HRXpert

THE ANNUAL HR MAGAZINE

14TH EDITION

KSHITIJ'20-

PEOPLE, PROCESS AND PRACTICE-

AN HR AND IR VANTAGE

FACULTY ARTICLES

ALUMNI INTERVIEWS

INTERNSHIP DIARIES

MINDSCAPE WINNING ARTICLES

A MESSAGE FROM DEAN

I am very happy to welcome all of you to KSHITIJ 2020, which is not only one of the flagship HR event of the student association (XIMAHR) of the Xavier School of Human Resource Management, but it is also one of the most prestigious field event for practitioners, academicians and aspiring HR managers of this country. Over the last few years,

Dr. Andrew Dutta

Dr. Andrew Du

Dean

Xavier School of

Human Resource

Management

KSHITIJ is considered as one of the most important field shaping icon of the domain of HR management in this country. Sincere thanks is due to all the corporate leaders, noted academics and agile student body of this school that made this over a close to one decade.

This year's theme is "People, Process & Practice – An HR and IR Vantage ", which is perhaps one of the most relevant issues currently given the fact that the unprecedented pandemic has challenged all notions and models of managing business. With the recent article in HBR by Prof. Peter Capelli of Wharton asking managers to stop over-engineering of the HR management function, and delink HR function as a mere variable in the production function, KSHITIJ 2020 has the primary role to shape this thinking in this regard in India.

The country is already witnessing changes in the new labour codes and also a reverse domestic immigration, drastic fall in demand and production and steep rise in joblessness yet a focus on larger domestic production and making ourselves self-sufficient in our own needs fulfilment without depending too much on imports from any one single country. These are very new challenges for the field of HR in companies. The nature of work is shifting, the manner in which work, job and people are managed is undergoing drastic changes and the erstwhile people practices are now no longer applicable. What does this mean therefore for managing a large of workforce who are "screenagers" – is a question worth delving deep into.

I am sure KSHITIJ 2020, with its august panel members will be able to create a clear roadmap and direction for the future HR managers of this country. My sincere best wishes to each one of them for bringing out the best in each other.

CREDITS

CONTENT TEAM

AISHWARYA MISHRA GAYATHRI S SWETA MISHRA SNEHA AGARWAL

SHADOWS: ABHIGNYA ADAMA, ISHAA UTTAM, RITIKA MITTAL

















DESIGN TEAM

AKASH PANIGRAHI

SIMPI KALIA

PRACHI AGASTI

SWETA MISHRA

SHADOWS: AYUSH KUMAR SAHOO, SUDHA SWAYAM PRAVA, TANVI MAHAJAN, TANVI SHARMA

SPECIAL THANKS

Prof. Dr. Andrew Dutta Prof. Dr. Lalatendu Kesari Jena Prof. Sadhna Dash



CONTENTS

Our Events	04
About XIMAHR	05
Faculty Articles	07
Alumni Interviews	22
Internship Diaries	31
Winners Articles	39
QUIZotic Questions	53

EVENTS















ABOUT XIMAHR



Established in the year 1987 as the HR association, today XIMAHR provides a platform to the budding HR professionals to make sufficient inroads in gaining knowledge beyond the classroom and increases interface with the industry to remain more agile and relevant. Through its various activities and initiatives, XIMAHR tries to nurture talent and streamline the competencies of the students. XIMAHR has evolved as one of the leading association of student specializing in HR with its alumni base present in almost all corporate houses of India.

MISSION of XIMAHR

- To collaborate with the management, in designing the academic curriculum as per industry standards and trends.
- To become the most sought-after association for HR Consultancy and other industrial HR Solutions in the region.
- To get recognized as a platform for learning and development for the HR fraternity of XAHR and provide a blend of Academic Knowledge and Industrial exposure through various event.
- To uphold the values of XAHR and working towards projecting it in the best possible light.

VISION of XIMAHR

-To become an innovative, vibrant, vanguard association dedicated to Human Resources, to facilitate the holistic development of the HR Fraternity and create long term industry relationships and achieve excellence in our executions.

Events/Activities conducted by XIMAHR

HR Symposium: It is an annual event where practitioners across the industries share their thoughts and views in panel discussions on a theme to familiarize students with current initiatives and challenges in the field of HRM.

Manthan: It is a series of workshops that will test the HR knowledge of the students through series of rounds that will cover HR concepts and attention and retention power though quiz

Kshitij: It is the flagship event of XIMAHR. Eminent leaders from the field of HR and IR come under one roof to talk on emerging and relevant HR and IR themes. This is an event which tries to build the bridge between academia and industry.



Deeksha: This is an interaction event with XAHR's experienced seniors who talk about each elective in depth to aid the selection of subjects by giving a fair idea about the electives available.

Case in Point: This is another flagship national case study competition that is conducted during the annual cultural fest of the university.

ProAct: This event is organized during the annual cultural fest of the university and comprises of a mix of HR knowledge and fun where a participant has to show skills of humor, acting, communication and spontaneity apart from his/her HR knowledge.

Think HR Sessions: These are the sessions conducted by the second year HR students wherein discussions are held on various topics of academic importance aimed at sharing knowledge and experience with first year HR students.

Immersion Courses: Courses were offered by industry experts covering crucial topics in the field of HR.

Live Project: In an attempt to increase the industry engagement, XIMAHR brings live project opportunities for the HRM students.

HR'Xpert: This is the annual magazine published by XIMAHR summarizing all the keystone activities conducted throughout the year involving the HRM students, sharing excerpts of their internship experiences and major achievements.

HRizn: This is the monthly newsletter circulated by XIMAHR, covering the ongoing trends and recent developments in the world of business to ensure that the students are up to date

Tol-Mol: It is a learning event involving the negotiation between trade unions and management conducted by XIMAHR where one bargains to win and forge strong professional relationships.

MASKING YOUR EMOTIONS -THE DUALITY OF CONFLICTING EMOTIONAL REQUIREMENTS



Prof. Suchitra Pal XIMB



Mr. Debraj Das Phd. Student XIMB

The HR role is complex and divergent in nature. In addition to finding an acceptable solution to workplace problems, HR professionals are expected to handle the emotion the situation has prompted and act as an emotional manager, who control and contain the emotions of themselves and others.

Emotion is an inseparable part of human-being. The very existence of our lives is meaningless without the existence of emotions. We rely on social interactions every moment and exhibit a plethora of emotions. Be it work, social gatherings, or day to day activities involving people, the emotions we experience and express in these events shape our days. The catastrophes caused by COVID-19 pandemic need no explanations. The emotional experiences of people from all walks of life are not the same anymore. With extreme emotional experiences of high risk-perception, fear, anxiety, and sadness the employees from various organisations are continuing to work to meet the organisational demands with the hope for a better tomorrow. The frontline employees are facing major challenges due to customer facing and interactional nature of their job. Irrespective of their emotional experiences and felt emotions, these employees are expected to express emotions as per societal norms or organisational display rules (Grandey, 2000; Hochschild, 1983). While personal safety remains a top priority to protect one from the dangerous infection with the coronavirus, physical distancing and wearing of face mask are becoming the new social norms under the new normal.

The biggest question is how the frontline employee will meet the job demands of expressing desirable emotions when half of the face is covered with the mask. Emotional labour (Hochschild, 1983) which has become one of the key job requirements of the frontline employees may need revisit under the new normal.

Facial expressions (Ekman, 1973) are undeniably the greatest indicators of performance of frontline employees facing the customers as it conveys the emotions that the society or the organisations deem fit which are also meant to meet the expectations of the customers. Although studies have shown that while emotions pertaining to joy, happiness, etc. could still be deciphered since it stretches the muscles around the eyes, other negative emotions such as fear, anxiety, and so on are still hard to detect when half of the face is covered with the mask.

We need to look at the impact of wearing the mask from the feeling, evaluation, and motivation traditions (Scarantino & de Sousa, 2018) of the emotion. The personal usage of masks can be examined from the evaluative tradition of emotions as one tends to evaluate the situation under the pandemic and makes the judgement of wearing the mask to protect oneself. On the side, people vulnerable to infection with the virus expect everyone to wear the mask looking from pro-social emotional process – empathy towards the vulnerable ones; a tradition based on feeling and motivation (Pfattheicher et al., 2020). Thus, inducing empathy for people most vulnerable to the pandemic might promote the motivation to wear masks. Hence, we may argue that individuals or customers with the feeling of empathy may even expect the employees to wear the marks irrespective of the emotional expressions visible on the face of the employee. And as we argue, it is always the happiness and joy that will show up when one is still wearing a mask. Though irritability and some other emotions will still be visible, some of the negative emotions will be masked.

A part of the emotional disconnect during the pandemic could be due to the way people perceive masks. The mask is definitely masking the emotional expression of employees and the employee might be struggling with the emotional regulations to meet the social norms and organisational rules, but the conflict between the safety needs and customer expectations are continuing to fight from within. A patient is waiting to see a smiling face of the treating nurse - a means to let him/her know that all is well; but might as well feel empathetic and expect the nurse to cover her face. Some might think of it as a sign of solidarity, others might think this as absolute necessity. It is time for organisations to revisit the emotional display rules of customer facing employees. Instead of perceiving the masks as a sign of distancing, it is time to understand and acknowledge that it is a sign of mutual benefit and care (www.scientificamerican.com). That itself should help us cover a lot of emotional bridges of this conflicting emotional requirement. Apart from this, open communication about our feelings will play a pivotal role in covering the emotional gap (www.advisory.com).

TOWARDS A NEW HR HORIZON - DO THE CHANGING TIMES MANDATE A DIFFERENT ROLE OF HR?



Prof. Tania Saritova Rath XAHR

The unprecedented time requires unprecedented innovation to adapt and bounce forward. The pandemic has put tremendous demand on HR to keep the ball rolling with compassion and resilience. The scope of HR has enhanced immensely to embrace healthcare and employee wellbeing on a massive scale. Companies have renamed CHROs as Chief Connection Officer and Chief Health Officers to refocus the priority of the HR departments. All areas of HR starting from Strategy, Planning, Recruitment, Performance, Learning & development, Compensation are being impacted by the continuous lockdowns and shutdowns that continue for months. Keeping the employees stressfree and motivated during this time while convincing them for a wage cut, furloughing or even in some cases lay off are absolutely challenging and require HR to handle such actions involving difficult communications with utmost sensitivity.

As overnight things have moved to virtual platforms, skilling, upskilling and reskilling has become a herculean task for HR. Training employees to use technology to enable them to perform in a virtual mode has helped certain heavily IT dependent sectors. On the other hand, managing shopfloor workers by training them to follow hygiene measures like frequent washing of hands and sanitization turned out to be highly challenging for HR managers in manufacturing set ups. Everybody from top to bottom must be trained in Covid guidelines and Government advisory issued from time to time. Remote working or work from home which was optional and usually given to women employees to facilitate coping with household care responsibilities has become universal norm during the pandemic. With it came new life balance issues which eventually landed at the door of HR to solve. As Shri Ratan Tata has rightly said ,"It is impossible to survive as a company if one is not sensitive to its people".

This is a time of tremendous uncertainty where every familiar way of working and doing business has gone for a toss. The flexibility and resilience required to face such scenario requires sensitive communication from the leaders. HR has a big role in guiding the leaders as well as taking on the role as change agents. They must listen to the people, try harnessing each other's resources through collaboration to develop a supportive environment. Companies like NTPC, PWC, Tatas, Ashok Leyland, Amazon etc. have reprioritized HR role to take care of health and safety of employees. For example, NTPC has started a PMS (Physical, Mental and Spiritual) programme to keep employees motivated during changing times. Another important innovation is digital detox being adopted by Amazon to rejuvenate employees from digital fatigue and stress actively advocating to take time off. This requires change in policies for taking leave, remote working, and work from home practices.

The role of learning and continuous learning to remain relevant in such a scenario and beyond has put learning and development as the leading function of HR. People must be given training in how to learn using virtual platform to do business in the 'New Normal'. They must be given awareness training also to keep themselves safe and healthy. This role is going to continue post pandemic with functional training supported by motivational and stress management programmes. Companies tie up with various learning providers like LinkedIn learning platform for VILT (Virtual Instructor led Trainings) courses to quickly reskill employees through online learning.

Many of these change initiatives are likely to continue beyond the pandemic time. The role of HR has always been doing business with a human face. The role remains the same, but the scope of work has increased immensely. Yes, the changing times has put HR invariably at the front seat. The Leadership challenge is enormous. Nice to see HR navigating through these challenges with an unprecedented resilience and flexibility to keep the business running with, 'compassion, communication, care and collaboration' which reaffirms the adage 'HR is Business'. HR is no longer limited to a particular department; it has become the profession of all managers across departments and across levels.

हम किस गली जा रहेहैं- ASSESSING THE LABOR LAW REFORMS



Prof. Girish Balasubramanian Assistant Professor HRM, IIM Lucknow

The last few months have indeed been quite challenging to the world and India is no exception owing to the Co-Vid-19 pandemic. It is also demonstrative of the increasingly connected and globalized nature of the world and the business and how one small incident can have a butterfly effect. While the scientists are busy trying to figure out a vaccine and epidemiologists and data aficionados are trying to build a robust model to understand the spread of the disease, the businesses are finding unique ways to adapt to the new challenges. Many of the earlier assumptions and ways of business are being revisited for instance organizations have adopted the usage of virtual meetings instead of face to face/physical meetings. As summarized by our honorable Prime Minister – "आपदा मेंअवसर" - which loosely translates as finding opportunities in challenges in one of his addresses to the nation. In continuation to the earlier government's focus on structural reforms, and in line with the vision of self-reliant India (आत्मिकर्भर रारत) there has been a constant endeavor especially, to improve the ranking of India on the index of ease of doing business. India is ranked 63 currently overall an improvement of ranks (www.doingbusiness.org/en/rankings). The complex labor laws have been projected as a major impediment in ease of doing business. It is almost as though history is being recreated except with different actors and different context - in 1991 under the then Late PM Dr. P V Narasmiha Rao and Dr. Manmohan Singh the then finance minister economic reforms were ushered in. Almost three decades later reforms are again being ushered in albeit in the field of labor laws. The famous rendition by singer Atif Aslam from the album Doorie – "हम किस गली जा रहेहैं" - (loosely translated as Where are we headed to) seems apposite to take stock of the much talked about labor reforms that have been enacted by the present Government of India. Therefore, the aim of this article would be to take an unbiased assessment of the labor codes as a whole rather than getting into the specifics for the sake of brevity.

Labor as a subject of administration falls under the concurrent list owing to which both the Central and State Governments can enact adequate legislations guided by the Directive Principles (Constitution of India 2018). In addition to the governments there is a multi-tiered judiciary headed by the Supreme Court which exercises its power to interpret the law of the land and the Constitution. The complexity and ambiguity can be attributed to 41 separate legislations having about 1200 different sections and giving rise to getting about 6 different registrations and 4 different licenses (Nageshwaran, 2020). Despite having such an expanse of legislations a large chunk of the unorganized workforce as well as the emerging platform based workers' often remained outside the purview of major provisions of labor laws barring statutory provisions and employee compensation. Thus reducing this complexity to 4 codes is indeed an ambitions intention. Moreover, this reduction in complexity was long overdue and various industry bodies in India and internationally have often demanded for more labor flexibility to make India a more invest (Kumar, 2020). With the structural economic reforms, India as an economy decided to shed away the license Raj image and adopt the Logic of Competition (Frenkel & Kuruvilla, 2002) – it is intuitive that heavy government interference and paternal nature of labor laws are not compatible with the global competition. The reforms also have a visionary intent. The scope of the proposed codes has been sufficiently enhanced in order to have a wider coverage which earlier used to cover a measly 5-7% of the formalized workforce. Secondly it is also catering to the contemporary needs such as bringing within its coverage the gig workers, the platform based workers and opening avenues for fixed term contracts including the statutory benefits. The proposed changes to the labor laws also enhance the penalties in some of the provisions. Two National Labor Commissions have been commissioned to assess the conditions of the labor in Commission gave a suggestion to unify the India. The Second National Labor legislations having common purpose and the existing labor codes can actually be traced to this recommendation. It was particularly critical of the abysmal state of collective bargaining in India owing to the lack of adequate legislations of recognition and registration of the trade unions (NCL, 2002). Some positives definitely have been taken in the proposed changes which have envisaged setting up of collective bargaining councils or committees depending on the representation of the workers in the firm (The Industrial Relations Code, 2019). Thus some of the positive aspects of the proposed labor reforms can be summarized as being visionary and keeping in tune to the contemporary needs of both business and workforce, reducing the complexity to be navigated in terms of number of legislations and compliances, making adequate provisions to focus on collective bargaining to mature - thus allowing mature industrial relations between the management and workers/trade unions two important actors within the industrial relations system and proposed wider coverage of the legislations. The overarching feature is that the changes are proposed keeping in mind the need and necessity of the investment and employment generation as well as making a complete transition to a market economy – whether or not such a change will indeed happen time will only tell.

As Sherlock Holmes the famous detective and protagonist of Arthur Conan Doyle would tell his friend, "The Devil is in the details my dear Watson". A critical examination of the proposed labor reforms brings out some of the short comings. The proposed codes are subsume some of the existing labor laws. The Wage Code is an amalgam of the Payment of Bonus Act, Payment of Wages Act, Minimum Wages Act and Equal Remunerations Act. On closer inspection one finds that the existing legislations are actually specific chapters in the new code with specific definition of key terms for each of the chapters. Since codes hardly address the redundant and ambiguous provisions it can hardly be termed as a structural reform - at best it is an exercise in amalgamation (Sarkar, 2019). A country as huge as India where the language changes every few kilometers, and praxis are different in different regions unification of the legislations and altering the terminology is likely to cause confusion, consequently implementation of the proposed changes indeed is a huge challenge and it remains to be seen how successfully the government is able to implement them (Sarkar, 2019). In addition to the suggestion by the Second National Labor Commission recommendation, the need for investments and adequate employment opportunities has been cited as one of the reasons for unifying the labor laws into codes. This however totally relies majorly on anecdotal evidences of labor legislations being an impediment to the so called "growth". Empirical evidence of effect of labor legislations on overall productivity, job creation and economic growth in different contexts has at best been mixed (Gross & Ryan, 2008; Lai & Sarkar, 2019; Olney, 2013).

On the contrary empirical evidence suggests that compromising on the labor regulations often leads to undercutting or compromising the labor standards and which happens to be a new race to the bottom owing to globalization (Olney, 2013). If we go by empirical evidence from India, Balasubramanian and Dash (2020) have found empirical evidence for the workers collective or the trade union having a positive impact on the productivity of the listed firms in the manufacturing sector. Prof. Shyam Sundar labor economist and professor at XLRI, Xavier School of Business has estimated loss of wage premium owing to the new labor codes (Prashant K Nanda, 2020). While flexibility and prudence are a necessity for the ease of doing business, the policies also need to be strongly grounded in empirics rather than anecdotal evidences. To summarize the shortcomings/pitfalls of the proposed codes while the intent can be appreciated – a closer examination of the codes gives an impression that it is at best an amalgamation rather than a serious reform. Secondly confusion abounds with respect to the implementation. Thirdly given that empirical evidences show that compromise on regulation to aid investment and employment generation is fraught with dangers of race to the bottom, whether or not necessary safeguards are in place is not clear.

On the contrary empirical evidence suggests that compromising on the labor regulations often leads to undercutting or compromising the labor standards and which happens to be a new race to the bottom owing to globalization (Olney, 2013). If we go by empirical evidence from India, Balasubramanian and Dash (2020) have found empirical evidence for the workers collective or the trade union having a positive impact on the productivity of the listed firms in the manufacturing sector. Prof. Shyam Sundar labor economist and professor at XLRI, Xavier School of Business has estimated loss of wage premium owing to the new labor codes (Prashant K Nanda, 2020). While flexibility and prudence are a necessity for the ease of doing business, the policies also need to be strongly grounded in empirics rather than anecdotal evidences. To summarize the shortcomings/pitfalls of the proposed codes while the intent can be appreciated – a closer examination of the codes gives an impression that it is at best an amalgamation rather than a serious reform. Secondly confusion abounds with respect to the implementation. Thirdly given that empirical evidences show that compromise on regulation to aid investment and employment generation is fraught with dangers of race to the bottom, whether or not necessary safeguards are in place is not clear.

In conclusion the assessment is that the proposed changes to the labor legislations is a mixed bag and much of the success depends on the effective implementation. It does declutter the complex web of rules and labor legislations and one can see light at the end of the tunnel. As noted cricketer and commentator Navjot Singh Sidhu would say one needs to be have a healthy skepticism about the light at the end of the tunnel lest it might be a train that is going to run you over.

THE NEW LABOR CODES-LEGISLATIVE INTENT AND REPERCUSSIONS



Dr. Arup Roy Chowdhury XAHR

The history of Labour Legislation in India is naturally interwoven with the History of British Colonialism. The industrial/labour legislations enacted by the British were primarily intended to protect the interest of the British employers. The original colonial legislation has undergone substantial modifications in the post-colonial era because independent India called for a clear partnership between labor and capital. A plethora of State legislations were either modified or newly enacted to provide the machinery for regulating the rights of employees & employers. With the aid of the regulatory mechanism from the State, Industrial Law covers a comprehensive canvas of social control to protect the interest of both workers and employers to bring in the desired industrial growth and prosperity for the country.

Labour Law is not a sole legislation, but it's a cluster of legislations enacted & amended by the government from time to time, covering the gamut of issues relating to labour & it's employment, satisfaction & job security to the labour and to check exploitation and oppression by the employer, is the essence of all these enactments.

In September 2020, the government withdrew three Bills related to labour laws and replaced them with new ones. The three labour code bills – the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020; the Industrial Relations Code, 2020; and the Code on Social Security, 2020 was passed by Parliament. This seems to be a major boost to labour reforms. In August 2019, Parliament had passed the first of the codes, the Wage Code.

These Bills make significant changes to regulation of labour and the employer-employee relationship in several ways. India has a complex regime of labour laws, and several committees have recommended simplifying and rationalizing them. Last year, the government introduced four labour codes as Bills to replace 29 existing laws. These Codes dealt with regulation of wages, occupational safety and health, social security, and industrial relations. The Code on Wages was passed by Parliament in 2019.

Major shift in approach

All the three Bills reflects a major shift in approach from the earlier laws. Many essential features of the law are no longer specified in the Codes but have been delegated to be prescribed by the government through Rules. Examples of delegated items include setting the thresholds for application of various social security schemes, specifying safety standards and working conditions, and the power to increase the threshold for establishments that have to seek permission before retrenchment. An important question is whether such features should be hard-coded in the Acts.

Another important issue for consideration is whether there should be relaxations for small enterprises to reduce their compliance burden. One may argue that for matters related to safety standards should be applicable to all while matters related to providing job security could be based on the size of the firm. The Occupational Safety Bill (which prescribes safety standards and maximum work hours) exempts small establishments from its purview while the Industrial Relations Bill applies to all.

New Labor Codes

There are several aspects of these Bills that differ significantly from the earlier Bills.

- 1) The 2020 Bills raise several thresholds.
- a) The Factories Act of 1948 defines any manufacturing unit as a factory if it employs 10 workers (with the aid of power) or 20 workers (without the aid of power). These thresholds are being raised to 20 and 40 workers, respectively.
- b) The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 requires any establishment employing over 100 workers to seek government permission before any retrenchment. Now, the threshold has been raised to 300, with the government empowered to raise it further through notification.
- c) The Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act of 1946 requires employers to formally define conditions of employment under them if they have at least 100 worker.

- 2) The 2020 Bills provide the government with the power to exempt establishments from any or all of their provisions.
- a) The Code on Industrial Relations governs working conditions, trade unions, retrenchment and layoffs, dispute resolution, and establishes industrial tribunals. The government may, in public interest, exempt any new industrial establishment from the provisions of this Code. One of the salient feature of this Code is the provision to set up a re-skilling fund for training of retrenched workers. The fund shall, consist of the contribution of the employer of an amount equal to fifteen days wages last drawn by the worker immediately before the retrenchment or such other number of days, as may be notified by the Central Government, in case of retrenchment only. The fund shall be utilised by crediting 15 days wages last drawn by the worker to his account who is retrenched, within 45 days of the retrenchment as may be provided by rules.

Also the Code incorporates a provision for a new feature of recognition of negotiating union and negotiating council in an industrial establishment by an employer for the purpose of negotiations. The criterion for recognition of negotiating union has been fixed at 51% or more workers on a muster roll of that industrial establishment. As regards negotiating council, a Trade Union having support of every 21% of workers will get one seat in the negotiating council and the fraction above 20% shall be disregarded.

The Industrial Relations Code combines the features of three erstwhile laws — the Trade Unions Act, 1926, the Industrial Employment (Standing Orders) Act, 1946, and the Industrial Disputes Act, 1947. It defines 'workers' to include, besides all persons employed in a skilled or unskilled, manual, technical, operational and clerical capacity, supervisory staff drawing up to ₹18,000 a month as salary. It introduces 'fixed term employment', giving employers the flexibility to hire workers based on requirement through a written contract. Fixed term employees should be treated on a par with permanent workers in terms of hours of work, wages, allowances and other benefits, including statutory benefits such as gratuity.

b) Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions specifies leave and maximum work hours, requires health and safety norms including adequate lighting and ventilation and welfare measures. It subsumes 13 Acts including the Factories Act. The 2020 Bill allows the State government to exempt any new factory from its provisions in the interest of increased economic activity and employment generation. Given that every new factory would lead to incremental employment, this gives wide discretion to the State government to exempt new factories from basic safety and welfare norms.

The Code aims at lessening the burden of the employers as it would replace multiple registrations under various enactments to one common registration, one licence and one return which will ultimately create a consolidated database centrally and will be helpful under ease of doing business. The limit of female workers for the purpose of creating creche facility for the children below 6 years of age, would increase to 50 female workers from 30 currently. As per The Factories Act if any establishment has 500 or more workers than occupier should appoint welfare officers but post implementation of this Code, limit shall be reduced to 250 employees. The establishment employing 100 workers will be responsible to provide canteen facility, reduction from current limit of 250.

Overall the Code aims to empower both employees and employers. On one side it allows flexibility in hiring and retrenchment on other side it will expand the social security net for both formal and informal workers.

- 3) There are some changes related to contract labour.
- a) The 2019 Bill was applicable to establishments which employed at least 20 contract workers and to contractors supplying at least 20 workers; these thresholds have been raised to 50 workers.
- b) The 2020 Code prohibits the employment of contract workers in any core activity, and specifically permits employment in a specified list of non-core activities including canteen, security and sanitation services.
- 4) The 2019 Bill on Occupational Safety allowed the government to prohibit employment of women in undertaking operations that could be dangerous to their health and safety. The 2020 Bill removes this power to prohibit employment and instead require employers to provide adequate safeguards.
- 5) Code on Wages 2019
- a) There are several definitions of the terms "wages", "employees", "employer", "establishment" etc in the different Labour Laws leading to various litigations besides difficulty in its implementation. The definitions of various terms have been simplified which will lead to better execution and compliance of the law.
- b) Provision of Floor Wage Concept which was absent in the earlier Acts and is unique Feature of the Code on wages Act, 2019. The Code provides for fixation of a floor wage, which is to be determined by the Central Government after taking into account the minimum living standards of workers, which may be different for different geographical areas. The appropriate Government of each state shall have to fix the minimum wages not less than floor wages as fixed by the Central Government. However, if the existing minimum wages fixed by the appropriate Government is higher than the floor wage, they cannot reduce the minimum wages.

- c) The Code seeks to provide a single uniform definition of 'wages' as applicable to minimum wages, payment of wages and payment of bonus.
- d) The new feature in the Code is that wages shall be paid by cheque or by crediting wages in the bank account of the employee or by electronic mode in addition to payment by way of cash. Further provision is made that the appropriate government shall specify industrial or other establishment wherein employees shall be paid wages only by cheque or by crediting wages in his bank account. The payment of wages by cheque or by electronic mode will bring more transparency in the system. The Payment of Wages by Cheque will also curb unfair practice of paying less wages to the employees than amount payable under the law or as agreed.
- e) Section 18 (3) of Code on Wages Act, 2019 is simple, uniform and clear compared to section 7 (3) of the Payment of Wages Act, 1936. The Section 18 of Code on Wages 2019 provides that the deductions shall not exceed 50% whereas in the Payment of Wages Act, 1936 the deductions were permissible upto 75% in case of the payment to cooperative societies and rest it was upto 50%.
- f) The Code has incorporated one more criteria in the provision related to disqualification from Bonus i.e. dismissal on account of conviction for sexual harassment.

Impact of IR Code

The reforms will make industrial strikes more difficult by clamping new conditions and also expand the social security net for both formal and informal workers. Under the Industrial Relation Code, the government has allowed companies up to 300 workers to retrench workers or close plants without the prior approval of the government. However, firms with more than 300 workers need to still apply for approval. However, if the authorities do not respond to their request, the retrenchment proposal will be deemed to be approved. Earlier labour laws required a 30 to 90 days notice period before retrenching "workmen", which is a class of mainly shop floor workers. In the case of manufacturing units, plantations, and mines with 100 or more workmen, lay-offs also required government approval. The point to ponder here is that if the data that 90% of India's workforce, which is employed in the informal sector is considered to be true then they won't be affected by these changes.

Economists have argued that India's outdated labour laws need change. Stringent hiring-firing rules applied to firms with over 100 employees, making it virtually impossible to lay off workers. This adversely acted as an incentive for smaller firms to stay small so they could escape the rules. According to the World Bank, with less restrictive laws, India could approximately add on an annual basis "2.8 million more good quality formal sector jobs".

Right of Workers to go on strike

The Industrial Relation Code lays down new conditions on the right of workers to go on strike. Unions will now have to give 60 days' strike notice. If proceedings are pending before a labour tribunal or the National Industrial Tribunal, workers cannot go on a strike for 60 days after they are concluded. These conditions apply to all industries. Earlier, workers could go on strike by giving between two weeks and six weeks of notice. Flash strikes are now outlawed.

Rules on Workplace Safety

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020, amends laws regulating occupational safety, health and working conditions of employees. The code empowers a state government to exempt any new factory from the provisions of the Code to create more economic activity and jobs. It fixes the maximum daily work limit at eight hours a day. Women will be entitled to be employed in all establishments for all types of work and in case they are required to work in hazardous or dangerous operations, the government may require the employer to have adequate safeguards in place prior to employment.

Social Security

The Code on Social Security, 2020 promises social security for both organized, informal workers, gig and platform workers. The government shall formulate and notify from time to time the suitable welfare schemes, including schemes related to "provident fund; employment injury benefit; housing; educational schemes for children; skill upgradation of workers; funeral assistance; and old age homes". The social security code lays down the setting up of a National Social Security Board to recommend to the central government suitable schemes for unorganised workers. The contribution by aggregators shall be at the rate not exceeding 2% but not less than 1% of the annual turnover of aggregator as specified in the Seventh Schedule. The rate shall be notified by the Central Government. The Central Government may frame ESIC scheme for unorganized workers. The concept of 'Career Centres' has been introduced in this Code. It means any office (including employment exchange, place or portal) established and maintained for providing career services (including registration, collection and furnishing of information).

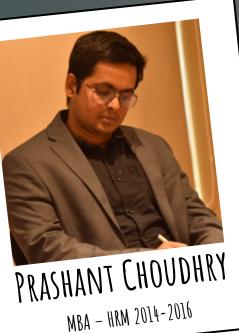
Conclusion

A developed & dedicated workforce is a pre-requisite for the success of an organization. Hence, a number of obligations have been imposed upon the employer, non-compliance of which entails penalty/prosecution. There is other side of the coin too. The employer has restricted rights to be exercised against the employees under certain conditions. Provisions have also been made to curb unfair labour practices, such as strikes, go-slow etc., to resolve the industrial disputes and to harmonise the labour management relations.

Ignorance of law is no excuse. Hence, it is essential for all whether the owner, employer, manager, supervisor or even employee of any organization, to keep themselves abreast of his rights and obligations under the labour laws.

A lot of concerns have been raised by the Trade Unions because the new labour codes have further eroded the limited protection available to them. As per a report in the Hindustan Times, Labour Economist KR Shyam Sundar of XLRI, Jamshedpur quoted "The Industrial Relations Code, 2020, bring new rules for hiring and firing of labour in mid-sized and large industries, making retrenchment easier. This effectively brings the north American hire-and-fire model to the Indian hinterland economy in the hope that businesses recoup and add more jobs on a net basis".

Also, elongation of the timeline before the workers can go on a strike has made the reality of a strike practically impossible. All in all, the new labour codes define the culmination of more than a decade long aspiration of Indian labour legislation fraternity to simplify the plethora of statutes that have dotted the landscape for so long. However this is just a step in the right direction and a lot many changes are needed to make them more robust and truly unifying.



ALUMNUS INTERVIEW

Mr. Prashant Choudhry is an esteemed alum of XIMB-HR, the batch of 2016. He holds a rich experience of working in both government as well as private sector.

At present, he is working as a Sr. Personnel Officer at THDC India Limited, a Miniratna Schedule A PSU, where he got an opportunity to understand IR and labour welfare activities and was also exposed to various government programs. A dual master's, an M.Sc degree in Physics from BITS, Pilani, and an MBA from XIMB, he has worked with Aircel Limited and Lenskart in Corporate HRIS/ HR Operations roles prior to joining THDCIL.

During his two years of stay at XIMB, and as a part of XIMAHR, he was instrumental in taking new initiatives and designing events as we see them today. Prashant has many laurels added to his hat, he bagged the "Best Presenter Award" and also as a Team Leader steered his team to win first prize in the "PowerHR forum", a forum for HR Professionals of all power sector PSU's in India. Moreover, his Quality circle team won the "Par Excellence Award", the highest award of the National Convention of Quality Concepts in the year 2019. He has twice successfully cleared the UGC NET exam, a clear proof of his academic excellence and intellectual prowess. His organization became the 1st PSU in India to attain Level 4 certification of PCMM and he played a key role during the preparation and assessment of his organization for 2 years. He has also trained budding HR professionals in the field of Advanced Excel and VB macros at various forums. For leisure, he likes to play badminton and stroll along the Ganges Ghat.

In an exclusive interview with Mr. Prashant, we tried to understand how we can excel in the perpetually evolving and dynamically changing field of Human Resource Management. Here are the snippets of what his interview:



What are some of the characteristics that make one successful in the HR Profession?

HR is a profession that is frequently revolutionizing. To flourish in one's career; an individual should not shy away from learning even after graduation. As an HR Manager, we get to interact with several people every day and face a multitude of situations. Every person we meet and every experience we have, good or bad, teaches us something new.

21st century is the era of technology. Information technology has penetrated every domain of management and Industrial Revolution 4.0 is already here. So, HR is predicted to see a sea of changes. In today's time to outshine in the field of HR, a basic understanding of various technological up-gradation is of utmost importance.

The most crucial function of HR personnel is to act as a bridge between the employees and management. An HR should be able to put up his ideas in front of the management without any hesitance, for the smooth functioning of the organization and betterment of its employees.

A good understanding of the core business of the organization and also possessing cross-functional knowledge goes a long way into shaping one's career.

Owing to the changing times, what would be the HR vantage in terms of People, Process, and Practices?

With the changing times, I see two notable shifts in the role of HR, and they are:

Gradually AI and advanced ERP tools are going to take over the most repetitive and clerical tasks of HR professionals. The role of HR's would shift towards the strategic side shortly. To perform strategically in the VUCA world, HR professionals would need to become more technology and data-driven.

The government is also consolidating and simplifying labour laws and compliances to improve Ease of Doing Business. Tilt can be seen towards the use of more contract labour and outsourcing of work. These could lead to labour unions becoming weaker and scattered in near future. The IR roles might lose their sheen or get redefined in the coming days.

Did you notice shifts in HR's role due to the pandemic?

Yes, there has been a visible shift in the role of HR due to pandemic. The pandemic has brought about many changes; specifically, it has changed the nature of employee engagement activities because employees are now working remotely.



Some of the gaps found have been filled by technology. There is also an evident emergence of the Work from Anywhere concept and virtual teams. However, in my opinion, HR professionals are currently not equipped to manage such a workforce. The major shift in my organization is that even Blue-collar workers have to adapt to technology and virtual meetings as a new normal.

How do you think, we as HR students, can be more prepared for the new normal?

For the current students of HR, I have three recommendations regarding how to prepare themselves for the new normal:

- First and foremost being they should learn how to work with data and should have basic functional knowledge of usage of ERP tools.
- The new normal has highlighted the concept of remote working, which can be the norm for the future workforce, and therefore, the students should be able to be adaptable to the idea of remote working. There is also scope for a lot of innovation in this area.
- The most important thing to keep in mind during these difficult times is to have the right attitude and a positive mindset.

Could you share with us some of your most cherished MBA experience and your plan ahead?

I have had a lot of good memories of my MBA days. The JLT, late-night walks around the campus, and night out with friends would be some of the most cherished ones. Also, we were the first batch of HR at the XUB campus, and there was no public transport available back then for commutation. We used to hire auto every weekend to watch a movie in Bhubaneswar. We tried eating out at almost every restaurant in Bhubaneswar. Another cherished memory would be working for XIMAHR. We had a great team and were able to bring about some promising initiatives. XIMAHR gives you immense opportunity to grow intellectually and interact with great brains from different institutes. I wish the best of luck to the current XIMAHR team for their initiatives. I would always be professionally and emotionally attached to XIMAHR. Talking about my future plans, I am still hungry for knowledge and currently, I am learning about other Social Sciences to switch into Civil services.



ALUMNA INTERVIEW

School of HRM (2017 - 2019). She is currently serving as Associate Consultant-Workday IBM Services. While pursuing her two-year post-graduate management degree, she also functioned as the core committee member of XIMAHR-HR Association of XAHR. Before joining her MBA, she has worked with one of the India's largest multinational corporation, Infosys Limited, as a Senior System Engineer (2014-2017). She has interned with India's oldest and most admired pharmaceutical company, Abbott Healthcare India Pvt. Ltd. She has also worked as a project trainee at Nettur Technical Training Foundation, Bangalore. She is a graduate in

Miss Sree Ramya is an esteemed alumna of the Xavier

Now, let's find out where an MBA can take us and what it can inspire us to achieve in the new normal, from the learning and real-life instances shared by our alumna.

Electronics and Communications Engineering from Biju

Patnaik University of Technology, Odisha (2009-2013).

What are some of the characteristics that make one successful in the HR Profession, according to you?

HRs are the culture champions of the Organization. They need to be approachable and employee friendly. According to me, new age HRs need to have a problem solving approach bound by integrity and ethics.

Owing to the changing times, what, according to you, would be an HR vantage in the aspects of People, Process and Practices?

In the current environment, HR role in every organisation has drastically evolved from a support function to a more leadership and decision making role.



Decisions on employee health, safety and work-life balance has become more important. HR vantage in the changing times can also be credited to the reach through digital channels into every aspect of People, Process and Practices. New practices are put in place to cut costs, handle layoffs, modify health policies etc and in the same time make the employees feel valued.

Did you notice shifts in HR's role due to Pandemic?

HR always has to run a fine line between Organization and Employees. During this pandemic, HR's role in the aspects of engagement and business transactions increased multifold. HRs had to come up with new initiatives such as Yoga and Mindfulness sessions, online events, reimbursements for work from home setup to keep employees motivated and helps cope up with stress and anxiety. Shift in workplace need to run in tandem with Work-Life Equilibrium.

How do you think, we as HR students, can be more prepared for the new normal?

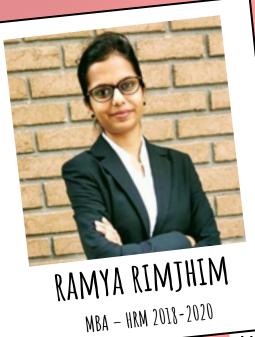
HR students need to have an open mindset to changing times. HR Leadership with Business acumen is the call of the hour. It is more advisable to keep oneself updated with happenings in various sectors and understand the viability of every business decisions on the future of Organization.

Could you share with us some of your most cherishable MBA experience?

My most cherishable MBA experience is the 2 month industry stint (internship) I did as part of curriculum. Compared to classroom sessions, practical on-the-job learning gives a greater exposure and experience with prime focus on process and policies of the industry. That is the biggest takeaway from MBA.

How has been your professional journey so far and would you like to share some of your learnings?

As an HR Consultant, my work is entirely client-centric focused on implementing cloud based ERP for the Organization. MBA in HR helped me form an in depth knowledge and understanding to minute requirements of the client. "Every client is different, and there is no one fit for all solution" - is a key learning from my experience so far. So a consultant needs to stay agile, be persistent and have a solution-centric approach.



ALUMNA INTERVIEW

Miss Ramya Rimjhim is an esteemed alumna of the Xavier School of HRM (2018- 2020). She is currently serving as the Human Resources Business Partner for

Medical Services at Tata Steel. While pursuing her two-year post-graduate management degree, she also held a position of responsibility as the coordinator of the Student Placement Committee, XIMB-XAHR. Before joining her MBA, she has worked with India's largest multinational business group, Tata Consultancy Services, as a System Engineer (2015-2018). She has interned with pharmaceutical companies like Dr. Reddy's Laboratories, Hyderabad and Apotex Pharmachem India Pvt. Ltd, Bengaluru. She is a graduate in Chemical Engineering from B.M.S College of Engineering, Bengaluru (2011-2015).

Now, let's find out where an MBA can take us and what it can inspire us to achieve in the new normal, from the learnings and real-life instances shared by our alumna.

What do you think are some of the characteristics that make one successful in the HR profession?

Few characteristics that I feel would help anybody in the HR profession can be:

- Knowledge of the business and expertise in HR practices and policies to make your opinion matter.
- It also depends on the type of role you are in. But majorly the ability to effectively deal with people and situations matter as employees are the major stakeholders.
- Being patient and a good listener helps in analyzing the problems and coming up with proper solutions because "one size fits all" doesn't work in any organization.
- Understand your target audience to build policies that will be readily accepted.



- Follow protocols because shortcuts do not work in the workplace.
- Focus on employee experience and look for reducing redundancy and optimizing the processes.
- Also, "on a lighter note", excellent presentation skills will take you a long way.

Owing to the changing times, what according to you, would be an HR vantage in the aspects of People, Process and Practices?

These are disruptive times, and the workplace has seen a complete transformation. Now we are talking about work, workplace, and workforce- "Workplace 2.0"

- People- Right now, the prime focus is on employee wellbeing and their families' wellbeing. We, as HR managers, are ensuring that our employees are safe, they are taking proper precautions, and most importantly, they understand the importance of taking precautions. It is also crucial to ensure that the employees are getting recognized for their efforts as they are putting their best foot forward and helping the company in business continuity. Employee Engagement is one of the biggest challenges that we are facing virtually and trying to work it out.
- Process- It has now become more agile. I can say that the companies are moving towards a more agile working culture, there is no laid-back attitude anymore, and decisions are taken very fast, which is the need of the hour. And also, ensuring compliance in this pandemic is very important. No matter what the situation is, but the compliances, like safety compliances, can't be neglected.
- Coming to the practices, they are constantly changing. Be it recruitment, training of
 employees, appraisals, everything is happening online. Employee safety is a
 concern, but business continuity is also important. So, maintaining a balance
 between these two factors has become one of the key focus areas. The use of
 technology has also increased drastically.

To sum up, I would say the changes in people, processes, and practices are essential to ensure business continuity.

Did you notice any shifts in HR's role due to the pandemic?

Yes, definitely. The HR professionals have become the front-line warriors for the company in this pandemic. In addition to handling the business requirements, we are now also responsible for addressing the concerns, apprehensions of the employees.



We have to constantly update ourselves and also update the employees, about all the rules, the protocols that have to be followed, and the change in the work style that is happening. HR team is a strong pillar that supports the employee health, helps in tracking COVID cases, and address grievances of the employees. We have seen an added responsibility of always bringing a change in policies and practices, as per the need of the hour. We had come with new work from home policies. These changes need quick decision-making and change in policies. We also have to ensure employee engagement and their mental wellbeing and communicate everything effectively. Few companies have come up with "Infrastructure allowance" for the employees because many of the employees do not have the necessary infrastructure at their home. HR role has become more dynamic than ever with managing remote workplaces and ensuring employee engagement and morale.

How do you think, we as HR students, can be more prepared for the new normal?

It is challenging to be prepared for uncertain times like this. But since we already know that this situation is here and it is here to stay, it is not going to be normal anytime sooner. Initially, it might be challenging, but you will get used to it. When the time comes, you would be prepared to face the transition as you are used to the online mode by now. It will be comparatively easier for all of you as the work culture has become more flexible.

On the other hand, the line between office life and personal life has become thin. As MBA students, you can be more agile and proactive to deal with the situation. Most importantly, be future-ready and don't be too dependent on anything. Don't resist change, understand it, and accept it- the sooner, the better. As we know, learning has no age, so- unlearn, learn, and relearn. Most importantly, enjoy every moment with friends and family as they are the only constants.

Could you share with us some of your most cherishable MBA experience?

The whole two years of my MBA journey was cherishable. The journey transforms you as a person. It transformed me for sure. Some of them are:

- Seeing my batchmates getting placed throughout the year. It was a very satisfying and completely different feeling altogether.
- The times I spent with my team, laughing and crying together, and of course, my friends, who stood by me throughout. Overall, the type of connections you make and the way you interact with people will make you grow as an individual.



How has been your professional journey so far, and would you like to share some of your learnings?

The professional journey so far has been good. Tata Steel has allowed me to work on several projects until now, and I am settling down well. My journey started with a rigorous three months of training, where I got to learn more about the company and dive deep into the functioning of HR departments. The various strategic projects assigned helped me in getting a clear understanding of my role. So, my few learnings would be:

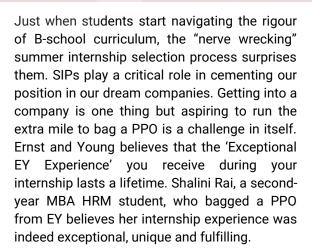
Avoid having pre-conceived notions about a particular role or a company because you know the best when you become a part of it.

- Grab every opportunity that knocks to your door. There is immense scope of learning and growing.
- Never be confined to your role only. Expand your horizon and make an impact.
- Own your work to give your best.



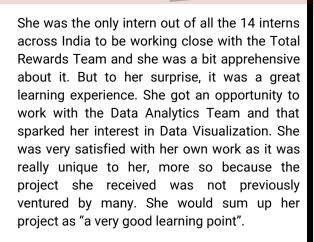
Internship Diaries

SHALINI RAI Ernst & Young-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



After bagging her SIP, Shalini decided to get absolutely thorough with the Business of the said company. If you get into a particular sector, you need to be cognizant of its strengths. weaknesses, opportunities and threats. When asked about the groundwork that needs to be done before approaching any internship, Shalini reiterated the importance of researching on your own and learning about the business units and the financials by proactively visiting their site and reading their annual report. If you get to know your role, it's wise to read upon the theory pertaining to it.

Coming to her project, she was assigned to work with the Total Rewards Team which comes under the purview of Compensation. She was asked to develop a framework for retention strategies during various situations. To put it shortly, she was responsible to form a compensation structure, which covers all facets that the organisation would like to put as its Employee Value Proposition.

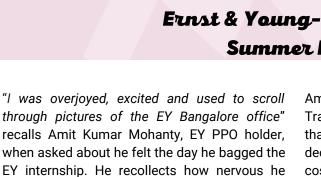


She thinks the Batch of 2022 is better prepared for Virtual experience unlike them. First hiccup that you would face on a virtual space would be setting up your virtual IDs. The process of setting it up might get delayed or take longer than you expect, but the key is to not fret about it. Second, restricted human interaction. Onsite, you can easily work to people and resolve your queries which is not possible on a virtual platform. You might face a problem in catching non-verbal cues. You might not be able to gauge the expressions and reactions of your Team while you present. verbal communication becomes really important. And for the final presentation, which is the make or break deal, she suggested us to bring all facets of our work to the table. Most importantly, our personality and learning should shine through while delivering the final presentation.

She thinks what they are looking for in people is their zeal to learn. You need to keep an open mind and be as agile as possible. The experience will teach you the importance of collaboration and constructive feedback. It is important not to be afraid to make mistakes. The work she delivered, the relationships that she built and the attributes that she displayed throughout the journey, made all the difference.

Internship Diaries

AMIT KUMAR MOHANTY Ernst & Young-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



The selection process for EY was rigorous that consisted of an aptitude exam, an MS excel test and two interviews that averaged 40 minutes each. Amit's plans to work in the EY Bangalore office were foiled because of the pandemic. His internship had been delayed by a month and he was sceptical. Never had he anticipated that his internship experience would be a virtual one. When he received the internship confirmation he was anxious but at the same time excited for the opportunity to be working at such a reputed organization.

was when he had not been placed in the first 7-

9 companies that came to campus. It was his

composure, perseverance and support from his

peers that got him through it all.

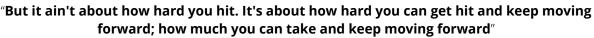
The first day of the virtual internship had a lineup of a welcome session, training modules and diverse engagement sessions. The New Hire Orientation programme was a common onboarding platform for interns and new employees to be acquainted with the rules, policies and guidelines of the company. While the internship had a set timeline and activities on MS Teams that engaged Amit, the one thing he misses is the informal coffee connects with his buddies and mentors. Amit worked as an Organization Workforce Transformation consultant on three projects that were guided by two principles that he decided of his own accord, faster execution and cost- optimization. He worked on tools and techniques that were used in end-to-end organization design in line with EY ethodology. Secondly, he prepared an interactive dashboard that analyzed headcount reduction and employee transfers. Lastly, he studied the impact of digital leadership and transformation on organizations in collaboration with interns from IIM Ranchi and TAPMI.

The uniqueness of EY is that it gives you the platform to be yourself and you can pitch your ideas freely. EY has a strong culture of inclusion. The humility and modesty of mentors shines through in their talks. One will always be valued and never feel isolated at the organization.

The virtual platform did present some challenges in terms of technical glitches and communication. Initially he had a tough time where he had to figure out majority of things on his own that involved him sitting in front of his system for 14 hours. He drew up a structured plan, researched extensively and updated his mentor with his work constantly. He pushed himself, never backed down from a challenge and emerged stronger. The mantra that Amit swore by is to "keep things simple and be yourself" and would recommend the same to the first years. Be attentive in class, be thorough with your concepts and basics and you will do well. In a nutshell, his experience at EY has been an exceptional one. Amit is eagerly looking forward to working at Ernst & Young.

Internship Diaries PRAGNYA PAPPALA

Ernst & Young-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



- Sylvester Stallone as Rocky Balboa

Silver Lining

The first few months in an MBA institute isn't a cakewalk! One is always swamped assignments, committee work, case study competitions, and innumerable things. In the blink of an eye, companies start coming for the summer internship program. Pragnya Pappala, a second-year MBA-HRM student from XAHR, who bagged a PPO from EY, gave a sneak peek into her life, both as a student and an intern! "You begin spending nights perfecting your CV, filling company forms, and preparing fundamentals" recalls Pragnya. According to her, resilience is the game-changer. Being rejected by initial few companies can be demoralizing, but what kept her going was the faith she had in herself and extracurricular along with academic engagements in university.

The selection procedure she had to undergo for EY was quite rigorous. The recruiters not only asked her technical questions but tried to understand her personality, and whether she was the right fit for the company by testing her Emotional Quotient and Social Intelligence. The technical round requires one to have a grasp over subjects like Introduction to HRM, Organisational behaviour, and Labour Law. However, Pragnya did not have to struggle in that area as she was quite thorough with all the subjects. Although the interview was stressful, what helped her sail through was the clarity she had and the radiated. confidence she Her thorough understanding of the company, its initiatives, its competitors along with curiosity to learn led to her being selected as one of the interns.

Start of something beautiful

Her internship was delayed for some months because of the pandemic but being a consultancy firm, Ernst and Young shifted to the WFH model seamlessly. She worked as a workforce advisory intern on two major areas: identifying performance and competency skill enablement. There wasn't a single day when she felt like a "mere intern" as the team was extremely approachable and amiable. She was given all the liberty to experiment, make mistakes, and most importantly learn. As an intern, she identified the most desirable traits a company looks for in employees, designed a psychometric survey to identify top performers at EY GDS, developed a data analysis tool that can be used, and created a competency skill framework for different service lines.

While working with EY, she left no stone unturned. There were days when she worked for more than twelve hours without even realizing it. According to her, one needs to be curious and passionate to understand the intricacies of the project. She networked extensively and was vocal about her expectations. She walked the extra mile and gave her absolute best. "At the end of the day, it was worth it!" she says. The internship put her growth trajectory in place, and gave her a glimpse into the corporate world but most importantly honed her managerial skills.

Pro-tips for first-year students

We are all different individuals with diverse backgrounds and nobody knows what's in store for us! According to Pragnya, it's crucial to focus on academics and overall corporate grooming. Most importantly, it's imperative to not over-hype the process and take it one day at a time. There were days when she felt down in the dumps, but she picked herself up and kept going at it. All in all, it's important to keep hustling but at the same time 'chill'. That indeed makes all the difference!

Internship Diaries

MAYURAKHEE DUTTA TATA Steel-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



If life gives you lemons, you have to make lemonade, a proverb that well describes the entire internship experience of Mayurakhee Dutta, Tata Steel PPO holder. Tata Steel is a dream company for many. She recalls her journey starting with the interview and finally receiving the PPO. Mayurakhee joined Tata Steel with high hopes and aspirations and felt privileged to be a part of the Tata family even if for a brief period of two months.

When asked about her interview, Mayurakhee recollects that despite being nervous, there was a smile on her face throughout the process. She describes the interview process to be a simple one, starting with the shortlisting of resumes, then the group discussion, and finally, the Personal Interview. She was looking forward to working in Tata Steel's offices but, the pandemic caused all companies to onboard their interns virtually. Although disappointed by the change in scenario, Mayurakhee felt blessed to not been denied the opportunity of working as a part of Tata steel.

The first day of the virtual internship for her started earlier than the fixed date. Mayurakhee considers herself to be lucky to be guided by three mentors instead of one. Two days before the commencement of the internship, Mayurakhee received a mail from her mentors who sent across the reading material attached to provide her help. Her mentors suggested her to work towards preparing a recommendation that would give her a shot at getting a PPO. As she recalls her first day, she said, "It was full of excitement and a bit of nervousness because handson experience in any sector is very different from the academic learning that you do in your first year."

Mayurakhee's project was on Code on Wages implementation. As the code has already been passed by the parliament and is only awaiting a date of notification, her project was based on trying to analyse the effect on Tata Steel once the project gets implemented.

When asked about the uniqueness of her experience, she expressed that unambiguity in the entire process made it stand out. From the very beginning, her mentors made sure that she was aware of the things required to be done to get in alignment with the company's goals. She was well aware of the things that needed to be done and how they should be done. Constant support from her mentors was something that made the entire process a wonderful experience for her.

With the internship going virtual this year for all interns, one of the major challenges faced by Mayurakhee was the inability to network with more people from the Tata Steel fraternity. The connectivity issue was the next major challenge she faced.

The words of wisdom that Mayurakhee has for the first years nearing their SIP process was,

"Believe in yourself and try to be a better person, be it professionally or personally. And it is sometimes about luck but mostly about the hard work you are ready to put in and, if you put enough hard work, I don't think there is anything that can stop you from succeeding in life".

To sum up everything, Mayurakhee's experience at Tata Steel was enriching and wonderful. Her perseverance paid off, and she was offered the PPO. According to her, even in the opposite scenario, the knowledge she gained would have helped her in her future endeavours.

Internship Diaries

AISHWARYA MISHRA Deloitte-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



The onset of COVID19, deferred, and cancelled internships all over LinkedIn had made Aishwarya apprehensive. From anxious days of waiting to join the Internship and then landing up with the PPO, it has been a roller coaster journey for her. Deloitte's work ethics, zealous mentors, congenial leaders made her internship journey a fruitful one. After going through gruelling eliminating rounds consisting of Group Discussions, Case Analysis, Pictographic interpretation, personal interview and completing her Summer Internship, she is up for some pointers for all the aspiring ones out there, which can help irrespective of the company you sit for.

Internship Journey

Aishwarya's first-day jitters settled down when she received a warm welcome virtually by the entire PMO team of Deloitte. The co-interns, group (of a buddy, two of her mentors and sponsor) were introduced while onboarding itself. The outline of the project along with the goals, timeline, evaluation criteria, compliance was briefed, leaving less room for ambiguity. Initially, assignments on Storyboarding, Data Analytics, Business Communication, Business Chemistry among the few were given to analyze the technical and behavioural competence and acquaint interns with the job profile and the Deloitte culture of work. Weekly "Coffee-Connects", "Social Media Buzz challenge" and Leadership Interactions kept the vibealive.

She was assigned Contingent workforce models and risk mitigation strategies: Recommend Strategies/Solutions to mitigate talent, Legal, and operational risks while engaging contingent workforce on various workforce models as her SIP project.

"Peer learning is one of the biggest opportunity Deloitte presents", says Aishwarya, who will cherish the network she built with her co-interns from TISS, IIM Ranchi etc.

The first roadblock she faced was garnering a pool of contingent workers, impaneled vendors, and interviewing them to understand their concerns. As, the entire project was secondary research-based, and the amount of data present online was scarce, Aishwarya made an effort to list all possible contacts and gain insights from them.

The second step was to study best practices across the world, benchmarking them with competitors for which she delved into significant IR rulings and legislations of the US and the UK, comparing and contrasting them with those in India.

Lastly, she proposed three recommendations in the form of a feasible prototype, which included highlights of what industry is moving towards and if and whether Deloitte should invest in it, a sample cost structure, stakeholders, and the risk mitigation strategy.

Key Takeaways

Though her first tryst with a virtual internship, Aishwarya believes that certain things will help irrespective of the mode. Her take would be:

- Always stay in touch with your buddies and mentors and mail them your progress, seeking suggestions and feedback. Make sure you do thorough research, seek appointments in advance and go prepared with a plan ahead.
- Own your mistakes, improvise on them and make meaningful connections. Everyone in Deloitte looks forward to meaningful discussions and new ideas.
- Be diligent, committed and uphold Deloitte virtues while having a conversation with anyone beyond the organization.

"You will be celebrated as an intern/employee in any company when you promise to give your role more than it is giving you."

This was one of the most significant take-aways for Aishwarya, a food for thought given by her team, which she wanted to share with everyone. It nudged her towards striving harder, made her proactive and motivated her to walk an extra mile in her quest to present her novel ideas to the organization. She narrated that the seven weeks of the Internship was one of the most incredible learning experiences of her life, and that the PPO was just the "cherry on the cake".

Internship Diaries

RICK BISWAS ITC-PPO Holder Summer Intern 2020



'So Much in So Little Time' - The ITC way!

Every B-school student's dream is to convert their SIP into a Pre-placement offer – an opportunity to work with their dream company. This dream came true for Rick Biswas, who's currently a second-year student of MBA-HRM at Xavier School of Human Resource Management when he got a job offer from one of the India's foremost private sector companies at the end of his summer internship! He shared his exciting internship experience at ITC Limited, and shared with us his journey to a PPO!

He is a graduate in electrical engineering from KIIT, Bhubaneswar. Post his graduation; he worked with the consulting giant, Accenture for about three years as an Application and Operations Analyst. He primarily worked in the fields of projects and talent acquisition along with a vast array of operational functionalities. He had the inclination towards HR, which landed him here to XAHR.

He shared his interview experience with us. He says that "The best way to crack any interview is showing something unique about yourself". He shared with us how his honest and unconventional answers made him stand apart from the rest of the candidates and made the interviewers believe that he's different from the rest. When asked to recall his first day of internship, he said that it a completely different experience from what previous batches had. As it was a virtual internship, he received a warm welcome from the leader of the food division responsible for interns, his mentor and POC. He started his work from the first day itself.

Rick was interning under the training and development cell in the food division of ITC. He was working under two completely diverse projects. One part of his project included designing a salary template, payslip and generalising the pay structure and bringing everything under one umbrella which required extensive research and knowledge on the Labour laws about wages code.

His other project included developing a POSH training module for the workers in which he had to design the entire module in several local languages using several case-lets and posters, most importantly keeping in mind the diversity and inclusion for all the workers across the 12 plants.

He shared how his internship experience at ITC was very unique. He said that the projects allotted to the interns have profound business significance, and hence, each intern is treated as an integral part of the company during the period, which he liked the most about interning with ITC. The company provides a real-life problem to its interns, and he had the liberty to experiment anything new to solve the problem and deliver results. While he had the support of his mentor throughout, the entire internship period was a bit bumpy for him. He remembers how he had to work under pressure to complete the deliverables within the stipulated time. This made his journey challenging and interesting at the same time.

He was pretty sure that he wanted to do something that could be more tangible in terms of the results of his efforts. This motivation and passion for extensive research consequently made him deliver better results and go beyond what was expected of him and win a PPO. He had many sleepless nights, but it was all truly worth it. One thing he misses the most is going to the factory and physically working there.

He says "Just be true to yourself and try going beyond what is expected to show that you are the worthy one."

He finally put forward his key learnings and gave some valuable tips for the junior batch, as stated below:

- Always look for an opportunity to deliver more than what is expected of you to make their as well as your time worth it.
- Success demands trading lofty comfort zone pleasures with diligent efforts. Put 10 times more efforts to succeed.

Internship Diaries

SHREYA MOHTA Titan-PPI Holder Summer Intern 2020



The multidisciplinary curriculum during shreya's graduation exposed her to various courses from economics, biotechnology, art, classical music & management. She was very intrigued by the management elective called "Group dynamics", and she found the course very refreshing. Hence, her interest in doing an MBA in HR emerged right from her college days. Shreya expressed how special and overwhelmed she felt on her achievement of PPI from Titan Company Limited. Describing her internship experience at Titan Company Ltd, she said," It was my first ever corporate experience and it could not have been any better. I felt like an employee during my internship tenure because of the ownership that I had of my work". She fondly recollects her experience when she had the opportunity to interact with the CHRO of the Titan company Ltd, Mr. Rajnarayan. Shreya acknowledged that the culture, philosophy, and values of the Titan are exemplary. She worked on a very relevant project "Driving higher productivity and sales management of beauty advisors" related to the fragrance business of Titan. The internship structure was very well- designed enabling interns to connect with each other as well as with the prominent leaders of the company. The entire virtual experience was seamless and as good as the physical one.

On sharing her key learning from the internship, Shreya quoted that she learned how to create an HR business process from the scratch. It is important to visualize the bigger picture and understand the perspective of the stakeholders in order to come up with a relevant outcome. Communication is the key, especially in the virtual setup. Seeking regular feedback and guidance from mentors assures the right direction of the progress of work.

Internship Diaries

MANOJ KUMAR DASH Bridgestonee-PPI Holder Summer Intern 2020



Manoj Kumar had done an internship in the field of HR post his graduation and from where he decided to pursue MBA in HRM and joined XAHR. He finds his B-school journey very eventful and upholds that the learning he got has helped him in improving his personality. He describes his internship experience as an enriching one.

The selection process after his resume got shortlisted, included an initial telephonic interview. Post that he had to make a PowerPoint presentation on two core functions of HR namely Performance Management and Learning & Development and later present the same in front of the Senior Managers of the organization followed by an interview. He describes the entire selection process as thoroughly rigorous and thrilling at the same time. Since the entire process was online over a video call, he did have his apprehensions but was relieved when everything went well. He felt that even though it was a virtual internship he did not find any lag with respect to his learning. His mentor was very cooperative and helped in every manner she could. They communicated every day and had a system of weekly feedback. The project he got gave him deeper insights of how actually HR functions. He even got the chance to present his ideas in front of the Senior Leaders. Overall, the 2-month experience went pretty smoothly. When asked about his USP, he told that he always backed all that he delivered with proper facts and figures and never made assumptions, which worked in his favor. His advice to the junior batch would be, to not to go after the name of the organization as every organization has its own benefit and what matters the most is the kind of project you get to work upon.

WINNER





Ruchi Smita Mohanty (XAHR)

Amit Kumar Mohanty (XAHR) THE NEW LABOUR
CODES:
LEGISLATIVE
INTENT AND
REPERCUSSIONS

Code on Industrial Occupational Realtions Code. Safety, Health and Wages, 2019 New Labour 2020 Security, 2020 Working Codes Conditions, 2020 (\$) The code Amalgamates subsumes 13 three legislations legislations which including: include: -The Factories Unions Act, 1926 Amalgamates Nine legislations Act. 1948 four legislations subsumed in this -The Industrial which are: -The Contract code and include: Employment Labour (Standing Orders) -The Payment of -The Employees (Regulation and Act. 1946 Wages Act, 1936 Provident Fund Abolition) Act, and 1970--The Industrial -The Minimum Miscellaneous Disputes Act, Wages Act, 1948 Provisions Act, -The Mines Act, 1952 -The Payment of Bonus Act, 1965 -The Maternity Benefit Act, 1961 -The Equal Remuneration -The Payment of Act, 1976. Gratuity Act, 1972

The New Codes

In 2019, the Ministry of Labour and Employment introduced four bills on labour codes which are to consolidate the existing 29 central laws. On September 22, 2020, the Parliament of India passed the three remaining major Labour Code Bills in addition to the Code of Wages, 2019 which became an act in August 2019. This was done in a period when the country has been dealing with the effects of a global pandemic with most of its economy and the industrial sector was in complete disarray and where 10% of the total

workforce, not including all that of the unorganized sector has been either laid off or given a pink slip.

Legislative Intent

The legislative intent behind the introduction of this code, as stated by the Centre for passing these codes have been to make the labour laws of the country less complicated as well as improving the ease of doing business in the country. This comes in a situation where the economy is moving towards globalization. By implementing the current changes in the law, the government is trying to attract investments in the Indian markets from the global organizations. Some of such intent include:

Facilitation of implementation of these codes

Ensuring Transparency and Accountability Ensuring and inhibiting Compliance to the laws

Removal of duplicity and repetitions Appropriate use of new age processes and technologies

Easy enforcement and decision making

With the amalgamation of various acts to form a single code, there have also been changes to the pre-existing provisions in these acts. Some of the highlighted changes with respect to the recently passed code cover

Industrial Relations Code

- -Threshold for Standing Orders increased from 100 to 300 workers
- -Establishment having at least 300 workers are required to seek prior permission of the government before closure, lay-off, or retrenchment
- -The threshold for negotiating council of trade unions have been reduced from 75% workers as members to 51% of workers
- -Introduces "Fixed Term Employment"
- -Present code extends the provisions of Strike to all establishments

Code on Social Security

- -Definition of employees expanded to include more workers like - inter-state migrant workers, platform worker
- -Central government, by providing a notification, may apply the Code to any establishment
- -Government to set up social security funds for unorganised workers, gig workers and platform workers
- -Government may defer or reduce the employer's or employee's contributions for up to three months in the case of a pandemic, endemic, national disaster

Code on Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions

- -Factory definition expanded to 20 workers for premises where the process uses power and 40 workers where the process uses no power
- -Daily work hour limit fixed at maximum of 8 hours per day
- -Manpower limit on hazardous conditions has been removed and mandates applying Code on contractors employing 50 or more workers instead of 20
- -Women will be entitled to be employed in all establishments for all types of work and employer

The Code of Wages, 2019 brought into coverage the unorganized sector as well which was in contrast with the previous acts such as the Minimum Wages Act, 1948 which mostly dealt with the organized sector and covered only 30-40% of the total workforce.

The After Effects

The changes in these codes have a significant impact on and for each of the players in the tripartite system followed in India and have had reactions from all the parties involved.

Government

- -The Finance Minister mentions this move as a benefit to the workers
- Examples of State governments in Uttar Pradesh, Gujarat and Madhya Pradesh are used as reference for the changes made in the various provisions
- -This is not going to provide immediate relief but will have a far-reaching positive effect

Employers

- -This move has been welcomed by employers all over India
- -Hiring of workers will be now much easier for the employers
- Fixed-term employment proposal was welcomed by the industry
- According to industry, it helps employment generation by giving employers a little bit more freedom than they had before

Employees and Trade Unions

- -According to Indiaspend's analysis, the new Bills may impact the number of permanent jobs in seasonal factories - which will result in a decline in wages, benefits and work conditions and reduced accountability for companies
- -Central trade unions are opposing the new codes claiming that they would "adversely affect industrial peace"
- -With the fixed-term contracts clause, there will be a reduction in the number of permanent jobs
- -With the increase in the threshold for Standing orders and for seeking prior permission of the government before closure, lay-off, or retrenchment has made it easier for the employers to hire and fire without any legal violations
- The mention of 'other sources' for funding the re-skilling fund in the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, experts said, is vague
- -Another matter of concern is the legal provisions that allow considerable discretion to the government in applying the new laws
- -The codes have ensured elongating the legally permissible time frame before the workers can go on a legal strike, making a legal strike almost impossible across all industrial establishments
- -Although the Code on Social Security, 2020 extends the provisions of the law to more areas, it has failed to utilise an opportunity to universalise social sector benefits

Final Thoughts

The introduction of the three codes- the Industrial Relations Code, 2020, the Code on Social Security, 2020, and the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020 and the Code on Wages enacted in 2019 is one of the major milestones in labour reforms in almost last three decades. With the new codes coming in a context where workers and

employers are both trying to deal with the effects of the pandemic that had a very significant impact on the total economy is a move that needs to be deliberated upon. "The increase in the threshold for standing orders from the existing 100 to 300 is uncalled for and shows the government is very keen to give tremendous amounts of flexibility to the employers in terms of hiring and firing...dismissal for alleged misconduct and retrenchment for economic reasons will be completely possible for all the industrial establishments employing less than 300 workers. This is complete demolition of employment security," XLRI professor and labour economist KR Shyam Sundar said.

Although there have been mixed reactions with respect to the introduction of this code from all the key players involved in the reforms, with some extensive loopholes in the new legislations, the hopes for any substantial improvement in the labour regime have been dashed. To "simplify" or dilute 40 central and over 100 state labour laws in 4 codes is problematic in itself. With unemployment being at a new high, the steady decline in the share of wages in the national income from a peak level of above 40% in the late 1980s to just about 35% now and the stagnation in the strength of trade union membership at around 10% of the total workforce are the concerns which need immediate addressing. With the losses seeming to be weighed upon a specific player with respect to these codes, there is a need to reconsider the changes by having a discussion with all the parties involved.

RUNNERS-UP





Kalyani Deshmukh (XLRI)

Smriti Garg (XLRI) THE CHANGING IR LANDSCAPE:

IN THE FACE OF THE NEW NORMAL

Introduction

The Indian industrial relations landscape was already under a state of flux at the start of 2019. After much deliberations, the 4 new labour codes were framed and would soon come into effect. These codes, pertaining to industrial relations, occupational health and safety, social security and wages are expected to increase the ease of doing business as well as safeguard the interest of workers. However, the situation has since then, drastically changed, as in other avenues of business, with the arrival of the COVID-19 pandemic. The cessation of operations meant the livelihood of close to 40 million internal migrants were staunched completely and when the constraints of the absolute lockdown were lifted, the number of jobs available were lower than usual, which mean a further reduction in the bargaining power of this workforce. These times have also prompted two state governments to impose ordinances that significantly curtail the rights granted to workmen in factories with an aim to boost investments into manufacturing. In the arena of non-legal changes happening in the dynamics of industrial workforce, there is an increased movement towards automation for majority of the firms. There is high cost of investment involved, however the lower operating costs due to reduction in the labour costs have proved to be a good enough impetus for a majority of employers to move to an automated shop floor propelling it to become a USD \$ 2 billion industry. The recent situation has also prompted employers to make the shop floor a safer place for workmen. This has manifold advantage of continuance of production and safer products.

In recent years, with the advent of the internet in the country, employers have seen a surge in the use of the gig economy as an alternative to traditional workforces. India constitutes of 40% of the total freelance jobs offered round the globe. In cases where the business model is primarily based on internet service, companies have flocked to this model due to the limited risk of liability for workers whom they call partners, as well as non-coverage of these partners under various labour enactments.

The trend began with IT professionals and other white-collar freelancers and, with the appropriate online infrastructure, trickled down to more blue-collar roles of drivers (Ola and Uber), delivery personnel (Zomato and Swiggy) and service professional (Urban Company). In recent times, the process of externalizing risk while simultaneously internalizing advantages using gig workers has been extenuated with the pandemic. Companies prefer to dole out commiserations and consideration pleas on their applications and websites for funding insurance for these workers while simultaneously keeping their involvement minimum lest they operate in the sphere of the employer employee relationship.

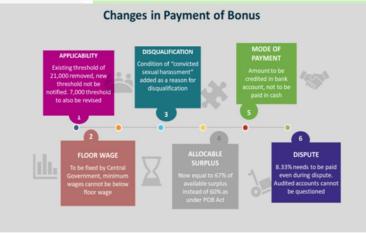
In the realm of contract labour too, there has been a steady increase of the proportion of use of contract labour albeit over a longer period of time than the gig-workforce. Contract labour formed 12% of the total workforce in 1985 which has risen to 24% in 2008. It is believed that the "flexibilization" of the labour markets as well as a lack of labour reforms has fueled the increase. Another reason is also the cost benefit because the contract labour costs about half of what a permanent workforce would cost to the company. Another key reason for employers to enhance use of contractual workforce is their inability of coalescing and gaining bargaining powers, thereby ensuring a unilateral power to the management. In the current context, contractual workforce, along with gig workforce is on the rise due to uncertainty in employment. However, it is yet to be seen if the gig model can penetrate in the manufacturing sector. While the Wage Code was enacted by the Modi Government in 2019, the Lok Sabha passed the new versions of the other three Labour Codes viz. The Industrial Relations Code Bill, 2020, Code on Social Security Bill 2020, and Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Bill 2020 recently on 22nd September 2020. This represents the governments efforts to merge 29 central legislations in order to boost labour reforms.

What are the key proposals under the Wage Code?

The Wage Code has increased applicability by removing the wage thresholds. It has also allowed for electronic payments through cheque/account transfer and electronic means while adding daily, monthly, weekly and fortnightly periods for payments. It also increased the umbrella for eligibility of minimum wages by eliminating scheduled employment. It also introduced for the first time, a National Floor wage set by the Central Government.

Changes in Payment of Wages APPUCABILITY Increased applicability due to removal of wage threshold RESIGNATION Added in terminated employees. Employee who resigns needs to be payed within 2 days. Payment can now be made through cheque /account transfer/ electronic means DEDUCTIONS Payments to words all statutory levies, social security schemes allowed. Clear exclusions given increased





What are the key proposals under the IR code?

A major development under the Industrial Relations Code Bill. 2020 has been an increase in the threshold for the requirement of a order in industrial standing establishments having 300 workers from 100 workers which provides greater flexibility for employers to hire and fire workers without prior government conditions and also a free hand for gives them introducing arbitrary service conditions.

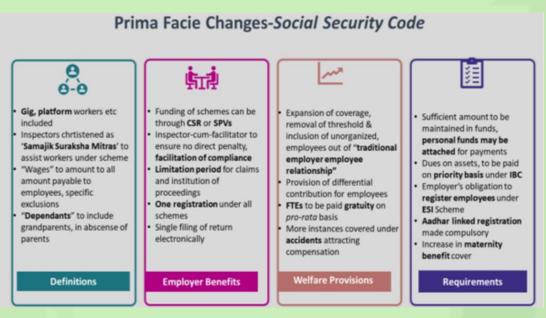
The Industrial Relations Code has also laid new conditions for workers attempting to carry out a legal strike. The IR code, now, prevents any person employed in an industrial establishment from going on strike without a sixty day notice and during pendency of proceedings before a Tribunal or National Industrial Tribunal and sixty days after the conclusion of such proceedings as opposed to the earlier threshold of two to six weeks.

The IR Code further proposed a worker re-skilling fund amounting to fifteen days wages drawn by the worker immediately before retrenchment along with contribution from such other sources.

What are the key proposals under the Social Security Code?

The social security net has widened with the promise of universal social security for all classes of workers including organised, informal, gig and platform workers. It has introduced Inspectors as "Samajik Suraksha Mitras" in order to assist workers under the scheme. It has also facilitated workers by the provision of a single registration for all schemes covered under the Code. While Aadhar linked registration has become mandatory, there has also been increase in employer's obligation to register employees under the scheme.

It has also provided a huge relief to women by increasing maternity benefits by providing extended leaves, advance payments among others. The Social Security Code has also proposed a National Security Board for advising central government on formulation of suitable schemes covering the aforementioned umbrella of workers. It also mandates aggregators employing gig workers to contribute 1-2 percent of their annual turnover to social security. It also allows the government to tap into the Corporate Social Responsibility funds in relation to these welfare schemes.



What are the key proposals under the Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020?

The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code 2020 provides a major shift by allowing women to be employed in all establishments including hazardous and dangerous operations by having adequate safeguards prior to employment. It also empowers the State Government to exempt any new factory from the provisions of the code to promote economic activity. It further fixes the maximum daily work limit at 8 hours per day. It has also defined an inter-state migrant worker. The code had dropped the earlier provision for a temporary accommodation for workers near worksites while replacing it with a journey allowance for travel between native place and place of employment.

Benefits of Labour Codes:

There are over 40 central labour laws that have been applicable to India's vast and complex judicial landscape. This is compounded by the fact that there are 100 state laws too. Many of these laws, mostly the foundational ones have been in operation since the pre-independence era (viz. Trade Unions' act of 1926) and quite a few of those carry forward sections and provisions that are now considered either redundant or unnecessary.

As can be expected, many of these laws define specific definitions for variables that are used widely across the labour judicial landscape. The most prominent of them being wages. The definition of wages is different for laws pertaining to social security, for laws pertaining to resolution of disputes and so on. Similar is the case with the definition of the employer, the establishment and the worker/workman/employee. This creates a highly confounding nexus of legislations that demand a peak into different statutes and many a times, the multiplicity gives rise to unnecessary complexity. This is what the 4 codes on labour seek to rectify and to a large extent, do rectify.

Apart from making the provisions less ambiguous and less redundant, the codes also reduce the layers of compliance that firms are needed to adhere to in terms of tasks such as maintenance of registers and return filing. The law also makes it relatively easier to retrench workmen in that the layers of permission that are needed for the same have been curtailed or minimized to a significant extent. The previous law on retrenchment in organisations with >100 workmen required for prior ratification, notice and wage benefits. Now the threshold is increased to >300 workmen and the modification privilege of the same has been restricted to the central government and that too, only in an upward direction. This significantly works in the employers' favor since it grants them ability to pivot in case a venture does not work with reduced loss, as well as gives them assurance of non-reduction threshold, thereby inducing confidence in MSMEs. Key advantage to the workmen here is the recognition received by the contract labour in the labour codes. Since there were multiple laws dealing with who comes into the fold of workmen, contract labour was not universally covered, however, with their inclusion, this has been rectified and a sweeping net of provisions are now available to these workmen. Another advantage to employers is the increase of thresholds of application of various statutes, 20/40 in case of factories from 10/20 and 50 in case of contract labour regulations from 20. A key advantage to the previously non-recognised class of workmen such as migrant labour and gig workers is a semicomplete coverage under the social security code. What it allows for is the benefits of the PDS system in their state of employment or in their home state. Also, in case of a migrant construction worker, any benefits under building construction cess will also be portable. For gig workers, under social security law, for establishments over a certain size, there will be other discretionary schemes. The code tends to define the role that an aggregator could play, it mentions the creation of funds for workers in the unorganized sector and that the schemes can be funded from central government, state government and the aggregator. The code also goes on to define the aggregators into 9 categories.

What are the concerns raised?

A lot of concerns have been raised by the Trade Unions because the new labour codes have further eroded the limited protection available to them. As per a report in the Hindustan Times, Labour Economist KR Shyam Sundar of XLRI, Jamshedpur quoted "The Industrial Relations Code, 2020, bring new rules for hiring and firing of labour in mid-sized and large industries, making retrenchment easier. This effectively brings the north American hire-and-fire model to the Indian hinterland economy in the hope that businesses recoup and add more jobs on a net basis" Also, elongation of the timeline before the workers can go on a strike has made the reality of a strike practically impossible. All in all, the new labour codes define the culmination of more than a decade long aspiration of Indian labour legislation fraternity to simplify the plethora of statutes that have dotted the landscape for so long. However this is just a step in the right direction and a lot many changes are needed to make them more robust and truly unifying.

RUNNERS-UP



PRIYANSHI RAY BARMAN (LIBA)

THE NEW LABOUR CODES: LEGISLATIVE INTENT AND REPERCUSSIONS

It is rightly said, "Law cannot organize labour and industry without organizing injustice" by Frederic Bastiat.

But as the times, era and people change in all aspects, we know the importance of change and adapting to it especially during the current pandemic. With this, what changes are what they need and demand and thus, a dynamicity in how to manage the workforce with having a balance with the organisation is crucial.

In the part of being dynamic, recently the parliament passed 3 labour codes. These are: -

- The Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code, 2020
- The Industrial Relations Code, 2020
- The Code on Social Security, 2020

What are these codes and what changed?

Industrial Relations Code, 2020

Instead of at least 100 employees, the establishment will now need at least 300 employees to obtain government approval before closure, lay off or retrenchment. It is only necessary to increase and not decrease this threshold. After this bill, the labour union with more than 75 per cent of the workers as members will be known as the sole bargaining union.

Code on Social Security, 2020

Compared to permanent employees, this code gives only requirements for contract, network or gig workers. The 2020 Bill notes that a fund will be set up for these workers by the central government. Separate social security funds for unorganised employees will also be set up and managed by state governments.

The 2020 Bill states that the National Social Security Board will also serve as the Board for the welfare of gig workers and platform workers in addition to unorganised workers and can prescribe and track schemes for gig employees and platform workers. This bill further describes various categories of employees with additional requirements. For working employees, the 2020 Bill cuts the gratuity duration from five years to three years. The 2020 Bill eliminates the requirements for reviewing certain conflicts or appeals and amends the punishments for certain offences. There has been an increase in the makeup of unorganised board workers, granting extra powers to staff and organisations during the epidemic

Occupational Safety, Health and Working Conditions Code

The 2020 Code raises the number of employee's threshold in the Factory description and removes mines from this group. The 2020 Bill covers all facilities where, regardless of the number of staff, any dangerous operation is carried out. It states that establishments or contractors employing 50 or more employees (any day in the past year) will be protected by the Code. As a daily working hour limit, the 2020 Bill sets the time limit at eight hours a day. For all forms of jobs under the Bill, the 2020 Bill provides that women will be eligible to be working in all establishments. The 2020 Bill also states that only those individuals who receive a maximum of Rs 18,000 per month or a higher amount that may be registered by the central government would be counted as inter-state migrants. This displacement allowance is being withdrawn by the 2020 Bill. The 2020 Bill creates a Social Security Fund for the welfare of unorganised workers and holds inter-state migrant workers' data on a portal.

The main legislative intent is to help the workers, but it indirectly helps the employer more. It aims at uplifting the unorganised sector in various aspects by expanding the social network but the few not meeting the criteria may face it as a setback. We see steps that are likely to provide more flexibility to employers for hiring and firing workers without government permission. The Plan to increase employment and decrease retrenchments. It will now be tougher for workers to conduct strikes. We see also an intent to increase investment by introducing more transparency and high accountability. The expansion of establishments and job creation across different sectors will instigate operational freedom. Though there is an ease of working of contract labours, employers must provide social security.

Repercussions

Though there are various pros and cons regarding the new codes we see a lack of clarity in the codes. It is unclear as to why the central government should continue to exercise jurisdiction over an establishment in which it does not own a controlling stake. We also observe that not all types of employees have been considered in the codes.

Strikes and lockouts can be challenging for workers and employers, given the Industrial Relations Code. This may bring further law and order but may also limit it. Government interference in such matters, such as changing or refusing tribunal awards, is not fair. It can become more restrictive to shape a negotiation council. Fixed-term jobs can provide employers with the flexibility to hire employees for a fixed period and for work that may not be permanent. The unequal bargaining powers between the worker and the employer may affect the rights of such employees because the employer has the power to renew these contracts. This can contribute to the employee's job insecurity and can stop him from raising questions about unfair work conditions, such as prolonged working hours or denial of salaries or leaves. Terms such as supervisor, boss, etc. have not been defined and thus lack clarification.

The 2020 Bill replaces nine laws relating to social security concerning the social security code. The Declaration of Objects and Reasons of the Bill states that, following the NCL guidelines, it aims to simplify and amalgamate the provisions of these laws.[The Bill, however, preserves the current set up to a large degree and does not completely enforce these guidelines. The Bill seeks to maintain thresholds for making such benefits mandatory depending on the size of the establishment, seeks to handle workers within the same establishment differently based on the number of salaries received, and maintains the existing fragmented setup for the provision of social security benefits. There is a specification for gig and platform employees, but other unorganised sector employees are not listed. The gratuity clause for fixed-term hires is ambiguous. The Aadhaar card connexion can violate the judgement of the Supreme Court.

In the Occupational Safety, Welfare and Working Conditions Code, the reason for certain provisions are ambiguous. It seems that the general provisions are OK and successful. The 2020 Bill bars all matters under the Bill from being considered by civil courts. In such cases in which persons are adversely affected by orders of the authorities, such as the

order of the inspector-cum-facilitator in the case of factories or the revocation of a licence for contractors, the Bill provides for the notification of the administrative appeal authority. It does not, however, have a judicial process under the Bill for hearing disputes

The government has made a strong claim that the laws are pro-worker and will provide statutory protection to unorganized workers. But we see that the codes are unclear though a hard attempt was done to integrate it all. Though some reforms would uplift the workers there are plenty of loopholes. It feels it is more pro-employer rather than the labour.

QUIZotic

WHICH TERM CONNECTS ALL THE 3 IMAGES?







CONNECT ALL IMAGES TO A SINGLE COMPANY.







CONNECT THE IMAGES BELOW.







QUIZotic

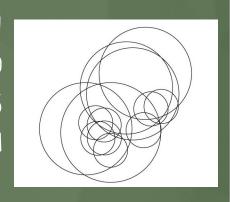
 ALL OR SOME WORDS FROM THE FIRST 2 PICTURES ARE PART OF A CONCEPT IN ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR. THE CONCEPT HAS 3 WORDS, THE FIRST WORD IS A COMBINATION OF FIRST TWO PICTURES AND THE LAST CAN BE DEDUCED FROM THE THIRD PICTURE. IDENTIFY THE CONCEPT.







- Name the Company which has controlover all these Plants.
 - RENUSAGAR POWER PLANT, SONBHADRA, UP
 - HIRAKUD CAPTIVE POWER PLANT, SAMBALPUR, ODISHA
 - UTKAL ALUMINA CAPTIVE POWER PLANT, RAYAGADA, ODISHA
 - ADITYA CAPTIVE POWER PLANT, SAMBALPUR, ODISHA
 - MAHAN INDUSTRIES, SINGRAULI
 - THE LOGO OF COMPANY X WAS ARRIVED AT BY AN
 COMPLEXAND INTRICATE DESIGN THAT CONSISTED
 OF DRAWING MULTIPLE INTERSECTING CIRCLES
 ANDBY FINALLY TAKING A PORTION OF IT. WHICH
 COMPANY IS X?

























XIMAHR CORE TEAM 2020

First Row: Akash Panigrahi, Aishwarya Mishra,

Durgesh Subudhi, Prachi Agasti

Second Row: Gayathri S, Sweta Mishra,

Mayurakhee Dutta, Simpi Kalia

Third Row: Sayantan Ghatak, Sneha Kamath

Fourth Row: Sneha Agarwal

