 07	9hr 30, at the Federation, Jumma Mosque, Port-Louis
2	Mr. Reaz Chuttoo & Ms J.Ragoo	FPU	464 – 3392 or 454 9919	13th Nov 07	12hr, Arcade Rond point R-hill
3	Mr. P. Peerthum	CMT	670-2236 or 9119023	24 th Oct 07	12hr, Coromandel (FCSU) benevolent fund
4	Mr. Patrick Aimē	FFW	212-2513 or 2124557 or 493-1555	24 th Oct 07	10hr, UOM (did not respond to invitation)
5	Mr. Serge Geoffroy	GWF	208-2687 or 786- 5474	25 th Oct 07	10hr, Hurhangee Building, No. 37, Souillac Str, Port-Louis
6	Mr. Kandhai Ramnath	MLF	212-5593 or 774- 3924	15 th Nov 07	10hr30, UOM
7	Mr. Yusuf Sooklall	FDUF	732-2982 (Sec) or 2520201		Unable to meet.
8	Mr. D. Benydin	FPBU	211-4167 or 7582319	29 th Oct 07	10hr, Community Center, Coromandel
<hr/>					
9	Mr. K.Kureemun	MLC	212-4343 or 2528020	25 th Oct 07	11hr, Entrance Eve Cantin (Jeetoo Hospital) Impact news..
10	Mr. R. K. Sadien & Mr. Ramcharan	MTUC SEF	466-0626	30 th Oct 07 13 th Oct 07	10hr, Unity House, Beau Bassin. 12hr, Unity House.
11	Mr. Atma Shanto	NTUC FTU	216-1475 or 216-1977 213- 4715	26 th Oct 07	12hr30, La butte Pont bourgeoise.
12	Mr. A. Subron	Activist	786-8689	22 nd Nov 07	14hr, Arcade Hurhangee, Port-Louis

Appendix F: Statistics for period July 2006 to June 2007

Industrial Disputes

Cases carried forward	60
Cases registered	237
Cases rejected	6
Cases settled and withdrawn	84
Cases referred to the Industrial Relations Commission	64
Cases referred to the Permanent Arbitration Tribunal	25
Cases still pending as at June 2007	118

Stoppages of Work

Number of stoppages	18
Number of Workers Involved	2380
Days lost	10810

Visits to Undertakings

Visits to enquire into complaints and industrial disputes	142
-----------------------------------------------------------	-----

Appendix G: Fees Payable by a Trade Union

The following fees shall be payable in advance:

TRADE UNION

Government Notice No 16 of 2004

	Rs	cs
(a) on an application for the registration of a trade union.....	600.00	
(b) on application for an alteration of the rules of a trade union.....	200.00	
(c) on an application for a change of the name of a trade union.....	400.00	
(d) for a copy of any certificate issued under the Industrial Relations Act.....	100.00	
(e) for a copy of the rules of a trade union a fee of 2 rupees per page of the rules, plus	100.00	
(f) for any document which is required to be signed or certified by Registrar of Associations a fee of 2 rupees per page, plus.....	100.00	
(g) for the inspection of any document kept by the Registrar of Associations other than the rules of a trade union a fee of 2 rupees per page plus.....	100.00	

Appendix H: Form to carry out a ballot

**FORM 9
[Section 26(3)]**

Name of Trade Union.....
Registered No.

CERTIFICATE OF RESULT OF BALLOT

We certify that a ballot under the Industrial Relations Act, 1973 was duly taken by the above trade union* between the and the 20....., in accordance with the rules of the union on a resolution for** and that the result was as follows: -

Votes for.....
Votes against.....
Votes rejected.....
Total number of Ballot Papers used for voting.....
The Resolution was therefore***

Scrutineer 1.....
2.....
3.....

Date:

- * indicate date or period
- ** indicate purpose of ballot
- *** insert "carried" or "lost" as the case may

Appendix I: Annual Return of Trade Union

**FORM 10
(Sections 34(2) and 36)**

Annual Return for the year ending 31st December.....

Name of Trade Union

Registered office

PART I – RETURN OF BRANCHES

Name of branches	Registered Office	No of compliant members on 31.12.20....		Date of annual general meeting
		Male	Female	
Total no of branches	Total no of members			

PART II – RETURN OF OFFICERS

Date of election (or appointment) of officers

Title of Officer	Names in full	Postal address

PART III – RULES

The last alteration of the rules was approved on

Date:

Secretary

PART IV – GENERAL STATEMENT

Section A – General Account

- Notes (i) Do not include in this Section income and expenditure relating to (a) the political fund, if any, or (b) any Special Fund to which members are free not to contribute.
- (ii) A deficiency in the accounts represents a misapplication of funds, and a statement must be furnished with the Return of the steps taken to meet the deficiency.

Income	Rs	Cs
(a) Received from members- Contributions		
Entrance fees.....		
Levies and fines.....		
(b) Received from other sources.....		
Sale of Rules, cards, etc.		
Interest		
Miscellaneous (to be specified)		
Total Income	-----	-----
Amount of General Fund at beginning year	-----	-----
Total Funds available during the year		
Expenditure	Rs	Cs
(a) *Benefits to members- Sick, accident, employment etc. Funeral Legal Aid Other Benefits (to be specified)		
(b) Administrative Salaries and allowances to officers Salaries to staff (employees) Fees to auditors Commission to collectors Travelling and transport of officers Maintenance, etc., of vehicles		
(c) Miscellaneous- Affiliation fees (to be specified) Trade disputes and trade union activities Office expenses (rent, telephone, etc.) Miscellaneous (to be specified)		
Total Expenditure	-----	-----
Amount of General Fund at the end of the year	-----	-----
Total		

Do not include in this section if benefits are paid from a separate fund

Section B – SPECIAL FUND

Political Fund/Funeral Benefits Fund/Legal Aid Fund

(A separate account must be prepared in respect of each separate fund)

Name of Fund

Number of members contributing to the fund

Income	Rs	Cs	Expenditure	Rs	Cs
(a) From members- Contributions Entrance Fees, fines			*Political expenses or benefits paid-sick, accident etc.		
(b) Other sources Interest			Funeral Legal Aid Other benefits (to be specified) Working expenses (to be specified)		
Total Income	-----	-----	Total expenditure	-----	-----
Add: Amount of fund at beginning of the year			Amount of funds at end of the year		
Total	-----	-----		-----	-----

Section C

Balance sheet of Funds and effects as at 31st December

Liabilities	Rs	Cs	Assets	Rs	Cs
Political Fund (as shown in section B)			Cash in hand of Treasurer		
Funeral Benefits Fund (as shown in section B)			Cash in hand of Branch Treasurers In Bank		
Cash account of General Fund (as shown in section A)			Total Cash and Bank balances	-----	-----
Other accruals of General Fund	-----	----	Goods and furniture		
Total amount of funds			Other assets(to be specified)		
Other liabilities (to be specified)			Total	-----	-----
Total	-----	----		-----	-----

Date:

.....

Treasurer

* Specify which of the class of expenses set out in section 30(6) of the Act.

Appendix J: APPLICATION FOR REGISTRATION OF A TRADE UNION

FORM 2 [Section 6(1)]

1. This application is made by the officers/members whose names are subscribed to the application.
2. The name under which it is proposed that the trade union on behalf of which this application is made shall be registered is as set forth in rule No.....
3. The registered office of the trade union is at
..... as set forth in rule No
4. The trade union was established on the day of
5. The whole of the objects for which the trade union is established and the purposes for which the funds whereof are applicable, are set forth in rule No
6. The trade union has a separate fund for the payment of
7. This application is supported by the following documents duly signed by us-
 - (a) two copies of the rules of the trade union; and
 - (b) (i) a list, marked A, of the titles and names and occupation of the officers and of the auditors;
 - (ii) * a list , marked B, of the existing branches;
 - (iii) a copy marked C of the minutes of proceedings of the General Meeting at which the rules were approved and the officers elected.
8. The number of members of the trade union at this date is
9. We have been duly authorised by the general meeting of the trade union to make this application on behalf of the trade union.
10. We declare that we are qualified to be *members and/or * officers, of the trade union.

This day of20.....

	Signatures	Office
1.
2.
3.
4.
5.
6.
7.

* complete or delete as appropriate

Appendix K: List of non-affiliated unions

Secretary	Unions not affiliated to Federations/Confederations	Addresses
Mr. Stefano Ollivia	Air Mauritius Cabin Crew Association	c/o Les Suites de Gothama Goojha, 5, Teste de Buch Street, Curepipe
Mr. Manou Chinathumby	Air Mauritius Staff Association	c/o Les Suites de Gothama Goojha, 5, Teste de Buch Street, Curepipe
Ms. Iannee Ramdin	Air Mauritius Supervisors and Managers Union	c/o SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien
Mr. Aneerood Bhunroy	All District Sugar cane industry Workers Union	c/o MLF, 6, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Sonalall Guness	All Mauritius Village Council Workers Union	c/o Mr. V. Kumar Bholah, Village Council Hall, Terre Rouge
Mr. Deolall Mohur	Assistant Postman Union	c/o Veenaye Kumar Bholah, Mahatma Gandhi Road, Grand Bay
Secretary	Association Des Employés de La Banque Nationale De Paris Intercontinentale	c/o B.N.P.I, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Secretary	Association of MBC Journalists	MBC, Louis Pasteur Street, Forest Side
Mr. Rajkumar Seegoolam	Barclays Bank Managerial Staff Association	c/o Barclays Bank, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Pierre Kelly	Building and Civil Engineering Contractors Association	Royal Road, Telfair, Moka
Mrs. Zainah Beekhy	Bus Industry Staff Association	c/o UBS Ltd, Royal Road Cassis, Port-Louis
Mr. Pierre Blackburn	Cane Growers Association	2nd Floor, Harbour Front, Port-Louis
Mr. Ayle Duval	Central Water Authority Meter Readers Union	The SVI Peace Center, Camp Samy Branch Road, Moka
Secretary	Cleaning and Laundry Workers Union	Arcades Rond Point, Rose Hill
Mrs. Clara Jacqueline	Clinic Employees Association	Flat, No. 2, Arcades Dookhun, Route St Jean, Quatre-Bornes
Secretary	Community Health Nursing Officers Union	3B Balfour Street, Beau Bassin
Mr. Vivekanand Chowtoonaick	DBM LTD Staff Association	c/o DBM, Chaussée Street, Port-Louis
Mr. E. S. Dada Mullack	Distributive Trade Workers Union	9, Saint François Xavier Street, Port-Louis
Secretary	Export Processing Zones Development Authority Staff Association	7th Floor, St James Court, St. Denis Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Rajiv Roy	Federation Of Unions of Managers of Private Secondary Schools	Mauritius College, Jermingham Street, Curepipe
Secretary	Fishing Vessels Workers Union	42, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis

APPENDIX K

Secretary	Unions not affiliated to Federations/Confederations	Addresses
Mr. Asraf Ali Ramdin	General Taxi Owners' Union	Plaine De Gersiny, Central Flacq
Mr. Dhananjay Hanuman	GIBB (Mauritius) Staff Union	20, Palmeston Road, Phoenix
Mr. Dharmendra Deechaye	Government Hindi Teachers Union	6, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Dr. Eknath Rajan	Government Medical Consultants Association	Victoria Hospital, Royal Road, Candos
Dr. Radhakrishna Veerapa	Government Veterinary Officers Union	c/o Division Veterinary Services, Réduit
Secretary	Habib Bank Limited Officers Association	c/o Habib Bank, Royal Road Rose-Hill
Secretary	Hotel Industry Staff and Employees Union	Pavillon, Cap Malheureux
Secretary	Imprimerie Commerciale Employees Union	23, Menagerie Street, Cassis
Mr. Jean Claude Arekion	Ireland Blyth LTD Staff Association	New Cold Storage Building, Terre Rouge
Secretary	Le Bocage High School Staff Association	Le Bocage High School, Mount Ory, Moka
Mrs. Mongelard	Lycée Labourdonnais Employees Association	c/o Lycée Labourdonnais, Louis Rochecouste Street, Forest Side
Mr. Pradeep Kumar Tulloo	MSIRI Staff Association	c/o MSIRI, Réduit
Mr. Jay Mootosamy	Market Traders Association	c/o New Complex Central Market, Port-Louis
Mr. Kissoon Beharee	Mauritius Commercial Bank Messengers and other manual worker' union	c/o MCB Ltd., Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Ravindranath Nursing	Mauritius Cooperative Agricultural Federation Staff and Employees Association	Caudan Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Bhai Imtehaze Ahsun	Mauritius Examination Syndicate Senior Staff Association	c/o Mauritius Examination Syndicate, Réduit
Secretary	Mauritius Free Zone and Secondary Industries Employees Union	Trois Boutiques, Triolet
Mr. Sonah Candhye	Mauritius Metal Workers Union	6, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Pierre Rivet	Mauritius Sugar Producers' Association	Plantation House, Edinburgh Avenue, Port-Louis

APPENDIX K

Secretary	Unions not affiliated to Federations/Confederations	Addresses
Mrs. Vallee Alwar	Primary School Tamil Teachers' Union	Tamil League Complex, Réduit
Mrs. Corinne Lecluse	Private Firms Staff Union	c/o Mr. Lindsay Untwan, Isidore Bouquet Street, St Croix
Dr. Aziz U.H. Foondun	Private Medical Practitioners Association	72, SSR Street, Port-Louis
Mrs. Fazeeda Chetty	Private Pre-Primary Schools Owners' Union	c/o Mrs. Sarojinee Hanoomanee, 31 D'epinay Street, Curepipe Road
Mr. Mumtaz Nabeebaccus	Private Transport Employees Union	c/o FDUF, Assotally Building, Thomy D'Arifat Street, Curepipe
Mr. Mohamed Iqbal Dusoruth	Professional Physiotherapists Association	3, Draper Avenue, Quatre-Bornes
Mrs. Ginette Fernand	Roman Catholic Secondary Schools Union	c/o Loretto College, Curepipe
Mrs. Vanessa Gowreesunkur	SMIDO Staff and Employees Union	c/o SEHDA, Ex-SMIDO, Industrial Zone, Coromandel
Mr. Jayraj Gopal	Social Welfare Community Centres Employees Union	c/o MLC, 8, Victor De La Faye Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Sewraj Sewsunkursing	South East Asian Bank Employees Association	26, Bourbon Street, Port-Louis
Ms. Kirtee Purgass	SSR Medical College Non-Academic Staff Union	c/o FDUF, Assotally Building, Thomy D'Arifat Street, Curepipe
Secretary	St Geran Hotel Workers Union	c/o St Geran Hotel, Belle Mare, Pointe De Flacq
Mr. Ajit Mewasing	State Bank Managerial Grade Association	c/o State Bank Tower, Place D'armes, Port-Louis
Mr Sanjeev Cowlessur	Technical School Management Trust Fund Lecturers' Union	Swami Dayanand Institute of Management, Beau Plan, Pamplemousses
Secretary	Textile and Allied Trade Workers Union	c/o Asven Canachee, Sans Souci, Montagne Balnche
Secretary	The Association of Inspectors of the Private Secondary Schools Authority	c/o PSSA Herschenroder, Street Barkly, Beau Bassin
Mr. Lindsay Arele	The Court Officers Association	Supreme Court, Port-Louis
Mrs. Toolsabye Seepujak	The Federation of Young Farmers Staff and Employees Union	National Federation of Young Farmers Club, Belle Mare, Quatre-Cocos
Mrs. Daisigambal Runghsawmee	The Indian Ocean General Assurance Employees Union	c/o IOGA Ltd, 35 Corderie Street, Port-Louis
Secretary	The Judicial Department Ushers Union	c/o Supreme Court Building, Jules Koenig Street, Port-Louis
Mr. G.M. Rahimbaccus	The Managers Of Private Secondary Schools Union	c/o Renaissance College, 22, Rivaland Street, Curepipe

APPENDIX K

Secretary	Unions not affiliated to Federations/Confederations	Addresses
Mr. Rajen Seetaramadoo	The Mauritius Association of IATA Travel Agents	c/o Executive Services Ltd., 2nd Floor, Les Jamalacs Building, Vieux Conseil Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Biswajeet Kaleechurn	The Mauritius Commercial Bank Employees Association	c/o MCB Ltd., Auguste Esnouf Street, Curepipe
Mr. Kamal Hurynag	The Mauritius Cooperative Union Staff and Employees Association	Devi House, 1st Floor, Perdrau Street, Port-Louis
Secretary	The Mauritius Export Development and Investment Authority Employees Union	25, Pope Hennessy Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Dharam Woodun	The State Secondary Schools Rectors Union	SSS Belle Rose, c/o SSS Sodnac, Sodnac
Mr. Beejaye Somai	The Sugar Industry Overseas Association	c/o MLC, 8, Victor De La Faye Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Kader Sooklall	The Tailoring and Dressmaking Industry Workers Union	c/o FDUF, Assotally Building, Thomy D'Arifat Street, Curepipe
Mr. Mohamad Parvez Khedun	Traffic Warden Staff Union	c/o NTA, MSI Building, Cassis
Mr. Harris Bachwa	Union of Managers of Private "A" Secondary Schools	c/o Mauritius College, Curepipe
Mr. Sharvanand Ramkaun	Union Of Professional Engineers	c/o DWC Head Office, Quay Street, Port-Louis
Mrs. Françoise Farla	Union Of Roman Catholic Primary School Clerks	c/o Mrs. Françoise Farla, 32, John Kennedy Street, Tranquebar
Secretary	Union Of Teachers and Other Employees Of the Private Pre-Primary Schools	Emmanuel Anquetil Labour Centre, James Smith Street, GRNW
Mr. Ambeegen Moonian	Union Of Telecommunications Engineers	c/o Mr. Ambeegen Moonian, Dr. Jhuboo Street, Souillac
Secretary	Union Of the Personnel Of Media	2nd Floor, BAI Building, 25, Pope Hennessy Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Jacques Désiré Goder	Union Of Workers Of The Development Works Corporation	c/o GWF Arcade Hurhangee, Souillac Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Fredo Onezime	Union Of Workers Of The Hotel and Catering Industries	c/o MLC, 8, Victor De La Faye Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Patrick Augustin	National Handicraft Promotion Agency Employees Union	c/o SEHDA, Ex SMIDO, Royal Road, Coromandel
Secretary	National Handicraft Promotion Agency Staff Union	NHPA, 3rd Floor, Ken Lee Building, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Mr. Ram Peenith	Primary School Clerks Union	26, Chateau D'eau Street, Port-Louis

Appendix L: Questionnaire for non-affiliated unions

Name of your Union:

Reason/s for the creation of the union:
.....
.....
.....
.....

(1) From records, we have come to know that your union is not affiliated to any Federation or Confederation, can you tell us why?

.....
.....
.....

(2) Do you think that union recognition is a problem in Mauritius?

Yes No

(3) Does government protect/promote the trade union movement in Mauritius?

Yes No

(4) (i) How would you describe the relationship of your union with the management?
Circle the one that applies most closely.

- A. Mostly conflictual, full of tension and strife.
- B. Employers and employees have divergent interests.
- C. Employers and employees generally support each others' objectives and work collaboratively.

(ii) What would you say was the perception of the management with regard to the relationship mentioned above?

.....
.....
.....

(5) There are a number of specialized services provided by the Ministry of Labour and Industrial Relations, namely:

- a) **Labour & Industrial Relations:** Inspection, Information and Education, Research and Labour Standard Branch.
- b) **Occupational Safety & Health:** Inspection, accident investigation, occupational safety and health information and training and specialist support services.
- c) **Employment Division and Service:** Work permit unit and Employment service.
- d) **Registry of Association:** Registration of Unions, delivery of talks and training, publication of returns of trade unions, inspection of accounts of trade unions, and handling of complaints.

Have you ever had recourse to any of these services?

<i>Services</i>	<i>Often</i>	<i>Sometimes</i>	<i>Never</i>
Labour & Industrial Relations	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Occupational Safety & Health	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Employment Division and Service	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Registry of Association	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(6) As an executive member of your union, how would you say you were personally viewed by the management? *Tick all that apply.*

- As a vital partner in the organization.
- As an important member as long as the union is able to persuade employees to comply with the management.
- As a necessary evil that needs to be constantly watched.
- As something they would prefer to avoid.

(7) (i) Is your union affiliated/close in any way to a political party?

Yes No

(ii) Generally or specifically for your union, what is your opinion about such a connection?

.....
.....
.....

(8) What are your general opinions on the new Bills (Employment Relations Bill and the Employment Rights Bill)?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

(9) (i) Please write in a few words what you consider to be the role of trade unions in the current and future political social economic landscape of Mauritius.

.....
.....
.....

(ii) Have the objectives of Trade Unions evolved over time? Please explain.

.....
.....
.....

(10) Statistics shows that only 21% of the workforce in Mauritius is unionized. What could be the reason for this low level of unionization in the country?

- A. Workers are not interested to join unions.
- B. Management embraces the role and functions of unions; as such unions become redundant in the organization.
- C. Unions are too traditional in their objectives which consist only in improving working conditions and increasing salaries.
- D. Unions are sometimes affiliated to political parties and this is negatively viewed by workers.

Others:

.....
.....
.....

(11) (i) It is observed that there are very few women trade unionists in Mauritius (either as members or leaders). According to you, what explains this state? *Tick any that apply.*

- Women lack leadership skills.
- Women are not keened at all to take part in unions' activities.
- Women are marginalized (excluded) by male trade unionists.
- Women cannot cope with both family obligations and trade unionist's responsibilities.
- Women are discouraged by family members and colleagues.
- Women lack self-confidence and assertiveness to occupy active/leadership roles in Trade Unions.

(ii) Others:

.....
.....
.....

(12) According to you, what is needed for Trade Unions to fulfill their roles to the most? (e.g. laws, other external factors, internal factors).

.....
.....
.....
.....

(13) In a few words, how do you perceive the future of the Trade Union movement in Mauritius?

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Thank you for your valued responses. If there are any additional comments you wish to make, please write these in the space below.

.....
.....
.....

Appendix M: Invitees of the Consultative/Focus Group & Brochure

Federations/Confederations	Name of women involved in the focus group	Positions	Contact numbers
Federation Des Travailleurs Unis	a) Mrs. Lucette Rosalam b) Mrs. Daniella Ivon	a) Assistant Treasurer b) Treasurer	FTU : 213 – 4715
Federation of Civil Service & Other Unions	Miss Marylin Josie Sarah	Executive member	256 - 1134
Federation Of Parastatal Bodies & Other Unions	Mrs. Nankoo	President of the Women Committee and also President of the Executive Committee.	212 – 2323 or 763 – 9769
General Workers Federation	Mrs. Nicole Allet	Member of the Executive Committee	918 – 9765
Mauritius Labour Federation	Mrs. Tilloo	Member of the Executive Committee	MLF : 212 – 5593

Federations/Confederations	Name of women involved in the focus group	Positions	Contact numbers
State Employees Federation	NO WOMEN AT EXECUTIVE LEVEL	466 – 0626	State Employees Federation
Federation Of Free Workers	NO WOMEN AT EXECUTIVE LEVEL	212 – 2513	Federation Of Free Workers
Mauritius Labour Congress	a) Mrs. Zai Poon Joomun b) Mrs. Coonjan Jugroop c) Mrs. Aisha Doba d) Mrs. Jessica Duval	a) President of the Women Committee b) Member of the Women Committee c) Member of the Women Committee d) Member of the Women Committee	a) 261 – 2854 b) 256 - 1951 c) 242 – 1996 d) 936 – 7791

Federations/Confederations	Name of women involved in the focus group	Positions	Contact numbers
Free Democratic Unions Federation	-	-	Secretary : 732 – 2982
Confederation Mauricienne des Travailleurs	-	-	-
General Trade Union Federation (Mr. Kuppan)	-	-	-
National Trade Union Confederation	a) Mrs. Jane Ragoo b) Mrs. Taucoorchand	a) Executive Member b) Executive Member	a) FPU : 454 - 9919 b) 767 – 6862

Federations/Confederations	Name of women involved in the focus group	Positions	Contact numbers
Federation of progressive Union	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mrs. Marie Claire Sarah b) Mrs. Taslima Joomun c) Mrs. Suzy Ramoo d) Mrs. Sheila Dayal e) Mrs. Devie Bisnauth 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Member of the Executive Committee of FPU b) Member of the Executive Committee at Smido c) Member of the Executive Committee of FPU d) Member of the Executive Committee at FPU e) Member of the Executive Committee at FPU 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 465 9919 b) 939 7794 c) 465 9919 d) 465 9919 e) 465 9919

Federations/Confederations	Name of women involved in the focus group	Positions	Contact numbers
Mauritius Trade Union Congress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Mrs. Brinda Koobloll b) Mrs. Najwantee Emrith c) Ms. Mokshva Gopee 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Vice President of the Executive Board and President of the Pre Primary School Employees union b) Executive member of the federation and Secretary at the National Women Council Employees' Union c) Executive member and member of the State Informatics Employees Union 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) 256 - 3211 b) 452 - 0460 c) 207 - 8000

Appendix N: National Research Project On Trade Unionism In Mauritius: Survey On “Gender And Industrial Relations”

(A) Please indicate your answer by placing a tick in the box representing your choice.

	Very much so	Quite	Some what	A little	Not at all
(1) Do you believe that Trade Unions in Mauritius have marginalized women (i.e. do women feel that Trade Unions have not done much for them)?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(2) Do you think Trade Unions recognize the importance of tackling this issue?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(3) Do you agree that women lack leadership skills to be in decision-making positions within Unions?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(4) Do you agree that women lack self-esteem and self-confidence, as compared to men?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(5) Do you agree that predominantly, women remain voiceless?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(6) Do you agree that Trade Unions in Mauritius are male-dominated and that the norm is strongly masculine?	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(7) Do you consider that the prevailing societal norm of women at work is that women are the ones who need to change, to adapt to the male norm?	<input type="checkbox"/>				

(B) Barriers to women’s participation in union activities

According to you, what could be the barriers against women’s participation in unions ?

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
(1) Stereotyped ideas about women’s abilities, roles and preferences.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(2) Discouragement and hostile reactions from colleagues and family members.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(3) Informal procedures for the election of women leaders which depend a lot on the male networks of the woman.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(4) Women lack self-confidence and assertiveness to address leadership positions.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(5) Women are inadequately covered by labour legislation in this country.	<input type="checkbox"/>				
(6) Women bear the brunt of combining work and family responsibilities, and they have difficulties to cope with both.	<input type="checkbox"/>				

(C) Level of Awareness

(i) How would you rate your level of knowledge of the following:

(a) The existing Industrial Relations Act of Mauritius (1973) –

I am very knowledgeable

I am fairly knowledgeable

I don’t know much

(b) The Labour Act of Mauritius –

I am very knowledgeable

I am fairly knowledgeable

I don’t know much

(c) The ILO conventions (generally) also known as ‘Labour Legislations’ –

I am very knowledgeable

I am fairly knowledgeable

I don’t know much

(ii) Do you believe that ratified ILO Conventions, specifically gender issues, are being adequately and appropriately applied in organizations in Mauritius? Please describe briefly why you think so.

	Yes	No	Don’t Know
(a) Convention 100, concerning Equal remuneration for Men and Women Workers for Work of Equal Value.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(b) Convention 111, concerning Discrimination in Respect of Employment and Occupation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(c) Convention 156, concerning Equal Opportunities and Equal Treatment for Men and Women Workers: Workers with Family Responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(D) The Provisions for a healthy working environment and Unions’ concerns about these matters:

(Applicable to the workgroup/workforce that your union represents) Please indicate which are available, and whether these are being addressed by your union.

	Available	Not Available	Currently on Union’s negotiating agenda
(1) Control over hours of work (e.g. through flexible work schedules).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Child care (e.g. at the site or subsidized).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Pension and retirement benefits.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Health Insurance or some other form of Health plan.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	Available	Not Available	Currently on Union's negotiating agenda
(5) Equal pay for equal work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Paid vacation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Paid sick leave.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Paid leave and/or permission to care for family members who are old or sick.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(9) Recognition of female health/ pregnancy/ breastfeeding realities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(10) Clear policy on Sexual Harassment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(11) Clear policy on gender discrimination.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(E) Organising

Would women prefer:

(a) To be in a mainstream union that included “women empowerment” in some form in its agenda?

Could you please describe briefly why you think so.

.....

(b) To be in an all-women, separate organization to cater for their own group’s circumstances and needs?

Could you please describe briefly why you think so.

.....

(F) Strategies to motivate women to join a union

(i) According to you, a trade unionist, what are the strategies which could be effective to generate more motivation for women to participate in unions' activities or even simply be unionized? *Please tick the boxes as appropriate.*

	Yes	No
(1) Unions providing free medical consultations for pregnant women and other female health issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Unions providing scholarship facilities to children of retrenched workers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Unions providing special insurance for women and extra payment for maternity leave and child care.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Unions purchasing household goods (e.g. rice, soap) in bulk to enable women members to get these goods at lower price.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Unions providing services for working women in the neighborhood to alleviate their heavy workload at work and at home (e.g. laundry, cleaning, cooking).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Unions providing child care facilities for working women near or at their place of work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Unions organizing training, talks and seminars on women-specific topics.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Unions organizing commemorative day activities like Women's Day – (8 th March) and Violence against Women – (6 th December).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(9) Unions providing a Women's Network where women unionists meet regularly.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(10) Unions rewarding women for their contribution in unions' activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(11) Unions holding lunch hour meetings to feel the pulse of women's problems.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(12) Unions offering training on how to deal with sexual harassment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(13) Unions promoting health and safety for women (breast cancer, family planning, parenting skills and so on).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(14) Unions provide measures to investigate on transport problems and solutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(15) Unions combined efforts to work at influencing policy concerning opening hours of services like banks, shops, dispensaries etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(16) Unions investigate street safety e.g. police presence and protection.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(17) Unions provide training in self-defense.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(ii) Others please specify:

.....

(G) Strategies to increase women’s presence in leadership positions

The following measures represent potential strategies for increasing women’s participation in leadership positions in unions. Please indicate:

- (a) Whether any have been adopted or must be adopted by your union in your view;
- (b) Your view of the potential effectiveness by ranking the **THREE** most effective strategies (1 = Most effective, 2 = Less effective and 3 = Not effective at all).

	Already Adopted	Must be adopted	Rank in terms of effectiveness
(1) Amending unions’ constitution to provide for women’s representation (reserved seats, proportionality, or quotas) at the Executive Committee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Having a woman president at the head of the federation or confederation thus ensuring that women participate in decision making at the highest levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Adoption and implementation of an equal opportunity policy having as prime objective equality in its membership, such that unions deviating from this policy will have to take corrective measures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) Awareness-raising campaigns targeting male-dominated unions, informing them how adequate representation of women at all levels will benefit them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(5) Giving increased visibility to women leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Using non-sexist language in all union documents and instances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(6) Encouraging and providing funding for women’s education, training and development.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(7) Providing training specifically in leadership development, confidence building, time management and assertive communication for women members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(8) Conducting unions’ meetings in a more friendly and accessible way to encourage wider participation by women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(H) High-level Decision-making

What is your opinion on the absence of women at:

- (i) National Tripartite Forum

.....

.....

(ii) National Pay Council

.....
.....

(iii) Leadership of Federations and Unions

.....
.....

(iv) International events and conferences

.....
.....

(I) Marginalization of women

(i) Do you believe the following represent forms of marginalization of women from unions? Briefly comment on each of them.

	Yes	No	Not at all
(1) No time-off to attend meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(2) Intimidation and bullying by men who don't want women in leadership positions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(3) Time and style of meetings not convenient for women.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
(4) No flexible working hours that will enable women to cope both with her unions' activities and family obligations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

(ii) Others, please specify:

.....
.....

Name:

Age:

Sex: F M

Name of Union:

Your executive position in the Union (if applicable):

Since when you were elected as an executive member (if applicable):

Your job title:

Thank you for your support and collaboration in completing this questionnaire.

Appendix O: List of Parastatal bodies for the Management and Industrial Relations Survey

Respondent	Organization	Addresses
Director	Agricultural Research and Extension Unit (AREU)	3rd Floor, Newry Complex, St Jean Road, Quatre Bornes
Director	Board of Investment	Level 10, One Cathedral Square Building 16 Jules Koenig Street Port Louis
Director	Business Parks of Mauritius Ltd	10 th Floor, NPF Building, Moka Road, Rose-Hill
General Manager	Central Electricity Board (CEB)	Head Office, Royal Road, Curepipe
General Manager	Central Water Authority (CWA)	CWA Head Office, Royal Road St Paul, Phoenix
Chief Executive	Civil Service Family Protection Scheme Board	2nd Floor, Mutual Aid Building, 5 Guy Rozemont Square, Port Louis
Director	Enterprise Mauritius	7th Floor, St James Court St Denis St, Port-Louis
Director	Farmers Service Corporation	Royal Road, Saint Pierre
Chief Executive	Financial Services Commission	4 th Floor, Harbour Front Building, President John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
Chief Executive	Financial Services Promotion Agency	5 th Floor, Barkly Wharf, Caudan Waterfront, Port-Louis
Director General	Food Agricultural Research Council	Royal Road, Réduit
Director	Hotel School of Mauritius	1 st Floor, Matikola Building, Royal Road, Boulet Blanc, Near Spar Supermarket, Central Flacq
Director	Industrial and Vocational Training Board (IVTB)	IVTB House, Pont Fer, Phoenix
Director	Independent Broadcasting Authority (IBA)	5, De Courson Street, Curepipe Road
Director	Information and Communication Technologies Authority (ICTA)	Level 12, The Celicourt, 6, Sir Celicourt Antelme Street, Port-Louis

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The Director	Organization	Addresses
Director	Islamic Cultural Centre	La Paix Street, Port-Louis
Confidential Secretary	Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture	4th Floor Astor Court Lislet Geoffroy Street, Port Louis
Director	Mauritius Broadcasting Corporation (MBC)	1, Louis Pasteur Street, Forest-Side Republic of Mauritius
Director	Mauritius College of the Air (MCA)	Reduit, Mauritius
Director	Mauritius Council of Registered Librarians	c/o National Library, 3rd Floor, Fon Sing Building, Edith Cavell Street Port Louis
Director	Mauritius Examinations Syndicate	Reduit, Mauritius
Director	Mauritius Ex-Services Trust Fund	3 Bis, Church Street, Port Louis
Director	Mauritius Freeport Authority (MFA)	1 st Floor, Trade & Marketing Center (TMC), Zone # 6, Mer Rouge, Port-Louis
Executive Director	Mauritius Institute of Health	Powder Mill, Pamplemousses
Director	Mauritius Lotteries	Government Lotteries Committee Level 6 Mutual Aid Building 5, Guy Rozemont Square Port Louis
Director	Mauritius Meteorological Services	St Paul Road, Vacoas
Director	Mauritius Oceanography Institute	France Centre, Victoria Avenue Quatre-Bornes
Director	Mauritius Post Ltd.	3, Dumas Street, Port-Louis
Director	Mauritius Qualifications Authority	IVTB Compound, Pont Fer, Phoenix
Director of Internal Affairs	Mauritius Revenue Authority (MRA)	Ehram Court, Cnr Mgr. Gonin & Sir Virgil Naz Streets Port Louis
Director	Mauritius Society of Authors (MASA)	3 rd Floor, NPF Building, Douglas Sholte Street, Beau Bassin
Director	Mauritius Standards Bureau (MSB)	Villa Road, Moka
Director	Mauritius Tourism Promotion Authority (MTPA)	4 -5th Floor, Victoria House St Louis Street Port Louis

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The Director	Organization	Addresses
Chief Executive	Municipality of Beau Bassin/Rose Hill	Town Hall, Royal Road, Rose-Hill
Chief Executive	Municipality of Vacoas/Phoenix	St. Paul Avenue, Vacoas
Director	National Agency For The Treatment And Rehabilitation of Substance Abusers (NATRESA)	Maxcity Building, 16.Poudriere Street, Port Louis
Director	National Computer Board (NCB)	7th Floor, Stratton Court La Poudrière Street Port Louis
Director	National Heritage Trust Fund	4 th Floor, Fon Sing Building, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Director	National Productivity and Competitiveness Council (NPCC)	Level 4, Alexander House, Ebene, Reduit
Director	Rajiv Gandhi Science Center	Old Moka Road, Belle Village
Administrative Manager	Road Development Authority	2 nd & 3 rd Floor, Jhugroo Building, St.Paul Road, Vacoas
Director	Small enterprises and Handicraft Development Authority (SEHDA)	Industrial Zone, Coromandel
Director	State Informatics Ltd. (SIL)	6 th Floor, Sun Insurance Building, 2, St. Georges Street, Port-Louis
Chief Executive	State Trading Corporation	3 rd Floor, Fon Sing Building, 12, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Director	Tea Board	Wooton Street, Curepipe Road
Executive Director	Tertiary Education Commission	Reduit, Mauritius
Director	Tobacco Board	Royal Road, Plaine Lauzun, Port-Louis
Director	Trade Union Trust Fund	2 nd Floor, Richard House, Jummah Mosque Street, Port-Louis
General Manager	Waste Water Management Authority	The Celicourt, Rue Celicourt Antelme, Port-Louis
Registrar	University of Mauritius	Reduit, Mauritius
Registrar	University of Technology, Mauritius	La Tour Koenig, Pointe aux Sables

Appendix P: List of Ministries for Management Survey

Respondent	Ministry	Address
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Land Transport & Shipping	3 rd Floor, Government Centre Port Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Tourism and Leisure and External Communications	12th floor, Air Mauritius Centre, 5, President John Kennedy Street, Port Louis.
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Finance & Economic Development	Government House Port Louis
Acting Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Foreign Affairs, International Trade & Cooperation	New Government Centre, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Environment & National Development Unit	Ken Lee Tower, Cnr Barracks & St. Georges Streets, Port-Louis (2 nd to 12 th Floor & Penthouse)
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Education & Human Resources	IVTB House (3rd Floor), Phoenix Republic of Mauritius
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Public Utilities	Level 10, Air Mauritius Centre, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry for Local Government	6th Floor, R. Seeneevassen Building Cr Pope Hennessy & Maillard Streets Port Louis
Ag. Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Agro Industry & Fisheries	8 th & 9 th Levels, Renganaden Seeneevassen Bldg, Cnr. Jules Koenig & Maillards Strs, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Social Security, National Solidarity and Senior Citizens Welfare & Reform Institutions	Cnr Pope Hennessy & Maillard Strs., Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Women's Rights, Child Development, Family Welfare & Consumer Protection	CSK Building, Cnr Emmanuel & Rémy Ollier Strs., Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Labour, Industrial Relations & Employment	Level 1 to 9, Victoria House, Cnr. Barracks & St. Louis Strs., Port-Louis

Permanent Secretary	Ministry	Address
Chief State Attorney	Attorney-General's Office and Ministry of Justice & Human Rights	Levels 2, 3, 4, 5, & 6, Renganaden Seeneevassen Street, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Health and Quality of Life	Emmanuel Anquetil Building, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Industry, Small and Medium Enterprises, Commerce and Cooperatives	Level 7, Air Mauritius Centre, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Arts and Culture	7 th Floor, Renganaden Seeneevassen Building, Cnr Pope Hennessy & Maillard Strs., Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Housing & Lands	2 nd & 3 rd Floors, Moorgate House, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunications	Level 9, Air Mauritius Centre, J. Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Youth & Sports	3 rd Floor, Emmanuel Anquetil Building, Port-Louis
Permanent Secretary	Ministry of Civil Service & Administrative Reforms	6 th & 7 th Floors, New Government Centre, Port-Louis

Appendix Q: Top 100 Companies List

Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Director	Mr. Aslam KATHRADA	Nak Enterprises Ltd	20, Sir Seewoosagur Street, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Ibrahim Dawwod Seerally	Socovia (Belle Vue) Ltée	28 Bis Dr. Eugene Laurent Street, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Henry Ngo	Belle Mare Beach Development Company Ltd	C/o The Residence - Coastal Road, Belle Mare, Flacq
Director	Mr. Yacoob Ramtoola, FCA	United Bus Service Ltd	Royal Road, Les Cassis, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Deo Rajah Dookun	The Dookun Companies	Bonne-Terre, Vacoas
Director	Mr. Jean Claude Giraud	Cogir Limitée	P.O Box 761, Bell Village
Chairman	Mr. Marc Birger	Blanche, Birger Co. Ltd.	18 Jules Koeing Street, Port-Louis
Chairman	Mr. Jean Michel Giraud	Pre-Mixed Concrete Limited	Geoffroy Branch Road, Bambous
Chairman	Mr, Paul Lavoipierre	Compagnie de beau Vallon Ltée	Labama House, 35 Sir William Newton Street, Port - Louis
AS, Ministry of Housing	Mrs. D. Ramma	National Housing Development Company Limited	4th & 5th Floors, Royal Complex, St. Ignace Street, Rose Hill
The Director	Mr. Dhannylall Jugroo C.S.K	Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd	Registered Office: Mauritius Shipping Corporation Ltd, Suite 417 / 418, St-James Court, St-Denis Street, Port-Louis
The Chairman	Mr. Chian Yew Ah Teck	MORNING LIGHT CO LTD (Hilton Hotel)	Registered Office: 301, Chancery House, Lislet Geoffrey Street, Port-Louis

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Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Chairman	Mr. George John Dumbell	The Constance & Gaieté Sugar Estates Company Limited	5th Floor, Labama House, 35, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Chairman	Mr. Issack Joonas	Joonas & Co. Ltd	10, Louis Pasteur Street, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Anil Kohli	Firemount Textiles Ltd	Factory & Office: Estate Road, Goodlands
Chairman	Mr. Liu Man Hin E. Andrew	E.A.L Man hin and Sons Limited	31, Brabant Street, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Antoine Harel	Maritim (Mauritius) Ltd	Balaclave, Terre Rouge
Director	Mr. Chan Fong Lin Yiptong	Yiptong & Sons Ltd	Yiptong House, Royal Road, Cassis
Managing Director	Mr. Georges Leung Shing	Mon Trésor and Mon Désert Ltd	7th Floor, Anglo-Mauritius House, A. de Plevitz Street, Port-Louis
Managing Director	Mr. Robert Wan Kaw Sang	Prosimex Industrial Company Ltd	Royal Road, Riche Terre
Director	Mr. Lin Chin Chen Koon Po Yuen	St Malo Exports Ltd	Royal Road, Tombeau bay
Chief Manager	Mr. T. C. Suseel kumar	Life Insurance Corporation of India	LIC Centre, President John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
The Chairperson	Mr. Cyril Lagesse	Mauritius Stationery Manufacturers Ltd - (MSM)	Old Moka Road, Bell Village, Port Louis
The Director	Mr. Wing Tet Pat Fong	Lai Fat Fur Brothers & Co. Ltd	11, Dr. Joseph Rivière Street, Port-Louis
The Chairman	Mr. Robert de Froberville	La Prudence Mauricienne	2nd Floor, Barkly Wharf, Caudan Waterfront, Port Louis

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Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Chairman	Mr. Bernard Montocchio	Meaders Feeds Ltd	Riche Terre Road, Riche Terre
Chairperson	Mrs. P. Hanoomanjee Issur	Beechand Company Limited	Head Office: 47-48 Brabant Street, Port Louis
Chairman & Managing Director	Mr. Ramesh Kalachand	The Kalachand Group	Stage II Building, DBM Industrial Estate, Plaine Lauzun, P. O. Box 634, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. J. Raymond Lamusse	Groupe Union	Union Ducray, Rivière des Anguilles
Chairman	Mr. Philippe Li Wan Po	Li Wan Po & Co. Ltée	19, Queen Street, Port Louis
Director	Mr. Jean li Wan Po	Richfield Tang Knits Ltd	Richfield Tang Knits Ltd, 5eme Mille, Royal Road, Beau_Bassin
Chairman	Mr. Dominique Galéa	Rey & Lenferna Ltd	Royal Road, Bell Village
Chairman	Mr. Antoine Seeyave	Happy World Ltd	Corporate Office: Level 8, Happy World House
Chairman	Mr. Salim Ismail	Socota Textile Mills Ltd	Sayed Hossen Road, Solférino, B.P. 32, Curepipe
Chairman	Mr. Jocelyn de Chasteauneuf	Finlease Company Limited	5th Floor, Travel House, Corner Royal & Sir William Newton Streets, Port-Louis
Director	Mr. Louis Serge Seenyen	Soniawear Co. Ltd	Dr. Jeetoo Street, Trèfles, Rose-Hill
Chairman	Mr. Jean-Claude Louis désiré Armance	Mauritius Housing Company Ltd	MHC Building, Rev. Jean Lebrun Street, Port-Louis
Managing Director	Mr. M. L. Jean Hardy	Automatic Systems Ltd	25, St. Georges Street, Port-Louis
Chairman	Mr. Soodursan Bhunjun	The Bhunjun & Sons Group	Osman Avenue / 3, Hennessy Lane, Quatre Bornes
Chairman	Mrs. Andreas Rogenmoser	Holcim (Mauritius) Ltd	Mer Rouge, Port-Louis

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Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Director	Mr. William Choong Kon AH SUE	Sotramon Limitée	Montebello, Les Pailles
The Chairman	Mr. Jacques Li Wan Po	Jacques Li Wan Po Group	P. O. Box 879, Plaine Lauzun, Port-Louis
Chairman and Managing Director	Mr. Sunil Mohan Hassamal	Shibani Knitting Co. Ltd	Block A, Industrial Estate, Vacoas
Chairman	Mr. Georges André Robert	Mauritius Union Assurance Co. Ltd	4, Leoville l'homme Street, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. G. Allain Doger de Speville	Mauritius Oil Refineries Ltd	Quay Road, P. O. Box 602, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Pierre Doger de Spéville	Medine Sugar Estates Ltd	6th Floor, The Harbour Front, 9 President John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
Managing Director	Mr. Llyod R. Coombes	The Mauritius Chemical & Fertilizer Industry Ltd	PO Box 344, Fort Georges, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Taken kumar Servansingh	State Insurance Company of Mauritius Ltd (SICOM)	SICOM Building, Sir Cécilcourt Antelme Street, Port Louis
Director	Mr. Manuel Carpraux	A & J Mural Construction Ltée (COLAS)	Richelieu, Brench Road, Petite Rivière
Chairman	Mr. Patrick Chapel	Lafarge (Mauritus) Cement Ltd	Chaussée Tromelin, Fort George, Port Louis
Director	Name	Organisation	Address
Director	Mr. Vincent Ah-Chuen	New Goodwill Investment Co. Ltd	Royal Road, Tombay Bay
Director	Mr. Harold Liu Manhin	New Zealand Milk (MTIUS) Ltd	Anchor Building, Les Pailles
Chairman	Mr. Cyril Mayer	Rehm-Grinaker Construction Co. Ltd	Royal Road, Arsenal

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Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Group Chairman	Mrs. Diane Cros	Apavou Holdings Ltd	Baie aux Tortues, Balaclava
Chairman	Mr. Dan Bhima	Cargo Handling Corporation Ltd.	Mer Rouge, Port Louis
Managing Director	Mr. Ashok Ramdenee	The Ramdenee Group of Companies	Industrial Zone, Phoenix
Director	Mr. Roland Staub	World Knits Ltd	Industrial Zone, Saint-Pierre
Chief Executive	Mr. Ali Parkar	Star Knitwear Group	La Clémence, Rivière du Rempart
Chairman and Managing Director	Mr. Jean Pascal Yen Fong Tsin Sa Ah Vi	UDIS Ltée	Royal Road, Grand Bay
Chairman	Mr. Dawood A. Rawat	Courts (Mauritius) Ltd	Bell Village, Brabant Street, P.O. Box 791, Port Louis
Managing Director	Mr, Jean Michel Giraud	The United Basalt Product Ltd	Head Office: Trianon, Quatre - Bornes
Chairman	Mr. Mohamad Ameen H. Rawat	Hassam Mussa Rawat Group	Hassam Moussa Rawat Bulding, 149-151 Royal Road, Beau Bassin
Chairman	Mr. Joyadeep Beeharry	Mauritius Duty Free Paradise	SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien
Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Roger Koenig	Robert Le Maire Groupe	Robert Le Maire Limited: Old Moka Road, Bell Village
Chairman	Mr. Guy Rivalland	Espitalier Noel Group	7th Floor, Swan Group Centre, 10 Intendance Street, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. P. Roland Maurel	The Mauvilac Group of Companies	Pailles Road, Les Pailles
Chairman	Mr. Alex Fon Sing	Gamma-Civic Ltd	Royal Road, Chapman Hill, Beau-Bassin
Chairman	Mr. George John Dumbell	Constance Hotels Services Limited	5th Floor, Labama House - 35, William Newton Street, Port Louis

APPENDIX Q

Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Director	Ms. Teresa Yang Ming Yen	The Esquel Group	Mare Gravier, Beau Bassin
Managing Director	Mr. Patrice Hardy	Naiade Resorts Ltd	Pierre Simonet Street, Floréal
Chairman	Sir René Seeyave	Happy World Foods Limited	Anse Courtois, Pailles
Chief Executive	Mr. Joseph Vaudin	The FUEL Group	11th Floor, Swan Group, 10, Intendance Street, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. M. E. Cyril Mayer	The Swan Group	Swan Group Centre, 10 Intendance Street, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Jayprakash Roshansingh Seetohul	Airports of Mauritius Co. Ltd	AML House, SSR International Airport, Plaine Magnien
Chairman	Mr. Jacques de Chateauvieux	Somags Ltée	c/o Jumbo, Sayed Hossen Avenue, Phoenix
Managing Director	Mr. M. Ramana	IndianOil (Mauritius) Ltd	Mer Rouge, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Jean Paul Adam	General Construction Co. Ltd	Plaine Lauzun, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Clency Leal	The Leal Group	Motorway M1, Pailles
Managing Director	Mr. Stéphane Lagesse	Palmar Group of Companies	Mon Loisir Industrial Zone, Rivière du Rempart
Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Claude Pougnet	Phoenix Beverages Limited	Pont Fer, Phoenix
Chairman	Mr. Raymond Ah Chuen	ABC Group	ABC Centre, Military Rd, Port-Louis
Chairman	Mr. Raj Ringadoo	The State Investment Corporation Ltd	15th Floor, Air Mauritius Centre, President John Kennedy Street, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Michael Easterbrook	Prices Tuna (Mauritius) Ltd	New Trunk Road, Riche Terre

APPENDIX Q

Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
General Manager	Mr. Jim McCormick	British American Tobacco Mauritius plc	P. O. Box 101, Nicolay Road, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Prakash Padaruth	Caltex Oil Mauritius Limited	Caltex house, Quay D Road, GPO Box311, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. G. Christian Dalais	Sun Resorts Ltd	5th Floor, IBL House, Caudan, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Bashirally A. Currimjee	The Currimjee Companies	Currimjee Limited, 6, Sir William Newton Street, Port Louis
Chairperson	Mr. J. Hugues Maigrot	The Harel Companies	Harel Freres Limited: 18, Edith Cavell Street, Port Louis
The Chairman	Mr. Laval Ah Kine	Compagnie Mauricienne de Textile Ltée	DBM Industrial Estate, Phoenix
Chairman	Mr. Momar Nguer	Total Mauritius Limited	18, Edith Cavell Street, P. O. Box 1202, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Hector Espitalier-Noel	New Mauritius Hotels Limited	10, Robert Edward hart Street, Curepipe
Executive Director	Mr. Michel de Spéville	Food and Allied Group of Companies	Gentilly, Moka
Chairperson	Mr. A. Thomas	Mauritius Telecom	Telecom Tower, Edith Cavell Street, Port Louis
Chief Executive Officer & Country Chairperson	Mrs. Sheri Roberts Updike	Shell Mauritius Limited	5, St- Georges Street, P.O. Box 85, Port Louis
Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Saleem R. Beebeejaun	British American Investment Co. (Mtius) Ltd	BAI Building, 25, Pope Hennessy Street, Port-Louis
Chairman and Group Chief Executive	Mr. P. Arnaud Dalais	Ciel Group	12th Floor, Swan Group Centre, Intendance Street, Port Louis

APPENDIX Q

Respondent position	Respondent name	Organisation	Address
Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Arnaud Lagesse	Groupe Mon Loisir (GML)	11th Floor, Swan group Center, 10, Intendance Street, Port Louis
Chief Executive Officer	Mr. Patrice d'Hotman de Villiers	Ireland Blyth Limited	IBL House, Caudan, P.O. Box 56, Port Louis
Chairman	Mr. Hector ESPITALIER-NOEL	Rogers	Rogers House, 5 President John Kennedy Street, Port – Louis
Chairman	Mr. Sanjay Bhuckory	Air Mauritius Limited	19th Floor, Air Mauritius Centre, President John Kennedy Street, P. Louis

Appendix R: Association of Human Resource Professionals’ list sent by post

Companies	Addresses
Rogers Distribution Division	3rd Floor, Rogers House, John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
Panache & Co. Ltd.	Industrial Zone, St Pierre
Panagora Marketing & Co. Ltd	Pont Fer Phoenix
La Sentinelle Ltd.	Rue Des Oursins, Riche Terre
Deep River Beau Champ Ltd.	Beau Champ GRSE
Pack Plastics/Emballages Ltd.	Anse Courtois, Les Pailles
Price Water House Coopers	Champ de Mars, Port-Louis
National Transport Corporation	Bonne Terre, Vacoas
Mauritius Freeport Development Corporation	Mer Rouge
JLR Engineering Ltd.	108, Bernardin De St Pierre, Vallee Des Pretres, Port-Louis
Societe De Gerance Mon Loisir	Mon Loisir, Riviere Du Rempart, Royal Road
Abra Marketing	Palmar Stone Street, Phoenix
Standard Chartered Bank	8th Floor, Happy World House, Sir William Newton Street, Port-Louis
Rogers Group- Engineering Cluster	Rogers House, President John Kennedy Street, Port-Louis
MEDCO	Fon Sing Building, Edith Cavell Street, Port-Louis
Rogers Aviation	President John Kennedy Street, Port Louis
Quality BeveragesLtd.	Royal Road, Belle Rose
MGI	MGI Complex, Moka
Maingard Piat & Associates	Moka
Marlin Export Ltd/ Volmar Ltd.	Royal Road, Riviere Noire
Cargo Handling Corporation	Mer Rouge, Port-Louis
Aquarelle Clothing Consolidated Fabrics	St Anne Road, Stanley Rose-Hill
Gamma Civic Ltd.	Royal Road, Chapman Hill, B. Bassin
MEXA	Seeneevassen Building, 9th Floor, Port-Louis
Maritim Hotel	Balaclava, Terre Rouge
Barclays Bank	Harbour Front, Port-Louis
Happy World Ltd.	Centre Commercial, Phoenix
Mauritius Port Authority	H. Ramnarain Building, Mer Rouge
La Pharmacie Nouvelle	Michael Leal, Pailles

Appendix S: Association of Human Resource Professionals' list sent by E-mail

Companies	E-mail addresses
Hilton Hotel	talal.atturkhan@hilton.com
CEB	simon.biguette@cebintnet.mu
Cogir Ltd.	cbissessur@cogirltee.com
Self Employed	jeanphi@intnet.mu
International Finance Servicers Rogers	hsseconsult@intnet.mu
Harel Freres Ltd.	gbouic@harelfreeres.com
Merville Beach Hotel	hrmerville@naiade.com
Iframac Ltd.	cchan@iframac.intnet.mu
Les Moulins de La Concorde Ltd.	achavry@intnet.mu
State Insurance Company Ltd	martine@sicom.intnet.mu
Phoenix Breweries Ltd.	bdecoriolis@ppg.mu
Bel Ombre Golden Resort	hrmanager@letelfair.com
GDP Hans Service Ltd.	delmayferret@sml.com
Waste Water Authority	sadek.futloo@intnet.mu
Tobacco Board	tobaco@intnet.mu
Forge Tardieu Ltd.	tardieu@intnet.mu
Constance & La Gaiete SE	clgprop.br@intnet.mu
CIP Ltd.	drinks@cip.intnet.mu
Ireland blyth Ltd	djhumun@iblgroupp.com
TFP International Ltd	tfp@intnet.mu
Triolet Bus Service	tbus@intnet.mu
Belle Vue Milling Co.	dkurumchand@harelfreeres.com
IBL	hlee@iblgroupp.com
British American Tobacco (Mtius) PLC	batmtius@intnet.mu
MQA	vmooten@mqa.mu
Courts	fmudhawo@courtsmauritiuss.com
HSBC	human.resources@hsbc.co.mu
Tropic Knits	stba@tropicknits.com
Securicor Mauritius Ltd	scor.op@intnet.mu
Mauritius Telecom	shashipuddoo@mauritiustelecom.com
Trou aux Biches Hotel	personnel.tb@bchot.com
Bank des Mascareignes	1ramlugon@bm.mu
Mauritius Telecom	rdeepak25@yahoo.fr
Shell Mauritius Ltd.	nancy.n.young@smauritiuss.shell.com

Appendix T: Unionization in Mauritius: Management Survey

Name of respondent (optional):
Gender M <input type="checkbox"/> F <input type="checkbox"/>
Name of organization (optional):
Sector of activity/industry:
Position in the organization:

1) Is there/are there a Trade Union or Unions that represent(s) the employees of your organization?

Yes No

2) If yes, what is/are the Union(s)?

.....
.....

3) Do you have a Collective Agreement with the Union(s)?

Yes No

4) If yes, what are the broad items in the Agreement?

.....
.....
.....

5) Would you say that your sector of activity/industry is a highly unionized one?

Yes No

6) What, according to you, drove workers to organize themselves in this sector/industry?

.....
.....

7) Would you say that there is/are valid reason(s) for the presence of unions in this sector?

Yes No

8) How would you rate the potency of the union(s) in this sector?

Very strong

Moderate

Weak

9) Describe the role that the union(s) in your organization play(s):

(a) directly with regard to the employees they represent

.....
.....

(b) With regard to wider organizational issues as a whole (e.g. productivity)

.....
.....

10) What type of strategy is being used by your organization in matters of employment relations? *Please circle.*

- A. We maintain a strong relationship with employees so as to reduce the risk of a union forming / the union becoming stronger.
- B. We prevent or try to prevent employees from forming or joining a union
- C. We accept one or more unions in our organization
- D. We welcome unions as partners in our organization's success.

11) How would qualify the culture of your organization?

.....
.....

12) Would you prefer direct dealings with the employees to negotiation through unions? Why or why not?

.....
.....

13) Do you essentially subscribe to an adversarial type of relationship with the workforce (i.e., that the goals of workers and of management are incompatible; the union is an outsider and a critic)?

Yes

No

14) How do you view the management-worker-union relationship in your sector/industry in general?

Essentially adversarial

Essentially co-operative

22) In your organization, is there:

		YES	NO
a.	A employee Welfare policy/programme/office		
b.	A Wellness/Quality of Work Life Programme		
c.	A Health and Safety policy that is well communicated		
d.	A work-life balance policy and strategy		
e.	An Ethics policy and programme		
f.	A Corporate Social Responsibility policy and programme		
g.	A Communications strategy		
h.	A Quality Management system, incorporating employee participation		
i.	Regular employee attitude or job satisfaction surveys		
j.	A HRM function staffed by highly competent and qualified individuals		
k.	A HRM strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy		
l.	A HRD strategy that is clearly linked to the corporate strategy		

23) In your view, is the union/are the unions knowledgeable about and sensitive to the changing business environment?

Yes No Partly

24) What policies exist in your organization to: *(Tick any that apply)*

- a) Prevent discrimination against any employee in hiring, promotions, benefits
- b) Prevent workplace harassment in all its forms
- c) Ensure that supervisors and managers adopt participative, collaborative styles of leadership
- d) Ensure that employees enjoy high motivation and job satisfaction
- e) Ensure that employees are provided with adequate, pleasant and modern resources and environment for their work
- f) Ensure that employees are provided with opportunities to participate in and influence decision-making in the organization

25) How do you see the future of the union movement in Mauritius?

.....

.....

Thank you for your valued responses. If there is any additional comment you wish to make, please write this in the space below.

.....

.....

		Respondent	Organisation/ Union	Contact Number	Time of the interview	Venue
		30th July	Mr. J.L Remy - Labour and Industrial Relations Officer	Youth and Sports & Industrial Relations & Employment.	Mob: 875 9535 Tel: 831 0672 or 831 0772 Fax: 831 0392	13. 00hrs
Mr. J. Augustin – President of GSA, Rodrigues Branch and Mr. N. Speville, member of the GSA	Government Servant Association, Rodrigues Branch		Tel: 831 1684 Fax: 831 0912	14. 00hrs	At the seat of Government Servant Association, Rodrigues Branch, Port Mathurin	
31st July	Mr. Alain Tolbize - President of Rodrigues Government Employees Association and Rodrigues Workers Federation	Rodrigues Government Employees Association and Rodrigues Workers Federation	Tel: 831 1732	11.00hrs	Rodrigues Government Employees Association, Rue Leguant, Port Mathurin. (Vis-à-vis patisserie Lulle)	
	Mr. Thomas Parmass - President of Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union	Rodrigues RCA Primary School Employees Union	Mob: 876 0982 Tel:831 7700	13.00hrs	Escale Vacances Lté.	
	Mr. Johnson Rousetty, Chief Commissioner at the Commission	At the Commission	Tel: 831 1051	14. 00hrs	At the Commission	
	Mrs. Florence François – Secretary of the Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union	Rodrigues Public Service Workers Union	Mob: 875 4723 Tel: 831 4560	16.00hrs	National Cooperative Credit Union, Mont. Lubin	
1st August	Mr. Jean Lid Félicité – President of Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Workers Union	Rodrigues Tourism and Allied Industries Workers Union	Tel: 876 7136	10.00hrs	Vacances Des îles, Port Mathurin	
	Mr. W. Edouard – President of Rodrigues Council of Social Service	Rodrigues Council of Social Service	Tel: 877 1195	13.00hrs	Rodrigues Council of Social Service, Port Mathurin	

RODRIGUES

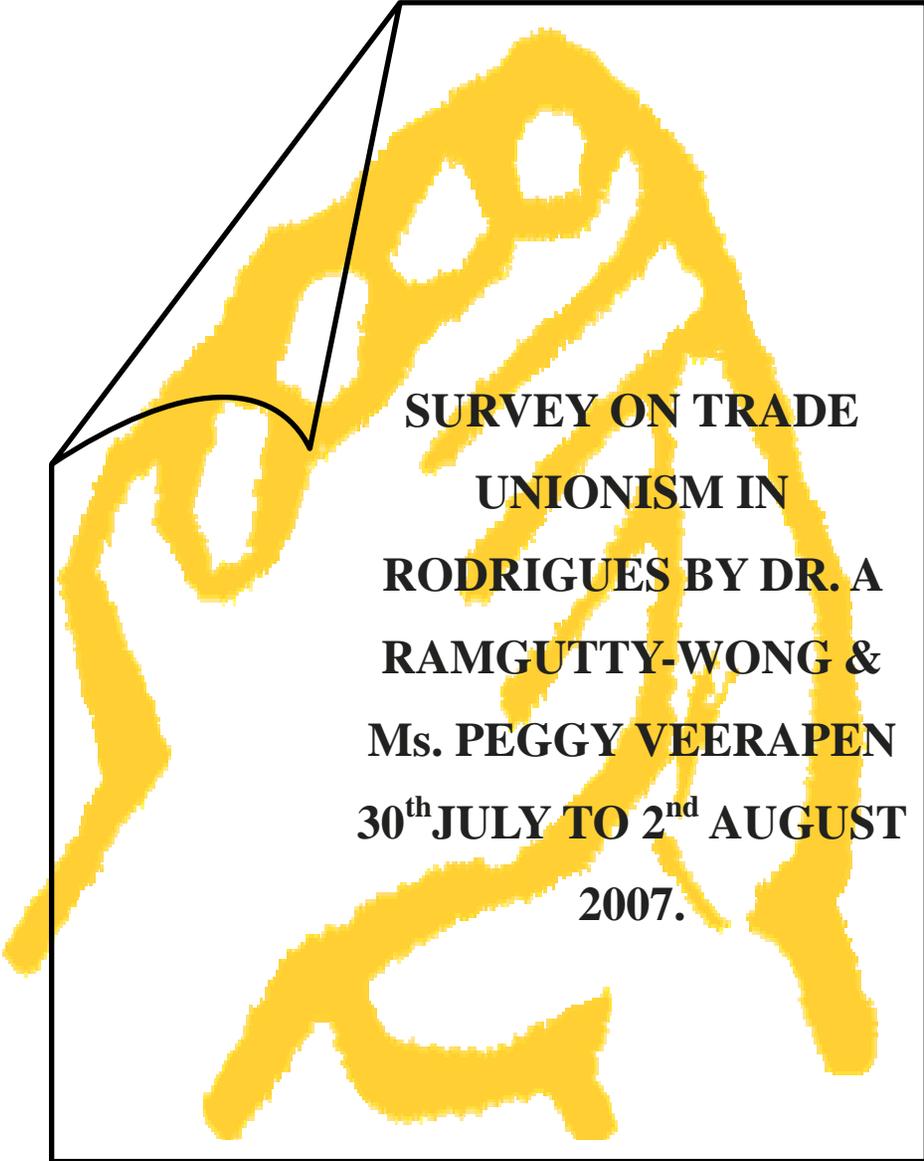
Appendix U: List of Interviewees in Rodrigues & Brochure

		Respondent	Organisation/ Union	Contact Number	Time of the interview	Venue
RODRIGUES	1st August	Mr. Joseph Romel Farla – President of Rodrigues Construction, Metal, Wooden and Allied Industries Employees Union	Rodrigues Construction, Metal, Wooden and Allied Industries Employees Union	Tel: 875 6542	13.45hrs	Escale Vacances Lté.
		Mr. Collette – President of Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union	Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union	Mob: 733 3985 Tel: 831 1732	14.45hrs	Port Mathurin Harbour Workers Union (Building of Rodrigues Government employees union)
	2nd August	Mr. John Milazar – President of Rodrigues Private Sector Workers Association	Rodrigues Private Sector Workers Association	876 4611	08. 30hrs	Escale Vacances Lté.

TRADE UNIONISM IN MAURITIUS

For any queries/ contribution to the project,
Principal Investigator: Dr. A. Ramgutty – Wong or the
Research Assistant Ms. Peggy Veerapen:

University Of Mauritius, Reduit;
Tel no. : 454 – 1041, Ext 1439;
Fax no. : 465 – 6906;
Email add. : rwong@uom.ac.mu



**SURVEY ON TRADE
UNIONISM IN
RODRIGUES BY DR. A
RAMGUTTY-WONG &
Ms. PEGGY VEERAPEN
30th JULY TO 2nd AUGUST
2007.**

PROGRAMME OF VISIT: 30th JULY TO 2nd AUGUST 2007

The rationale for a project on trade unions in Mauritius and in Rodrigues flows from the dearth of comprehensive compilation of perspectives and issues regarding trade unionism on either islands. In order that the various stakeholders – government, industrialists, investors, managers, trade unionists, scholars – take informed positions and decisions within their own fields of action, a working knowledge of the wider perspective on unionization is necessary. The project is being funded by the Mauritius Research council (MRC) and will come to term by the end of 2007. The research team will kindly appreciate every input and collaboration on your part.

30th JULY 2007

06 45 Departure Mauritius to Rodrigues

08 15 Arrival Rodrigues

09 00 Travel to “Chez Madam Prudence”

10 30 Relax and freshen up

12 00 Go out and spot location for upcoming interviews

12 30 Lunch

13 00 Interview with Mr. Remy
(NorthCoombes Building, Port Mathurin)

14 00 Interview with Mr. Augustin and Mr. Speville (GSA, Port Mathurin)

31st JULY 2007

07 00 Wake up, breakfast, bath and get ready for the interviews

11 00 Interview with Mr. Tolbize

12 00 Lunch

13 00 Interview with Mr; Thomas Parmass (Grand La Fouche Manges)

14 00 Interview with Mr. Johnson Roussety, Chief Commissioner (The Commission)

16 00 Interview with Mrs. Florence Francois (National Cooperative Credit Union, Mt Lubin)

1st August 2007

10 00 Jean Lid Félicite

13 00 Mr. W. Edouard

13 45 Mr. Joseph Romel Farla

14 45 Mr. Collette

2nd August 2007

08 30 Mr. John Milazar)