

FRAMEWORKS OF INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS ANALYSIS: A RE-VISIT TO INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS THEORY

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ABSTRACT

The search for a theory of Industrial Relations has led to the emergence of a plethora of frameworks, of analysis of Industrial Relations. Making sense of the diverse perspectives involved has become as problematic as the original search itself. This paper re-visits the search for a theory of Industrial Relations by imposing an order on some dominant schools of thought in the literature, starting with the subject-matter and approach debate. The paper concludes that the subject-matter of Industrial Relations has evolved from being unions, to institutions of job regulation (rules), and then to conflict; and these correspond with the Union, Rules, and Conflict frameworks of Industrial Relations analysis suggested here. Consequently, it is the view of this paper that these should be seen as the components of the subject-matter of Industrial Relations; and given its multi-disciplinary nature, a web-of-discipline approach is more appropriate in Industrial Relations theorizing.

KEYWORDS: *Unions, Rules, Conflict, Multi-Disciplinary, Web-of-Discipline*

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