

Evaluating post-apartheid south africa trade unions assignment

[History](#)



1. Marx had enormous faith in the trade unions because he saw that they were growing in numbers and getting stronger. Trade Unions protected workers against struggles with their employees. For Marx to believe in the success of the trade unions he saw that the unions had drive and they were in a positions where they needed the employees to give better working conditions and wages to workers. By developing that they had a common interest, they would work together to fight against the employees. In having one goal in mind they are able to combine together and form strong united Unions.

The attack on competition among workers. Workers wages were cut because of new technologies that were becoming a great treat as machinery was improving rapidly and the employers where the ones who determined the wage level because there was not much competition in wage labour, workers had no option but to keep their jobs and fight for better working conditions, joint combination of different workers came together (Trade Union) to meet at this common interest of wage expansion this became the Union of workers.

Unions seemed to be united and winning the struggle. Marx says " Union was helped by the improved means of communication that are created by modern industry and the place workers of different localities in contact with one another. Marx saw that while industries grew so did the Unions because workers wanted to protect their wages interest, better working conditions while the industries grew and also workers from different parts of industries were able to come into contact because of the vast communication that was needed between industries to coordinated their business people outside their
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work place where able to socialize with other workers in the different industries because they might live the same area and want the same protection and fighting strength that Unions provided. This would make the trade Unions grow in masses.

So if the industries grew so did the trade Union so you couldn't necessary stop the growth of industries just because of trade unions being stronger? These Unions would break the barriers of classes and will help fight national struggle which would become a political struggle. Marx and Engels " Evolution of industrial capitalism provides preconditions of collections organization by throwing workers together in large numbers and creates the deprivation which spur them to combination. " Trade unions where organized regardless of their skills, they were prepared to take aggressive action in support of their wage cause and later leading to a olitical and social cause. What made the unions more strong and threatening it was because unions were no longer entrenched along the racial lines. Marx saw these unions as training grounds for social revolutionaries and overthrow private property to put an end to their enslavement. 2. Lenin and Trotsky had different opinions on the trade unions, on the way that they operated and their purpose. Lenin believes that this economic struggle that workers fort against their employees for a better commodity for their labour power. orkers wanted their labour power to be sold off at better price and that certain working condition were consider as workers were unhappy with the current working conditions. Lenin would say that this was a trade union struggle because the workers differed in the type of job that they did. The unions were interested in supporting the workers to have rights in the workplace in the different

industries. trade unions were not going to affect economic stability it's just that workers want a fair share of what the employers were getting out of the markets .

They wanted better wages and considerable working hours. The trade unions knew that by fighting the employers would in turn force the government to pass new legislations that will be well suited for the workers. workers wanted to persuade government into giving into what they wanted which was these better working conditions and the only this was going to happen was if one party was going to give up this fight or if this dispute was resolved Trotsky had the incorporated thesis which he believed that the union leaders had an altruistic motive.

Unions were fast becoming powerful and workers on their side it seemed they were unstoppable; they were going to use these workers to gain control and assist capitalism in controlling the workers. Lenin focused on the internal role of the trade unions. He never thought that trade unions would exploit the power that it had. The trade unions were going to put forward the worker needs in order to penetrate the governing. By having the workers needs as a front they would pose a danger to the government because they were unsure of the trade unions intentional acts.

Trade unions were undecided on what they wanted which would cause the political struggle more unstable. Lenin argument states that " workers aspiration could be only satisfied through transformation of society". This means that everyone will not have altruistic motives or want to gain more than the other. 3. Jeremy Baskin describes corporatism as the only realistic

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opinion for trade unions movements in South Africa because he thinks that the trade union movements do not have a better alternative that is viable in the future to get what they have planned or demanded.

The other alternatives that trade union movements might opt to use lack reality in this day in age. It's either they have to go through the whole struggle of the apartheid era trying to overpower the government which is mostly unlikely to happen. Government is much stronger it would easily be destroyed. Their movement also might as joint political parties want to pressure the government to giving up to their demands and seizing power all these attempts lack a sense of direction and have no vision in today's government systems.

Trade union movements' last resort would be to defend gains and fight bosses, this might be a direct approach but violence is hardly the answer there are rules when bargaining that are in place that everyone has to adhere to. Jeremy Baskin is right about making this assumption because it seems that South Africa is faced with a variety of problems that they are unable to deal with. Unemployment is constantly rising above the usual level and investments in the country have lost enthusiasm, they tend to decline more than rise. a new system such as corporatism will overturn this economic crisis.

The unions will be able to protect the working conditions and wage interests from the negative effect of the current recession. During the apartheid era if there was a recession workers suffered a cut in their wages now things will be entirely different. 4. When he uses the term strategic unionism he means

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that there is a need for change and they should embark in that change in the way trade unions, companies, workers and the government operate. Karl von Holdt sees the need to encourage worker participation in the companies.

Workers should be involved in the decision making not just sitting back and taking orders even though they do not agree with the decisions or affect their working conditions. Karl von Holdt when he uses strategic unionism he states that transformation was ideal so that everyone could be satisfied with all decisions making and activities in the industries. This would help avoid certain things such as strikes, uncertainties' and unstable industries. If the trade unions are able to co-operate with the state so that there can be full transformation of the South African economic system.

Strategic unionism is when transformation of the state, of the workplace, of economic decision ??? making and civil society is reached. Unions/workers or the labour movement should be in the centre of the transformation so they can avoid being controlled by the state as previously in the apartheid era, having too strike and take aggressive action . When engaging in this transformation they should not want immediate results and neglect certain issues. It should be a step by step process or programme which makes its fundamental priority that democracy is practiced in this transformation of industries or new industries.

In this arena of decision making should be democratic and deepens the power of the working class. The working class should be involved in management level and be able to play an important role in the decision making. To improve industrial relations institutions and state institutions.

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Unions should ensure that they get enough support from the government, when assistance is needed. 5. Corporatism is the “ process of negotiation and implementation of agreements between the sectors of the state and powerful monopolistic interest organizations co-operate is indispensable if desired policies are to be implemented”(Wikipedia 2010). here are certain number of interest organization which are limited and have to adhere to certain rules in all the sectors to reorganize they way government and the organizations operate and the new legislation that are passed have to be used. Advantages of corporatism in South Africa: the inflation rate South Africa economy is unstable, investments are constantly changing all the time but mostly they decrease. This unstable economy could cause a number of things such as a political crisis where the country will be ungovernable no matter who is power.

The economy from time to time it would slowdown or come to a standstill. This unstable economy normally leads to a loss of jobs which increases the unemployment rate which is already at an alarming rate. The unemployment rate is one of the disadvantages because it is constantly rising and also is the population growth is rising. Unemployment is currently worsening because of this unstable economy; there are no new jobs that are created. This is a problem because there is a high influx of new job seekers entering the labour market.

Less people in this country are guaranteed formal jobs. All of this is followed by political matters many people want something out of this new government they want to see some changes being made, this could seem

very hard to satisfy these people because the economy is unstable.

Uncompetitive productivity levels South Africa should be able to compete at an international level; they have need to clients that are loyal to them because they produce quality goods.

If this is not the case they should improve their quality and the time it takes to produce certain goods in order for them to be viable. REFERNCES 1. Desai and Habib's article " Labour Relations in Transition: the Rise of Corporatism in South Africa's Automobile Industry" 2. Jeremy Baskin " trend towards Bargained corporatism" 3. Karl von Holdt " the rise of strategic unionism" 4. Richard Hyman " Marxism and the sociology of trade unionism 5. V. I. Lenin " trade unions, the present situation and Trotsky's mistakes 6. www. wikipedia. com