

Employee relations in contemporary organisations



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Consistent by Professor Katie Truss from the institute of personal and development, “ Engagement is about creating opportunities for employees to connect with their colleagues, managers and wider organisation it is also about creating an environment where employees are motivated to want to connect with their work and really care about doing a good job. It is a concept that places flexibility, change and continuous improvement at the heart of that it means to be an employee and an employer in a twenty-first century workplace.” (Gatenby M & Rees C, 2009)

Another place in ‘ a dictionary of human relations’ by Heery & Noon, “‘ Employee relations’ is a common title for the industrial relations function within personnel management and is also sometimes used as an alternative label for the academic field of industrial relations. The term underlines the fact that industrial relations is not confined to the study of trade unions but embraces the broad pattern of employee management, including systems of direct communication and employee involvement that target the individual worker.” (Heery & Noon, 2001)

“ Employment relations are the study of the regulation of the employment relationship between employer and employee, both collectively and individually, and the determination of substantive and procedural issues at industrial, organisational and workplace levels.” (Rose, 2008)

Prescription and description is not only a substance of employment relation. Like it shown, because of governments, other policy makers, trade union leaders, the CBI make statements of policy, prescription is significant to prescribe ‘ remedies’ to problems or advocate potential explanations. For

example, an intellectual study of government industrial relations strategy will predict that the policy is based upon some sort of rational theoretical analysis of the role of the state, of the economy and the political organism. Different governments will use complementary and probably contradictory theoretical analyses in operationalising their political agendas. In 1970s Labour government politicians and their advisers had an analysis of industrial relations based upon a quantity of legislative sustain for trade unions and their members, whereas in 1980s the conservative government had a negative analysis of trade unions that informed their policies. Consequently, it can argue the policies of both Labour and Conservative governments were based on contradictory theoretical perceptions and analyses of the responsibility of the state and political economy. (Rose. E, 2008)

Based on theoretical aspects on the employment relations or industrial relations, it's classified by following perspective:

The unitary perspective or unitarism

The pluralist perspective or pluralism

The radical perspective or Marxism

According to J. Gennard, " The unitary approach emphasises organisations as harmonious and integrated, all employees sharing the organisational goals and working as members of one team." (Gennard, J & Judge, G. 2005)

Consistent by Rose, E, " Base upon the hypothesis of the unitary perspective that the organisation is or should have an integrated group of people, a

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simple loyalty or authority organization, and a set of common values, interest and objectives.” (Rose, 2008) Management’s privilege is considered as legal, logical and traditional, and any conflict to it internally or externally is seen as irrational. The fundamental hypothesis of this outlook is that “ the organisation exists in perfect harmony and all conflict, not only industrial relations conflict is both unnecessary and exceptional.”(Salamon M.) From this, there are two significant implication are stemming. The first is that argument as the phrase of the employee dissatisfaction. The second is that trade unions are considered as an interruption into the organisations from outside, challenging with organization for the loyalty of employees. Therefore, a presence within the organisation of trade unions should be denied. However, in some cases, organisation may be forced to acknowledge a trade union presence in terms of employee pay and conditions of employment. (Rose E. 2008)

Management prerogative is considered as legal and logical to share a set of common values, interest and objectives between organization and employees. Thus the need of both employers and employees can be satisfied, opposition is seen as irrational. Therefore trade union are unnecessary and deviation, since there exists no conflict between management and employees. (Lecture note: 3)

As a simple theoretical mechanism, both historically and currently, the unitary perspective can be used to classify the industrial relations environment within explicit forms of organisations and which are:

During the nineteenth century an 'aggressive' unitary perspective adopted by many firms, with controlling employers enthusiastically exclusive of trade union. Including women and children, employees were poorly treated and for subsistence-level wages worked for a long hours.

During this period some of the employers were resisting any trade union presence. Even in the 2000, there are many organisations whose managements adopt a modified unitary view. For example, Marks & Spencers, relatively treat their employees well and that are often described as neo-paternalist.

Allan Fox (1996), who first made the distinction between the unitary and pluralist perspectives, argues that, "the importance of this perspective is declining and has been superseded by the pluralist perspective." (Rose, 2008)

In contemporary society, the pluralist perspective is considered as being more harmonious with developments, while in nineteenth century the unitary perspective would seem to be more appropriate to capitalism. An organisation is composed of individuals based on the assumption which communicate to a variety of distinct sectional groups. There is not only one set of common but also a plurality of interests. Such as, class, employment, race and gender. Consequential from the inherent argument of interest, the organisation is in a permanent state of dynamic tension. It is seen as completely logical and predictable conflict between management and employees. The pluralistic outlook accepts that there is a legal responsibility for trade unions through which workers can seek to manipulate

administration judgment. Such on social values legality is founded and so trade unions are a superior thing. (Rose, 2008 & Lecture note 3)

Both than the unitary or the pluralist perspective, the radical perspective is broader in scope and Marxist analysis of the employment relationship integrates. Both unitarism and pluralism in a number of primary techniques the radical perspective differs by:

Unitary and pluralist perspectives are intellectual's philosophies such as fox have recognized to managers and employers.

An organisational and societal status quo's reflections of both unitarist and pluralist ideologies. The capitalist economic and political systems accept and endorse by both and as a result no important of it.

Therefore, Marxist analysis illustrated balance of powers eventually rests with the employers and governments enthusiasm to support in a crisis.

For the period of the 1920s and early 1930s the economic depression on employers and government was brutally reflected in a substantial decline in a trade union membership, wage cuts and a high incidence of industrial action. (Salamon, 2000)

During the 1940s - 1970s the labour saw in the political arena trade union power increasingly used and its power raised. In the earlier, the employees had the industrial strength, mutual insurance and into the trade had their control on over entry. In the ' union rules' employer had seek acceptance. In controlling wage competition, both employees and employers had an interest. Though on a national basis many trade union already organised.

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(Salamon, 2000) approximately exclusively on both an organisational and a district basis conducted this early cooperative negotiates. Therefore, trade unions wherever had adequate organisations and potency, to ensure that various employers within a local labour market applied the same terms of employment they wanted to establishment of a 'common rule'. At the moment in terms of membership and density trade union power reached its height, and employee protection legislation, industrial democracy and the 'social contract' incomes policy it influenced the 1974 – 79 labour government. (Hollinshead, 2002) But to the economy both conservative and labour governments had and gradually more dominant approaches to maintenance of full employment, earnings policies, development of employment protection legislation, bargained corporatism and tripartite arrangements. (Lecture note) Latterly of the 1970s the perception of the corporatist failures of the Wilson (Labour) and Heath (conservative) governments to control unemployment and the economy had grown popularity of the new right thinking. " Since 1979 – 1997 Mrs Thatcher's Conservative government that came to power in 1979 viewed this relationship as unhealthy as corrupt. The 1979 Tory Manifesto contained the statement " by heaping privilege without responsibility on the trade unions, Labour have given the minority of extremists the power to abuse individual liberties and to thwart Britain's chance of success"

Their view was that the role of the state was to encourage enterprise through the deregulation of markets, especially the labour market." (Lecture note; 6)

While the Second World War, in the UK a number of overlapping phases through industrial relations have developed of pressure on the industry-level system, voluntary government intervention and a possibly a new realism.

Hawkins has recommended that it was assumed that the immediate post-war period was the great industrial argument of the past had been determined by the gradual development of a framework of voluntary institutions. However, this assumption of methodical system of industrial relations based on industry level agreements soon came under pressure. Other side, the consecutive Acts of Parliament were the government's step by step approach to the development of trade union legislation to revolutionize the culture and modify the bargaining position of unions without the need to confront them head on. (Salamon, 2000)

On the employee's side, full employment, the welfare state and changes in society, coupled with increased union membership at the workplace, resulted in rising objectives in value of both material awards and greater interest in executive judgment making. At the same time, management's interest was determined gradually more on changing working practices and development productivity within the organisation. However, industry-level in the main provided only basic terms of employment on both bargaining and agreements. To the conservative government of 1980s, the protagonists of trade union were the scheme traditions they were seeking to establish. Despite the fact that, the use of closed-shop agreements, restricted tradition and legal immunities, they were seen to have the mechanisms for inhibiting the improvement of the free market central to the conservative's value.

Moreover, unions were perceived to fetter the freewill of the personality, and <https://assignbuster.com/employee-relations-in-contemporary-organisations/>

though the cooperative bargaining process, to organize the way which views and actions could be expressed and presented. (Hollinshead, 2002)

At the side of the conflict and improved legislative control, the period since the late 1980s has seen important development in management's approach to industrial relations. Though, there has not been a single organized policy which has been applied consistently across all organisations. Consideration out the 1980s and early 1990s UK trade union were mainly ' on the defensive' because of the uncooperative economic, political and organisational situations. Although, between 1979 and 1998 almost fifty percent (five and half million) membership declined, trade union have not, as some expected, been ' wiped out' and 35 percent still account for the workforce. They have responded to the adverse conditions in three main ways:

Objective of their employment efforts in the employment development areas. (Part-timers, women, service sector etc).

Developing and supporting the individual member services and in his or her communication with management.

More practical and optimistic relationship is offering management based on the theory of ' social partnership' which not only recognises shared interest in the employment relationship but also on an individual basis of employees relationships its accepts management's desire to maintain and strengthen. (Salamon, 2000)

During 1997s to 2010s the New Labour policy introduced. The New Labour policy were committed to cheering better flexibility at work, employees can change over his or her working hours if necessary, working hours dividing into small various shifts, expanding the logic of partnership between employers and employees, achieving fairness at work. The New Labour technique is also to provide social partnership between trade unions, employers, but very influential of unitary perspective. By minimum wage, new policy though fairness of minimum labour standards, 'family-friendly' policies are importance on this policy, extension of equality legislation of breadth & depth, agenda of 'welfare to work'. (Guardian, online & lecture note) following 2010s to present, conservatives government return to power in combination with the liberal democrats, quickly get assess to general policy on ER in details, mostly as policy has to be approved in the partnership: "We will review employment and workplace laws, for employers and employees, to ensure they maximise flexibility for both parties while protecting fairness." (Conservative party 2010) However, with mass redundancies of public sector ER faces some very difficult times, pay freezes, work intensification and changes to pension schemes that boost supports and raise the age of privilege. Beside this reality, increasing of unemployment in UK market getting more issue and largest difficulty, pretenders rise of 32, 500 during August and was the biggest since 1992. According to Labour Force Survey it showed rising of joblessness is 81, 000 to 1. 72 million or of the workforce 5. 5%. Economist critique the economy continues to slide into recession and will peak by late 2010. (Guardian, online)

Employee relations with employer over the last few centuries have been significantly changes. Trade union, employers and government brought this fundamental responsibility gradually. ER directly or indirectly interconnects with political, economical and social environments. At different period with this environmental changes also brought changes in employee relations. Systematically this change creates a better working atmosphere at workplace in UK and also provided employee's rights at workplace, importance and better salary.