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International Framework of Ethics and Labour Standards – A Descriptive Review

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ABSTRACT

Multi-National Companies as the name itself suggest are located in different nations. People are employed in such companies from across the globe, and it includes multiple factors to be taken very delicate care of by the companies. When it comes to people, that is, human resource, their management is a huge responsibility and requires special attention, framing of policies, organizational structure, and culture suitable for every employee, compensation plans, training and development, career enhancement, and many more. The two most important of these are labour standards and framework of ethics. Labour standards vary from country to country and an organization working at the global level should definitely ensure that they meet and are at par with the labour standards of all the countries they operate in. Labour Laws are very crucial and important to be taken care of because it is a human resource an organization is employing in their business. Organizations are taking the help of the labour from the human resource, thereby, it is the duty of such an organization to ensure that they meet all the labour standards and while operating at international levels, they must take care of legislations and legal requirements of all the countries involved in their business. They must most definitely stick to International Labour Standards and the requirements released and updated by the International Labour Organization. Business ethics, on the other hand, focus on the moral obligations which the employer and employee are ought to follow. Ethics deal with morality and the right behaviour and wrong behaviour which people expect you to do and expect you not to do respectively. Framework of ethics are those standpoints which are used for rational decision making and for deciding upon what are the courses of action one must take in order to reach an outcome which is beneficial for the task to be effective and efficient and also is backed up with morality. The framework of ethics differ from place to place. Through this paper the two authors intend to identify how framework of ethics take place at the international level and the various reasons for companies at global level to follow the international labour standards. The authors majorly aim to comprehend the need of international labour standards and framework of ethics, various fundamental conventions of international labour organization, and principles and standards of international framework of ethics.

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Keywords: *International Framework of Ethics, International Labour Standards, Ethical Decision-Making, Conventions of ILO, Principles and Standards of Framework of Ethics.*

I. INTRODUCTION

International Labour Standards (ILS) are set by the International Labour Organization (ILO) for labour welfare across the globe. ILO is a tripartite United Nations agency which has been working since 1919. It has a total of 187 Member States currently and works for setting labour standards. Development of policies and programmes that contribute for the promotion of decent working conditions and standards for all men and women equally. ILO aims at providing equal opportunity to workers and employers and works to ensure that they work together in peace. The main objectives of the ILO are promotion of rights for workers at their workplace, encouraging the provision of decent employment opportunities and enhancement of social protection in work-related problems.³

The ILS are the legal requirements which are set by the members of ILO together for putting together the founding principles and rights at work. ILS are of different forms including International Conventions, Recommendations, etc. ILO conducts International Labour Conferences and there the Member States meet to discuss the standards and set the basic principles which are then ratified accordingly or dismissed. The principles which are ratified, i.e., those which receive formal consent and acceptance of members are added to the ILS. Standards set in Conventions become legally-binding on Member States once they are ratified, and those set through Recommendations of ILO are not binding but will be of great progress for labour welfare.

As per 2018 data, ILO has in total adopted 189 Conventions, 205 Recommendations, and 6 protocols which cover all the possible issues related to work and workplace. The major areas for which the labour standards are set and focused upon are:

1. Basic Human Rights,
2. Occupational Safety and Health,
3. Wages,
4. Working Time,
5. Employment Policy and Promotion,

³ *About the ILO*, International Labour Organization, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/lang-en/index.htm> (Last Visited Jan 28, 2023).

6. Vocational Guidance and Training,
7. Skills Development,
8. Specific Categories of Workers,
9. Labour Administration and Inspection,
10. Maternity Protection and Social Security,
11. Indigenous and Tribal People, and
12. Migrant Workers.

Labour standards set by the ILO ensures that all the above-mentioned areas are covered as they hold most importance in work and employment related matters. ⁴

ILS are framed and adopted at the International Labour Conference by representatives of governments, employers, and workers. After adoption, the standard is submitted by the Member States to their respective legislative body for further consideration. To comprehend the process of how the ILO sets and frames the ILS the research paper titled, “Human Resource Management, International Labour Standards and Globalization” was referred. This paper aimed to contribute to the current debate on the interaction of globalization, human resource management, and business performance, particularly from the perspective of developing countries. As a response to the challenges of globalization, the paper presents a framework for Strategic Human Resource Management. Organizations have generally achieved relatively low levels of effectiveness in implementing Strategic Human Resources Management (SHRM) practices. If the above propositions are supported, then the real challenge for organizations in the globalisation era is to place a special emphasis on strengthening their human resources by upgrading relevant competencies. The paper clearly explained the origin of ILO, its process of Conventions, Recommendations, and Conferences for the purpose of ILS. ⁵

Through the paper “How Effective are the ILO’s Labour Standards under Globalization?” the authors comprehend that it is difficult to implement all the labour standards which are set by the ILO in all the nations as for most developing countries it is a heavy task to implement all the standards effectively and hinders the stages of economic development for them. Certain

⁴ Maria Paz Anzorreguy, Rita Yip, *What are ILO International Labour Standards?*, International Labour Standards, IOE, available at: <https://www.ioe-emp.org/policy-priorities/international-labour-standards>. (Last Visited Jan 28, 2023).

⁵ Anthony Igwe, Obiamaka Priscilla Egbo, Josaphat UCHECHUKWU JOE Onwumere, *Human Resource Management, International Labour Standards and Globalization*, available at: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/309678713_Human_Resource_Management_International_Labour_Standards_and_Globalization (Last Visited Jan 29, 2023).

Conventions of the ILO seem unrealistic for few countries due to their current development state. The standards are considered to be objectives and goals to be achieved in the future rather than a legislation that will be easy to create, enact and implement effectively. The ILO provides assistance in framework and implementation of standards to under-developed and developing countries. But for the assistance and follow-up, the member states who require the aid need to provide details of their legislations in order to reach the requirements of the Conventions.⁶

Globally countries are affected even by small changes in the environment, be it economic changes, political changes, socio-cultural changes, etc. The best example to comprehend that business got affected due to an unanticipated and unexpected change is the COVID-19 Pandemic. Many organizations were affected especially the MNCs. People lost jobs and it also affected the financial status and economic status of the MNCs. The paper titled “Protecting the life and health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Overview of national legislative and policy responses” highlights how the COVID-19 pandemic situation has adversely affected the health of people. The pandemic caused a barricade on the goal of achieving adequate protection for the life and health of workers in all occupation which is one of the important requirements in the Constitution of the ILO. The paper states that the member states of ILO responded immediately by enacting legislations and other rules to protect the health of the workers in the workplace and increased safety measures. The paper includes how 35 countries set excellent examples as to how a pandemic situation must be handled and how the life and health of workers can be protect as per the requirements of ILO in such situation in the workplace.⁷

Ethical frameworks are perspectives useful for reasoning what course of action may provide the most moral outcome. In many cases a person may not use a reasoning process but rather do what they simply feel is best at the time. A definition of international business ethics begins with a moral code of right and wrong, but modern business ethics has expanded to encompass supporting social and environmental causes, and being a responsible member of the communities where the company operates.

The international framework of ethics is a set of principles, standards, & guidelines designed to guide individuals, organizations, and governments in conducting themselves in an ethical manner. This paper provides an overview of the international framework of ethics, including

⁶ Biffi, Gudrun; Isaac, Joseph E. (2002) : *How Effective are the ILO's Labour Standards under Globalisation?*, WIFO Working Papers, No. 178, Austrian Institute of Economic Research (WIFO), Vienna, available at: https://www.econstor.eu/bitstream/10419/128719/1/wp_178.pdf (Last Visited Feb 1, 2023).

⁷ ILO Brief, *Protecting the life and health during the COVID-19 pandemic: Overview of national legislative and policy responses*, available at: https://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---dgreports/---inst/documents/publication/wcms_767389.pdf (Last Visited Feb 2, 2023).

historical development, and the key principles and standards. The paper concludes with a discussion of the importance of the international framework of ethics in promoting global justice, human rights, and sustainable development.

The relationship between ethics and international business is a deep, natural one. Definitions of ethics and ethical behavior seem to have strong historical and cultural roots that vary by country and region. It has also been widely noted that ethics in Western universities tend to focus on ‘ethical clearance’ at the start of a research project which can lead to a ‘bolt-on view of research ethics.

Issues related to consent, harm, respect, and transparency are not restricted to ICE, but can be heightened in the international and collaborative contexts that ICE researchers work. The framework offers a set of five overlapping values – transparency and honesty, respect and care, conscious freedom, experiential and tacit awareness and reflexive practice. These values are located on an axis to denote the myriad of ways in which they might change according to context.

There are clear challenges here for researchers when they enter the field of ICE, (International and Comparative Education) particularly so for early career researchers who may be relatively inexperienced undertaking fieldwork in cross-cultural settings. Researchers have explored these tensions in relation to language, negotiating access with gatekeepers at national and local levels, informed consent, and methods of data collection such as recording devices.

II. THE NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

The global economy has expanded rapidly in recent years, and globalization has created new opportunities for businesses and workers alike. However, globalization has also given rise to concerns about the treatment of workers, particularly in developing countries where labour standards may be lower than in developed countries. To address these concerns, a variety of international frameworks for labour standards have been established. This paper will examine the international framework of labour standards and their implications for workers and businesses around the world.

The concept of labour standards refers to the minimum working conditions that should be ensured for workers in any industry. These standards include working hours, wages, occupational health and safety, child labour, and freedom of association. In many developing countries, labour standards are often not enforced or are lower than in developed countries, creating a competitive advantage for businesses that can exploit these conditions. This has led to a debate about the role of international labour standards in promoting fairness and social

justice in the global economy.

International labour standards have had a significant impact on workers around the world. They have helped to improve working conditions, promote social justice, and reduce poverty. For example, the elimination of child labour has allowed children to attend school and receive an education, while the abolition of forced labour has helped to prevent modern slavery and human trafficking.

Furthermore, international labour standards have helped to promote social dialogue and cooperation between employers, workers, and governments. This has led to the development of collective bargaining agreements and the establishment of minimum wage laws, which have helped to improve working conditions and increase wages for workers.

However, despite the progress made in promoting and implementing international labour standards, there are still many challenges that need to be addressed. These include the informal economy, where many workers are not protected by labour laws, and the lack of enforcement of labour standards in many countries.

The International Labour Organization (ILO) is the primary international organization responsible for the development and promotion of labour standards. The ILO was founded in 1919 and is a specialized agency of the United Nations.⁸ The ILO has developed a range of international labour standards, including conventions, recommendations, and codes of practice. These standards cover a range of issues, including child labour, forced labour, discrimination, and social protection, some of the important ones are: -

1. Protection of workers' rights:

International labour standards provide a minimum set of protections for workers, ensuring that they are not subject to exploitation or abuse. These standards cover a range of issues, including child labour, forced labour, discrimination, and social protection.

2. Fair competition:

Labour standards help to ensure that businesses compete on a level playing field, regardless of their location. This prevents companies from gaining an unfair advantage by exploiting workers in countries where labour standards are lower or not enforced.

⁸ *The need for social justice*, International Labour Organization, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/need-for-social-justice/lang--en/index.htm> (Last Visited March 24, 2023).

3. Sustainable development:

Labour standards are a key component of sustainable development, promoting economic growth that is socially responsible and environmentally sustainable. By ensuring that workers are treated fairly and working conditions are safe, businesses can contribute to the long-term well-being of communities.

4. Social justice:

Labour standards promote social justice by ensuring that all workers are treated fairly and have access to basic rights and protections. This helps to reduce inequality and promote social cohesion.

5. International cooperation:

International labour standards provide a framework for cooperation and dialogue between governments, businesses, and workers' organizations. This allows for the sharing of best practices and the development of common solutions to shared challenges.

The establishment of international labour standards has had both positive and negative implications for workers and businesses. On the one hand, these standards have helped to promote fairer working conditions and protect workers from exploitation. For example, the ILO Convention on Forced Labour has helped to reduce the prevalence of forced labour around the world.

In addition to the ILO, other international organizations have developed labour standards, such as the United Nations Global Compact, which encourages companies to adopt sustainable and socially responsible policies. The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) has also developed guidelines for multinational enterprises, which include recommendations on labour standards.

On the other hand, some critics argue that international labour standards can be a barrier to economic growth, particularly in developing countries. Businesses may argue that compliance with these standards can be expensive and may limit their ability to compete in the global market. However, proponents of international labour standards argue that compliance with these standards can actually improve the competitiveness of businesses in the long term by promoting better working conditions and higher productivity.

The international framework of labour standards has played an important role in promoting fairness and social justice in the global economy. While these standards have had both positive and negative implications for workers and businesses, they remain an important tool for

promoting human rights and sustainable development. It is essential that governments, businesses, and civil society continue to work together to ensure that these standards are implemented and enforced effectively around the world.

III. FUNDAMENTAL CONVENTIONS OF INTERNATIONAL LABOUR STANDARDS

International labour standards are legally binding agreements that set out the basic principles and rights at work, including freedom of association, non-discrimination, and the elimination of forced labour, child labour, and other forms of exploitation. The ILO has adopted over 200 international labour standards, which are categorized into eight fundamental conventions and other non-binding instruments, such as recommendations and codes of practice.

These conventions are considered to be the cornerstone of the ILO's work and represent the basic principles that underpin all of its activities. There are eight fundamental conventions of international labour standards, which are as follows:⁹

1. Freedom of association and the right to organize:

Freedom of association and the right to organize are fundamental principles of international labour standards that recognize the rights of workers and employers to form and join organizations of their own choosing, without interference from the state or employers. It also recognizes the right to collective bargaining.

In India, the Indian Constitution guarantees the right to form associations, including trade unions, under Article 19(1)(c). The Trade Unions Act, 1926 provides for the registration and recognition of trade unions, as well as their rights and responsibilities. The Industrial Disputes Act, 1947 provides for the settlement of industrial disputes, including disputes related to trade unions.

2. Forced labour:

This convention prohibits forced labour in any form such as debt bondage, human trafficking, slavery, etc. Forced labour is a form of modern slavery where individuals are made to work against their will, usually through coercion, deception, or threat of violence. It is a violation of fundamental human rights and is prohibited under international law.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO), forced labour is defined as “*all work or service that is exacted from any person under the menace of any penalty and for which the*

⁹ *Conventions and Recommendations*, International Labour Organization, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/global/standards/introduction-to-international-labour-standards/conventions-and-recommendations/lang--en/index.htm> (Last Visited March 24, 2023).

said person has not offered himself or herself voluntarily.” This means that forced labour involves situations where individuals are made to work against their will, without their informed consent or the ability to leave the situation, and are subject to some form of penalty or punishment if they refuse to work or try to escape.

Forced labour is a serious human rights violation that affects millions of people around the world. It is associated with a range of negative outcomes, including physical and mental health problems, low wages or no wages, and limited freedom and mobility. Efforts to combat forced labour include legal and policy measures, as well as initiatives to promote decent work, empower workers, and the improve the financial and social conditions.

Many conditions have implemented legal provisions for the same. In India forced labour in a criminal offence under Section 370 of the Indian Penal Code, 1860. It is prohibited through the Bonded Labour System (Abolition) Act, 1976, the Minimum Wages Act, 1948, and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention Prohibition, and Redressal) Act, 2013.

3. *Child labour:*

This convention prohibits the employment of children under the age of 15 (or 14 in certain developing countries) in most types of work, with exceptions made for certain types of light work. Child labour is a violation of children's rights and is prohibited under international law. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child recognizes the right of every child to be protected from economic exploitation and from performing any work that is likely to be hazardous or to interfere with the child's education, or to be harmful to the child's health or physical, mental, spiritual, moral or social development.

Efforts to combat child labour include legal and policy measures, as well as initiatives to promote education, empower families, and improve working conditions. The elimination of child labour is a key goal of the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals, which aim to end poverty, promote prosperity, and protect the rights of all children. Child labour may take different forms such as working in hazardous industries, exploitative work, domestic help, agricultural work, etc.

Child labour is strictly prohibited in India and there are several legal provisions in place to prevent the same. The Indian Constitution under Article 24 prohibits child labour, the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, the Right to Education Act, 2009, the Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015, the Mines Act, 1953, and the Factories Act, 1948 are the various legislations protecting the children from the evils of child labour.

4. Discrimination:

This convention prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on race, color, sex, religion, political opinion, national extraction, or social origin. Discrimination refers to the unfair or unjust treatment of individuals or groups based on certain characteristics such as race, gender, religion, caste, age, disability, or sexual orientation. Discrimination can take many forms, including exclusion, harassment, or unequal access to opportunities, resources, or services.

In the context of human rights, discrimination is considered a violation of fundamental rights and freedoms, and is prohibited under international and national law. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights, for example, states that “*all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights*” and should be treated without discrimination. Similarly, the Indian Constitution guarantees the right to equality and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth.

In India, there are several legal provisions in place to prevent and combat discrimination. The Constitution of India guarantees the right to equality and prohibits discrimination on the grounds of religion, race, caste, sex, or place of birth. Article 15 of the Constitution prohibits discrimination on these grounds and Article 16 guarantees equality of opportunity in public employment.

The Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes (Prevention of Atrocities) Act, 1989, the Protection of Civil Rights Act, 1955, the Persons with Disabilities (Equal Opportunities, Protection of Rights and Full Participation) Act, 1995, and the Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace (Prevention, Prohibition and Redressal) Act, 2013 are important legislations that protect the citizens from discrimination.

These are some of the key legal provisions related to discrimination in India, but there are many other laws, policies, and initiatives aimed at promoting equality and preventing discrimination based on various grounds. However, despite these legal provisions, discrimination remains a serious problem in India, and efforts are needed to ensure that these laws are effectively enforced and that everyone enjoys their right to equality and non-discrimination.

5. Equal remuneration:

This convention requires that men and women receive equal pay for work of equal value. Equal remuneration refers to the principle of providing equal pay for work of equal value. It means that individuals who perform the same or similar work, or work of equal value, must receive equal remuneration, regardless of their gender, race, or other personal characteristics. Equal

remuneration is an important aspect of promoting gender equality and eliminating discrimination in the workplace.

In India, the Constitution provides for the same under Article 39 (d) equal pay for equal work. The principle of equal remuneration is majorly enshrined in the Equal Remuneration Act, 1976. The Act prohibits discrimination on the basis of gender in matters relating to employment, including recruitment, training, promotion, and remuneration. It mandates that employers must provide equal pay for equal work or work of equal value to men and women workers.

6. *Minimum age:*

This convention sets a minimum age for employment that takes into account the needs of developing countries and the need for education. The minimum age for employment refers to the age at which a person is legally allowed to work. In India, the minimum age for employment is regulated by the Child Labour (Prohibition and Regulation) Act, 1986, which sets out the legal provisions for the same.

Under the Act, children under the age of 14 are prohibited from being employed in any occupation or process. However, there are certain exceptions to this rule, such as when a child is working as an artist, in a family business, or in a school or other educational institution. Furthermore, the Act prohibits the employment of children between the ages of 14 and 18 in hazardous occupations and processes, such as mining, working with explosives, and working with certain chemicals and machinery. The Act defines hazardous occupations and processes based on a list that is periodically updated by the government.

7. *Occupational safety and health:*

This convention requires that employers provide a safe and healthy working environment for their employees. Occupational safety and health refers to the measures taken to ensure the safety, health, and well-being of workers in the workplace. It involves identifying and mitigating hazards and risks that may cause harm or injury to workers, and promoting safe work practices and procedures. Occupational safety and health is important for protecting workers and promoting a safe and healthy work environment.

In India, the legal provisions for occupational safety and health are primarily governed by the Factories Act, 1948, and the Mines Act, 1952, there are other laws and regulations in India that provide for occupational safety and health, such as the Building and Other Construction Workers (Regulation of Employment and Conditions of Service) Act, 1996, and the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948.

8. Social security:

This convention requires that workers be provided with some form of social security, including benefits such as pensions, medical care, and unemployment insurance. Social security refers to the measures taken by the government and other organizations to provide financial and other forms of assistance to individuals and families who face economic and social risks, such as poverty, illness, disability, and old age. Social security is designed to provide a safety net for individuals and families in times of need and to promote social and economic well-being.

In India, the legal provisions for social security are primarily governed by the Employees' Provident Funds and Miscellaneous Provisions Act, 1952, the Employees' State Insurance Act, 1948, and the National Social Security Scheme. These laws provide for various forms of social security, including pensions, health insurance, and unemployment benefits.

The National Social Security Scheme is a government initiative that provides social security benefits to vulnerable and marginalized populations, such as the elderly, disabled, and widows. The scheme provides various forms of financial assistance, such as pensions and insurance, to help these individuals and families meet their basic needs and improve their quality of life.

These fundamental conventions are seen as the minimum standards that all countries should strive to meet, in order to ensure that workers are protected and their rights are respected. Countries that ratify these conventions are required to report on their implementation and to take steps to ensure that they are fully respected.¹⁰

IV. NEED FOR INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF ETHICS

In an increasingly globalized world, it is essential to have a common framework of ethics that guides individuals, organizations, & governments in their behavior. The international framework of ethics has evolved over time to reflect the changing nature of global society, but its core principles remain the same that includes promotion of social justice, respect for human dignity & protection of the environment.

The framework also offers a set of five overlapping values – transparency and honesty, respect and care, conscious freedom, experiential and tacit awareness, and reflexive practice. These values are located on an axis to denote the myriad of ways in which they might change according to context. The framework has been developed in response to the growing recognition that educational researchers working in cross-cultural settings need further support in negotiating

¹⁰ *ILO Declaration on Fundamental Principles and Rights at Work*, International Labour Organization, available at: <https://www.ilo.org/declaration/lang--en/index.htm> (Last Visited March 29, 2023).

research ethics.

The international framework of ethics has its roots in the ancient world, where philosophers developed ethical systems that emphasized virtues such as justice, courage, & wisdom. In this modern era, the concept of ethics has been expanded to encompass a range of issues, including human rights, environmental protection, and corporate responsibility. The Universal Declaration of human rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948, marked a significant milestone in the development of the international framework of ethics, as it set out a set of principles that all nations were expected to follow.

Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a critical role in ensuring that an organization's workforce is managed ethically and fairly. Given that many organizations operate globally, it becomes essential to have an international framework of ethics in HRM to provide guidance on ethical practices in managing human resources across borders.¹¹ Following are the important reasons as to why an international framework of ethics in international human resource management is necessary:

1. Globalization:

In today's interconnected world, businesses often operate across borders and have employees from diverse cultures and backgrounds. An international framework of ethics in IHRM helps to ensure that HR practices are consistent and aligned with global ethical standards.

2. Protecting Human Rights:

IHRM practices can have a significant impact on employees' well-being and human rights. An international framework of ethics in IHRM helps to ensure that employees are treated fairly and equitably, regardless of their location, gender, race, or any other characteristic.

3. Building Trust:

Organizations that operate ethically and demonstrate a commitment to ethical HR practices are more likely to earn the trust and respect of their employees, customers, and other stakeholders. An international framework of ethics in IHRM provides a clear and consistent standard for ethical practices, which can help to build trust in organizations.

4. Compliance:

Many countries have their own laws and regulations regarding IHRM practices, such as employment contracts, wages, working hours, and health and safety. An international

¹¹ *Ethics and Human Resource Management*, The Human Capital Hub, available at: <https://www.thehumancapitalhub.com/articles/Ethics-And-Human-Resource-Management> (Last Visited March 22, 2023).

framework of ethics in HRM can help organizations to ensure compliance with these laws and regulations, regardless of their location.

5. Reputation:

Ethical HR practices can also help to enhance an organization's reputation and brand image. By adhering to an international framework of ethics in IHRM, organizations can demonstrate their commitment to ethical practices and differentiate themselves from competitors.

V. PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS OF INTERNATIONAL FRAMEWORK OF ETHICS

The international framework of ethics in international human resource management (IHRM) is governed by several key principles and standards. These principles and standards guide the behavior and decision-making processes of organizations operating in multiple countries and cultures.¹² Some of the key principles and standards of the international framework of ethics in IHRM are:

1. Respect for Human Dignity:

This principle requires that all individuals be treated with dignity and respect, regardless of their race, gender, religion, or other characteristics. This principle is based on the idea that all individuals have inherent dignity and worth and should be treated with respect and dignity. Respect for human rights includes a commitment to promoting and protecting human rights, including the rights of workers, in all countries where an organization operates.

2. Social Justice:

This principle emphasizes the need to promote fairness and equality in society, and to address issues such as poverty, inequality, and discrimination. Organizations should ensure that their policies and practices do not discriminate against individuals based on their race, gender, religion, sexual orientation, or other factors. This principle also applies to the treatment of migrant workers and other vulnerable groups.

3. Environmental Protection:

This principle recognizes the importance of protecting the environment ensuring that natural resources are used sustainably. Organizations should take steps to minimize their impact on the environment and promote sustainable practices. This includes reducing waste and pollution, conserving natural resources, and supporting the transition to renewable energy sources.

¹² *Code of Ethics*, SHRM, available at: <https://www.shrm.org/about-shrm/pages/code-of-ethics.aspx> (Last Visited March 28, 2023).

4. Corporate Social Responsibility:

This principle is a voluntary initiative that aims to make a positive impact on society, the environment, and stakeholders, including employees, customers, suppliers, and communities. CSR may include activities such as philanthropy, charitable donations, volunteerism, environmental sustainability, fair labor practices, and ethical business practices. The ultimate goal of CSR is to create long-term value for all stakeholders, while minimizing negative impacts on the environment and society.

5. Fair Labour Practices:

This principle requires organizations to ensure that their employees are treated fairly and with dignity. This includes providing fair wages, safe working conditions, and freedom of association and collective bargaining.

6. Transparency and Accountability:

Organizations should be transparent about their policies and practices and be accountable for their actions. This includes engaging in open and honest communication with stakeholders, including employees, customers, and local communities.

7. Respect for Local Cultures and Customs:

This principle recognizes the importance of respecting local cultures and customs when operating in foreign countries. Organizations should strive to understand and respect local traditions and customs, while also upholding their own ethical standards.

VI. NOTABLE FRAMEWORKS DEVELOPED OVER TIME

Despite the existence of a robust international framework of ethics, there are a number of challenges facing its implementation. One of the main challenges is the lack of consensus on ethical principles and standards among different cultures and nations. Another challenge is the lack of enforcement mechanisms to ensure that ethical standards are adhered to, particularly in the case of multinational corporations and governments.¹³ There are several international frameworks of ethics that have been developed over time. Some of the most notable ones include:

1. Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR):

This document, adopted by the United Nations General Assembly in 1948, sets out the

¹³ *Ethics and International Business*, available at: https://saylordotorg.github.io/text_international-business/s05-05-ethics-and-international-busin.html (Last Visited March 28, 2023).

fundamental rights and freedoms that all individuals are entitled to, regardless of their race, gender, nationality, or religion.

2. *The Nuremberg Code:*

Developed in response to the unethical medical experiments carried out by Nazi doctors during World War II, this code outlines the ethical principles that must be followed in medical research involving human subjects.

3. *The Belmont Report:*

Developed by the US National Commission for the Protection of Human Subjects of Biomedical and Behavioural Research in 1979, this report outlines the ethical principles and guidelines for research involving human subjects.

4. *The United Nations Global Compact:*

This initiative, launched in 2000, provides a framework for businesses to align their operations and strategies with ten universally accepted principles in the areas of human rights, labor, environment, and anti-corruption.

5. *The Earth Charter:*

This document, created in 2000, outlines a set of principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society. It emphasizes the need for ethical and ecological awareness and highlights the interdependence of all living beings.

Thereby, an international framework of ethics plays a crucial role in promoting v ethical behavior and ensuring that Overall, an international framework of ethics plays a crucial role in promoting ethical behavior and ensuring that universal ethical principles are upheld across different cultures and nations. An international framework of ethics is essential to ensure that ethical considerations are taken into account in various fields of human endeavour, particularly in a globalized world where decisions and actions can have far-reaching consequences. Such a framework helps to establish a common set of values and norms that transcends cultural and national boundaries, thus promoting global cooperation and understanding. It also provides a basis for resolving ethical dilemmas that arise from conflicting values or interests.

VII. CONCLUSION

The importance of international labour standards lies in their ability to create a level playing field for workers and employers around the world. When all countries adopt and enforce the same labour standards, workers can expect to be treated fairly and equitably, regardless of where

they live or work. This helps to prevent exploitation and ensures that workers are able to exercise their rights and earn a decent living.

Effective implementation of international labour standards is crucial for ensuring that these standards have a positive impact on workers and their families. This requires cooperation and coordination among governments, employers, workers, and other stakeholders, as well as strong legal frameworks and enforcement mechanisms. Governments must ratify and implement relevant international conventions and ensure that they are integrated into national legislation. Employers must respect workers' rights and provide decent working conditions, while workers must be empowered to exercise their rights and participate in social dialogue.

Overall, international labour standards and their effective implementation are essential for promoting decent work and social justice in the global economy. They help to create a more equitable and sustainable world, where all workers have the opportunity to earn a living with dignity and respect.

One of the key advantages of an international framework of ethics is that it helps to prevent the exploitation of vulnerable populations, particularly in developing countries, by providing guidelines for ethical behavior and decision-making. For example, in the field of medical research, the Nuremberg Code and the Belmont Report provide guidelines for ethical research involving human subjects, which has helped to prevent the kind of abuses that occurred during the Nazi era.

Similarly, the United Nations Global Compact encourages businesses to uphold human rights, labour standards, and environmental protections in their operations, particularly in countries where such protections may be lacking. The i framework of ethics helps to promote ethical behavior and decision-making on a global scale, which is essential for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful world for all.

The international framework of ethics is an essential component of a just and sustainable global society. While there are challenges to its implementation, the principles, and standards it espouses are fundamental to the promotion of human rights, social justice, and environmental protection. As such, it is important that individuals, organizations, and governments continue to work towards the implementation of these principles and standards in their everyday actions and policies.

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