

**Nirmal Kumar Betchoo**

**An Analysis of Trade Union Strategies  
in the new Employee Relations Climate  
in Mauritius**



## Abstract

This dissertation aimed at identifying and explaining why trade unions in Mauritius have lost their influence in the contemporary workplace context. After being vibrant during the buoyant period of the 1970s, trade unions now face challenges that they must justly consider to enable them develop in today's society. This phenomenon is global and affects both advanced and developing economies from a workplace perspective. The study examined why trade unions lost their influence over employees, members and society. It identified that trade union influence was on the decline and, if unions maintained the same structure and objectives that focused mainly on member recruitment and disputes over pay, they would not survive in the current and forthcoming conditions since there is better employee education, legal framework supporting employees and wider use of technology. The Employee Relations Act 2008 served as a background with new developments in favour of the employee but unions contested key provisions it made. The research conducted with a systematically organised sample of some 100 respondents, confirmed that unions, both public and private, had to focus on strategic factors and that these would determine their success. The findings showed that if unions followed key strategies for their survival, namely innovation in communication, leadership, female empowerment, social partnership, union rationalisation and focus on globalisation, they would secure better chances to remain relevant and maintain their credibility among the stakeholders of employee relations, in particular, employees, employers and government. A model and recommendations were developed that could lead to ensuring the success and survival of trade unions in Mauritius in the years to come.

Key words: trade unions, strategies, employee relations