

Botswana College of Distance and Open Learning

In Collaboration With

Zimbabwe Open University

Labour Relations

Course Code: D-LR 01

Sessional Examination, 2010

Time: 3 Hours Total Marks: 100

Instructions to candidates

1. Answer all questions in Section A, B and C.

Section A: Multiple-choice questions

1. The tripartite structure in labour relations involves the following three actors.
 - A. The state, the Trade Unions, banks
 - B. The state, the employers, workers and unions
 - C. The trade unions, the employment agency and the state
 - D. The state, industrial courts and workers

2. The _____ labour theory assumes that the work place is characterised by division of interest between capital and labour and this results in class conflict between employers and employees.
 - A. Pluralistic Perspective 2
 - B. The systems 4
 - C. Unitary perspective 1
 - D. Marxist perspective 3

3. The four major characteristics of International Labour Standards are
 - A. universality, flexibility, viability and adaptability.
 - B. universality, acceptability, standardisation and controllability.
 - C. common, theoretical, standardised flexibility .
 - D. universality, theoretical, uniform and standardised.

4. The four factors of production are
 - A. Goods, services, roads, industry
 - B. Land, labour, capital, entrepreneurship
 - C. Capital, machines, cash, industry
 - D. Land, forests, industry, people

5. When making decisions, people adopt those decisions from which they expect greater benefits than others. The alternative must be foregone in order to implement the other. This economic concept is known as
 - A. Revenue maximisation
 - B. Benefit sought
 - C. Opportunity cost
 - D. Scarcity

6. If the price is set below equilibrium. There will be
 - A. excess supply.
 - B. excess demand.
 - C. stability on the market.
 - D. decreasing prices.

7. The **two** major policies used by government to control the economy are
 A. Labour policy and trade policy
 B. Fiscal policy and monetary policy
 C. Localisation policy and privatisation policy
 D. Healthy policy and labour policy
8. One of the characteristics of a labour market under pure competition is
 A. Workers can freely choose the occupations they want and employers whom they want to work for
 B. The government sets the wages to be paid
 C. There are many workers but only one major employer who can influence the wages
 D. Workers cannot easily switch from one employer to the other
9. _____ unions owns to organise all workers in a defined industry irrespective of the jobs performed by the workers
 A. General unions
 B. Government unions
 C. Industrial unions
 D. Professional unions
10. During negotiation _____ power can be displayed by the use of threats and bluffs or walking out of negotiation
 A. Reward power
 B. Expert power
 C. Referent power
 D. Coercive power

Section B: Short Answer Questions**[60 Marks]**

1. (a) Suggest **any six** causes of grievances in organizations. (6 marks)
- (b) Identify the responsibilities of the personnel officer/industrial relations practitioner in minimising and resolving grievances in the organisation. (4marks)
2. (a) Identify **any five** characteristics of a perfectly (pure) competitive market structure. (5 marks)
- (b) (i) Explain the concept of diminishing marginal returns. (2 marks)
 (ii) Identify **any three** macro-economic objectives of the government. (3marks)
3. (a) Identify **any six** characteristics of negotiations in labour relations. (6 marks)
- (b) Identify **any four** relevant skills needed for one to be a good negotiator. (4 marks)

4. Workers will work effectively if formal communication and consultation channels are put in place. Briefly explain how both the organisation and its employees benefit from communication and consultation. (10 marks)
5. Both unions and employers should bargain in "good faith". Elaborate on any five features of negotiations done in "good faith". (10 marks)
6. Explain the formalities that should be followed by unions when they intend to engage in a strike, for the strike to be regarded as legal (the right to strike) according to Section 39 of the Trade Disputes Act. (10 marks)

Section C

30 Marks

Read the Case Study below and attempt the questions that follow.

Tripartite Cooperation

While the principle of tripartite cooperation appears to be accepted in most parts of Asia and the Pacific, it cannot yet be said that most governments view the process as an essential part of their relations with the social partners.

A number of countries have longstanding and effective arrangements in this area, others are struggling with giving effect to the principle, while, for countries in transition, understanding the concept and applying it in practice are still at an early stage of development. There is considerable variation in the form of tripartite cooperation applied from one country to another. Most countries have some form of national consultative body providing advice to government on a broad range of social and labour issues. Such consultation has, over the years, been influential in the preparation of labour policies, laws and IR codes of practice. A number of countries have also integrated tripartite consultation to lower levels (e.g. sector/industry and regional) levels, and in relation to addressing particular issues (e.g., occupational health and safety; workers' compensation; vocational training, social security; international labour affairs; and, lastly productivity). In addition, some countries have tripartite wage determination and dispute settlement bodies.

There are a number of important factors still limiting the effectiveness of tripartite cooperation in the region. These include, on the part of government, not integrating tripartite consultation across all issues related to national planning and development, a lack of "political will" to make the process work (e.g., failure to consult; lack of follow-up on agreed matter); policy and legislative restrictions on the role of workers' and employers' organisations; and technical impediments to and inadequate resources for the effective operation of consultative or other tripartite bodies. For their part, workers' and employers' organisations are still handicapped in tripartite processes by such issues as their relative weakness vis-à-vis government (in terms of their personnel, technical and organisational capacity); lack of representativeness; lack of coordination of view with other trade union federations or employers' organisations; politicization of trade unions (particularly, in South Asia); and a lack of organised and continuous bilateral relations.

Zimbabwe Open University, Industrial Relations, 2002

Questions based on the case study

1. Identify and explain the role of the key actors in the tripartite structure of labour relations as indicated in the case above. (15 marks)
2. Identify the problems prevalent in the countries mentioned in the case in relation to labour relations. (10 marks)
3. Suggest the ways in which the countries can improve the state of their labour relations. (5 marks)

End of Paper