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ABSTRACT

The Workers' Education is a special kind of adult education designed to give workers a better understanding of their status, rights and responsibilities as worker, as union member, as a family member and as a citizen. The workers' education places an emphasis upon group advancement and solution of group problems. It differs from vocational and professional educations which are meant for individual advancement. Fundamentally, the need for developing the workers and their representative is equally as important as the managers, because the workers, their leaders and the managers work within the same socio-economic and political conditions, policies of the organization. Therefore, in the present day context, the workers and their representatives play an equally important role in making some of the decisions concerning the organization; herein lays the importance of Workers' Education Scheme and its training.

In India, inclusion of Workers' Education in the second five year plan (1956-61) marks the beginning of some systematic efforts to organize educational programmes for workers in our country. This ultimately led to the setting up of an autonomous Central Board for Workers Education (CBWE) in 1958 to administer a three tier scheme formulated by the Government of India. Till today, the CBWE continues to be the focal point of workers' education in India.

The workers education is also a well accepted and widely followed concept internationally. In Asia, Japan was the first country to take up such programmes in the second decade of 20th century under the auspices of Ya Ai Kai, a trade union founded by Bunji Suzuki in 1912. By the middle of 1952, the Japanese trade unions have established five workers schools in various parts of Japan. Later, the Japan Institute of Labour (JIL) was set up by the Government of Japan in 1958 with the object of carrying out study and research in labour problems etc. Now, the JIL is known as Japan Institute for Labour Policy and Training (JILPT) and it operates under the control of Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Govt. of Japan.

Most comparative studies of workers' education and industrial relations practices have so far been conducted either within or between industrialized countries and very little has been done to compare such practices between developed economies and significant developing economies, particularly such as India. The present study is a modest attempt to study the comparative workers' education schemes within Industrial Relations, Trade Unionism and Human Resource Management practices in India and Japan. The impact of Globalization on trade unionism, industrial relations, workers, workers institutions & workers' education in India and Japan has also been looked into in the present study. Few case studies were also included to know the present status of workers education scheme in India & what it can learn from Japan.