

The roles and behaviour of employer associations: Theoretical application for resource dependence perspective

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ABSTRACT

The theories and cases about the roles and behaviour of employer associations in industrial relations have mainly focused on institutional functions. This paper argues that we should consider organisational perspective to understand different behaviours of employer associations. Applying for resource dependence theory, this paper discusses 'interdependence' between organisations and environments, 'the social control of organisational choice' and the representative functions of employer associations. First, 'interdependence' between individual firms and environments seems to affect employers' tendency to associate in terms of the availability of resources and mutual coordination. Second, 'The social control of organisational choice' can explain internal dynamics of employer associations, which help us to understand the relationship between member companies and the associations. Finally, among the symbolic, 'collective goods' and 'selective goods' functions of employer associations, the 'selective goods' functions become more increasingly important. Despite those implications, further research is necessary because this paper focuses on raising need of a new theoretical approach.

