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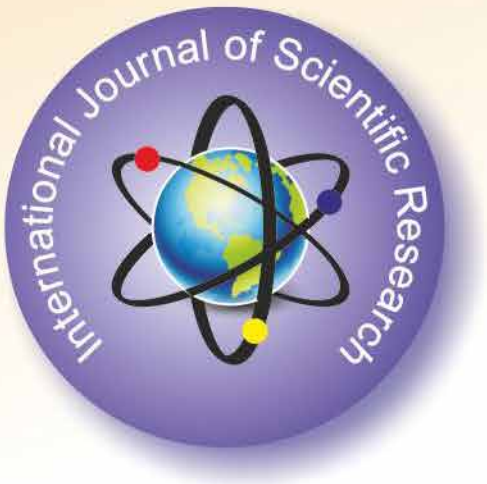

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INDEX

Sr. No.	Title	Author	Subject	Page No.
1	Ionic composition of a freshwater lake and its implications on aquaculture	Dr. Shankar P. Hosmani	Biotechnology	1-2
2	Growth and Performance of Mutual Fund Industry in India	Dr. M. K. Maru	Commerce	3-4
3	Waste Management: A New Paradigm of Contemporary Business	Dr. Vipul Chalotra	Commerce	5-6
4	Rural Financial Services in J&K (A study in the field of financial services sector development)	Tarsem lal	Commerce	7-8
5	Banyan, the National Tree of India	Dr. J.K. Sehgal	Commerce	9-10
6	Impact of Online Marketing on Customers with Special Reference to Coimbatore City	Dr. R. Ganapathi	Commerce	11-15
7	Customers' Attitude towards Housing Loan With Reference to Commercial and Rural Banks	Dr. R. Ganapathi, Mrs. B. VIDYA	Commerce	16-23
8	Consumer Behaviour towards Broiler Chicken Retail Stores With Reference to Madurai City	P. Easwaran, J. Gnanadevan, Dr. R. Ganapathi	Commerce	24-30
9	Data Security and Protection in Cloud Computing	Shameena Begum, V. Ratna Vasuki, K.V.V.Srinivas	Computer Science	31-34
10	Foreign Direct Investment in India – An Explanatory Study	Dr. K.Madhu Babu	Economics	35-38
11	Growth - Saving Causality in India: A Cointegration Analysis	Dr. Shradha H. Budhedeo	Economics	39-42
12	Constitutional perspectives on Labour Wages in India	Dr. Shankar Ambhore, Dr. Dilip Arjune, Manish Parshuram Pawar, Dr. Ashok Shankarrao Pawar	Economics	43-45
13	A Critical Study of Special Economic Zones in India	Dr. Shankar Ambhore, Dr. Dilip Arjune, Manish Parshuram Pawar, Dr. Ashok Shankarrao Pawar	Economics	46-48
14	Industrial Relations - Settlement of Disputes in India	Dr. Shankar Ambhore, Dr. Dilip Arjune, Manish Parshuram Pawar, Dr. Ashok Shankarrao Pawar	Economics	49-50
15	AMLA - ITS MEDICINAL USES	Manisha Gaur	Economics	51-52
16	The Role Of Total Quality Management In Higher Education	Ramesh B. Sakhiya	Education	53-55
17	Perceived Competencies Of Graduate Teacher Trainees In The Intensive Teaching Practice [I T P] Session	Dr M. Parimala Fathima, N.Sasikumar, M. Panimalar Roja	Education	56-58
18	Uchch Siksha Ki Rah Men Dushvariyan	Dr. Anup Chaturvedi	Education	59-60
19	Fault Diagnoses of Rotating Machinery with Advance Signal Processing Methods	Prof. Divyang H. Pandya, Prof. Ankit A. Darji	Engineering	61-63
20	A Hybrid Neural Network Approach for Wind Speed Prediction	S.N Deepa, K.gnana Sheela	Engineering	64-67
21	A Study on Phishing: Preventions and Anti-Phishing Solutions	V.Karamchand Gandhi, Prof R.Senthil Kumar	Engineering	68-69
22	The Killari 1993 Intracratonic Earthquake- a Comparative Study	S.S. Patil, K.L. Karkare, I.B. Ghorade	Environment	70-72
23	Cosmic Plants as Alternative Medicine	Dr. Sneh Harshendra Sharma	Environment	73-77

24	Green Initiatives for Reducing Carbon Footprint	Dr Mahalaxmi Krishnan	Environment Science	78-79
25	Prediction of Urban Sprawl in Hyderabad City using Spatial Model, Remote Sensing and GIS Techniques	S. Indhira Gandhi, Dr. V. Madha Suresh	Geography	80-81
26	Tectono-Provenance and Reservoir Rock Characteristics of the Tipam Sandstones in Parts of Upper Assam Basin	Dr. Pradip Borgohain	Geology	82-84
27	(Jansanchar Aur Bharatiya Samaj)	Dr Subodh Kumar	Journalism	85-86
28	An Overview of Industrial Disputes Settlement Authorities in India	Manish Parshuram Pawar, Dr. Ashok Shankarrao Pawar	Law	87-88
29	Innovative Method of Role Play for Developing English Language Teaching and Learning	K Rajkumar	Literature	89-91
30	Impact of Workers Participation in Management on Industrial Relations	Anuradha Averineni	Management	92-93
31	Consumers Preferences , Behaviour and Satisfaction with respect to banking services quality in Ghaziabad(NCR Region)	Prof(Dr.)H. P. Pandey, Mr. Ashish kumar Singh	Management	94-96
32	Factors Influencing Employee Branding in Higher Educational Institutions: A Special Reference to Management Institutions in Virudhunagar District in Tamilnadu	Jegadeeswari. Mani, Dr. S. Franklin John S.	Management	97-98
33	Evaluation of Service Quality in Internet Banking: An Empirical Study in Coimbatore	Ms. R. Gokilavani, Dr. R. Ganapathi	Management	99-101
34	To Study the Relationship Between Gender & Banking Preferences of Management Graduates at Ibmrd, Ahmednagar	Rajendrasingh Pardeshi, Gadekar Vithal Laxman	Management	102-103
35	FCB model of Advertising Strategy	Prof. Arvind Rathod	Management	104-107
36	Assessing Beneficiary Satisfaction with Service Delivery of Non Governmental Organizations (NGOs)	Dr Papori Baruah, Bhaskar Jyoti Barthakur	Management	108-111
37	Current Trends in Human Resource Management	Dr. Kalyani Kenneth, Mrs.R.Aruna jayamani	Management	112-113
38	“Indian Banking – A Future Ahead”	Haresh B. Barot	Management	114-116
39	Financial Inclusion-Banking Services to the Common Man	Dr. M. Venkata Subba Reddy, Mr. M.s.udaya Banu	Management	117-118
40	A study of Service Marketing Mix w.r.to b-schools in Mumbai	Dr. Balaji S. Mudholkar	Management	119-120
41	A Study on the Customers Opinion on the Benefits of the Credit Cards Around Combatore District	Mrs. G. Murali Manokari	Management	121-123
42	A Study on the Job Satisfaction of the Employees at Sri Kannan Departmental Stores, Coimbatore	Mrs. G. Murali Manokari, Mrs.r.kanaka Rathinam, Mr. G. Lenin Kumar	Management	124-126
43	Foreign Direct Investment In Indian Retail Sector: A Critical Evaluation	Dr. Raghavendra Dwivedi, Ram Kumar	Management	127-128
44	Emerging Challenges to Cyber Security-Internet Monitoring with Specific reference to National Security	Triveni Singh	Management	129-131
45	An Empirical Study of Consumer Impulse Buying Behavior in domestic Markets (special reference to Ahmednagar, (M.S) India.)	Gadekar Vithal Laxman	Marketing	132-135
46	Insomnia and the performance of general population: Results from the Insomnia Survey	Miss Ketaki Sathe, Dr G S Shekhawat	Medical Science	136-137
47	Transition in Human Resource for Health: Challenges Ahead	Dr. Pawan Kumar, Dr. Abdul Majeed Khan	Medical Science	138-139

48	Kartageners Syndrome- A Case Report	Dr. Ramakrishna Ghubde, Dr. Archana Shekokar	Medical Science	140-141
49	Perceptual challenges in auditory neural processing in neurodegenerative conditions like Fredereich Ataxia	Mr. Ayas Muhammed, Ms. Archana, Dr. Rajashekhar	Medical Science	142-143
50	Transient Auditory Dysynchrony Due to Non-Maturational Causes Evidenced by ABR – A Case Report	HariPrakash. P, Sangeetha. G, Bhargavi P.G	Medical Science	144-146
51	Study on Sphenoid Sinsuses Variants in Magnetic Resonance Imaging of South Indian Population	Suresh Sukumar, Sushil Yadav	Medical Science	147-148
52	A Study to Find out the Prevalence and Effectiveness of Occupational Therapy Intervention for Pain and Activity Performance in Mobile Users with Risk of Repetitive Strain Injury	KR.Banumathe, V.Guruprasad, Leena Ann Lukose	Medical Science	149-151
53	Modified Falls Behavioral Scale for Indian Community Dwelling Older Adults	V.Guruprasad, Sebestina A D'Souza, KR.Banumathe	Medical Science	152-154
54	The Essence of Employees Training and its Impact on the Work Force in an Industry	Dr. Mohan Singhe	Organization Behavior	155-156
55	Scientific Behaviourism of Watson and Hull : A Philosophical Perspective	Dr. Jatinder Kumar Sharma	Philosophy	157-158
56	The growth of manganese oxide thin films by spray pyrolysis technique	M.Sudha, P.Duraisamy	Physics	159-161
57	Terrorism and Competitive Terrorism in India	S. Sreejith, P. Sakthivel	Political Science	162-164
58	Kuposhan Se Karahta Bachpan	Dr. Anup Chaturvedi	Social Science	165

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Research Paper

Impact of Workers Participation in Management on Industrial Relations

Management

KEYWORDS : Industrial democracy, Industrial Relations, Management, Workers Participation.

Anuradha Averineni Flat # 302, Anjamma Kalpatharu Apartments, Gowthami Nagar, Vanasthalipuram, Hyderabad

ABSTRACT

This paper made an earnest attempt to present the impact of workers participation in management on the interpersonal relations in an industry. Industrial relations have become most delicate and complex in modern Industrial Society. It attempts at arriving solutions between the profit motive and social gain, between the authority and industrial democracy. In order to build harmonious relations, workers participation in management is essential now-a-days. The concept, objectives , forms and levels of participation has been explained According to situation and need if these levels of participation is implemented in the true spirit, results in sound industrial relations system, which in turn leads to high productivity, high profits and satisfaction at all levels.

Introduction:
A sound industrial relations system is one in which relationships between management and employees (and their representatives) on the hand, and between them and the State on the other, are more harmonious and cooperative than conflictual and creates an environment conducive to economic efficiency and the motivation, productivity and development of the employee and generates employee loyalty and mutual trust.

Importance of Industrial Relations:
The healthy industrial relations are key to the progress and success. Their significance may be discussed as under –

Uninterrupted production – The most important benefit of industrial relations is that this ensures continuity of production. This means, continuous employment for all from manager to workers. The resources are fully utilized, resulting in the maximum possible production. There is uninterrupted flow of income for all. Smooth running of an industry is of vital importance for several other industries; to other industries if the products are intermediaries or inputs; to exporters if these are export goods; to consumers and workers, if these are goods of mass consumption.

Reduction in Industrial Disputes – Good industrial relations reduce the industrial disputes. Disputes are reflections of the failure of basic human urges or motivations to secure adequate satisfaction or expression which are fully cured by good industrial relations. Strikes, lockouts, go-slow tactics, gherao and grievances are some of the reflections of industrial unrest which do not spring up in an atmosphere of industrial peace. It helps promoting co-operation and increasing production.

High morale – Good industrial relations improve the morale of the employees. Employees work with great zeal with the feeling in mind that the interest of employer and employees is one and the same, i.e. to increase production. Every worker feels that he is a co-owner of the gains of industry. The employer in his turn must realize that the gains of industry are not for him along but they should be shared equally and generously with his workers. In other words, complete unity of thought and action is the main achievement of industrial peace. It increases the place of workers in the society and their ego is satisfied. It naturally affects production because mighty co-operative efforts alone can produce great results.

Mental Revolution – The main object of industrial relation is a complete mental revolution of workers and employees. The industrial peace lies ultimately in a transformed outlook on the part of both. It is the business of leadership in the ranks of workers, employees and Government to work out a new relationship in consonance with a spirit of true democracy. Both should think themselves as partners of the industry and the role of workers in such a partnership should be recognized. On the other hand, workers must recognize employer's authority. It will naturally have impact on production because they recognize the interest of each other.

Reduced Wastage – Good industrial relations are maintained on the basis of cooperation and recognition of each other. It will help increase production. Wastages of man, material and machines are reduced to the minimum and thus national interest is protected.

Thus, it is evident that good industrial relations are the basis of higher production with minimum cost and higher profits. It also results in increased efficiency of workers. New and new projects may be introduced for the welfare of the workers and to promote the morale of the people at work. An economy organized for planned production and distribution, aiming at the realization of social justice and welfare of the massage can function effectively only in an atmosphere of industrial peace. If the twin objectives of rapid national development and increased social justice are to be achieved, there must be harmonious relationship between management and labor.

Objectives of Industrial Relations:
- To safeguard the interest of labor and management by securing the highest level of mutual understanding and goodwill among all those sections in the industry which participate in the process of production.
- To avoid industrial conflict or strife and develop harmonious relations, which are an essential factor in the productivity of workers and the industrial progress of a country.
- To raise productivity to a higher level in an era of full employment by lessening the tendency to high turnover and frequency absenteeism.
- To establish and promote the growth of an industrial democracy based on labor partnership in the sharing of profits and of managerial decisions, so that ban individuals personality may grow its full stature for the benefit of the industry and of the country as well.
- To eliminate or minimize the number of strikes, lockouts and gheraos by providing reasonable wages, improved living and working conditions, said fringe benefits.
- To improve the economic conditions of workers in the existing state of industrial managements and political government.
- Socialization of industries by making the state itself a major employer.
- Vesting of a proprietary interest of the workers in the industries in which they are employed.

Objectives:
The scheme has economic, psychological, ethical and political objectives.

- Its psychological objective of the scheme is to secure full recognition of the workers. Association of worker with management provides him with a sense of importance, involvement and a feeling of belongingness. He considers himself to be an indispensable constituent of the organisation.
- Socially, the need for participation arises because modern industry is a social institution with the interest of employer, the share-holders, the community and the workers equally

invested in it.
- The ethical objective of participation is to develop workers free personality and to recognize human dignity.
- The political objective of participation is to develop workers conscious of their democratic rights on their work place and thus bring about industrial democracy.

Levels of Participation:
Workers' participation is possible at all levels of management; the only difference is that of degree and nature of application. For instance, it may be vigorous at lower level and faint at top level. Broadly speaking there is following five levels of participation:

1. Information participation: It ensures that employees are able to receive information and express their views pertaining to the matters of general economic importance.
2. Consultative participation: Here works are consulted on the matters of employee welfare such as work, safety and health. However, final decision always rests at the option of management and employees' views are only of advisory nature.
3. Associative participation: It is extension of consultative participation as management here is under moral obligation to accept and implement the unanimous decisions of employees.
4. Administrative participation: It ensure greater share of works in discharge of managerial functions. Here, decision already taken by the management come to employees, preferably with alternatives for administration and employees have to select the best from those for implementation.
5. Decisive participation: Highest level of participation where decisions are jointly taken on the matters relation to production, welfare etc. is called decisive participation.

Forms of Workers' Participation in Management:
The forms of workers participation in management vary from industry to industry and country to country depending upon the political system, pattern of management relations and subject or area of participation. The forms of workers participation may be as follows:

1. Joint consultation model: In joint consultation model the management consults with the workers before taking decisions. The workers represent their view through 'Joint consultative Committees'. This form is followed in U.K., Sweden and Poland.
2. Joint decision model: In this form both the workers and management jointly decide and execute the decisions. This form of participation is followed in U.S.A. and West Germany.
3. Self management of auto management: In this model, the entire control is in the hands of workers. Yugoslavia is an example to this model. Where the state industrial units are run by the workers under a scheme called 'Self Management or Auto Management Scheme'.
4. Workers' representation on board: Under this method, the workers elect their representative and send them to the Board to participate in the decision making process.

The participation of workers may be formal or informal. In the formal participation, it takes the forms of formal structures such as Works Committee, Shop Councils, Production Committee, Safety Committee, Joint Management Councils, and Canteen Committee etc. The informal participation may be such as the supervisor consulting the workers for granting leave, overtime, and allotment of worked or transfer of workers from one department to another.

Conclusion:
Prior to WPM Bill, 1990 all the schemes of participation were non-statutory and concentrated on particular levels. For effective and meaningful participation at all levels, a bill was introduced in Parliament on 25th May, 1990. The bill provide for effective participation at all level by formulating schemes of participation. For electing representatives for participation it also provides for secret ballot. The appropriate government may also appoint inspectors to review participation schemes and the bill also has provision of punishment for those who contravene any of the provision of the Act.

Thus the workers' participation schemes in India provide wide scope for application and upliftment of workers. But in practice, these schemes have not met with success though they are successful in some private sector units. The factors responsible for the failure are:

- Attitude of the management towards the scheme is not encouraging. The preventatives of workers are not given due recognition by the management.
- The attitude of trade unions towards the schemes is negative as they consider these schemes are reducing the power of Trade Unions. Some Trade Unions boycott Joint Management Council meetings.

For the success these schemes require certain conditions.
- Management should appreciate the scheme and accept them in full faith.
- Trade unions have to cooperate with the schemes.
- Workers have to be educated.

Thus workers' participation in management in India has yet to succeed. It can be done by educating the workers, creating an environment in the organization for coordination of workers and management.

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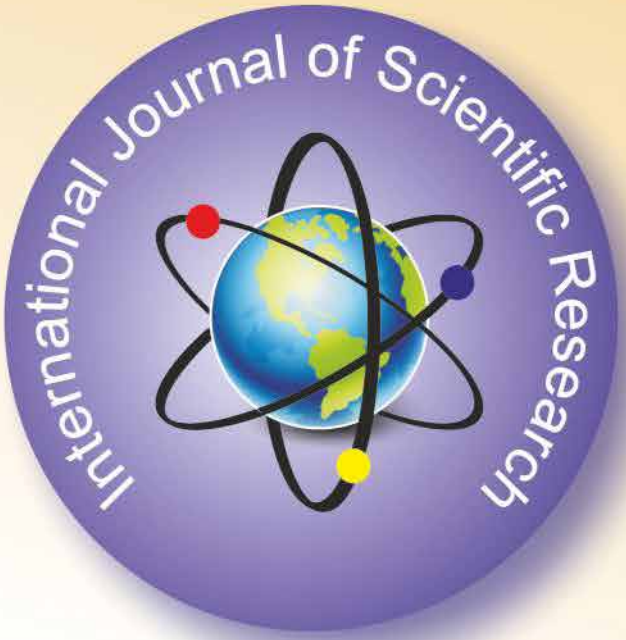

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