

## Communication

# Industrial Relations in Co-operative Printing Presses in Tamil Nadu

S. Nehru

---

*Industrial Relations involves the complex web of relationship between the employer, employees and the government. It is dynamic and is the product of the entire socio-economic, political environment that prevails in a country. The co-operative printing presses are an important segment of the co-operative movement in Tamil Nadu. Success of the co-operative printing presses depends on good organizational climate and cordial relationships between labour and the management. This study assesses the state of industrial relations that exists in the co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu and also identifies the factors that affect it.*

S. *Nehru* is Reader in Commerce, Mannar Thirumalai Naicker College Madurai, Tamil Nadu 625004. E.mail: nehrusanjeevi@gmail.com

### The Study

Industrial Relations is a human relation that exists in the production system which has a definite impact on efficiency and productivity and comprises the sum total of relations in the organizations. In a narrow sense, industrial relations refers to the union-management relations or the so-called collective relations between the employer and the employees. In a broader sense the concept of industrial relations also includes the institutional agent, i.e., the government. Thus, it involves the complex web of relationship between the employer, employees and the government.

**Good industrial relations has the potential to promote restructuring of organizations and processes for improving productivity and competitiveness.**

Industrial relations is dynamic and is the product of the entire socio-economic-political environment that prevails in a country at a particular point of time. Good industrial relations has the

potential to promote restructuring of organizations and processes for improving productivity and competitiveness. Industrial relations is not merely a matter between the employer and employees but a vital concern of the community for the protection of its larger interests. It is basically a strategic activity concerned with arriving at the rules of the game, to be observed and enforced by all the players in the organizations. Establishment and maintenance of harmonious relations between labour and management is a pre-requisite for the stability and progress of the industry.

After India's independence, a number of co-operative societies were formed both in the credit and non-credit sectors to serve the weaker sections of the community. The increase in the number of co-operative societies resulted in a corresponding increase in the demand for books of accounts, forms, co-operative journals, literature and the like. Co-operative printing presses were started to cater to the printing needs of all the co-operative societies in Tamil Nadu. The performance of the co-operative printing presses depends on the cordial relationship between labour and the management. Since the co-operative printing presses are the service providers to all the co-operative societies in Tamil Nadu, the attempt here has been to analyse the industrial relations in co-operative printing presses in the state.

The co-operative printing presses are an important segment of the co-operative movement in Tamil Nadu. There

were 25 co-operative printing presses with 1511 workers. Tamil Nadu is very popular for printing works in India. There is keen competition to the co-operative printing presses from the private printers. Success of cooperative printing presses depends on good organizational climate and cordial relationship between labour and the management. This study throws light on the relations that exist between labour and the management.

### **Objectives**

The objectives of the study are:

- i) To analyse the opinion of the workers relating to various factors that affect the industrial relations in the co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu.
- ii) To explore the inter-relationship among various dimensions of industrial relations.
- iii) To provide insights in to strategic management to promote industrial relations in co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu.

### **Methodology**

The primary data required for the study were collected from 250 workers of the co-operative printing presses by conducting a sample survey with the help of a structured interview schedule. For the purpose of the survey a multi-stage stratified proportionate random

sampling technique was adopted. In the first stage, out of the 25 co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu, 19 presses functioning with permanent workers alone were selected. In the second stage, these 19 presses were stratified into three groups on the basis of the number of permanent workers. From each strata, 50 per cent of the workers were selected by random sampling technique and was rounded off to ten presses. The total population of workers of sample presses numbered 747. In the third stage one-third of the workers of each sample press was selected by random sampling technique and rounded off to 250 workers.

Karl Pearson's Correlation Coefficients have been computed to explore the inter-relationship between various dimensions of industrial relations in co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu. The Principal Components Method of Factor Analysis has been applied to extract the factors underlying the dimensions of industrial relations. Discriminant function analysis has been used to examine the factors that could discriminate between employees with cordial and strained relationships.

The Canonical Discriminant Function modelled in the study is in the following form:

$$Z_i = d_{11}f_1 + d_{12}f_2 + d_{13}f_3$$

Where  $Z_i$  = score on discriminant function

= one for employees with cordial relations with management

= zero for employees with strained relations with management

$d_{11}$ ,  $d_{12}$  and  $d_{13}$  are discriminant coefficients

$f_1$ ,  $f_2$  and  $f_3$  are factors or predictor variables.

### Factors

In this section we present the results of correlation, factor and discriminant analysis S for exploring the inter-relationship among various dimensions of industrial relations and factors affecting industrial relations. The dimensions of industrial relations for the present analysis include:

1. Industrial relations practices
2. Causes for disputes
3. Methods of disputes settlement
4. Pay and allowances
5. Labour welfare facilities
6. Work environment
7. Job satisfaction
8. Trade unions
9. Strikes

### Correlation Analysis

The results of matrix of correlation coefficients are given in Table 1.

**Table 1: Matrix of Correlation Coefficients among Industrial Relations Dimensions**

	P&A	L.W.F.	W.E.	I.R.P.	C.D.	M.S.D.	O.T.U.	O.S.	J.S.
P&A		.3637**	.3718**	.4623**	-.2150*	-.0773	.1655	.2066*	.5113**
L.W.F.	.3637**		.4716**	.4723**	-.4923**	-.2716**	.1714	.2555**	.4348**
W.E.	.3718**	.4716**		.4605**	-.3250**	-.0940	.1294	.1946*	.5875**
I.R.P.	.4623**	.4723**	.4605**		-.5288**	-.1765*	.2895**	.2089*	.6655**
C.D.	-.2150*	-.4923**	-.3250**	-.5288**		.3326**	-.1534	-.3468**	-.3876**
M.S.D.	-.0773	-.2716**	-.0940	-.1765*	.3326**		.1582	-.2698**	-.0247
O.T.U.	.1655	.1714	.1294	.2895**	-.1534	.1582		-.0932	.3397**
O.S.	.2066*	.2555**	.1946*	.2089*	-.3468**	-.2698**	-.0932		.3199**
J.S.	.5113**	.4348**	.5875**	.6655**	-.3876**	-.0247	.3397**	.3199**	

\* indicates one per cent level of significance

\*\* indicates five percent level of significance.

P&A – Pay and allowances; L.W.F.- Labour welfare facilities W.E.- Work environment; I.R.P. – Industrial relations practices; C.D. – Causes for disputes; M.S.D. Methods of settlement of disputes; O.T.U. – Opinion on trade unions; O.S.- Opinion on strikes; J.S.- Job satisfaction.

**The satisfied workers realized that the trade union should exist to ensure good industrial relations practices.**

Methods of settlement of disputes and the remaining variables were significantly correlated with job satisfaction. Causes for dispute (C.D.) were the only variable that negatively correlated with job satisfaction. The positive relationship between job satisfaction and opinion on strikes indicates that for those who had job satisfaction strike was not a weapon to achieve the monetary means. Those who were satisfied with their jobs had good opinion about the role of trade union. Opinion on trade unions and industrial relations practices were positively and significantly related. The implication is that the satisfied

workers realized that the trade union should exist to ensure good industrial relations practices.

In the co-operative printing presses, pay and allowances were considerably low. In spite of that, pay and allowances and job satisfaction were positively and significantly correlated. The inference is that even those who were drawing less pay felt job satisfaction. The basic reason for this positive relation was that most of the respondents enjoyed freedom in job and had job security. Further from the field survey it was inferred that the respondents held the view that if they resort to any kind of strike, it would lead to the closure of the presses.

**Even those who were drawing less pay felt job satisfaction.**

The negative correlation between job satisfaction and causes for disputes showed that when causes for disputes increased, workers lost their job satisfaction. Similarly the negative correlation between the industrial relations practices and causes for disputes indicated that where industrial relations practices were sound, the chances for disputes were less in the organisation. Causes for disputes were negatively correlated with pay and allowances, labour welfare facilities and work environment. The implication is that low pay and allowances, poor labour welfare facilities and poor work environment were the causes for industrial disputes.

### Factor Analysis

The principal components method of Factor Analysis has been used to extract the number of structures underlying the dimensions of industrial relations. To rotate the Factor Matrix, Kaiser's Varimax Criterion has been used. In the present study, dimensions (variables) with factor loadings at least equal to 0.60 have been taken for discussion, following Comrey (1983:416). Thus eight variables have been selected for discussion. The selected variables have been assigned a factor on the basis of their factor loadings. Results are presented in Table 2.

**Table 2: Rotated Factor Matrix of Selected Dimensions of Industrial Relations**

Sl No.	Factor Variables	Factor I	Factor II	Factor III	Communality
1	Industrial Relation Practices	0.80174	-0.09989	0.01769	0.8385
2	Causes for Disputes	-0.75314	-0.10029	0.2342	0.877646
3	Methods of settlement of Disputes	0.61883	-0.28667	0.1241	0.59141
4	Pay and Allowances	-0.15385	0.91006	0.14756	0.688231
5	Labour Welfare Facilities	0.12303	0.90152	-0.17733	0.613802
6	Work Environment	-0.0307	0.70273	0.0274	0.384644
7	Trade Unions	-0.17751	-0.11644	0.77591	0.647104
8	Strikes	0.14835	0.2393	0.65438	0.507485
	Eigen Value	2.238244	2.10284	1.17168	
	Total Variance	22.38244	21.0284	11.71618	
	Cumulative Variance	22.38244	43.41093	55.1264	

The Principal component Method has given three factor solutions to study the influence of groups of inter-correlated dimensions (variables) on the industrial relations. All the factors taken together explain 55.15 per cent of the total variation. The results are reliable, as the communality values have been high. The first factor has explained 22.38

per cent of the total variation. Industrial relations practices, causes for disputes and methods of settlement of disputes have been the dimensions clustered in the factor. The variable industrial rela-

**Industrial relations practices can maintain a good relation among workers and the management.**

tions practices has been heavily loaded in the factor. It shows that industrial relations practices can maintain a good relation among workers and the management. As all the variables clustered in the factor are relating to dispute settlement, the factor could be termed as 'Settlement Factor' or 'Relational Factor'.

The second factor has

explained 21.03 per cent of the total variation. Pay and allowances, labour welfare facilities and work environment have been the three dimensions clustered in the factor. The variables pay and allowances and labour welfare facilities have been heavily loaded in the factor. The inference is that these two dimensions largely influence the industrial relations in the positive direction. As all the variables clustered in the factor are relating to the job, the factor could be called 'Job Factor'.

The third factor has explained 11.72 per cent of the total variation. Trade unions and strikes have emerged as the dimensions in the factor. The factor could be named as 'Recognition Factor'.

### **Two Groups of Employees**

In this study we examined the factors that could discriminate between employees with cordial relationship and those with out with management. Standardization of coefficients has been done with the help of the poled 'within groups' standard deviation to make them directly

comparable to the discriminant power by their magnitude and to find the direction of discrimination by their sign.

**Table 3: Standard Canonical Discriminant Coefficients**

Sl	No. Factors	Coefficients	Other Statistics
1	Job Factor	0.9857	Wilks Lambda = 0.7484
2	Recognition Factor	0.1152	Canonical Correlation Coefficient = 0.746
3	Settlement Factor	-0.00831	

As shown in Table 3, the job factor has relatively high discriminating power than the other factors. The positive coefficient of this factor (0.9857) reveals the importance of job factor which includes:

- i) Pay and allowance
- ii) Labour welfare facilities
- iii) Work environment in maintaining cordial relation between employees and the management.

### **Conclusion**

The study concludes that the causes for disputes, methods of settlement of disputes led to the deterioration of industrial relations in co-operative printing presses in Tamil Nadu. Low pay and allowances, poor labour welfare facilities and poor work environment were the causes for industrial disputes. When the causes for industrial disputes increase, workers loose the job satisfaction. The workers of co-operative printing presses should be paid on par with the state government employees.

Since these co-operative printing presses are smaller organizations, a federation should be formed to look into the affairs of the presses. Whatever may be the size of the organization, the work environment should be improved in all respects.

**The workers of co-operative printing presses should be paid on par with the state government employees.**

### References

Comrey, A.L. (1983), "A First Course in Factor Analysis", quoted by Barbara, G, et. al., in *Using Multivariable Statistics*, Harper and Row Publishers, New York.