

Chapter 17

Managing the Performing Workforce In India: Challenges and Legacies

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Introduction

Workforces are fundamental to the creation of organizations and economies that perform well, internationally and over time. Several studies show that 'human capital is the foundation of a modern economy' (Becker and Becker, 1997: 76), and that 'the state of underdevelopment for an economy stems from the low productivity of the great mass of the people' (Harberger, 1995: 45). Internationally, several areas of policy significance have been identified, including minimum standards of wages, welfare and safety conditions and the equal and

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free opportunity for all to participate and be rewarded in the economic sphere (Newland, 1999), to nurture healthier workforce systems.

India has ratified three of the core International Labour Organization's (ILO) conventions that deal with equal opportunity and remuneration. These are: No. 29 on the Abolition of Forced Labor of June 28, 1930; No. 100 on Equal Remuneration for Men and Women; and No. 111 on Non-discrimination in Employment. Table 17.1 shows that more than 250,000 bonded workers have been identified and rehabilitated under the government law in India.

Table 17.1: State Wise Number of Bonded Laborers in India

States	Identified and released	Rehabilitated	Central assistance provided (Rs in million)
Andhra Pradesh	36,289	29,552	68
Bihar	13,092	12,368	31
Karnataka	62,727	55,231	138
Madhya Pradesh	12,822	11,897	15
Orissa	49,971	46,843	90
Rajasthan	7,478	6,321	9
Tamil Nadu	63,894	61,729	128
Maharashtra	1,384	1,300	1
Uttar Pradesh	27,797	27,797	53
Kerala	823	710	2
Haryana	544	21	2
Gujarat	64	64	.1
Arunachal Pradesh	3,526	2,992	-57
Punjab	—	—	1
India	280,411	256,825	595

Source: Annual Report 2000-2001, Ministry of Labour, Govt. of India.

Three other important conventions dealing with child labor and the union movement remain to be ratified. These are: No. 87 on the Freedom of Association and Protection of the Right to Organize of July 9, 1948; No. 98 on the Right to Organize and Bargain Collectively of July 1, 1949; and No. 138 on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment of June 26, 1973. Although there were technical difficulties in the implementation of the first two conventions of the union movement, they have been successfully complied by