ABSTRACT

Industrial Relations in the Public and Private Enterprises in Kerala has been undertaken to examine the industrial relation position in Kerala. The study has examined the nature and causes of disputes, the role and involvement of employees, trade union leaders and management personnel in disputes, union management relations, involvement of employees in trade union activities and the performance of the settlement machinery.

The study covers a decade from 1996 to 2005. Both primary and secondary data were used for analysing the study. The primary data were collected from employees, trade union leaders and from management personnel based on structured interview schedule. The secondary data used for the study were collected from the sample units, books, reports and periodicals. The data collected were classified and analysed suitably keeping in view the objectives of the study.

On the basis of the findings of the study, it is deduced that the economic benefits, viz. wages, bonus and allowances provided to employees in the public and private enterprises in Kerala were not sufficient which cause disputes in these sectors. The work load is another cause of dispute in the public and private enterprises in Kerala. Violation of agreement is an important cause of disputes in the public sector. ‘Reasonable demand’ and ‘unity of workers’ were the important reasons for the success of strikes. Employees and trade union leaders ‘always’ consider the purity of strikes before joining it. The attitude of management towards the strikers was found to be ‘strict’ or ‘very strict’ in the private enterprises. ‘Job security’, ‘protection against victimisation’ and ‘unity of workers’ were the main reasons for employees joining unions. The existing union- management relationship is found to be moderate. The management does not take the employees and unions into confidence for the settlement of disputes. ‘Conciliation’ and ‘negotiation’ were the most preferred and usually used form of dispute settlement in both the public and private sectors. Further, the settlement of dispute was usually made by the middle level management and the top level management.