

# Unions and health and safety - unitarism and pluralism



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Union and Health & Safety – Unitarism & Pluralism Unitarism and Pluralism can be acknowledged as the most prominent perspective of Industrial relation, that is, the relation between the management and the workers.

These are the perspectives with the help of which the scholars of Industrial Relation have alienated the framework to understand the relation between the employee and the employer (Edwards, 2003, p. 1).

An organization is considered within the framework of Unitarism, when the workers and the employer share the cordial relation. There remains the mutual indulgence along with the approach to work together like one family.

The trustworthiness of the employee is quite predictable in this type of Industries as both the association and the staff share a common goal and objectives among themselves. The general attitude of Unitarism is to maintain a cordial relationship between the two most pivotal pole of an organization, that is, the management and its human resources (Mc Carthy, n. d., p. 3). Pluralism is a political as well as social concept where people believe in representative democracy instead of direct democracy. In case of a workplace, the representative body is the trade union, which plays the role of a medium of communication between the workers and the owner or manager. The trade union act as the voice of people to the management and also influence the staff when required being in the favor of the Organization. The direct communication between the employee and the employers are not possible in Pluralism, thus there is normally no common goal. This obviously increases the possibilities of conflict. (Reynolds, 1996)

From 1950 both the ILO & WHO collectively aimed a general cause for health and safety in the working place, which ensure that a proper care (physical, mental and social) is to be provided to the workers, which will encourage the

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staff to carry out their job without any fear of getting injured and as a consequence productivity will not suffer. The objective to introduce health and safety in industrial area is to promote a fair and safe working environment (Policy Basis for a Regional Strategy, n. d., p. 3). The worldwide acceptance of this perspective is quite evident with the worldwide implementation of different Acts and programs in this context. European Agency for Safety and Health at work was founded in 1996 in Europe. The Occupational Safety and Health Act was passed in 1970 by United States. Even countries like Malaysia, through DOSH (Department of Occupational Safety and Health) has enforced Factory and Machinery Act in 1969 and Occupational Safety and Health Act in 1994. (Making Europe a safer, healthier and more productive place to work, n. d.; Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, n. d; The Workshop on Globally Harmonized System for Malaysia Government Agencies, 2006, p. 3)

A statistical study of ILO (International Labor Organization) shows that the workers aged between 50-59 and are mostly prone to accident. Thus in the Silver Line Plan for the middle aged worker in 1979, a genuine attempt has been made to reduce accidents in the working place (Development and implementation strategies of the national occupational safety and health policy, n. d.). It has been observed that about 2 million people die of occupational accident and occupation related diseases thus from 2003, 28th April ILO started to observe the day as the World Day to prevent the mishap and the disease in the work place (Safety and Healthy at Work, n. d.).

From what we have already discussed we thus conclude that the current situation comprise of both pluralism and unitarism in the workplace. The representative body of laborers is now international by nature (ILO) and the <https://assignbuster.com/unions-and-health-safety-unitarism-pluralism/>

world's workforce is bounded and represented by the single body to protect and safeguard them. Though unitary approach is an incorporated and harmonious approach, the Pluralist is a discordant approach that shows several groups existing within the organization, but in both the case safety and health in the industrial sphere is equally significant. The steps that have been once taken by ILO and WHO to minimize the threat of mishaps in the workplaces have been serving as important examples and have become a model for the whole world to lead a nation free from the occupational hazard and also maintain a gracious relationship between the employer and the employee. Thus the international representative body may reinforce the unitarism at even the fundamental firm level.

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