

Global Union Federations & Changing Landscape of Labor Relations in India

Santanu Sarkar

With the advent of globalization as the product market in India has been dwelled by foreign MNCs, so has the labor movement with the global union federations (GUFs), if not equally. Today, these federations are forming an integral part of the labor movement in India, especially in industry sectors which have witnessed the rising presence of foreign MNCs after the '90s liberalization. However, less is known about what these GUFs have been doing in India and how they have shaped the changing labor movement in the country. In this paper, we tried to build the narrative of GUFs' activities and campaigns in India, their nuances and particularly how they organize and campaign differently in a country where the labor movement has a long history of a certain form of organizing and campaigning.

Santanu Sarkar is a Professor of HRM & Labor Relations, at Xavier School of Management, Jamshedpur, India 831001. E-mail: ssarkar@xlri.ac.in

Introduction

“Capital went global; trade went global; finance went global. It's impossible for unions to stay local or regional... ‘Workers of the world, unite!’ isn't ideological anymore. It's practical”

~ Andy Stern, SEIU President (2009)

Globalization has touched the base on all spheres of the economy from product market and business to developmental spaces and aids and finally the labor movement. As multinational corporations (MNCs) expanded their presence in the Global South, international non-governmental organizations (I-NGOs) progressively extended their activities and programs to this part of the world and then arrived the actors of labor transnationalism—the Global Union Federations (GUFs). The growing internationalization of capital in the current global political economy has spurred the emergence of what contemporary literature in the global era has referred to as labor internationalism, labor transnationalism,

transnational or cross-border solidarity/collaboration, cross-border alliances, global unionism, and multiple variations thereon (Levesque & Murray, 2010: 222). Today, the pathway to a truly global labor movement is littered with calls for trade union internationalism. Phillip Jennings, the then General Secretary of Union Network International (UNI, a GUF) noted that “global offshoring is a reality. We need Global Union Alliances to ensure that workers’ rights are respected at home as well as other destinations” (2010). Around the same time, Richard Trumka of AFL-CIO highlighted the need for unions with the “ability to confront corporate power wherever it rears its head, whether it is a call center in Bangalore, a shoe factory in Vietnam, or a coal mine in Columbia”. While there is agreement amongst labor leaders that labor must go global the way capital has grown globally, there is less consensus on how best this can be achieved, especially in the Global South.

GUFs, the sectorial organization of international unionism (Helfen & Fichter, 2013) consists of one pathway to labor internationalism. These federations seek to bring trade unions in the same industry together, protect existing union rights and build new union rights in countries where they operate through the process of collective bargaining. GUFs are different in size and they operate in specific industrial sectors/occupations and function differently with varying priority areas and goals such as clearing houses, political influence, training institutions, ‘flotilla’ and networks. In total, there are eight GUFs active in over 27

industrial sectors. The sectors covered range from building and construction with Building and Wood Workers’ International (BWI) as the GUF in the sector, to education where Education International (EI) represents teachers, to food, agriculture, beverage, hotel, and catering sectors where the IUF is active. They have functions that are necessarily different from traditional labor unions.

GUFs expanding their cadre base in the Global South through local affiliates from the host country is a phenomenon that needs no special introduction (Sarkar & Kuruville, 2020; Brookes, 2013; Brookes & McCallum, 2017). However, these federations’ response to globalization in tandem with the transformation of union strategies whilst working with low-waged labor from the Global South makes an interesting case for analysis. Especially, when the nation-state from the Global South that we denote viz., India is known historically for its pro-labor economic and social policies and does not fit conveniently into the kind of ‘repressive state’ that Keck and Sikkink (1998) referred to in elaborating the boomerang effect (Agarwala, 2012: 444) even today when labor flexibility has been achieved through different measures including labor and labor law reforms in the country (Balasubramanian et al., 2023; Sarkar, 2019, 2021).

So, in this paper, we are trying to build a narrative of the GUFs’ activities and campaigns in India, a country from the Global South where the ‘90s economic liberalization has impeded unionization and led to a steep decline in union den-

sity across old and new economy sectors. At the same time, globalization and trade liberalization have given rise to the increasing presence of foreign MNCs over the next two decades in India. This brought an unprecedented change in the industrial relations in the country (Sarkar & Chakraborty, 2021). For instance, protecting labor standards, a chief responsibility of the state in the pre-liberalization era has gradually been shaped as a task for labor unions and MNCs driven by their corporate governance and affirmed code of conduct. So, how the role of GUFs gained importance amid this change is what we are trying to comprehend in this paper by drawing information from both primary and secondary sources on GUF activities and campaigns in India over the past decades.

What are the Global Union Federations?

International Trade Secretariats (ITSSs) or Global Union Federations (GUFs) as they were renamed in 2002 are the international federations of trade unions from over one hundred and twenty countries affiliated with them and representative of workers working in clearly defined industries and occupations with specific characteristics, structure, and problems. GUFs bring together the national trade unions on an international level and engage the common employer internationally (Bendt, 1996: 9). Based on their composition and rallying point, Croucher and Cotton (2009) have grouped GUFs into three broad categories as (a) those with members operating in the private sector and having in-

dustrial and bargaining focus, (b) those with members operating in the private sector but with less bargaining focus and unstable membership base and (c) the ones with public sector unions which relate mainly to international governmental organizations and national governments with the solid membership base. Most GUFs are driven by specific industry types, and because of this most of the time, concerned with comparable industrial problems they act within the same international labor market and at times face the same MNCs, to answer to the problems posed by the internationalization of trade (cartels, monopolies, intensification of competition in some sectors with resulting decrease in wages, etc) (Dale, 1967: 101; Gumbrell-McCormick, 2000: 32).

The internationalization of local labor disputes remained one of GUFs' strong points.

Being independent and democratic, GUFs are often treated as the most effective channels of unions to acquire wide-reaching support in disputes between MNCs and local trade unions or groups of workers working in a specific country where the GUF and MNC operate. The internationalization of local labor disputes remained one of GUFs' strong points. The GUFs are reasonably experimental in their approach. Being the vanguard of cross-border campaigns, they have acquired a greater understanding of diverse local issues through their direct engagement with MNCs and workers. In most cases, their direct en-

gements with both the company and labor in dispute have benefited them in understanding ground reality and accessibility to country-specific information. GUF's relation with MNCs internationally blended with affiliates' contact and understanding with local operations of the MNCs generate a true countervailing force to global capital. That is why close to 90 percent of their work directly affects local workers on the shop floor (Lewis, 2003).

Global Union Federations – Brief History & Broader Roles

Mostly formed between the late 19th and the first quarter of the 20th century except for the UNI and IndustriALL, these federations of worker members from specific industry sectors are doing on the international level what their affiliates were doing on the national level (Dale, 1967: 102). However, they ran into limits in their approaches of focusing on and regulating MNCs from specific industry sectors (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2000). Accordingly, the space created by their limitations was filled by ICFTU (now known as the International Trade Union Confederation/ITUC). But, over some time, it was equally discomfiting for ICFTU to drive it alone. Therefore, after years of working in silos with a fair degree of overlap between them, GUFs and ICFTU resolved the issue of dividing their thrust areas.

Today, the GUFs steered by specific industry characteristics, structure and problems are different in their positioning from large international federations

such as ITUC, World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), Trade Union Advisory Committee (TUAC), or World Confederation of Labor (WCL). As GUFs were unswervingly challenged by problems in the industry sectors they represent, matters concerning relations between MNCs and unions became the concern of GUFs, whereas the relations between these MNCs and governments or inter-governmental agencies remain the responsibility of ITUC (Gumbrell-McCormick, 2000: 36). Today, GUF deals with specific MNCs in a given sector, whereas ITUC deals with federations of employers who are known to be more traditionalists than MNCs. GUF focuses on well-defined areas of work and concentrates on workplace issues like working conditions, wages, health, and safety. They organize around industrial areas led by real actions such as strikes, campaigns, protests, boycotts, and demonstrations. Whereas the ITUC concentrates on broad issues of universal labor rights and their activities are in the political area.

The increasing emphasis on institutionalization led to Global Framework Agreements (GFAs) which most GUFs have preferred over regional contract negotiations.

The GUFs use practically similar mechanisms and procedures though each of them has developed specific means of its own, which makes the implementation reasonably different. These include engaging MNCs by having framework agreements or organizing the workers on

the shop floor for better wages and working conditions. The increasing emphasis on institutionalization led to Global Framework Agreements (GFAs) which most GUFs have preferred over regional contract negotiations. It opened a window of opportunities for GUF to defend its global quality by having a unified dictum vis-à-vis local adaptability by exerting influence on national labor conflicts in subsidiaries. GFAs evolved as one of the important strategic tools that GUFs devised to push for self-regulation and to gain recognition from MNCs as legitimate negotiating counterparts (Helfen & Fichter, 2013). Five out of 10 GUFs have signed more than 20 GFAs each. Over 90% of all GFAs were signed by five GUFs (viz., IUF, IMF, ICEM, BWI, and UNI). All five interestingly operate in private sectors and have industrial and bargaining focus. Nevertheless, not all GUFs adopted GFAs as a strategic priority to engage with MNCs (Stewis & Boswell, 2007) since GFAs entail a multi-level intervention for successful implementation (Helfen & Fichter, 2013).

There are other 'choices' made, specifically by ITGLWF (which is now a part of IndustriALL), EI and PSI, since GFA does not fit in the conditions/sectors in which the ITGLWF, EI and PSI aim to regulate labor rights. Although strategies such as lobbying and advocacy have their innate restrictions (Anner, 2011; Fichter, Helfen & Sydow, 2011), yet, keeping in view their operation in sectors where inter-governmental/supra-national bodies play crucial roles, EI and PSI in particular were found to have chosen lobbying and advocacy instead of other strategies

such as GFA. Few GUFs such as IUF have taken the bottom-up approach also. They engaged workers through shop-floor campaigns.

Respecting their activities, it is a mistake to assume that GUFs are involved only in solving hostile clashes through global campaigns against MNCs. They do maintain "day-to-day relations with MNCs, where most of the work involves discussions and negotiations with companies" (ICFTU, 2004: 47). Campaigning is one of many activities in which they directly fight MNCs. Therefore, given their day-to-day activities, GUFs have many things in common, still to confront MNCs they do not necessarily follow a similar path. Transnational labor relations driven by GUFs, which are still in an embryonic stage (Helfen & Fichter, 2013) have witnessed several strategic choices made by global unions in the past. Fairbrother and Hammer (2005) or recently Helfen and Fichter (2013) in their work, however, have argued that GUF strategies, in the last half a century, have progressed to more efficient ones (e.g., codes followed by a 'social clause' campaign to works council and finally replaced by GFA, which is often seen as an alternative to previous strategies). Conversely, Anner et al. (2011) in comparing forms of labor internationalism have shown that GUFs in different sectors have contemporaneously engaged in diverse strategic activities to reassert control over labor markets.

According to Bendt (1996: 29-38), the GUF's efforts are directed at "(a) protecting and supporting labor, (b) strength-

ening affiliated unions, (c) exchanging information, experience, studies and publications, and (d) coordinating international negotiations and lobbying". These methods largely descend from three broad functions of GUFs as proposed by Croucher and Cotton (2009: 8), namely creating space for affiliate unions, defending the existing space in which the affiliate unions operate, and helping affiliate unions to exploit these spaces. While activities like international solidarity actions, direct international protests and condemnations, boycotts, lobbying, international negotiations, etc., hinge on the global scale of GUF's operation, the education and training, legal assistance, strengthening affiliated unions, internationalization of local disputes, information exchange, etc., justify localization. GUFs aim at practical international solidarity with fellow workers in the same industry for example by refusing to supply labor to other countries in industrial disputes. GUFs' activities in detail are given in Table 1.

The GUFs' campaign strategies, if can be equated with any organization strategy, are a set of critical choices about the means and ends of the campaign. Choices are decisive since they play a significant role in the success or failure of the campaign, and because they account for important variations in the performance of the campaign. Except for UNI which has categorically adopted a business-style strategic planning process UNI's 'SCORE', other GUFs though have conceived and enacted different strategies, apparently have not embraced formal strategic planning. The GUFs

choose or plan these strategies in a context and hence, environmental variability is to be correctly recognized.

Global Union Federations in India

New methods of resisting the spread of industrial capitalism are emerging in ambitious, radical and original ways in India, many of which were led by GUFs in the present era. Despite the forked challenges posed by conservative nationalism in India (Sarkar, 2020) and a rising aversion to unions in core sectors as well (Sarkar, 2012; Sarkar & Huang, 2012), all eight GUFs have been involved in various activities and programs in the country based on their priorities and agendas set by their global, regional, or country offices. This new trade unionism in India is propelled by individuals' battle to protect their human dignity (Sarkar, 2007). International Union of Food, Agriculture, Hotel, Restaurant, Catering, Tobacco, and Allied Workers Associations (IUF), Service Sector employees, UNI and the Global Union of Metal, Mining, Energy, and Manufacturing Industry sectors, viz., the IndustriALL are those GUFs which have been active for over two decades with their affiliates in India. In addition, there are other GUFs that have made their presence felt to employers and workers in India through organizing and campaigning. These are Building and Wood Workers' International (BWI) consisting of free and democratic unions

This new trade unionism in India is propelled by individuals' battle to protect their human dignity.

with members in the Building, Building Materials, Wood, Forestry and Allied sectors, Public Service International (PSI) offering an international voice for public services and the workers and unions which deliver them, and transport workers' International Transport Federation (ITF). Several of them have independent trade unions over politically affiliated unions as their affiliates with the rising independent labor movement in India since the '90s (Sarkar, 2008a).

Important activities of these GUFs are organizing workers in industry sectors, building affiliate power, campaigning, and undertaking activities related to the implementation of GFAs in Indian subsidiaries of the MNCs which have signed GFAs with these GUFs. While there are signs of an impending rise of global unions' engaging foreign MNCs in India, especially with the rise of FDI in sectors which were traditionally part of a protected economy in the pre-liberalization era like telecom, banking, and insurance and depleting labor costs in those sectors post-liberalization like manufacturing (Lai & Sarkar, 2017, 2011; Sarkar & Lai, 2009), GUFs partaking in the local articulation of their global campaigns in India has also gained momentum (e.g., global campaigns against Coca-Cola, Unilever, G4S, and Nestle).

GUFs' Activities in India

All eight GUFs have been active in trying to increase union organizing and membership in India. Most of them created administrative structures that provided more autonomy to act in India i.e.,

a minilateral rather than a multilateral governance approach which helped in creating a positive condition for their organizing and campaigning success. Most of them have had prominent global campaigns that were in the public eye and much admired by labor activists in India. They are active in multiple sectors, thus offering the opportunity to study the importance of variation in the national context on their success. Over the years, their affiliate strength in India has increased manifold indicating their success in organizing local workers in India across sectors and increasing union power at the local level.

All eight GUFs have been active in trying to increase union organizing and membership in India.

For example, formed in 2000 as a merger of four major global unions, the UNI is a global federation for service sector workers, which is organized along the functional lines, sustained by a large network of affiliates from 15 different service industries. UNI serves as a model for other GUFs by handling issues that cannot be necessarily managed on a national scale which is not an agenda of other GUFs such as ITF, IndustriALL and IUF. In doing so, UNI's strategy encompasses global organizing by forming sector-based global unions that protect the core labor standards internationally and negotiate GFAs, support and coordinate alliances and solidarity action. Even before establishing its country office in India, UNI's first engagement was in the country's ITeS sector where employees

had mixed feelings towards unionization in the early 2000s (Sarkar, 2008b) after the ITeS sector boomed with MNCs shifting their back-office operations to India and at the same time working to keep unions at bay in their back-office (Sarkar, 2009, 2014). Later, some of the significant campaigns of UNI in India that were a part of its global strategies include engaging the G4S India operations over almost a year-long country-wide campaign (Sarkar & Kuruvilla, 2020) and the 'Anti-FDI in retail' campaign to prevent the giant MNCs such as Walmart from entering India.

On the other hand, IUF's strategy is steered by a "pragmatic internationalism" used predominantly in emerging economies, where it concentrates on realistic tasks, and for it, IUF adopts a multi-layered strategic organizing policy that works towards increasing union membership in its sectors, and affiliates' recognition and effectiveness within MNCs (Garver et al., 2007). A militant among the eight, IUF has been organizing workers from the bottom in formal as well as informal sectors such as agriculture, plantation, and dairy. Their affiliates, a part of the company/factory have remained forthright in sectors in India where hostility and industrial violence have been dominating as a response to employers' repression (Sarkar, 2015). Some of their important campaigns in India were in the Indian facilities of Coca-Cola, Unilever, Nestle, Kraft, SABMiller, and GSK. Today, IUF has 25 affiliates in India. They have been engaging their country affiliates in wage negotiating, mostly the tricky plant-level bargaining with Indian

offices of MNCs (Sarkar & Singh, 2018). Likewise, ITF and BWI are steadfast in organizing particularly the contract workers and participants in the informal economy where unionization has otherwise been a deep challenge (Sarkar, 2023; Balasubramanian & Sarkar, 2017, 2020).

One GUF may be better than the other in organizing and campaigning in a specific context because of the factors that are closely related to GUF's origin in the given context.

One GUF may be better than the other in organizing and campaigning in a specific context because of the factors that are closely related to GUF's origin in the given context. For instance, IUF essentially hinged on drawn-out global campaigns as well as local movements and finally built the campaign partners as its affiliates in India whereas others like IndustriALL and UNI's affiliates in India are its natural allies. Indian affiliates of four global unions blended into the UNI-India Liaison Council in 2001 and similarly, the Indian affiliates of the three global unions, viz., International Metalworkers' Federation (IMF), International Federation of Chemical, Energy, Mine and General Workers' Unions (ICEM) and International Textiles Garment and Leather Workers' Federation (ITGLWF) blended into the IndustriALL South Asia office with the three global unions converging to form IndustriALL in 2012. Today, IndustriALL has 16 affiliates in India, and these are mostly sectorial and

industry-level federations over factory/company unions with BASF Indian Worker's Federation as an exception. On the other hand, UNI and IUF have mostly company-level unions as their affiliates. BWI and ITF in India also have large industry-level federations as their affiliates.

An Example

Given a time of not exceeding two decades, some of the interesting developments on the GUFs' campaign front include engaging the MNCs from the GUFs' core sector and overseeing the implementation of GFAs signed with MNCs from the sector. Below, we present how UNI tried localizing a global campaign against an MNC such as Walmart in India and tried to succeed in a country-specific anti-FDI campaign. As per the India Liaison Council of UNI (UNI-ILC), the GUF should take pride in having its Indian affiliates as the vanguards of a thoughtful campaign against FDI in retail, which central trade union organizations have not done in the past in the country.

In 2003, a seminar of national federations organized by the UNI-ILC in Mumbai got officials from the United Food and Commercial Workers International Union (UFCW). They were apprised of Walmart's groundwork to enter India. The government's mulling over the idea of allowing FDI in retail prodded UFCW. UFCW's idea was not to influence the Indian government to not allow FDI but to forewarn them of their decision's consequences. A short-lived government back in 1998 opened the

door for MNCs, allowing them to take the cash-and-carry route to the retail industry. Consequently, Walmart entered into an equal joint-venture agreement with an Indian corporation – Bharti and floated a wholesale business—Bharti-Walmart (BWM) in 2007 with its sourcing hub in Bangalore. The Liaison Council officials apprehended facing a mounting threat with the government making the door ajar and Walmart taking its giant foot inside by building a cash-and-carry hub that soon would turn into stores. Forum of UNI, UNI-ILC and UFCW launched distinct activities to impede the government from passing the bill on allowing 51% FDI in multi-brand retail.

As part of the organizing retailers, *Kirana* (mom-and-pop store) owners, and hawkers in Mumbai were organized though it was challenging because it was hard for them to come together under a common vision. Forum drew them to rallies. Participants' concern was that foreign companies would eat into their space if FDI in retail is allowed. However, the majority till then have not heard of Walmart. So, the campaign rallied against anti-FDI in retail over anti-Walmart. UFCW with UNI brought a report with a large chunk of Indian data. Christy Hoffman who was then the General Secretary of UNI with UNI-ILC met the head of the Foreign Investment Promotion Board (FIPB) in India. Members of UFCW and UNI-ILC had meetings with FIPB's officials. The report carrying Walmart's labor practices and its impact on small Indian retailers was presented. FIPB insisted on approaching the labor

secretary. So, it was critical to table the report in parliament. One of the UNI's affiliates in India from the postal department mailed its translated copies to MPs. Parliamentary debate on the bill was overhauled by MP's knowledge of Walmart generated through the report, which stalled the enactment.

The report became part of the mass movement. It was referred to in press conferences and mass rallies organized by UNI-ILC in India. The forum roped in many recognized faces including civil-rights activists, politician-cum-union leaders with the idea of raising the concerns through the voices that would be heard. Veteran trade unionists brought with them more than 3000 cadres on Mumbai's street and common men harked to the call. Distinguished persona amongst New Bombay's traders leading the rally in the twin city was a giant leap for the organizers. Affiliates of HMS took part in Mumbai's meeting and CITU and BMS in Delhi. A letter written by the then Prime Minister, Dr. Manmohan Singh when was in the opposition expressing his party's determination to keep Walmart out was discovered. A copy of the letter was circulated to every stakeholder to convey that the same person after taking oath is backing off from what he promised. It created enormous pressure on the Government. The opposition found it decisive to leverage the strain.

Over the next few months, the organizer of UNI who bridged the gap between the retailers and UNI all over the campaign founded 'FDI-Watch'. Later the organiser was appointed as the full-

time anti-FDI campaign organiser and brought the movement to a logical end. The bill was passed by the Congress Government in 2012. But with more than 200 stores in 13 states, 'easy mart' was unable to multiply by leaps and bounds because of the UNI affiliates and the forum's idea is to foil BWM's plans by organizing rallies of local retailers and UNI's cross-sector affiliates where BWM intended to set up stores. When the campaign was at its peak spread across major metros, the UNI forum was organized in Lucknow, a city where BWM planned to launch the first 'easy mart' store. Commenting on the campaign's outcome, the UNI-ILC spokesperson held that they could not prevent MNC and government from racing to the bottom but lessened their velocity and cut down Walmart's India story short by two decades. UNI-ILC could unite those who never felt to be part of the supply chain or were incoherent due to political reasons. UNI's communication personnel attending the rallies were regularly interviewed by international broadcasters, which offered a global face to the India campaign. UNI-ILC continued lobbying with the opposition party to stop Walmart, which characterizes the changing dynamics in the labor-political party dyad (Sarkar & Liu, 2019). Christy Hoffman when asked to comment on whether the campaign against Walmart was a country-specific or a global campaign that was localised in India commented that it was a good strategy to initially organize a campaign in India by engaging with FDI debate, but eventually, UNI had to focus on keeping Walmart out because it is the one that

poised to benefit from FDI in Indian retail space the most. Moreover, UNI has a global campaign involving Walmart.

References

- Agarwala, R. (2012), "The State and Labor in Transnational Activism: The Case of India", *Journal of Industrial Relations*, 54(4): 443-58.
- Anner, M. (2011), *Solidarity Transformed: Labor Responses to Globalization and Crisis in Latin America*, Ithaca: Cornell University-ILR Press.
- Balasubramanian, Girish & Sarkar, S. (2017), "How Has the Dark Knight Uisen? Chronicle of Union Revitalization from India", *Employee Relations*, 39(5): 660-82
- Balasubramanian, Girish & Sarkar, S. (2020), "Organizing Experience of Informal Sector Workers – a Road Less travelled", *Employee Relations*, 42(3): 798-817
- Balasubramanian, Girish, Talluri, S.B., & Sarkar, S. (2023), "The Curious Case of Judicial Interpretation and Efficiency Affecting Labor Flexibility in India", *Industrial Law Journal*, 52(3): 696-720.
- Bendt, H. (1996), *Worldwide Solidarity: The Activities of the Global Unions in the Era of Globalization*. Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung.
- Brookes, M. (2013). 'Varieties of Power in Transnational Labor Alliances: An Analysis of Workers' Structural, Institutional, and Coalitional Power in the Global Economy'. *Labor Studies Journal*, 38 (3): 181–200.
- Brookes, M. & McCallum, J. (2017), "The New Global Labor Studies: A Critical Review", *Global Labor Journal*, 8 (3): 201-18.
- Croucher, R. & Cotton, E. (2009), *Global Unions, Global Business. Global Union Federations and International Business*, London: Middlesex University Press.
- Dale, L. (1967), "International Trade Secretariats", *Relations Industrielles*, 22(1): 98-115.
- Fairbrother, P. & Hammer, N. (2005), "Global Unions: Past Efforts and Future Prospects". *Relations Industrielles/Industrial Relations*, 60 (3): 405–31.
- Fichter, M., Helfen, M. & Sydow, J. (2011), "Employment Relations in Global Production Networks: Initiating Transfer of Practices via Union Involvement". *Human Relations* 64(4): 599-622.
- Garver, P., Buketov, K., Chong, H. & Martinez, B. S. (2007), "Global Labor Organizing in Theory and Practice", *Labor Studies Journal*, 32 (3): 237-56.
- Gumbrell-McCormick, R. (2000), "Globalization and the Dilemmas of International Trade Unionism", *Transfer*, 6(1): 29-42.
- Helfen, M & Fichter, M. (2013), "Building Transnational Union Networks Across Global Production Networks: Conceptualising a New Arena of Labor-Management Relations", *British Journal of Industrial Relations* 50, Special Issue.
- Keck M & Sikkink K (1998), *Activists Beyond Borders: Advocacy Networks in International Politics*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press.
- Lai, Yu Cheng & Sarkar, S. (2017), "Do High FDI Indian Firms Pay Low Wages & Have Higher Output?", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 52(3): 432-42
- Lai, Yu-Cheng & Sarkar, S. (2011), "Labor Cost and Foreign Direct Investment – Evidence from India", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 47(1): 396-411
- Lévesque, C. & Murray, G. (2010), "Understanding Union Power: Resources and Capabilities for Renewing Union Capacity", *Transfer: European Review of Labor and Research*, 16(3): 333–50.
- Lewis, H. (2003), *The International Transport Workers' Federation 1945–1965: An Organizational and Political Anatomy*, Un-

- published PhD thesis, University of Warwick
- Sarkar, S. & Chakraborty, R. (2021), "Determinants of the Annual Rate of Change of Union Membership in Divergent National Contexts After the Nations Survive Through Major Economic Crisis", *Employee Relations*, 43(3): 644-66.
- Sarkar, S. & Charlwood, A. (2014), "Do Cultural Differences Explain Differences in Attitudes Towards Unions? Culture and Attitudes Towards Unions Among Call Centre Workers in Britain and India", *Industrial Relations Journal*, 45(1): 56-76.
- Sarkar, S. & Huang, K.L. (2012), "Do Cultural Groups Differ in Their Attitudes Toward Unions? Evidence from Indian and Taiwanese Samples", *Asian Business and Management*, 11(4): 395-423.
- Sarkar, S. & Kuruvilla, S. (2020), "Constructing Transnational Solidarity: The Role of Campaign Governance", *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 58(1): 27-49.
- Sarkar, S. & Lai, Y.C. (2009), "Foreign Direct Investment, Spillovers and Output Dispersion – The Case of India", *International Journal of Information and Management Sciences*, 20(4): 491-503.
- Sarkar, S. & Liu, M-chun. (2019), "How the Changing Relationship Between Labor and Political Party Influenced Growth of Autonomous Labor Unions in Taiwan", *Employee Relations*, 41(4): 758-72.
- Sarkar, S. & Singh, A. (2018), "Dynamics in a Plant Level Bargaining Process and Wage Determination", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 54(2): 267-81.
- Sarkar, S. (2008a), "BSWU: Case Study of Independent Trade Union in India", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 44 (2): 303-16.
- Sarkar, S. (2008b), "Trade Unionism in Call Centre Industry in India – an Insight from Literature", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 51(4): 1053-64.
- Sarkar, S. (2009), "Individualism-collectivism as Predictors of BPO Employee Attitudes Toward Union Membership in India", *Asia Pacific Journal of Management*, 26(1): 93-118.
- Sarkar, S. (2012), "Determinants of Employees' Attitudes Toward Union Membership in India", *Journal of World Business*, 47 (2): 240-50.
- Sarkar, S. (2015), "Murderous Violence at Work: Conflict and Aggression in Indian Auto Factories", *Work Organisation, Labour and Globalization*, 9(1): 38-62.
- Sarkar, S. (2019) "Amalgamation of Existing Laws or Labor Reform?" *Economic and Political Weekly*, 54(28): 33-37.
- Sarkar, S. (2020), "Influence of Virulent Nationalism on Proletarian Internationalism", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 55(36): 33-39
- Sarkar, S. (2021), "2019 Code on Wages: Truth versus Hype", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 57(1):1-12.
- Sarkar, S. (2023), "Union Wage Effects on Contract Labor", *Indian Journal of Industrial Relations*, 59(2): 175-191
- Sarkar, S. (2007). "The Struggle To Be a Part: Story of Dignity of Indian Labor", *Indian Journal of Labour Economics*, 50 (2)
- Stevis, D. & Boswell, T. (2008), *Globalization and Labor: Democratizing Global Governance*. Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

Table 1: GUFs & Their Activities

GUFs, sectors covered & membership strength	Activities & programs
BWI in construction and materials with 12 million members from 328 unions in 130 countries	Founded in 1933, the BWI has been active in various domains of transnational solidarity. The GUF has nine priority areas. With multinationals, the BWI has to date concluded 17 IFAs through which it tried to establish minimum labor standards in the sector set under ILO conventions and assist affiliates to get recognized as bargaining agents for social dialogue on the company and national level with multinationals and players in the supply chain. Concerned over the role of GATS-WTO in causing an increase in cross-border work in the construction sector, the BWI advocates for trade union consultation in establishing the minimum standards for migrant workers. BWI has been lobbying supranational bodies for the implementation of ILO standards in the building and construction sector¹. In May 2005, the mandatory clauses on forced labour, child labour and non-discrimination were added to World Bank construction contracts. It also works for cooperative agreements between national unions with the help of its affiliates and is successful to some extent (e.g., a similar agreement was signed between NFCCWU from Taiwan and NUBCW from the Philippines in 2005, according to which, the workers who migrated to either country are assured same salary and conditions of service, and trade union membership). Through its '<i>Global Wood and Forestry Program</i>', the GUF seeks to bring together unions in industries and provide a platform for them to increase their mutual solidarity. Besides, it also addresses protest messages in cross-border campaigns led by their affiliates for which it has created an <i>online campaign template</i>. A '<i>toolbox</i>' (campaign tool) developed by BWI that carries several interlinked instruments and guidelines such as IFAs, EWC, GCC, and corporate campaign literature has been effective for its affiliates. BWI's '<i>Children Should Learn Not Earn!</i>' campaign has set up schools for child labour, pulling thousands out of building sites and getting them into the classroom in India.
EI in education with 30 million employees from all levels of education from 400 organizations in 170 countries	Being a GUF mainly with public sector unions, there is less scope for EI's representation vis-à-vis multinationals or its roles under classical industrial relations. Founded in 1993, the EI's activities and programs over the past two decades have been around (a) policy-making through cooperation with international and government organizations, and lobbying UN organizations, (b) engaging global NGOs in the education sector, and (c) campaigning for the universal right to education. The GUF has four regional committees. The EI has been campaigning for the rights of its affiliates to participate in drawing up and implementing education policy in affiliates' countries. Together with advocacy, another focus for EI is solidarity. EI has been confronting attacks on education unions concerning affiliates' freedom of association, bargaining rights and professional freedoms. The GUF launches Urgent Action Appeals against teacher unions' repressions worldwide. For its affiliates, it has started the '<i>Global Network for Teaching Quality and Effectiveness</i>' to counter de-professionalization trends in the education sector. EI offers capacity-building programs

for affiliates in low-income countries and emerging democracies. On the social responsibility front, the GUF has campaigned together with ActionAid, Oxfam International and civil society networks, and lobbied UNESCO and UNICEF to ensure school education for all children.	IndustriALL founded in June 2012 as a result of amalgamation of three GUFs, viz., ICEM, IMF and ITGLWF, is the youngest among the eight existing GUFs. Below mentioned are the activities of three independent GUFs before amalgamation. Today IndustriALL has 43 ITFs with multinationals. The ICEM till early 2012 has negotiated and monitored 16 IFAs with multinationals in seven sectors. Besides, ICEM has been representing affiliates' interests within the UN and its agencies as well as other intergovernmental bodies. ICEM has been providing information and expertise to budding affiliates and support for affiliates during disputes. Through networking affiliates from multinationals, ICEM tried to develop strong union networks in multinationals from core sectors and coordinate solidarity and union building in countries where unions in the sectors are weak. ICEM has offered skills training and development work for its affiliates. The ICEM was working with the world's major mining companies to stem the spread of HIV/AIDS by setting up medical clinics for full community access near mining sites in remote regions.
IMF in metal-working with 25 million metalworkers from 200 unions in 100 countries	The IMF's plan for global solidarity in action in its six core sectors comprises four elements: (a) building a counterweight to the power of MNCs by [i] strengthening union solidarity across sectors and MNCs, and [ii] advancing unions' rights through IFAs. Here, the IMF was successful in applying two forms of institutionalization. For cross-sector solidarity, it used global union networks and IMF World Company Councils/World Work Councils (<i>WCC</i>). The <i>WCC</i>'s² of employee representatives established at Volkswagen, Daimler, SKF, and Rolls Royce are meant to assure that all unions can be part of the information exchange process. Likewise, to establish minimum labour standards across the operations of MNCs and their supply chains, framework agreements were negotiated between its affiliates and the corporations. IMF had the maximum number of IFAs with multinationals till the merger and consequently, it has adopted a model IFA along with policy recommendations for improving the content, initiating, negotiating, implementing and enforcing of IFA; (b) defending and protecting workers' rights in the sectors by collaborating with other GUFs, NGOs, ITUC, and TUAC, and by using OECD guidelines and ILO instruments; (c) strengthening collective bargaining by working with affiliates to ensure that collective agreement provides a framework for intervening in all work issues; (d) union building by organizing the unorganized, uniting trade unions at the national level, and union building through education, training and information exchange.