

## COMPLEMENTARITIES AND CONTRADICTIONS BETWEEN HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AND TRADE UNIONISM: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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### **ABSTRACT**

*Since the early 1980s, human resource management has received a lot of interest from both scholars and practitioners around the globe. There is a general belief that human resource management plays a crucial role in the success of organizations by improving the effectiveness of employees. However, despite the acknowledgement that human resource management involves the implementation of policies and practices that take care of employee needs, trade unions continue to exist in many organizations. The main objective of the study was to establish the reason for the co-existence of human resource management and trade unions and whether the two complement or contradict each other. The study was based on a critical literature review from books and journals. The literature review revealed that the relationship between human resource management and trade unionism depends on whether an organization assumes a unitarist or a pluralist approach to managing the employment relationship. An organization that assumes a unitarist approach will normally embrace human resource management and discourage trade unionism while an organization that assumes a pluralist approach will generally accept trade unions despite human resource management. The study concluded that human resource management and trade unionism can complement or contradict each other depending on whether an organization adopts a cooperative or conflicting stance.*

**KEYWORDS:** *Human Resource Management, Trade Unions, Unitarist, Pluralist, Employment Relations, Employee Relations*