# Comparative Study

Employment relations play a crucial role in the economic growth of the countries worldwide. That is why the employment relations in emerging economies, such as China, has witnessed great changes in the past few years. Every country is working hard to improve its economy and this contributes to a race between all. In this all way, the main focus of development is the industrial sector, through which the countries can generate great revenue and enjoy a powerful position in the international market, as a strong economy. Different countries are participating in this race, including European countries, Asian Countries, and States from UAE. The current study now presents a comparative analysis of the role of employment relations actors in Australia and China.

The opening of markets, neo-liberal reforms, increasing competition in the industrial section, and privatization of the organization are proving to be great boosters to the countries' economy. However, along with so many benefits, it leaves a negative impact on the employment relations of the emerging economies. Where the countries are running on the track to win the race, there they are forcing their employees to work harder than they were doing before. This leads to the great pressure on employees and contributes to the downward impact on labour standards. At one side, where the industrial growth is essential and organizations are working hard to generate more revenue and contribute in the GDP growth, on another side these industries are forcing their employees to work hard at low wages and meet the working criteria without getting benefits from the authorities. This all is an indication of the declining role of governments in better enforcement of labour standards and ruthless cost-cutting through outsourcing practices. Thus, there is a strong requirement of the employment relations actors (such as state and national unions) to play their positive role in the provision of protection to the employees' rights and stop inadequate work pressure over them.

When it comes to Australia, the broad changes in the Australian industry is not different from other countries, and so increasing work pressure over the employees is also similar across emerging economies. Like employees of other countries, the Australian employees are also facing employers' pressure, more working hours with less wage, forced behaviour of the organization for high-quality work without provision of basic benefits, and cost-cutting via outsourcing. However, different employment relations actors have been playing their important part to defend the employees' rights, but still, more is required to defend the employees' rights in Australia. Though the employment relations actors are working since 1996, with the establishment of federal-level Workplace Relations Act 1996, more involvement of such actors will bring great advantages for all, the government, employers, and employees.

Employees are the strength of any state or country because they work day and night for better economic growth and revenue generation. Thus, taking care of employees' rights is as crucial as focusing on the industrial development and attracting the foreign investors. Now, it is the time when the employment relations actors must play their role towards decision making, conflict resolution, and workplace level. The evidence from the literature shows that the trade unions or national-level actors, such as Australian Industrial Relations Commission, have been playing their role in defending the employees’ rights and establishment of policies in their favour. However, this is still not enough and there is strong requirement to deal with the wage policies, working hours limit, and employees’ social security policies.

The government of Australia also is concerned to develop a healthy and friendly relationship with all employees, and protect their rights in the best possible way. For this purpose, the government made some amendments in the employment-related legislation 1996 and established Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005. This Act protected the employees’ rights and set minimum rates of pay, employees’ rights, and workplace environment. Not only this but through this Act, the employment relations actors also established great individual employment arrangements and introduced new opportunities for all to operate alongside trade unions. This not only protected the employees' rights but played a good role in motivating the employees in playing their part for the success and economy growth of Australia (Michelson & Jamieson, 2009). It motivated the employees and left a positive impression on all. Through such legislative policies, the strong interaction was developed between managers, employees, and trade unions to develop a strong and positive influence over the employment relationships.

Though the employment relations are playing role efficiently in Australia but still the focus on new employment opportunities is relatively slow in Australia, when compared with other countries. The reason behind this slow progress in the creation of employment opportunities is a narrow range of non-traditional actors. Thus, there is a requirement to embrace the range of nontraditional actors to explain the experiences and regulation of employment. This simply means, more groups and agencies must be involved at social and community level to defend the employees' rights and find for the better way to enhance employment opportunities. Also, there must be strong actors to deal with discrimination and disability-related issues to the employees to ensure that every person in Australia is eligible to earn better, and thus it will contribute to better living standards in Australia.

On the other hand, when it comes to China’s labour management relation system, it has been changing dramatically since 1978. It is leaving a deep impact on the economic life of the people, as a result of which the State-owned enterprises' share in productive output has decreased to 30% from 77.5% between 1978 and 2015 (Warner & Zhu, 2008). China has always kept its employees’ protection and their rights on priority and that is why its membership in World Trade Organization was sealed in 2001. The government and employment relations actors have always given preference to the workers’ rights but this is also bringing great challenges to them. Now the government of China, management, enterprises, and trade unions are facing great challenges in introducing new employment opportunities. Also, due to its population, China appears on the top of the list of highly populated countries. In such scenario, establishing more opportunities for the nation is challenges for employment relations actors (Wang & Cooke, 2017). Industrial growth was also essential for China to play its important part in the economic growth and lead the race amongst its competitors, including the US, Japan, and Korea. Chinese invested in the industrial sector and started a new era of advancement with establishing large exporting industries, such as the LED industry of China and others. Through this investment the Chinese government also provided great earning opportunities to Chinese, however, the main purpose of the Country is to lead the economy race. For this purpose, it has now established new regulations regarding employment responsibilities and earning. Though the Chinese workers are offered with attractive wage packages, they have to work more hours and with more potential. In this way, the Chinese worker though has enough to eat but with hard working conditions.

China is also different in its policy approach from other Asian countries. Some Asian countries, like Pakistan and India, believe that cheap labour provides more effective competitive edges and that is why they remained unwilling and incapable of upgrading technology, and thus left behind in improving the efficiency of their workforce. On the contrary, China doesn't believe in cheap labour, instead, it promotes and facilitate its labour with technological investment and has found other ways to reduce labour cost. China uses prison labour at low rates, which generates much higher productivity while keeping the rights of the labour on priority (Chan, 2015).

Now after knowing the basic structure of Australia and China's employment relations actors, their comparison becomes clearer. Australian employment system is a mixture of legislation Acts, legal agreements, and common laws, based on which the actors are working hard to protect the employee's rights. However, despite their great efforts, the employment relation actors are unable to enhance their speed in the provision of earning opportunities to the Australian. On the other hand, China is straight forward and more concerned about the employees' rights and responsibilities. It is established a comprehensive legal framework that provides a wide range of protection to the employees' rights. In China, the employees are paid very well for their hard work but, to contribute for the better economic growth of the country, employees face hard working conditions and are required to show their full potential at workplaces (CLB, 2014; Government, 2019).

When comparing the employment relations actors of both countries; Australian and China, it also becomes essential to discuss how hard employees have to work to gain access to the employees’ benefits. When it comes to Australia, it follows a well-established working structure, where the employees are given great benefits and comforts at their workplace. In Australia, the employees are provided with great working conditions safety, attractive compensation, and other workplace benefits. Also, the employment relation workers are concerned for the comfort of employees and that is why they restrict the employees to work for a maximum of 38 hours a week. In this way, employers cannot force the employees to work harder than their capacity. On the other hand, China is concerned about its industrial growth and economy progress and that is why they force their employees to work harder and show their full potential. In China, the employment relations actors have set 40 working hours per week with fixed overtime working. This shows that Chinese workers have to work more than the Australian worker to get better wages and establish better living standards. However, the employees are given with full rights, such as they have the legislative right to be paid in full and on time (Labor, 2019; ICLG.com, 2019).

The Australian Fair Pay Commission also works for the payment rights of the employees and ensures that employees are paid well for their hard work. To keep the employees in the protective zone and maintain wage scales, it has set the minimum wage in Australia as A$ 13.47 per hour. On the other hand, China is focused to protect the employees right but meanwhile, it is more concerned about its economic productivity and that is why it has set its hourly wage as 24 Yuan, which is equivalent to A$ 5. With this difference, it becomes clear that Australian employment relations actors are establishing great policies while keeping the comfort and benefits of the employees on priority. On the other hand, China is working hard for its economic growth and investing in different regions of the world. At the meantime, China's employment relation actors are establishing great policies for its employees. China's employment relations actors have always kept the employee's rights on priority but when it comes to wages, China's actors have been established a setup, under which the employees are forced to work harder for less wage. However, still, this wage is far better than the wages offered to the employees in other Asian countries (Chun Hui, 2014).

Employment relations play crucial role in the economy growth of the countries, but the role of employment relations actors is even more important to deal with employees’ working rights and responsibilities. Every country has established their employment relations actors, including trade unions, labour system management, and other organization, to deal with employment related matters and work for the rights of employees. In this way, the employees remain in protected and comfortable zone, where they are aware of having a support at their back. Every country is, thus, concerned to improve and establish strong employment relations actor management to motivate its employees in participating better productive growth. Australian and China are also playing their important part. However, when comparing these two powers in their approach towards employees’ roles and responsibilities and role of employment relationship actors, the difference become prominent. Australian Industrial Relations Commission, have been playing their role in defending the employees’ rights and establishment of policies in their favour. Also, the government made some amendments in the employment related legislation 1996, and established Workplace Relations Amendment (Work Choices) Act 2005. This Act protected the employees’ rights and set minimum rates of pay, employees’ rights, and workplace environment. On the other hand, when it comes to China’s labour management relation system, it has been changing dramatically since 1978. The government and employment relations actors have always given preference to the workers’ rights and has now established new regulations regarding employment responsibilities and earning. Though the Chinese workers are offered with attractive wage packages, but they have to work more hours and with more potential. In this way, the Chinese worker though have enough to eat but with hard working conditions. Conclusively, the major difference between the employment relations actors of both countries exist in their approach, where Australian are more concerned to provide comfortable zone to every employee and China is more concerned about its economy growth which has somehow affected the working standards of employees in China.

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