

# Wal-mart employees union



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Wal-Mart, the largest retail store in America, gained its popularity due to the cheap products that it sells to the market (Featherstone, 2004). However, recent events, such as the numerous criticisms from various sectors in the society, have put Wal-Mart in a bad light. The main subject of these negative feedbacks is related to how the company treats its labor force. As a result of this controversial issue, the question whether Wal-Mart's employees should unionize or not has been debated.

Based on the reports and findings about the condition of Wal-Mart's employees, it is in their best interests to establish a union. Employees have the right to organize themselves in order to influence and affect their labor conditions.

Unions are organizations that are established by employees. Labor unions enable workers to influence and affect important policies that concern them such as wages, hours of work, and benefits (Resources for Union Organization [RLUO], 2008). By establishing a union, employees could also engage easily in collective bargaining.

Collective bargaining is a means by which the union and the company work together in addressing important issues like policies concerning human resource management. As such, a union plays a vital role in assuring that the rights of the employees are protected and respected (RLUO, 2008). Certainly, Wal-Mart employees would gain numerous benefits from organizing themselves and forming a union.

By unionizing, they can protect themselves against any means by which the company could take advantage of them. Creating a union is the best answer in order to address the maltreatment of the company towards its employees.

This is very much applicable in the case of Wal-Mart employees since there have been numerous reports about how the company violated the rights of these employees. The succeeding paragraphs would discuss some of the Wal-Mart company's infringement of their laborers rights. There have been numerous reports about the maltreatment that Wal-Mart employees experience under the company. Some of them are unfair compensation, unhealthy working conditions, discrimination, and many others.

This is proven by the fact that a substantial number of Wal-Mart employees who reported that they receive unjust compensation.

According to Dr. Richard Drogin who conducted a study entitled " Statistical Analysis of Gender Patterns in Wal-Mart's Workforce," the 2003 wage analysis shows that cashiers only earn \$7. 92 per hour and they work 29 hours a week.

Thus, Wal-Mart cashiers only earn an annual wage of \$11, 948 (United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, 2005). Furthermore, Wal-Mart employees also work extended hours without being properly compensated for their extra hours of work. This allegation is supported by Wal-Mart's 2006 Annual Report which proves that the company is facing 57 lawsuits regarding wage and hour issues.

These lawsuits exist in the states of California, Indiana, Minnesota, Oregon, Pennsylvania, as well as Washington.

In relation to this, Wal-Mart is also violating the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). An example of this violation is proven in the 2000 internal Wal-Mart audit that shows 60, 767 missed breaks and 15, 705 lost meal time of their employees (United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, 2005). There are also observable human rights violations in the company. The most evident among them is the discrimination that its female employees experience.

Consequently, Wal-Mart is facing a class action sex discrimination lawsuit. This lawsuit takes into account the company's discrimination against women employees, especially in terms of promotions, job assignments, training, and salary (Class Action Sex Discrimination Lawsuit against Wal-Mart, n.

d. ). Wal-Mart employees should unionize so that they could assert their right when it comes to these abovementioned violations. Unionizing will make sure that the federal government will be more responsible to all laborers and not only to those few wealthy people.

Moreover, since Wal-Mart is the nation's largest retailer, establishing a union would be a remarkable step for the laborers of the country. It would inspire other employees to follow suit. Eventually, it would also increase the vital role of union organization nationwide (Meister, 2003).

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