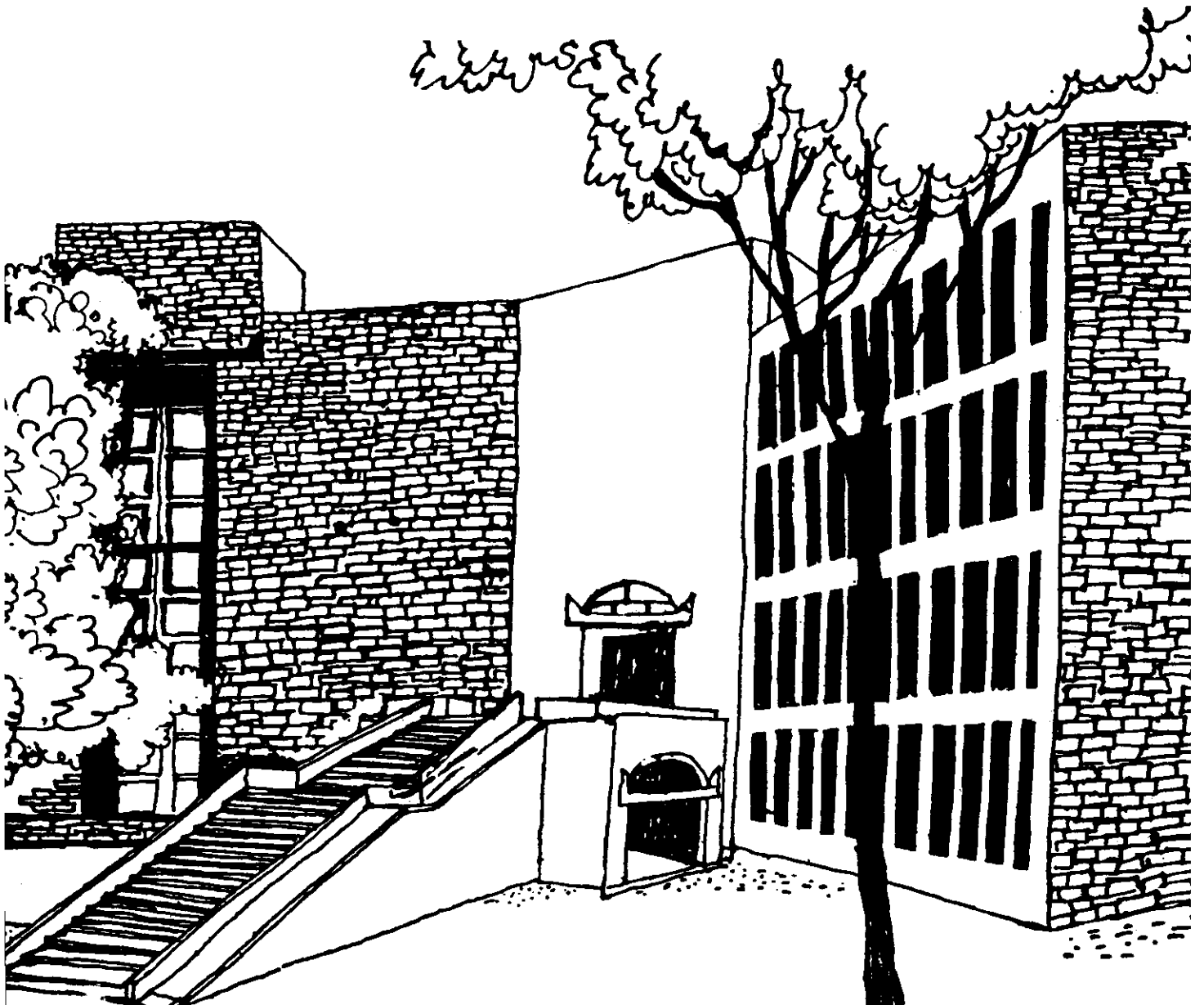# Working Paper

NEGOTIATING STRATEGIES AND SKILLS - 1
A SOCIOLOGICAL STUDY OF THE PARADIGMS IN
THE MANAGEMENT OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS IN
THE INDIAN CONTEXT - CURRENT SCENARIO AND
FUTURE DIRECTIONS

By

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A Sociological Study of the Paradigms in the Management of Industrial Relations in the Indian Context - Current Scenario and Future Directions

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1.   Introduction

The continuous and relentless search for gaining new insights into the structure and process of choice behaviour in the management of industrial relations has been one of the most fascinating areas for investigation in the field of socio economic research. Studies of the procedural as well as substantive aspects of this area of human activity have made attempts to understand the process by which choicemaking situations emerge, the behavioural patterns of the actors involved in choicemaking, the dynamics of such situations, the interface between the choicemaking situation and the environment, the structure and process of choicemaking in varied contexts. The purpose of this paper is to go beyond some of the above issues and concerns to see if there are any underlying patterns in choicemaking behaviour. In other words, the main objective of this paper is to make an attempt to gain access to the surreal world of choicemaking paradigms behind the signs, sounds, symbols, structures, strategies and struggles of industrial relations choicemaking processes.

A paradigm for our purposes can be defined as a conceptual representation of certain phenomena which has the potential for interpreting reality as well as to guide processes leading to policies, decisions and actions in any sphere of human activity. Paradigms are identifiable by their distinctive value orientations which help in defining the relationship between ends and means in the processes leading to policies, decisions and actions.

The methodology adopted in the identification of paradigms was as follows:

Phase 1   The following five comprehensive case studies were developed for analysis:

* Industrial Relations at Voltas - A Case Study (Joseph, 1991; 331-347)
* Industrial Relations at PRTC - A Case Study (Joseph 1991: 233-261)
* Human Resources Regeneration - The JMEL Experience (Joseph 1991: 465-493)
* Human Resources Regeneration - The KTL Experience (Joseph 1991; 460-464)
* Labour Management Negotiations in the Indian Steel Industry (Joseph 1991: 348-425)

Two other cases on the question of policy options in the strategic management of relations with unions were also developed.

* Union Recognition - the PRTC Dilemma (Joseph 1991: 262-300)
* The Horns of a Dilemma - Union Recognition in a Multiple Union Situation (Joseph 1991: 301-312)

Phase 2   A review of literature on industrial relations as well as on management of industrial relations was carried out from the point of view of identifying major choicemaking paradigms as conceptualized by various studies.

Phase 3   The cases were administered to over 500 participants in various postgraduate and management development programmes. The case analysis process was also oriented to sensitizing participants to the elements of the paradigms identified through literature review. The purpose of this phase was not so much to determine the frequency with which the elements of paradigms were being identified but more to identify elements and patterns in industrial relations processes through sharing, iteration and reinforcement.

The results of this endeavour are presented in this paper in the following sections:

* Industrial Relations - Paradigms underlying conceptual approaches.

- Management of Industrial Relations - Paradigms underlying conceptual perspectives.
- Conceptual framework for industrial relations choicemaking emerging from the review.
- Contextual framework of industrial relations choicemaking - The Indian Socioeconomic Formation and the Politicolegal Framework of Industrial Relations.
- Elements of Paradigms in Industrial Relations choice behaviour - the empirical evidence.
- Paradigms in Industrial relations choicemaking - The Case of Union Recognition Policy in a Multiple union situation.
- Conclusions and Implications.

2. Industrial Relations - Paradigms underlying Conceptual Approaches

There are three major paradigms in the conceptual approaches to industrial relations choice behaviour – the systems approach, the liberal pluralist approach and the radical approach. The systems approach stresses the maintenance of order through regulation, the liberal-pluralists focus on institutions for job regulation while the radical approach looks at industrial relations choice behaviour as the process of struggle to gain control over work structures, relations and processes. Table 1 presents an analysis of the three approaches in terms of "paradigms" defined as a conceptual representation of certain phenomena in terms of the ends-means-values relationship.

Table 1 Paradigms in Conceptual Approaches to Industrial Relations Choicemaking			
APPROACHES	ENDS	MEANS	VALUES
The Systems Approach (Dunlop, 1958; Anderson, 1979; Goodman, 1977.)	* Goal Attainment * Adaptation * Integration * Pattern Maintenance Parsons (1951)	* Rulemaking/Regulation * Procedural * Substantive	* Order * Stability
The Liberal Pluralist Approach (Flanders, 1970; Fox, 1971; Clegg, 1979.)	* Compromise and Consensus through Discussion and Negotiations	* Multiple Stakeholder Orientation * Collectivization and Bargaining * Institutionalization for Job Regulation	* Bilateralism * Conditions and Concessions Orientation
The Radical Approach (Marx, 1973; Lenin, 1978; Michels, 1959; Trotsky, 1977; Marx and Engels, 1970; Hyman, 1977.)	* Humanization through protection and promotion of collective procedural and substantive interests of direct producers	* Collective organization and action using legislative, direct and legal redressal means to humanize organizational as well as social structures, processes and relations	* Change Orientation through conscious collectivization and struggle

The focus in terms of ends-means-values varies from approach to approach. The focus in the systems approach is on the "system", the focus in the liberal pluralist approach is on multiple stakeholders as alternate power centres, while in the radical approach, the focus is on the direct producers.

3.   Paradigms in conceptual approaches to the Management of Industrial Relations - An Overview

Several attempts have been made to conceptualize the modalities of the management of industrial relations. Fox (1966) wrote about the unitarist as well as the pluralist approaches in the management of industrial relations. Within the unitarist perspective, the right to manage is considered the preserve of management while the pluralist perspective recognizes several competing power centres. Fox (1974) later added a third "radical" perspective in which he challenged the balance-of-power advocates whose basic premise was that the mere recognition of plural centres of power brings about a balance of power.

The late 60s and the mid-70s saw the emergence of the control theory of industrial relations. "Organization implies control. A social organization is an ordered arrangement of individual human interactions. Control processes help cimcumscribe idiosyncratic behaviours and keep them conformant to the rational plan of organizations. Organizations require a certain amount of conformity as well as integration of diverse activities. It is the function of control to bring about conformance to organizational requirements and achievement of the ultimate purposes of the organization." (Tannenbaum 1967:3)

Several typologies of control in the management of industrial relations have been identified. Braverman (1974) in his seminal work stated that the main mechanisms of control of industrial relations was through job fragmentation and job specialization. Friedman (1977) wrote of two perspectives -- one which advocated direct control and another which postulated the responsible autonomy approach. Edwards categorized control strategies in terms of bureaucratic control and technological control (1979). Gospel (1983) identified other mechanisms through which management exercises control over industrial relations -- the putting out system, job contracting and the wage earning foremen mechanisms. Burawoy's fascinating account of how consent is organized at the point of production throws up three . types of control -- despotic control, hegemonic control as well as hegemonic despotism (1985: 261).

Ramaswamy's observations (1988), related to the perceptions and strategies of management in relation to labour relations, are representative of management approaches of the 80's in the Indian context within the "control" perspective discussed above. Farming out of jobs to labour contractors, use of the putting out system, having on the rolls of the company different categories of employees with varying levels of job securty and wages (casual labour, temporary labour, apprentices, trainee labour), change of designation of the top crust of the blue collar force which transforms it into the bottom layer of the managerial cadre without change in job content or emoluments, introduction of labour saving automation, coaxing or threatening labour to take on higher loads, use of incentive schemes, use of management charters to match union demands in the collective bargaining process, retaining work allocation as a management prerogative are some of the managerial strategems.

Several initatives taken by managements in the 80's indicate that the management of industrial relations is characterized by the thrust towards regaining control over labour. The orientation has been to live from crisis to crisis and the tactic has been to respond situation by situation.   Adhocism, opportunism and expediency oriented pragmatism have characterized managerial approaches. Firefighting is the pervasive stance. Since the actors within this framework of industrial relations indulge in gamesmanship, oneupmanship as well as in brinkmanship, an all pervading cynicism engulfs the actors.

Impressions gathered from media representations of industrial relations choice behaviour has led to the widespread belief among the general public as well as industrial relations managers that the approach characterized by *positional reactivism* is the all pervasive paradigm

in operation. Research studies in the Indian context bred on the "systems" and "control" theories have tended to look for certain types of manifestations of industrial relations choices and have also tended to conclude that positional reactivism is the predominantly prevalent mode. These perceptions and perspectives tend to be perpetuated through educational as well as training programmes. Yet, this study of industrial relations at the enterprise level points to a certain disenchantment with the positional reactive approach and a simultaneous search for alternative approaches. Empirical evidence in the 80's also points towards the emergence of the strategic choice approach to the management of industrial relations.

Strategic management literature is vast but in essence it began with the postulates that environmental change determines corporate strategy and strategic initiatives determine internal structures and processes (Chandler 1962). Others like Simon (1957) and Blain (1968) have looked at industrial organization and organization theory from this angle. Strategic management basically involves decisions like investment, disinvestment, relocation, mergers and bankruptcy. In the Indian context, changes in the structure of ownership, changes in the structure of management, new enterprise development, mergers and acquisitions, diversification, foreign collaboration, new technology introduction, relocation, decentralization of production, sick unit turnarounds, retrenchment and closure in response to internal as well as environmental pressures are some of the more significant strategic management concerns.

Several attempts have been made to conceptualize strategic management. Strategic management has been viewed as a function of corporate capability (Ansoff 1984) and as a process of linking external opportunities to internal resources and values (Andrews 1987). Peters and Waterman (1982) based on their research on the elements which go into the search for excellence in the American corporate context, came to the conclusion that strategic management is a function of seven interrelated dimensions — strategy, structure, systems, skills, staff, style and shared values. A key element is the choice of a strategic thrust in relation to a firm's products, markets and technology with the option of continuing with current strengths at one end of the continuum and with the option of continuous innovation at the other end of the continuum.

Strategic management, therefore, is not a static but a dynamic process in which the organization continuously defines the environment and responds appropriately. It is a continuous process of redefining its own core in order not only to remain in existence but also to change in order to be able to grow. This may involve not only structural changes and systemic innovations but it may also involve changes in the skills and shared values in the organization.

The strategic choice perspective and approach has had a profound influence on human resources management. Beer et al (1985) have conceptualized human resources management as the interplay of the interests of various stakeholders like shareholders, management, employee groups, government, the community as well as trade unions. Several situational factors like workforce characteristics, business strategy and conditions, management philosophy, labour market conditions, profile of unions, task technologies, the legal framework and societal values also need to be taken into consideration. The interplay of these actors and forces determine human resources management policy choices and human resource outcomes which have long term consequences. Broadly speaking, the human resource management policy choices in the Beer framework revolve around four areas: employee influence, human reource flow, rewards system and work systems. Four kinds of human resources outcomes are discernible as a consequence: commitment, competence, congruence and cost effectiveness.

Tichy et al (1982) view human resource management from the strategic choice perspective as a function of four systems — the strategic select... system, the strategic appraisal system,

the strategic rewards system, the strategic development system.

Kochan, Mckersie and Cappelli (1984) draw attention to several factors like decline in union membership, changes in managerial values and changes in the role of government in the American context which pointed to the inadequacy of the systems theory and certain other middle range theories. New managerial initiatives are also in evidence flowing from the strategic choice perspective at the strategic, functional as well as work place levels. This paper suggests that research should be directed towards examining how strategic choices influence collective bargaining and the workplace but also how changes at the grassroots level affect strategic choice behaviour. Other ideas suggested for further exploration relate to the role of values and ideology as explanatory variables independent of market forces and strategic choices. Yet another question posed is: will more stability occur in decentralized structures in which employers pursue a union free strategy at the corporate level coupled with programmes to achieve labour management cooperation at the plant level, or in centralized and highly unionized structures where management and labour search for a coherent and integrated strategy for shaping their practices at all three levels of industrial relations?

Later,in 1988, Kochan and Katz, based on their anaysis of the American industrial relations scenario, identified the elements of a New Industrial Relations System for the American context. Information sharing between management and workers, worker and union participation and representation, crossfunctional consultation, integration of industrial relations with business and technological strategies are some of the elements at the strategic level. Contingent compensation, employment continuity and security, strong commitment to training and development are the elements at the collective bargaining and Personnel Policy level. At the workplace level, the elements in the emerging scenario would be employee participation, flexible work organization, grievance procedures with communications and due process supplements.

If Kochan and Katz have interpreted the strategic choice perspective from the management perspective, Hyman (1977) has looked at industrial relations from the point of view of the direct producers. Hyman has taken the position that the drama of industrial relations is enacted within a politico-economic totality which is characterized by contradictions. The transformation of the contradiction ridden totality is brought about by the praxis of the labouring classes. In Hyman's "strategic" perspective, the focus is on the direct producer and the politico-economic framework of the praxis of the direct producer. Hyman has defined industrial relations as the study of the processes of control over work relations and among these processes, those involving collective worker organization and action are of particular concern.

The conventional approach to strategic industrial relations management at the firm level, as discussed earlier, begins with top management decisions and then works out implications at the functional and workplace levels. The underlying logic of top management strategic decisions is oriented to products, markets and technology. In this scheme of things, the direct producer is a "commodity" and an "input cost" to be minimized. Such an approach merely serves to sharpen the contradictions which are inherent in employer-employee relations. The modalities of strategic choice in industrial relations in management take on entirely different connotations if they are seen not only from the angle of the reality of the inherent contradictions in the employer-employee relations but also from the standpoint of the "praxis" of the direct producers.

It might be useful at this point to dwell on the notion of praxis which has been interpreted in different ways by different authors. Lefebvre (1968) attempted a useful interpretation of the concept of praxis which could serve our purpose. Praxis ling to him, is the

dialectic between action and reflection as man relates to nature and society. The term denotes not only theoretical decision but also the decision to act. Direct producers as they are engaged in praxis experience themselves as subjects capable of activity, reflection and desire. This engagement also involves the direct producers in rich and complex social relations and work directed towards need creating and need fulfilling goals. Praxis is experienced at three levels — the base or foundation (productive forces, techniques, organization of labour); structures (production and property relations; superstructures (institutions, ideologies). Lefebevre also suggests that the modalities of praxis are threefold - - repetitive praxis, mimetic praxis and innovative praxis. In repetitive praxis, the same gestures, the same acts, are performed again and again, within determined cycles. Mimetic praxis follows models; occasionally it creates without imitating, that is, creates without knowing how or why — but more often than not imitates without creating. Inventive, creative praxis has a continuous change orientation both in quantitative and qualitative terms and often comes into conflict with the status quo. The sustainability of innovative praxis would depend on the political strength of various groups, classes and individuals involved.

The elements in the Lefebvre formulation could help in piecing together a definition of praxis. Praxis can be defined as the dialectic between critical reflection and innovative action for change in which direct producers as subjects are engaged in the continuous transformation of the confluence of structures, relations, processes and outcomes in any given context. As Lefebvre also points out, it is also important to bear in mind that each moment in the praxis of any group presents two alternatives — the structures, relations, processes and outcomes could lead to greater alienation or to greater disalienation.

Kappen (1983), also reflecting on the notion of praxis, sees two distinct patterns from the plethora of interpretations of the term — one neutral, the other value laden. According to him, praxis in the neutral sense means the totality of sense experience which includes both action and passion, perception and need, man's whole relationship with his environment through seeing, touching, hearing, feeling, loving, willing, acting and suffering. Praxis, in the value laden sense, according to Kappen, derives from the historial dialectical phases: the praxis of alienation, the praxis of disalienation and the praxis of humanized social systems. The direct producers as subjects are enmeshed in the praxis of alienation, consciously and actively involved in the praxis of disalienation as they strive towards the praxis of humanized patterns of social organizations.

The term alienation may require brief elaboration. Joseph (1991), reviewing studies on alienation, suggests the concept can be viewed from two perspectives -- the behavioural perspective and the politico-economic perspective. From the behavioural perspective, the direct producers experience alienation in the technical, behavioural, managerial relations of an organization. The modalities of alienation within this perspective are: powerlessness, self-estrangement, cultural estrangement, normlessness and meaninglessness (Seeman (1959). From the politico-economic perspective, the direct producers experience alienation by virtue of their very condition given the modalities of the wage labour system. The direct producers are alienated not only from the product of their labour but also from the process of production, relations with other direct producers and ultimately from themselves. Joseph terms behavioural alienation as "peripheral" alienation and politico-economic alienation as "fundamental" alienation.

The praxis of alienation may therefore be defined as the confluence of forces and factors both within an organization as well as in the socioeconomic formation within which the organization is located which contribute to the fundamental as well as the peripheral alienation of man-the-worker even as he seeks to transform the immediate as well as the wider reality.

The praxis of alienation has two conceptually distinguishable elements – the macropraxis of alienation and the micropraxis of alienation. The macropraxis of alienation includes the socioeconomic formation in a given context and the concomitant industrial relations processes within which trade unions as well as managements live, move and have their being.

The micropraxis of alienation also has two conceptually distinct dimensions – the manner in which work itself is organized to fulfil organizational goals and the modalities of the experience of alienation of the direct producers.

The praxis of disalienation may be defined as the complex of structures, processes, relations, strategies and tactics employed by direct producers in their relentless thrust towards the continuous transformation of organizational and socioeconomic structures and processes in the direction of greater humanization. The alienation of the direct producers impels them to participate in democractic institutions and processes – right to livelihood, right to associate, right to be recognized, right to represent, right to strike and right to self-determination. Participation in trade unionism and recourse to direct, legislative and legal action activates the praxis of disalienation of the direct producers.

The brief overview of conceptual approaches shows that it is possible to identify three major paradigms in industrial relations choicemaking processess – the positional reactive approach, the strategic approach and the strategic humanist approach. Table 2 presents the elements which constitute the three paradigms.

Table 2 Elements of Paradigms in Industrial Relations Choice Making			
APPROACHES	ENDS	MEANS	VALUES
The Positional Reactive Approach	Control oriented Divide and Rule Policy	* Positional Reactivism * Unilateralism * Adhocism * Opportunism * Expediency oriented Pragmatism * Gamesmanship * Oneupmanship * Brinkmanship	* Manipulation * Short Term Orientation * Exploitation Orientation * Direct Producers viewed as objects * Collective organization and action viewed as subversive
Strategic Orientation	* Profit * Sales * Productivity * Quality * Cost Effectiveness * Modernization * Turnaround * Mergers * Diversifiction * Closure	* Strategic Phase Orientation * Management Dominant Pluralism * Substantive Demarcation * HRM orientation * Strategy on collective organization and action	* Long Term Orientation * Situational Variance * Strategic Interest Dominant * Direct Producers viewed as commodity and input cost * Direct Producers and Collective organizations subordinate to strategic interests
Strategic Humanist Orientation	Strategic Commitment Oriented Humanization	* Recognition of Procedural as well as substantive contradictions * Principled proactivism * Mutuality orientation * Learning orientation	* Strategic Working Relations * Concern for interests of Direct Producers * Direct producers viewed as subjects capable of contributing * Collective organization as collective voice

It is evident from the analysis of various conceptual approaches to the management of industrial relations that two paradigms dominate literature related to the subject – the positional reactive approach and the strategic approach. However, piecing together several studies from the perspective of the direct producers, it is possible to piece together a third paradigm -- the strategic humanist paradigm. While the positional reactive approach operates on the maxim that the end justifies the means which in turn subscribes to certain values, the strategic approach revolves around the notion that both means and values should be subordinate to the strategic ends of the enterprise. The strategic humanist approach, however, views the ends-means-values dialectic from the perspective of principled mutuality.
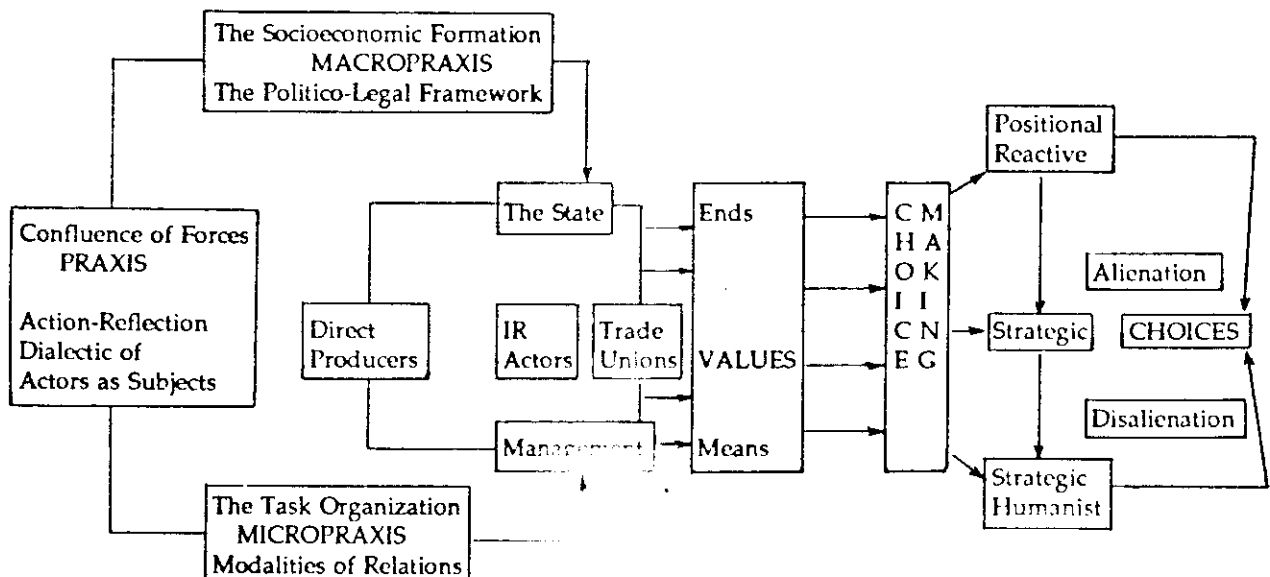
4.   Conceptual Framework for Industrial Relations Choicemaking

It has been found necessary to try and develop a framework to be able to conceptualize the strategic humanist approach in order to distinguish the newly discernible approach from the strategic as well as the positional reactive approaches. The need for such a framework arises from the following considerations:

* the need to view direct producers as alienated striving through collective action towards disalienation.
* the need to recognize direct producers as subjects and not as mere objects as implied in the positional reactive or strategic approaches.
* the need to recognize the sensitivity of industrial relations choicemaking to a changing and dynamic environment.

The major industrial relations actors are involved in dynamic interaction to make choices within the ends-means-values framework. The choices made in this dynamic interaction may flow from the positional reactive approach, strategic approach or the strategic humanist approach. The choices made and the underlying paradigms are determined by praxis understood as the confluence of forces in which the direct producers as subjects are involved with a view to transforming concrete realities through action and reflection. Praxis may be conceptualized as the macropraxis which is the socio-economic formation as well as the politico-legal framework within which industrial relations choices are made. There is also the reality of the micropraxis of such choices which comprises the task organization as well as the modalities of relations at the strategic, functional and operational levels. The entire process of dynamic interaction results in paradigm shifts from alienation to disalienation as union-management structures, processes and relations shift from the positional reactive through the strategic towards the strategic humanist approach (Table 3).

Table 3
Conceptual Framework for Industrial Relations Choice Making

5.   The Contextual Framework of the Study

5.1   *The Indian Socioeconomic Formation*

An attempt can now be made to study trends and patterns in industrial relations choicemaking in the Indian context utilizing the conceptual framework. Table 4 gives some idea about the Indian socioeconomic formation which constitutes the macropraxis of industrial relations choicemaking.

Table 4 The Indian Socio Economic Formation (P13)		
Ideology	Theocratism Marketization Socialism	
Ethnicity	Region Religion Caste Linguistic Affiliation	
Mixed Economy	Private Sector State Sector Joint Sector	
Property Relations	Sole Proprietorship Partnership Private Limited Public Limited State owned Joint Sector Cooperative Sector Multinational Corporations	
Political System	Rightist Parties / Centrist Parties / Left Parties Regional parties within the framework of Parliamentary Democracy	

* The Indian socioeconomic formation is characterized by ideological pluralism in which liberal right as well as radical left ideologies coexist. Marxist ideology itself is pluralist in the sense that there are several strands of Marxist viewpoints in debate and dialogue with each other. There has also been a resurgence of a theocratic ideology which is seeking political expression in order to capture political power.

* There is also the reality of ethnic plurality. Ethnic identities revolving around caste, tribe, religion and language are inextricable realities in any attempt to characterize the Indian socio-economic formation. There is also the awakening of ethnicity in which identification with the immediate ethnic grouping appears to take precedence over identification with a nationalist feeling.

* Ideological and ethnic pluralism has resulted in political pluralism in which different ideological and ethnic entities seek expression in the democratic process through the mechanism of political parties and through involvement in parliamentary democratic processes.

* The influence of both capitalist as well as socialist ideologies and experiences,which was available to the Constitution Makers as well as to successive regimes, has had its impact on the design of the Indian socioeconomic formation. If capitalist society is viewed as the thesis and socialist society as antithesis, then the synthesis that is the Indian socioeconomic formation resulted in the "Mixed Economy" model. Several forms of property relations have co-existed as well as competed with each other in the Mixed Economy System in India. Different forms of ownership have been experimented with —sole proprietorship, partnerships, private limited ownership, joint stock ownership, state ownership, cooperatives, joint sector ownership, state and private promoters and multinationals.

* If there is an underlying thread of consensus running through ideological, ethnic, political and economic plurality, it is the commitment to the freedoms enshrined in the fundamental rights clauses of the Constitution. Political parties of various ideological strands, ethnic interest groups, trade unions, employers' and trade associations, have demonstrated this commitment although conflict of interests between different contradictory constituents has

led to the infringement or curtailment of freedom at certain moments in the evolution of the Indian socioeconomic formation.

The 80's have also witnessed a process of restructuring of the socioeconomic formation through changes in the economic, industrial trade policies in order to make industry more competitive in both internal as well as international markets. Deregulation of Indian industry has gone hand in hand with the opening up of the Indian markets to foreign investment.

5.2   *The Politico-legal Framework of Industrial Relations*

Table 5 presents an analysis of the procedural rights of employers and employees in the Indian context. An attempt has also been made to profile the employer-employee relationship given the rights conferred in the Trade Unions Act (1926), The Industrial Disputes Act (1947) and the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act (1946).

The 80's and the 90's have witnessed some changes in the profile of employer and employee rights. The role of the state (the legislature, the executive and the judiciary) has been changing slowly but surely from an interventionist to a non-interventionist mode relative to what was in prevalence in the 60'sand the 70's. This has largely left labour and management to fend for themselves through the collective bargaining mechanisms. The gradual change in the role of the agencies of the state which is likely to be more visible in the 90's has resulted in increase in labour layoffs, retrenchments, closures while there has been stagnation on the employment generation front in the organized sector. While there has been a decline in strike activity at the industry level, there has been a spurt in litigative action to redress grievances. But with the liberalization of the exit policy, even legal redressal is likely to become unavailable to labour in the 90's.

6.   Empirical Evidence - The Enterprise Level

Table 6 presents an analysis of the five cases in terms of how the Role Relations of the four major industrial relations actors change and how their Relational Phase patterns evolve. The Role Relations evolution and the Relational Phase patterns were also categorized in terms of the paradigms as conceptualized in earlier sections (Table 7). The role and relational phase patterns as the dynamic interaction among the industrial relations actors evolves from the positional reactive through the strategic to the strategic humanist approach shown in Table 8.

6.1   *State Role Patterns*

Since Indian industrial relations has been dominated by the state and determined by its policies, legislations, executive orders and judicial pronouncements, it is instructive to observe that from the five case studies at the enterprise level the following role patterns are discernible:

*   Non-interventionism: In the initial stages, since there is little manifest conflict between labour and management, the state and its agencies adopt a non interventionist role.

*   In the second phase, there is on the one hand a legislative-executive protective interventionism, and on the other, a kind of judicial activism. The former takes the form of legislation or executive orders or even interventions by the labour department or labour ministry to prevent or to resolve disputes. Judicial activism takes the form of progressive interventionism in scrutinizing the decisions taken by management or by the unions.

*   The state role does sometimes become one of bureaucratic interventionism

where all decisions have to be referred to the government. Inordinate delays as well as loss of ability to resolve the problem characterize this phase. The cases show that the state also plays the role of strident interventionism through midnight ordinances banning strike action or through abrogation of worker rights or managerial discretion through amendments to existing legislation.

Table 5		
Politico-Legal Framework of Industrial Relations: Profile of Employer Employee Relationships		
Profile of Employer Rights	Profile of Employee Rights	Profile of Employer Employee Relationships
1. Employers have the right to own and to control work organizations, structures and processes. 2. Employers have the right to hire employers. 3. Employers have the right to frame the terms of the employer employee contracts. 4. Employers have the right to define discipline and to enforce discipline at the workplace. 5. Employers have the right to layoff, to retrench and to dismiss employees. 6. Employers have the right to lockout employees. 7. Employers have the right to close down operations. 8. Employers have the right to form trade unions. 9. Employers have the right to activate the disputes resolution machinery.	1. Employment is not guaranteed by the constitution as a fundamental right nor is there any provision for unemployment security benefits. 2. Those employed have the right to form and register trade unions to protect and promote immediate as well as long term interests of employees but in most states there is no statute to compel recognition of unions by employers. 3. Employees have the right to strike but the right has been curbed to such an extent that it is virtually impossible to go on a legal strike, especially in a public utility service. 4. Employees have the right to activate the machinery for resolving disputes and find growing protection in adjudication in spite of the cost and time involved in the process. 5. Employees have the right to defend themselves in disciplinary proceedings and find growing protection in the intervention of the judiciary in such proceedings. 6. Employees have the right to layoff and retrenchment compensation only and no guarantee of life time employment.	1. The employer-employee relationship is a contractual relationship with the power to employ according to employer's terms. 2. The employer-employee relationship is a struggle for power to gain control over work processes at the point of the workplace with regulation and institutionalization being important elements. 3. The employer-employee relationship is ridden with structural contradictions given the modalities of property reltions of the Indian Socioeconomic formation. 4. The employer employee relationship is conditioned by legislative enactments and by the executive authority of the state. 5. The employer-employee relationship is conditioned by judicial interpretations and pronouncements given the framework and character of the Inian socioeconomic formation.

* The state is also capable of strategic interventionism where, taking a long term point of view, steps are taken to strike at the roots of industrial relation problems with a view to protecting and promoting the strategic interests

enterprises This may entail withdrawal of patronage, appeals to the players, additional financial allocation, using the media and so on. It has also been observed in the five cases that the state may take on the role of strategic normative orientation wherein the state merely lays down or facilitates the evolution of norms and standards which helps in not only preserving the interests of the enterprise but also protects the interests of other stakeholders like labour, consumers or the public.

Table 6
Empirical Analysis - The Five Enterprise Cases

		VL	PRTC	JMEL	SAIL	KTL
The Positional Reactive Approach	1.	1.1/1.2/1.3*	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4	1.1/1.2/1.3	1.1/1.2/1.3/1.4
	2.	2.1/2.2/2.3/2.4	2.1/2.3	2.1/2.2/2.3/2.4	2.1/2.4	2.1/2.2/2.3/2.4
	3.	3.1/3.2/3.3/3.4	3.1/3.2/3.3/3.4	3.1/3.2/3.4	3.1/3.3/3.4	3.1/3.2/3.4
	4.	4.1/4.2/4.3	4.1/4.2/4.3/4.4	4.1/4.2/4.3/4.4	4.1/4.4	4.1/4.2/4.3/4.4
	5.	5.1/5.2/5.3	5.1/5.2/5.3	5.1/5.2/5.3	5.1/5.2/5.3	
The Strategic Approach	1.		1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5
	2.	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5	2.5
	3.	3.5			3.5	
	4.	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5	4.5
	5.	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4	5.4
The Strategic Humanist Approach	1.		1.6	1.6	1.6	1.6
	2.			2.6	2.6	2.6
	3.	3.6			3.6	
	4.	4.6	4.6/4.7	4.6/4.7	4.6/4.7	4.6/4.7
	5.		5.5/5.6	5.5/5.6	5.5/5.6	5.5/5.6

* See Table 8 for decoding

Table 7
Analysis of Distribution of Role and Relational Phase Patterns by Underlying Paradigms

	State Role Patterns	Management Role Patterns	Trade Union Role Patterns	Direct Producers Role Patterns	Relational Phase Patterns
The Positional Reactive Approach	1.1 1.2 * 1.3 1.4	2.1 2.2 2.3 2.4	3.1 3.2 3.3 3.4	4.1 4.2 4.3 4.4	5.1 5.2 5.3
The Strategic Approach	1.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	5.4 5.5
The Strategic Humanist Approach	1.6	2.6	3.6	4.6	5.6

* See Table 8 for decoding

Table 8

Elements of Paradigms in Industrial Relations Choice Behaviour

	1.1	1.2	1.3	1.4	1.5	1.6	
1. State Role Patterns	Non interventionism Protective Interventionism/ Judicial Activism	Legislative-Executive Interventionism	1.3 Bureaucratic Interventionism	1.4 Strident Interventionism	1.5 Strategic Interventionism	1.6 Strategic Normative Interventionism	
2. Management Role Patterns	2.1 Unquestioned Unilateralism	2.2 Eroding Unilateralism/ Collusive Unilateralism	2.3 Grudging Bilateralism	2.4 Militant Bilateralism	2.5 Pluralist Bilateralism	2.6 Democratic Bilateralism	
3. Trade Union Role Patterns	3.1 Mobilization	3.2 Militant Entrenchment	3.3 Positional Entrenchment	3.4 Symbolic Struggles	3.5 Concessionary Posturing	3.6 Normative Bilateralism	
4. Direct Producers Role Patterns	4.1 Euphoric Buoyancy	4.2 Progressive Disaffection	4.3 Paralyzing Helplessness	4.4 Lateral Aggression	4.5 Vertical Pressure	4.6 Strategic Self Interest Orientation	4.7 Strategic Collective Interest Orientation
5. Relational Phase Patterns	5.1 Honeymoon Phase	5.2 Confrontative Direct Action Phase	5.3 Symbolic-Litigative Action Phase	5.4 Grudging Bilateral Phase	5.5 Pluralist Bilateral Phase	5.6 Strategic Humanist Phase	

6.2   *Management Role Patterns*

The analysis of the five cases shows that management role patterns take several forms:

*   The first form is that of unquestioned unilateralism, in which management has a clear field over both the substantive as well as the procedural aspects of industrial relations. This is usually during the entry phase of an enterprise and may continue if the enterprise remains non-unionized.

*   The second form is that of eroding unilateralism due to state regulation, judicial intervention as well as the organized action of labour. Management's dual response is that of autocratic and/or feudal paternalistic unilateralism. Autocratic unilateralism uses a complex of strategies and tactics to prevent, divide or break organized labour. Feudal paternalistic unilateralism uses positive, as well as negative instruments, to incorporate organized labour through a strategy of placation and domestication. The latter form, if successful, results in collusive unilateralism.

*   The third form is that of grudging bilateralism, as a result of the pressures from organized labour on policy making bodies and managements. The policy in this form is to develop an equation with an amenable union or group of unions on day to day issues. On long term issues, all significant unions are involved within the framework of limited collective bargaining.

*   The fourth variant is that of militant bilateralism, in which managements try to regain lost ground by matching union charters with their own charters for increasing productivity, enhancing efficiency, upgrading technology and reducing employee costs. Militant managerialism has been made possible by the exercise of managerial rights, such as the right to retrench, right to lockout, right to close down operations and rights related to disciplinary and disputes procedures.

*   The fifth variant discernible in empirical realities is that of pluralist bilateralism. In this stage, management and labour are encouraged to resort to collective bargaining to settle differences. Collective bargaining, in pluralist bilateralism, is confined to interest related issues such as wages and allowances. Rights issues are handled under disputes procedures, like grievance machanisms, conciliation and adjudication.

*   There is a sixth variant as is evident from the JMEL and KTL cases — that of democratic bilateralism. In this variant management seeks a principled approach to other stakeholders in industrial relations choicemaking by respecting democratic rights, by sharing authentic information, by adopting a learning orientation as well as a stance which can best be characterized as one of constructive detachment.

6.3   *Trade Union Role Patterns*

Empirical evidence drawn from the cases points to the following six variants in Trade Union Role Patterns:

*   The first variant is that of a mobilizing role. This happens at the entry phase or when there is a change of ownership or management or when there is a change in the political scenario in the larger environment.

*   Once unions gain entry, if there is resistance to the union or its leadership, a strategy of militant entrenchment may be adopted. This could involve the use of strikes, intimidatory methods as well as pressure tactics.

*   Unions could also get into a stance of positional entrenchment. In this mode, on substantive as well as procedural i: ues, unions take positions and dig into

them resulting in deadlocks as well as a certain operational paralysis.

* Continuous use of strikes, lockouts and other instruments of coercion leads to fatigue. Union Role patterns shift to a litigative mode combined with symbolic struggles using fasts, demonstrations, and so on.
* Given the choice between company closure and wage freeze or workforce reduction, unions tend to accept the latter. The Concessionary Posturing Role Pattern is a phase in which unions are willing to choose the lesser of two evils.
* The JMEL and the Voltas case especially shows that unions do shift into a Role Pattern which can best be termed as that of Normative Bilateralism where the focus is not on making minor gains here and there but more to lay down sound principles related to bilateral issues like quality, productivity, incentives, technology upgradation, job security, job replacement, profit sharing.

6.4 *Direct Producers' Role Patterns*

Direct Producers also go through various role patterns.

* At the entry phase or when significant changes take place (change of ownership or management or any new strategic initiative) there is euphoric buoyancy due to enhanced expectations combined wth spontaneous enthusiasm on the job.
* As management and union strategies change, there is Progressive disaffection tending towards Paralyzing helplessness. Peripheral alienation intensifies.
* A phenomenon which can best be termed as 'lateral aggression' is discernible where hostility towards colleagues, immediate supervisors, rival union members and leaders is in evidence. At the same time through rank and file action (wildcat strikes and protests), vertical pressure is brought to bear on the union leadership as well as on frontline supervisors.
* Evidence from all the cases shows that workers do develop a strategic orientation initially predominantly alloyed with self-interest but ultimately tending towards collective interest. The JMEL and KTL cases are examples of how management, union and the direct producers develop a well orchestrated strategic collective interest orientation on substative as well as procedural industrial relations choicemaking.

6.5 *Relational Phase Patterns*

As each of the four actors in industrial relations choicemaking evolve role patterns in dynamic interaction, the cases show that the interaction itself goes through Relational Phase Patterns at the enterprise level. The six phases which are discernible are:

* The Honeymoon Phase
* The Confrontative Direct Action Phase
* The Symbolic-Litigative Phase
* The Grudging Bilateral Phase
* The Pluralist Bilateral Phase
* The Strategic Humanist Phase

7. Paradigm and Role/Relational Phase Patterns "Fit"

An analysis was also carried out to see the correspondence between the characteristics of the Role/Relational Phase Patterns of the IR actors with the elements of the industrial relations choicemaking paradigms. Table 9 shows the variations in the role patterns of

Table .
Paradigms and Role/Relational Phase Patterns Fit

	State Role Patterns	Management Role Patterns	Trade Union Role Patterns	Direct Producers Role Patterns	Relational Phase Patterns
• Positional Reactive Approach	• Non Interventionism • Legislative-Executive Protective Interventionism • Judicial Activism • Bureaucratic Interventionism • Strident Interventionism	• Unquestioned Unilateralism • Eroding Unilateralism/Collusive Unilateralism • Grudging Bilateralism • Militant Bilateralism	• Mobilization • Militant Entrenchment • Positional Entrenchment • Symbolic Struggles	• Euphoric Buoyancy • Progressive Disaffection • Paralyzing Helplessness • Lateral Aggression	• Honeymoon Phase • Confrontative Direct Action • Symbolic-Litigative Action Phase • Grudging Bilateral Phase
• Strategic Approach	• Strategic Interventionism	• Pluralist Bilateralism	• Concessionary Posturing	• Vertical Pressure	• Pluralist Bilateral Phase
• Strategic Humanist Phase	• Strategic Normative Interventionism	• Democratic Bilateralism	• Normative Bilateralism	• Strategic Self/Collective Interest	• Strategic Humanist Phase Orientation

Table 10

Elements of Paradigms in a specific industrial relations choicemaking -- The Case of union recognition in a multiple union situation

Union Recognition Policy Elements	Positional Reactive Paradigm	Strategic Paradigm	Strategic Humanist
• Trade union structure	No union	Single or Multiple	Multiple or Single
• Trade union policy	Ignore/Fight unions Promote Company unions	Informal/Formal recognition of unions	Recognition of Representative unions
• Trade union relations policy	Divide and Rule/Adhoc firefighting/ Promoting collusive relations	Pluralist Tolerant/ Pluralist Militant	Principled and Constructive Relations
• Choice of Basis for Union Recognition	Adhoc Basis	Situational	Voluntary Tripartite/ Bipartite/Statutory
• Choice of Method of Union Recognition	Verification of Membership	Check off	Secret Ballot
• System for Dealing with Unions	Adhoc, opportunistic, expediency oriented unilateralism	Collective Bargaining - Limited scope	Composite Bargaining Agent with proportionate representation

the four major actors in industrial relations choicemaking when viewed within the framework of the three paradigms.

8.   Use of Paradigms in analysing a specific industrial relations choice — the case of union recognition in a multiple union situation

Table 10 shows the variations in the position taken on the question of union recognition in a multiple union situation depending on the paradigm from which the decision emanates. Not all the elements of the three paradigms may be in evidence in any single choicemaking process but the value orientations which distinguish one paradigm from another are discernible in the analysis presented in Table 10 based on the experiences of two enterprises.

Trade union structure in the analysis refers to whether the enterprise is a no union, single union or a multiple union situation. Multiple unionism in the Indian situation may be due to variation in political affiliation or due to organization along craft or industry lines. What is significant in the context of paradigmatic analysis is that in the positional reactive approach, the primary concern would be to try and manage without a union or at least to ignore unions, in the strategic approach the focus would be to subordinate this issue to strategic ends while in the strategic humanist approach the orientation is towards taking a principled stand and to develop a principled relationship with unions. In the strategic humanist approach, even in a non union situation, there is concern for the need for voice for direct producers which is the paramount consideration behind collective organization and action.

9.   Conclusions and Implications

This study has helped in arriving at the following conclusions:

*   For long, studies in industrial relations in the Indian context have been carried out from the "systems" or "control" paradigm. The conceptual framework as well as the empirical evidence in this study points towards the existence of three clearly distinguishable paradigms in industrial relations choicemaking — the positional reactive, the strategic and the strategic humanist approaches.

*   This study also shows that paradigm shifts take place because of the dynamic interaction of all the four actors in the industrial relations choice-making. The Role patterns of each of the actors and the evolution of the role patterns determine the relational phase patterns of the industrial relations actors. In this perspective, the strategic humanist paradigm, for instance, is determined by roles and responses of all four actors in an incremental process (Quinn 1980).

*   Yet another important finding is that dramatic paradigm shifts could take place around a major event or a crisis at the macro or micro level. It is through relational catharsis that role patterns change and the relational phase pattern shifts.

*   The profiling of the paradigms in operation behind the drama of industrial relations choicemaking have implications for research as well as training and development.

*   Research studies could focus on the analysis of the relationship between paradigms and organizational performance parameters and the effect of paradigms on the structures, strategies, processes and relations of the actors in industrial relations choicemaking.

*   The author has also experimented with the paradigm approach to industrial

relations course design, formulation of learning objectives, devising of learning pedagogies and the evaluation of learning outcomes. The impact on the learners has been substantial as evident from a study which is currently in progress.

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