

Introduction

- The primary concern for any organisation operating in a competitive environment is to maximise organisational performance and generate satisfactory returns for the owners and stakeholders of the enterprise in terms of effectiveness, profitability and so on.
- The primary goal of management is to organise the factors of production, including labour, to achieve these objectives.
- Employee relations is an important consideration in this process.

Employer's objectives/beliefs in employee relations include:

- Preservation and consolidation of the private enterprise system.
- Achievement of satisfactory returns for the owners
- Effective utilisation of human resources.
- Maintenance of control and authority in decision making.
- Establishment and maintenance of satisfactory management – employee relations.

Role of employer's associations – key social partners – advancing employers interests at national level.

- Grew from a need to react to “new unionism”
- They are bodies designed to organise and advance the collective interests that employers have in the labour market.
- Very prevalent at EU level as a key social partner.
- Pure employer's associations: represent only interests related to the labour market and employee relations issues.
- Pure trade associations: represent only product market interests
- Dual associations: combine representation of labour market and product market interests.
- Prevent harmful economic competition with each other, particularly regarding pay.
- To counter TU power.
- Deal with increasingly complex nature of collective bargaining (CB) and employment legislation.
- Provide a forum for exchange of views.
- Represent employer's views in employee relations.
- Influencing government decision making.

Roles identified can be categorised into four broad areas:

- Exchange of views
- Represent employers views to the government and its agencies
- Representation of employer interests to the general public.
- Provision of specialised services to members.

The role of the employers association that deals specifically with labour market issues would be to defend, represent or advise affiliated employers and to strengthen their position in society at large.