

Crib for 3E5 examination: 2009

Q.1 This question should be answered critically and arguments should be made both for and against. It is not enough to simply recite David Guest's typology of the differences between the two but arguments should also be made to the contrary, particularly setting out the views of Karen Legge. A good student would not only be familiar with the literature on both sides of the argument but also would be able to offer arguments of his/her own.

Q.2 In the first part of the question candidates should recognise that although there are differences between the various European countries, there are common characteristics in the European Social Model (ESM). These common characteristics are all based on common principles and values such as social justice and social citizenship. Citizens have a right to education, health care, social security etc. Rights cannot be taken away and are enforceable.

Social policy is also recognised as a productive factor. Social partners are accepted as principal actors in social development. Companies are seen as social entities. Both political and religious arguments give firms a social obligation to the community. The idea of economic citizenship is also developed. European employees also have greater rights of participation in the enterprise in which they work. These can start from the basic (and not necessarily just European) rights of representation within the workplace, the right to health and safety etc. Employees also have the greater right to be informed about decisions both at a workplace and company level. They have a right to influence decisions that affect them and a high level of job security. Central to this philosophy is the theme of partnership which is meant to encourage employee commitment. This is epitomised in the German tradition of *Mitbestimmung* (co-determination). In this scheme workers are given wide levels of representation but their representatives must also consider the enterprise's interests. Some form of trade unions is also seen to have an important role in the ESM.

There are similarities between HRM and the ESM. HRM is about making people committed to a company by satisfying their needs and giving them a means to express themselves in the enterprise. This idea of satisfaction and the right of expression is not too different to some of the ideas of the ESM as described earlier. Concepts such as keeping employees informed, providing effective communications channels to management are some of the most important concepts in HRM. Proponents of HRM would say that these benefits would encourage employees to have a sense of responsibility towards the organisation they work in, just the kind of responsibility expected from them by the European Social Model. In this sense therefore, HRM and the ESM appear to have much in common.

However the main problem is that, unlike in the European Social Model, the facilities provided to employees by HRM are not *rights*. Employees are treated as a resource, especially by those employers who adopt the 'hard' model of HRM, which is common in the UK (Cully et al, 1999). HRM represents a move towards individualism, which is in stark contrast with one of the key elements of the ESM - *partnership*. HRM is associated with the deregulation of labour markets and consequently increases the power of employers. Hence the contrast between the two philosophies of employment protection on the one hand, and imposed flexibility on the other.

Unlike in the US, European HRM also takes into account things like culture, the role of the state, and legislation. A good example of this kind of blending together of the two models can be seen in the field of participation. HRM favours a more direct participation approach,

whereas the European Social Model would seek to maintain some form of indirect participation, through legal means if necessary. A good student would mention that there is no reason why both direct and indirect participation cannot co-exist. Indeed, the 'softer' forms of HRM are most successful when combined with some kind of collective bargaining. Many commentators would argue that successful European companies adopt a socially responsible HRM based on high commitment management practices with elements of collective bargaining and social partnership.

Q. 3 The first part of the question requires students to generally outline the principles of 'Taylorism' i.e. deskilling, job fragmentation, task specification, routinisation and the transfer of decision-making and discretion in jobs to management. Until around 30 years ago Taylorism was confined to manufacturing and the office environment was immune from Taylorism, as office technology was slow to develop. However, Taylorism has now finally pushed open the doors to the office and the call centre is a good example of the introduction of Taylorism and how it has been facilitated by the fusion of telecommunications and computerisation.

A good student might mention that Taylorism is more prevalent in larger establishments and hence the move to a call centre is almost inevitable.

Q.4 This is a very open question and I expect students to produce a large diversity of answers. All answers, however, should outline the factors that have led to increased globalisation and the way labour and product markets have changed on an international level. Students should provide examples of convergence in management practices e.g. lean production, human resource management, quality circles, briefing groups and other 'Japanised' forms of management practice. They should also be aware of the changes in labour markets as a result of globalisation and perhaps refer to the activities of multi-national companies and 'free trade zones'. References to literature and informed sources would gain a lot of credit in the marking process.