

# **Professional Practices**

**“The Framework of  
Employee Relations Law  
and Changing  
Management Practices”**

# Contents

## **1. Definition of Employee Relations:**

1. Define employee relations as the ongoing interaction between employees and employers, encompassing various aspects such as communication, conflict resolution, and employee engagement.

## **2. The Importance of Employee Relations:**

1. Discuss the significance of positive employee relations in enhancing employee morale, motivation, and commitment to organizational goals.
2. Highlight the impact of effective employee relations on reducing turnover, absenteeism, and workplace conflicts.
3. Emphasize the link between employee relations and organizational performance, competitiveness, and reputation.

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## **1. Principles of Employee Relations:**

1. Communication: Emphasize the importance of open, transparent communication between management and employees to foster trust, collaboration, and mutual understanding.
2. Fairness and Equity: Discuss the need for fair and equitable treatment of employees in all aspects of employment, including recruitment, compensation, performance management, and disciplinary actions.
3. Employee Involvement: Advocate for involving employees in decision-making processes, problem-solving, and goal-setting to enhance their sense of ownership and commitment to organizational objectives.
4. Conflict Resolution: Introduce strategies for resolving conflicts and disputes in the workplace, such as mediation, negotiation, and grievance procedures, to maintain harmonious employee relations.
5. Employee Recognition and Reward: Highlight the importance of recognizing and rewarding employee contributions and achievements to promote job satisfaction, motivation, and retention.

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## **1. Legal Framework:**

1. Provide an overview of relevant employment laws, regulations, and policies governing employee relations, such as labor laws, anti-discrimination laws, and collective bargaining agreements.
2. Discuss the role of HR professionals and managers in ensuring compliance with legal requirements and promoting ethical conduct in employee relations practices.

# Employee Relations

- The term '**employee relations**' refers to a company's efforts to manage relationships between employers and employees.
- An organization with a good employee relations program provides fair and consistent treatment to all employees so they will be committed to their jobs and loyal to the company.
- Such programs also aim to prevent and resolve problems arising from situations at work.

# Employee Relations

- The most important part of any business is its people.
- No business can run effectively without them. But people don't work in a vacuum; they need to communicate and work with others to get their jobs done.
- Employers need to manage relationships in the workplace to keep the business functioning smoothly, avoid problems, and make sure employees are performing at their best.

# Employee Relations

- Happy employees are productive employees.
- Successful businesses know how to manage relationships to build lasting employee satisfaction.

# Employee Relations

- Employee relations is about the rules governing employment.
- Most of the times, it is the employer who decides the terms and conditions or rules of employment.
- These rules include anything from pay and normal working hours to health and safety rules.



# Employee Relations

- In most industrial countries, such unilateral regulation of employment by management is not the only way of deciding and administering the rules governing employment.
- Employers have recognized trade unions for collective bargaining purposes.
- Managers negotiate with trade union officials in order to reach collective agreements about pay and other conditions of employment.

# Employee Relations

- The applicability of collective bargaining model of employee relations to software worker is very limited.
- Trade unions have made little impact among software workers, so terms and conditions are largely set by employers and managers.
- Limited forms of co-management, such as joint consultation with employee representatives, to some extent substitute for unions.

# Labor law

- Apart from unilateral management decisions and collective bargaining, LAW is another way to make the rules that govern employment.
- Labor law is that part of law that deals with individuals and legal persons in their capacity as employees or employers and is concerned with work and relationships arising from it.
- Labor law is concerned with both the collective and individual aspects of the employment relationship.

# Labor law

Labor Law

Collective  
Labor Law

Individual  
Labor Law

# Framework of collective labor law

- Collective labor law deals with collective industrial behavior and institutions for regulation of employee relations, such as trade unions and collective bargaining.
- It basically concerns the relationship between employer, employee and trade unions.

# Trade Unions

- Trade unions are organized groups of workers who engage in collective bargaining with employers.
- Some countries require unions to follow particular procedures in pursuit of their goals. For example, some countries require that unions poll the membership to approve a strike.
- Laws may govern the circumstances and procedures under which unions are formed. They may guarantee the right to join a union or remain silent in this respect.
- Some legal codes allow unions to obligate their members, such as the requirement to comply with a majority decision in a strike vote.

# Workplace Participation

- A legally binding right for workers as a group to participate in workplace management is acknowledged in some form in most developed countries.
- In a majority of EU member states (for example, Germany, Sweden, and France) the workforce has a right to elect directors on the board of large corporations.
- This is usually called "codetermination" and currently most countries allow for the election of one third of the board.

# Workplace Participation

- In Sweden, participation is regulated through the "Law on board representation".
- The law covers all private companies with 25 or more employees.
- In these companies, workers (usually through unions) have a right to appoint two board members and two substitutes.
- If the company has more than 1,000 employees, this rises to three members and three substitutes.



# Information and Consultation

- Workplace laws in many countries require that employers consult their workers on various issues.

# Individual Labor Law

- Individual employment law regulates the individual employment relationship as it arises from the contract of employment.

# Employment Terms

- The basic feature of labor law in almost every country is that the rights and obligations of the worker and the employer are mediated through a contract of employment between the two.
- Many contract terms and conditions are covered by legislation or common law.
- In the US for example, the majority of state laws allow for employment to be "at will", meaning the employer can terminate an employee from a position for any reason, so long as the reason is not explicitly prohibited, and, conversely, an employee may quit at any time, for any reason (or for no reason), and is just required to give a prior notice.

# Employment Terms

- Another example of employment terms in many countries is the duty to provide written particulars of employment to an employee.
- This aims to allow the employee to know concretely what to expect and what is expected.
- It covers items including compensation, holiday and illness rights, notice in the event of dismissal and job description.

# Minimum Wage

- Many jurisdictions define the minimum amount that a worker can be paid per hour.
- Each country sets its own minimum wage laws and regulations, and while a majority of industrialized countries has a minimum wage, many developing countries do not.

# Living Wage

- The living wage is higher than the minimum wage and is designed that a full-time worker would be able to support themselves and a small family at that wage.
- A living wage is the minimum income necessary for a worker to meet their basic needs.
- Needs are defined to include food, housing, and other essential needs such as clothing.
- The goal of a living wage is to allow a worker to afford a basic but decent standard of living.
- Due to the flexible nature of the term 'needs', there is not one universally accepted measure of what a living wage is and as such it varies by location and household type.

# Hours

- The maximum number of hours worked per day or other time interval are set by law in many countries.
- Such laws also control whether workers who work longer hours must be paid additional compensation.
- Before the Industrial Revolution, the workday varied between 11 and 14 hours.
- With the growth of industrialism and the introduction of machinery, longer hours became far more common, reaching as high as 16 hours per day.
- Now a days an 8 hours working day is a standard in a large number of countries.

# Health and Safety

- Labor laws also involve safety concerning workers.
- Such laws deals with all aspects of health and safety in the workplace and has a strong focus on primary prevention of hazards



# Discrimination

- Such laws prohibited discrimination against employees as morally unacceptable and illegal, in particular racial discrimination or gender discrimination.

# Equal pay and Gender Discrimination

- **Equal pay for equal work** is the concept of labor rights that individuals in the same workplace be given equal pay.
- It is most commonly used in the context of gender discrimination, in relation to the gender pay gap.
- Equal pay relates to the full range of payments and benefits, including basic pay, non-salary payments, bonuses and allowances.
- Some countries have moved faster than others in addressing the problem.
- Since President John F. Kennedy signed the Equal Pay Act of 1963, it has been illegal in the United States to pay men and women working in the same place different salaries for similar work.

# **Equal pay and Gender Discrimination**

**IT industry and  
women employees???**

- **Prevalence of Gender Discrimination:**

- 1. Underrepresentation in Leadership Roles:**

1. Despite comprising a significant portion of the workforce, women are often underrepresented in leadership positions within IT companies. Glass ceilings and implicit biases limit women's access to executive roles and decision-making positions.

- 2. Gender Pay Gap:**

1. Women in the IT industry consistently earn less than their male counterparts for similar roles and qualifications. The gender pay gap reflects systemic inequalities in compensation practices and opportunities for career advancement.

- 3. Stereotyping and Bias:**

1. Women in IT often face stereotypes and biases that undermine their abilities and contributions. Stereotypes such as "women are not as technically proficient as men" or "women are better suited for administrative roles" perpetuate gender-based discrimination and limit women's career opportunities.

- **Challenges Faced by Women Employees:**

- 1. Workplace Culture and Environment:**

1. Male-dominated workplace cultures in the IT industry can create hostile or unwelcoming environments for women employees. Discriminatory behaviors, such as harassment, microaggressions, and exclusionary practices, contribute to a toxic work atmosphere.

- 2. Limited Opportunities for Advancement:**

1. Women often encounter barriers to career progression in the IT sector, including limited access to mentorship, sponsorship, and networking opportunities. Lack of visibility and support from senior leadership further exacerbates challenges related to career advancement.

- 3. Work-Life Balance and Family Responsibilities:**

1. Balancing work commitments with family responsibilities remains a significant challenge for many women in IT. Inflexible work schedules, long hours, and a lack of supportive policies, such as parental leave and childcare assistance, hinder women's ability to thrive in their careers.

- 4. Retention and Attrition:**

1. Gender discrimination and workplace challenges contribute to higher rates of attrition among women employees in the IT industry. Many talented women leave the field due to frustration, burnout, or limited opportunities for growth and advancement.

# Case Studies

- **Effective Employee Relations Practices:**

- 1. Google's Employee Engagement Initiatives:**

1. Case Study: Google is renowned for its employee-centric culture and innovative approaches to employee engagement. The company offers various perks and benefits, such as flexible work hours, on-site amenities, and opportunities for professional development. Google's open communication channels, transparent leadership, and focus on employee well-being contribute to high levels of job satisfaction and retention among its workforce.

- 2. Zappos' Holacracy Model:**

1. Case Study: Zappos, an online shoe and clothing retailer, implemented a holacracy model that promotes self-organization and distributed decision-making among employees. Through this approach, employees have greater autonomy and responsibility in their roles, leading to increased engagement, creativity, and job satisfaction. Zappos' emphasis on employee empowerment and trust has contributed to its reputation as a desirable workplace.

- **Ineffective Employee Relations Practices:**

- 1. Walmart's Labor Disputes:**

1. Case Study: Walmart has faced numerous labor disputes and criticisms regarding its treatment of employees, including allegations of low wages, inadequate benefits, and anti-union tactics. These issues have resulted in negative publicity, legal challenges, and reputational damage for the company. Walmart's adversarial approach to labor relations has led to employee dissatisfaction, turnover, and protests by workers and labor unions.

- 2. Uber's Toxic Workplace Culture:**

1. Case Study: Uber, a ride-hailing company, faced widespread criticism and backlash over its toxic workplace culture characterized by allegations of harassment, discrimination, and retaliation. Reports of unethical behavior and a lack of accountability among senior leadership led to internal turmoil and negative public perception. Uber's failure to address employee concerns and foster a healthy work environment resulted in significant reputational and financial repercussions for the company.