

Industrial Relations Systems Defined

Before proceeding to discuss the model itself, I would like to suggest that one of the reasons for the lack of any significant conceptual and theoretical developments in industrial relations is the fact that the discipline has never been defined in such a way as to give it some degree of central focus. Dunlop, who probably comes closer than anyone else in defining the domain of industrial relations, defines it almost strictly in structural terms. Nowhere, except in his contrast with the economic system, does he touch on its functional character. However, an adequate definition of the discipline must comprise both its structural and functional components.

For our purpose, then, industrial relations may be defined to include that complex of private and public activities, operating in an environment, which is concerned with the allocation of rewards to employees for their services. By referring to the complex of private and public activities, this definition embraces the whole gamit of structural arrangements whereby employee rewards are allocated, ranging from unilateral determination by the state or an employer to tripartite determination involving employers, unions, and public or private agencies. By referring to the rewards to employers for their services, this definition embraces not only material rewards, but also the psychological and social rewards which employees