

Ethics, Compliance, and Justice in Human Resource Management for Managing Industrial Relations and Employee Welfare

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ABSTRACT

This study examines ethics, compliance, and justice in human resource management practices for managing industrial relations and employee welfare. A qualitative literature review approach was employed to synthesize findings from scholarly publications addressing pay equity, gender equality, anti discrimination, data protection, and compliance with employment regulations. The analysis reveals that ethical practices in human resource management form the foundation for harmonious industrial relations between management and workers. Pay justice affects employee perceptions of organizational treatment and influences retention decisions. Gender equality and anti discrimination policies demonstrate organizational commitment to fairness and inclusion. Data protection has become increasingly critical in the digital era as organizations collect and process personal information for various purposes. Compliance with labor regulations reflects ethical values and reduces legal risks. Employee welfare encompassing physical, psychological, and social aspects improves significantly when organizations implement just policies and value contributions from every individual. Leadership ethics and organizational culture supporting justice strengthen the implementation of equitable human resource practices. Ethical human resource practices improve productivity, innovation, and organizational competitiveness while fostering sustainable industrial relations.

INTRODUCTION

Human resource management has evolved from an administrative function into a strategic pillar of modern organizational governance. This development brings growing ethical responsibility for HR practitioners in managing the relationship between companies and workers (Chauhan & Dubey, 2025). Ethical issues such as wage fairness, gender equality, and anti-discrimination have become central concerns because they involve the basic rights of individuals in the workplace. Greenwood and Freeman (2005) emphasize that ethics in HR is not merely compliance with the law but a commitment to fairness and respect for human dignity. Gilliland and Steiner (2001) identify that perceptions of fairness in HR practices influence employee attitudes and behavior toward the organization. Employees who feel fairly treated tend to show higher levels of job satisfaction and loyalty. This satisfaction is closely tied to how organizations nurture employee creativity and innovation, since a fair working climate encourages workers to contribute more productively (Darmawan, 2023).

Perceived unfairness can trigger resistance and declining productivity (Dundar & Tabancali, 2012).

Employee data protection has emerged as an increasingly urgent ethical issue amid the digitalization of HR practices. Technological advances now allow the collection and processing of employees' personal data on a scale never seen before (Nayak & Vasanth, 2025). Schoeman and Du Plessis (2009) examine the ethical implications of data collection in recruitment and selection, highlighting the potential misuse of personal information. These risks intensify as organizations rely more heavily on knowledge management systems to gain competitive advantage, since the same information infrastructure used for strategic purposes can also expose sensitive employee data (Darmawan, 2023). The use of biometric technology, digital monitoring, and predictive analytics raises questions about the boundary between organizational interests and individual privacy. The shift toward remote and flexible work arrangements adds additional complexity to this issue, as employee monitoring increasingly extends beyond the physical workplace

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(Darmawan, 2023). Albrecht and Jerald (2009) stress that organizations must develop transparent data protection policies and involve employees in decision-making. This concern is reinforced by legal provisions governing the handling of electronic and personal data, which set clear boundaries on how such data may be collected and used (Budiman et al., 2026). Employees have the right to know how their data is used and protected from unauthorized access. Clear data protection standards are urgently needed to maintain employee trust in the organization. Ethical HR practice requires responsible data management that upholds privacy principles.

Gender equality and anti-discrimination are essential pillars of fair HR practice. Discrimination in recruitment, promotion, and compensation remains a problem in many organizations worldwide (Mann & Mann, 2025). Bishu and Alkadry (2017) highlight that gender discrimination persists despite various regulations protecting women workers' rights. Discrimination can appear explicitly or implicitly through bias in decision-making processes. Reskin and Bielby (2005) show that organizational structures and work culture often reinforce gender inequality in access to resources and career development opportunities. Age-based bias deserves similar attention, since older workers often face barriers in adapting to organizational changes driven by digital technology, which can limit their access to equal opportunity (Darmawan, 2023). Ethical HR practice must proactively identify and remove bias from human resource management systems. Affirmative policies and diversity awareness training can serve as an initial step toward a more inclusive work environment (Jalan & Jena, 2025). Commitment to gender equality reflects the values of fairness that underlie harmonious industrial relations.

Wage fairness is a complex ethical issue in human resource management because it involves balancing organizational interests with worker welfare (Bhardwaj & Singh, 2024). Determining a fair wage level must consider productivity, cost of living, and labor market standards. Leppänen and Johansson (2009) examine the influence of perceived wage fairness on employee motivation and performance across various industry sectors. Wage unfairness can create tension in industrial relations that leads to conflict and organizational instability. Research shows that employees who feel their wages are unfair tend to reduce work effort and increase their intention to leave the organization. Wage fairness is not merely a matter of compensation amount but also of transparency in how wages are determined and distributed. A well-designed compensation structure

is central to this transparency, since strategic compensation design helps align pay decisions with organizational sustainability while reducing arbitrary disparities among employees (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2013). Organizations need to develop objective performance appraisal systems and link compensation to employees' actual contributions. Ethical HR practice demands fairness in wage structures and the elimination of unjustified gaps between groups of workers (Chauhan & Dubey, 2025).

Healthy industrial relations require a balance between the rights and obligations of management and workers. Labor unions and joint bargaining institutions play an important role in maintaining fairness in employment relationships (Fatoni & Widagdo, 2024). Kaufman (2008) examines the evolution of industrial relations and the role of institutions in regulating interaction between labor and management. Collective bargaining allows workers to voice their interests and negotiate better working conditions. Organizations with healthy industrial relations tend to be more stable and productive in the long run. Unresolved conflict can damage the working climate and hinder the achievement of organizational goals. Effective industrial relations also depend on how well both parties understand applicable labor regulations, as a clearer grasp of legal provisions tends to improve consistency in applying workplace policies (Mardikaningsih & Arifin, 2021). Ethical HR practice must facilitate dialogue between management and workers and respect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively. Compliance with labor regulations forms the foundation for harmonious and fair industrial relations.

A major problem in ethical HR practice is the gap between formulated policies and their implementation on the ground. Many organizations have well-documented codes of ethics and anti-discrimination policies, but their execution falls far short of expectations. This phenomenon often occurs because of insufficient oversight and accountability in implementing HR policies. Decision-making in recruitment, promotion, and compensation remains vulnerable to undetected subjective bias. Such bias is not always deliberate; psychological factors that shape everyday decision-making can unconsciously influence how managers evaluate and treat employees (Gardi & Darmawan, 2022). Managers who lack adequate ethical awareness may discriminate without realizing that their actions violate the principle of fairness. An

organizational culture that tolerates discriminatory practices reinforces a cycle of injustice that is difficult to change (Stephens et al., 2020). Employees who become victims of discrimination often hesitate to report it for fear of retaliation or because no safe complaint mechanism exists. A safe and accessible complaint mechanism becomes even more important in socially and culturally diverse workplaces, where dispute resolution approaches need to account for differing norms and expectations among employees (Futriyah et al., 2023). The organization's inability to consistently enforce ethical policies creates the perception that its commitment to fairness is merely ceremonial. This undermines employee trust in management and weakens the overall effectiveness of HR practice.

Management holds significant authority in setting wage policies, performance appraisal systems, and career development, while workers are often powerless to influence these decisions (Welbourne & Trevor, 2000). This imbalance is worsened by the weak position of labor unions in the private sector and small companies. Workers without strong collective representation struggle to voice dissatisfaction with unfair treatment. Authoritarian and non-transparent management practices reinforce this imbalance and create a tense working climate. This vulnerability becomes especially apparent when workers suffer harm on the job, as securing adequate compensation for such cases still depends heavily on the strength of enforcement mechanisms in a rapidly automating work environment (Budi et al., 2024). Employees who experience unfair treatment often choose to leave the organization rather than fight for their rights. This phenomenon results in high turnover and the loss of valuable talent for the organization. The inability to create a balance of power in industrial relations hinders the creation of a fair and productive work environment.

Attention to ethical issues in HR is becoming increasingly important as public demand grows for responsible corporate governance. Scandals involving worker rights violations across various global industries have prompted consumers and investors to question the HR practices companies carry out. Organizations that fail to maintain ethical standards in human resource management face serious reputational risk in the eyes of the public. This reputational risk mirrors patterns seen elsewhere in stakeholder perception, where satisfaction with the quality of service an organization provides shapes public trust and

confidence in that organization (Darmawan et al., 2022). The regulatory framework in various countries is also becoming stricter in governing worker rights protection and workplace fairness. Pressure from stakeholders drives organizations to increase transparency in HR policies and practices. Just as public attitudes toward a brand are shaped by the image projected through its communication, an organization's standing before the public depends on the values it visibly upholds in practice (Darmawan et al., 2019). Sustainability reports now include worker rights protection indicators as part of corporate social responsibility.

The purpose of this writing is to systematically examine the role of ethics, compliance, and justice in human resource management as the foundation for managing industrial relations and employee well-being. This writing aims to build a theoretical understanding of how ethical principles such as wage justice, gender equality, anti-discrimination, and employee data protection contribute to harmonious industrial relations. Through a comprehensive literature review, this research seeks to identify the mechanisms through which ethical HR practices can improve employee well-being and reduce workplace conflict.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research applies a qualitative literature study approach with a structured and systematic conceptual analysis design. This approach was chosen because the research objective is to understand the theoretical relationship between ethics, compliance, justice, industrial relations, and employee well-being through the synthesis of knowledge from various academic sources. Creswell (2003) explains that a qualitative literature study allows researchers to build a rich understanding of social phenomena through the exploration of various theoretical perspectives that have been developed. The data sources of this research consist of scientific journals, books, conference proceedings, and research reports related to HR ethics, industrial relations, and employee well-being. Source selection was carried out through searches on prominent academic databases using relevant keywords. Inclusion criteria cover publications that explicitly discuss ethical aspects in HR practices, labor regulations, and the dynamics of industrial relations. This research also includes publications presenting theoretical or empirical analysis on wage justice, equality, and employee data protection.

The analysis procedure in this research follows a

workflow consisting of collection, reduction, presentation, and conclusion drawing from the gathered literature. Booth et al. (2012) emphasize that a quality literature study requires a systematic approach in searching, evaluating, and synthesizing sources to avoid selection bias. The initial stage of the research includes the identification of main keywords such as ethical human resource management, industrial relations, employee welfare, pay equity, and anti discrimination. Searches were conducted on Scopus, Web of Science, and ProQuest databases with relevant publication year restrictions. After initial collection, a screening process was carried out based on the relevance of titles and abstracts to the research topic. Saunders et al. (2009) emphasize the importance of transparency in the source selection process to enhance the credibility of literature study findings. This research conducts thematic analysis on the content of selected literature to identify patterns of relationships among the concepts discussed. The validity of research findings is maintained through source triangulation and the comparison of findings from various studies with different approaches and populations.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Ethical practice in human resource management forms the foundation for harmonious industrial relations between management and workers. Wage fairness, as one dimension of HR ethics, influences employees' overall perception of how they are treated by the organization (Valecha, 2022). Devi et al. (2025) explore the impact of compensation and benefits on employee retention and find that perceived fairness in wage structures affects employees' decisions to stay with or leave the organization. When employees feel that their wages reflect their contribution and fair market value, they tend to show stronger attachment to their work and the organization. Conversely, perceived wage unfairness can trigger counterproductive behavior and increase turnover intention. Wage fairness is also connected to gender equality in compensation structures, where pay differences not grounded in performance or capacity can create prolonged industrial relations conflict. Fair wage decisions cannot be separated from how an organization manages its financial resources, since sound ethical principles in financial management help ensure that compensation policies remain both responsible and sustainable (Putra & Arifin, 2023). Organizations that disregard the principle of wage fairness face the risk of higher turnover and a declining reputation as a fair and responsible workplace.

Gender equality in HR practice is an important indicator of an organization's commitment to fairness and anti-discrimination. Employees who experience equal treatment in recruitment, promotion, and career development show higher levels of loyalty and motivation. Yıldız and Topaylı (2024) examine positive psychological capital and problem-solving ability among academics, indicating that an equal and inclusive work environment contributes to employees' psychological well-being. Gender discrimination in HR practice not only violates ethical principles but also prevents an organization from fully utilizing the potential of its entire workforce. Companies with strong gender equality policies tend to show better financial performance and higher innovation. This inclusive approach also strengthens an organization's long-term competitiveness, since human capital that is well managed and equally developed becomes a key driver of sustainable competitive advantage (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2026). Darmawan (2024) studies the distribution of factors that improve organizational effectiveness and finds that diversity and inclusion are essential elements of organizational effectiveness. Ethical HR practice must include proactive steps to remove bias from decision-making processes and create equal career paths for all employees regardless of gender (Kamran et al., 2023).

Employee data protection has become an increasingly critical ethical issue in the era of HR digitalization. The collection and processing of employees' personal data for purposes such as performance appraisal, career development, and productivity monitoring raise questions about privacy and individual rights (Yadav, 2020). Konovalova (2021) discusses employee recognition programs and new realities, highlighting that digital technology is changing how organizations interact with employees and manage their personal data. As organizations increasingly adopt digital tools and artificial intelligence in HR processes, legal clarity over the validity of electronically generated agreements becomes essential to safeguard both organizational and employee interests (Maulani et al., 2023). Sahoo et al. (2026) explore employee skill development through artificial intelligence in organizational training, showing that the use of technology in HR requires close attention to data protection. Employees have the right to know how their data is used and to retain control over the personal information collected by the organization. This responsibility reflects a

broader pattern in which organizations are expected to apply sustainable and accountable management principles across all aspects of their operations, not only in handling employee data (Mardikaningsih & Nuraini, 2022). Ethical HR practice must develop transparent data protection policies and obtain employee consent before collecting or processing personal data. Data protection violations can damage employee trust and create legal consequences for the organization (Hussain & Antonio, 2024).

Anti-discrimination as an ethical principle in HR encompasses protection against various forms of discrimination based on race, religion, age, disability, and other legally protected characteristics. Miller and Hill (2017) assert that organizations seeking an emotionally engaged workforce must show consistent commitment to fairness and equality. Workplace discrimination can take many forms, including differential treatment in recruitment, promotion, compensation, and access to training. Employees who become victims of discrimination often experience a significant decline in psychological well-being and work motivation. Ethical leadership plays a central role in addressing this issue, as leaders who consistently model integrity help shape an organizational culture that discourages discriminatory behavior and reinforces fairness as a shared value (Mardikaningsih et al., 2022). Oorschot et al. (2021) examine leadership style and psychological contracts, showing that employees expect fair treatment as part of a reciprocal relationship with the organization. Ethical HR practice must develop safe reporting mechanisms for employees who experience discrimination and ensure that perpetrators receive proportionate sanctions. A strong anti-discrimination policy forms the foundation for harmonious industrial relations and an inclusive work environment.

Healthy industrial relations require a balance between the interests of management and workers, facilitated through collective bargaining and social dialogue. Newman and Ford (2022) argue that organizations can build loyalty by consistently signaling commitment to employee welfare and recognition of their contributions. Authentic leadership contributes to this dynamic by fostering a positive work climate and encouraging employees to engage in citizenship behavior that goes beyond formal job requirements, further strengthening cooperation between management and workers (Mardikaningsih et al., 2022). Collective bargaining provides a channel for workers to voice their interests and negotiate better working conditions.

Organizations with harmonious industrial relations show lower levels of conflict and higher productivity. When negotiation and dialogue fail to resolve disputes, formal legal mechanisms become necessary to ensure that unresolved conflicts can still be settled through a fair and structured process (Priyatama et al., 2026). Compliance with labor regulations forms the foundation for healthy and fair industrial relations. Ethical HR practice must facilitate two-way communication between management and workers and respect workers' rights to organize and bargain collectively.

Employee well-being, as a primary goal of ethical HR practice, encompasses the physical, psychological, and social dimensions of the work experience. Employees who feel well cared for tend to show higher productivity, creativity, and loyalty toward the organization. Stawicki et al. (2022) show that emotional intelligence contributes to performance and creativity within knowledge-based workforces, indicating that psychological well-being is a precondition for optimal performance. Positive psychological factors such as optimism and resilience also play a role in this process, since they strengthen employees' engagement and commitment to their work (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Effective employee well-being programs include health benefits, work flexibility, psychological support, and career development opportunities. Darmawan et al. (2020) examine the relationship between human resource quality and employee loyalty, showing that attention to well-being increases long-term loyalty. Ethical HR practice must place employee well-being as a priority and integrate it into all HR policies and programs. Organizations that address employee well-being comprehensively tend to have more harmonious industrial relations and lower turnover rates (Sharma et al., 2023).

Compliance with labor regulations is an important aspect of ethical and responsible HR practice. Labor regulations are designed to protect workers' basic rights such as minimum wage, working hours, occupational safety, and protection from discrimination. Organizations that comply with regulations demonstrate commitment to ethical standards and reduce the risk of litigation and reputational damage. Such compliance carries real consequences, since organizations that fail to meet applicable regulatory standards bear legal responsibility when violations cause harm to those affected (Dirgantara et al., 2025). Mardikaningsih and Darmawan (2022) discuss digital human resource

practices in remote work systems and highlight that compliance with labor regulations must be maintained despite changes in work patterns. Weak compliance is often rooted in how an organization is structured from the outset, as businesses that avoid establishing a proper formal legal entity tend to have looser governance over their employment practices (Hardyansah et al., 2024). Compliance with regulations is not merely a legal obligation but also reflects the ethical values held by the organization. Ethical HR practice must ensure that all policies and procedures conform to applicable regulations and are clearly communicated to all employees. Periodic compliance audits are needed to identify and correct potential regulatory violations (Hussain & Antonio, 2024).

Career development and training, as part of ethical HR practice, play an important role in improving employee well-being and job satisfaction. Ozkeser (2019) studies the impact of training on employee motivation in human resource management and finds that investment in competency development correlates positively with motivation and retention. Employees who have the opportunity to develop their skills and career tend to show higher commitment to the organization. Employees' belief in their own capability, or self-efficacy, also determines how well they adapt when organizations introduce new technology through training (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2022). Fared and Darmawan (2021) discuss the design and implementation of cross-functional training to improve team collaboration, which is relevant for creating an inclusive and fair work environment. This kind of adaptability tends to come more easily within a flexible organizational structure, where training programs can be adjusted quickly as business conditions change (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2023). Ethical organizations must provide equal access to training and career development for all employees without discrimination. Fair career development programs consider employees' individual needs and their potential to contribute more to the organization. Hariani and Mardikaningsih (2021) examine the implementation of value-based management in multinational organizations, showing that investment in employee development is part of an organization's ethical commitment. Ethical HR practice must ensure that every employee has an equal opportunity to develop their potential.

Procedural justice in HR practice influences

employees' overall perception of organizational fairness. Transparent and consistent procedures in performance appraisal, promotion, and compensation increase employee trust in management (Haines et al., 2024). Darmawan (2021) examines objective vagueness, appraisal bias, and lack of employee involvement in performance appraisal in relation to job satisfaction. These findings indicate that unclear appraisal procedures can undermine employees' sense of fairness and reduce job satisfaction. This pattern is not confined to internal HR decisions; similar effects appear when unclear legal procedures discourage individuals from pursuing legitimate claims through formal channels (Hardyansah et al., 2021). Qin (2024) analyzes the impact of corporate culture on employees' sense of belonging and finds that procedural justice is an important factor in building belonging and engagement. Employees who understand how decisions are made and have the opportunity to give input tend to accept decision outcomes even when those outcomes are not personally favorable. Approaches built around mediation offer a useful comparison here, since strengthening such mechanisms tends to produce outcomes both parties perceive as fairer than purely adversarial processes (Aidin et al., 2026). This same principle extends to how disputes over communication or expression are resolved, where a restorative rather than a purely punitive approach is increasingly regarded as the fairer path (Darmawan & Negara, 2023). Eddine et al. (2023) find that knowledge management and quality of work life influence employee commitment, indicating that fair procedures improve quality of work life. Ethical HR practice must develop clear and documented procedures for all decisions affecting employees.

Distributive justice, related to the allocation of resources and rewards, is also an essential element of ethical HR practice. Employees compare the outcomes they receive with their contributions and with the outcomes received by other employees. Kase et al. (2025) examine the impact of wage dispersion and relative wage position on employee mobility, showing that distributive unfairness can trigger decisions to leave the organization. Darmawan (2020) examines the retention and career mobility of senior employees, showing that employees who feel unfairly valued tend to seek opportunities elsewhere. Fair distribution also concerns how risk and protection are structured between parties, since clear contractual arrangements determine who bears liability and

whose assets are protected when problems arise (Akbar, Hardyansah, & Dirgantara, 2024). Distributive unfairness can also trigger industrial relations conflict and reduce overall productivity. Perceptions of fairness in accessing resources are not unique to the workplace; similar perceptions shape how individuals view their access to financial support such as government credit programs (Darmawan et al., 2022). Mngomezulu et al. (2015) find that recognition has a significant impact on talent retention, indicating that distributive justice covers both financial and nonfinancial aspects. How individuals weigh potential outcomes against risk, as seen in decisions to invest, mirrors the way employees evaluate whether the rewards they receive are worth the effort and risk involved in their work (Mardikaningsih & Darmawan, 2023). Ethical HR practice must ensure that the allocation of rewards and recognition is carried out fairly based on objective performance and contribution. Distributive justice perceived by employees strengthens industrial relations and commitment to the organization.

Recognition and appreciation, as forms of nonfinancial reward, play an important role in creating a fair and motivating work environment. Konovalova (2021) discusses employee recognition programs and new realities, highlighting that timely and sincere recognition has a significant impact on motivation and engagement. Nasir (2022) discusses the importance of building a culture of appreciation and shows that public recognition of employee achievement can increase motivation and job satisfaction. Darmaki et al. (2019) review the role of reward in encouraging innovation, showing that nonfinancial rewards stimulate innovative behavior. In ethical HR practice, recognition must be given fairly and consistently based on objective performance. Awareness of one's own rights shapes how people respond to unfair treatment, whether in the workplace or in other formal agreements, since a lack of legal consciousness often means unfair practices go unchallenged (Hardyansah et al., 2022). Shalini (2020) observes the impact of reward and recognition on employee commitment in the banking sector and finds that fair recognition strengthens affective commitment. Organizations with flexible structures tend to design recognition programs that better reflect employees' actual contributions, since rigid structures often result in appreciation being distributed too uniformly (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2023).

Organizations must develop structured and transparent recognition programs so that all employees have an equal opportunity to be recognized. Fair recognition strengthens industrial relations and improves employees' psychological well-being (Elmastini & Elmastini, 2025).

An organizational culture that supports ethics and fairness is a critical factor in the effective implementation of HR practices. Organizational culture reflects the values and norms shared among organizational members (Manekar, 2024). Putra et al. (2021) discuss organizational social capital and team collaboration as supports for total quality management, showing that a culture of collaboration supports the application of fairness principles. This same commitment to responsibility tends to extend beyond internal relations into how an organization manages its broader operational chain, since sustainable practices in that chain are often driven by the same ethical culture (Barzani et al., 2022). Hariani (2021) examines organizational culture and self-efficacy in shaping employee performance, indicating that a culture supporting fairness increases self-efficacy and performance. Such a culture is also reflected in how organizations treat their environmental and legal obligations, since ethical accountability tends to be applied consistently across different areas of responsibility (Darmawan, 2022). Darmawan et al. (2025) examine the influence of cultural values and work motivation on organizational citizenship behavior, showing that cultural values influence employees' prosocial behavior. An ethical organizational culture encourages employees to behave in accordance with the values of fairness and mutual respect. This balance between adaptability and fairness is particularly relevant as organizations pursue innovation, since a healthy innovation culture requires pairing technological speed with genuine attention to human values (Darmawan, 2023). Kurniawan and Darmawan (2021) examine the effects of adaptive learning, showing that a culture supporting learning and adaptation enables organizations to respond better to change. The principle of fairness embedded in such a culture is not exclusive to the workplace; similar reasoning appears in how substantive justice is applied to protect the rights of vulnerable parties within family and legal structures (Darmawan & Fitroni, 2026). Ethical HR practice must align with organizational culture and be reinforced through consistent leadership.

Ethical leadership plays a key role in shaping fair HR practices and harmonious industrial

relations. Ethical leaders show behavior consistent with the values of fairness and integrity in every decision they make. Oorschot et al. (2021) examine leadership style and psychological contracts, showing that ethical leadership strengthens the positive psychological contract between employees and the organization. This dynamic mirrors how formal agreements function more broadly in business practice, where trust between parties depends on clearly understood and mutually honored commitments (Da Silva, Darmawan, & Irfan, 2022). Darmawan (2021) examines the implementation of agile project management, showing that adaptive leadership is needed in a dynamic environment. Ethical leaders create an environment where employees feel safe to voice opinions and report ethical violations. This sense of safety is closely tied to employees' broader engagement and commitment, both of which are shaped by positive psychological factors leaders help cultivate (Darmawan & Mardikaningsih, 2022). Irfan and Darmawan (2021) discuss improving psychological well-being through emotion management, showing that ethical leadership supports employees' psychological well-being. Sustaining well-being at this level increasingly requires organizations to treat mental health as a legitimate organizational concern rather than a purely individual matter, which calls for a deliberate reorientation of HR strategy toward supportive work environment design (Issalillah & Khayru, 2025). Ethical HR practice requires strong leadership commitment to the principles of fairness, anti-discrimination, and protection of worker rights. Ethical leadership becomes the foundation for harmonious and sustainable industrial relations (Saudin, 2024).

Fair and transparent performance management policy is an important component of ethical HR practice in managing industrial relations. A biased or inconsistent performance appraisal system can create a perception of unfairness that damages employee trust. Osman et al. (2016) find that innovation contributes to employee performance, showing that performance appraisal should include aspects of innovation and creativity. Speckbacher and Wabnegg (2020) emphasize the role of knowledge exchange in motivating innovation, indicating that performance appraisal systems should encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing. Shaheen et al. (2020) examine the relationship between extrinsic reward and creative performance, showing that performance appraisal must consider

employees' creative contributions. How reward is understood by employees matters as much as how it is structured, since the meaning attached to compensation and benefits shapes whether employees perceive the appraisal system as genuinely fair (Hariani & Mardikaningsih, 2016). In ethical HR practice, performance appraisal must be based on objective and documented criteria and involve employees in the evaluation process. This is best achieved through a compensation design that deliberately aligns individual work behavior with organizational goals, rather than treating pay and appraisal as separate systems (Hariani et al., 2014). Arifin and Mardikaningsih (2021) examine the influence of employability and organizational climate on employee performance, showing that an organizational climate that supports fairness improves performance. A fair performance appraisal system becomes the basis for equitable compensation, promotion, and career development decisions.

Harmonious industrial relations require fair and effective conflict resolution mechanisms. Conflict between management and workers is natural in every organization, but how it is resolved determines the quality of industrial relations. Tarihoran and Harsono (2025) explore the dynamics of employee loyalty in construction companies and find that fairness in conflict resolution increases employee loyalty. Vandenberghe (2021) discusses moderators of organizational affective commitment, showing that perceived fairness in conflict resolution strengthens affective commitment. Arifin et al. (2021) discuss how to build work-life balance to improve job satisfaction, showing that this balance includes fair conflict resolution. Effective conflict resolution mechanisms include mediation, arbitration, and dialogue between management and workers. The procedural side of this process matters as well, since disputes brought before industrial relations proceedings depend on valid legal representation to ensure that each party's interests are properly defended (Putri et al., 2026). Ishaq et al. (2021) examine the gig economy and worker well-being, showing that fair conflict resolution is important in non-traditional employment relationships. This concern extends to informal work arrangements more broadly, where access to welfare protection remains uneven despite the sector's significant contribution to employment (Rojak & Putra, 2021). Ethical HR practice must develop clear, accessible conflict resolution procedures that involve employee representatives. Such procedures rely on

the same professional integrity expected of legal advocates who must sustain fairness even within adversarial processes (Saktiawan et al., 2021). This principle of fairness is closely related to broader human rights protections, which guard individuals from being unfairly subjected to repeated proceedings over the same matter (Simanjuntak et al., 2026). Fair and transparent conflict resolution prevents conflict escalation and maintains harmonious industrial relations.

Compliance with labor regulations and international work standards is an important indicator of responsible HR practice. Multinational organizations face the challenge of complying with regulations in various countries that may differ in standards and implementation. Gautama et al. (2021) examine the relationship between employee welfare and public organization performance, showing that regulatory compliance improves organizational performance. Oluwatosin et al. (2021) discuss the relationship between employee welfare programs and workforce retention, indicating that compliance with welfare regulations increases retention. Fair compliance also concerns how equally the labor market treats different groups of jobseekers, since factors such as age, experience, and gender can still unfairly extend the time it takes graduates to find employment (Khayru et al., 2022). Mardikaningsih and Darmawan (2021) discuss business sustainability strategies in facing uncertainty, showing that regulatory compliance is part of a sustainability strategy. Organizations that comply with regulations show commitment to ethics and reduce legal risk. This becomes especially relevant in newer forms of employment, where legal protection of workers' rights and employment contracts needs to keep pace with the flexible arrangements common in startup ecosystems (Nugraha et al., 2024).

Compliance in such settings also depends on clarity regarding who bears legal responsibility for corporate management decisions, particularly within emerging business structures like startups (Nugroho et al., 2024). Eddine and Darmawan (2021) discuss professional, manual, and informal workers in achieving work-life balance, showing that regulatory protection must cover all types of workers. Similar attention to risk and compliance appears in financial regulatory contexts, where mitigating exposure to risk is treated as a core obligation of parties operating within a regulated platform (Sahid et al., 2023). Breaches of good faith in cooperation agreements illustrate how noncompliance can shade into outright fraud, underscoring why clear legal safeguards matter across all forms of organizational

partnership (Santoso, Waksito, Wijaya, Pakpahan, & Dirgantara, 2024). Transparency obligations extend further still to ownership disclosure, which supports broader efforts to strengthen accountability and prevent misuse of corporate structures (Setyastomo et al., 2024). Ethical HR practice must ensure that all policies and procedures comply with applicable labor regulations.

Fair and ethical work practices not only improve employee well-being but also increase overall organizational productivity and performance. Employees who are treated fairly and whose contributions are valued show higher levels of commitment and motivation (Kumar & Ramraj, 2025). Putra et al. (2022) discuss employee experience in the digital workplace, showing that a positive work experience increases productivity and satisfaction. Part of this positive experience depends on how well employees are equipped to keep pace with automation, since deliberate strategies to build knowledge and sustain engagement in increasingly automated routine work help prevent disengagement (Darmawan, 2024). Dutta and Dhir (2021) develop a measure of employee loyalty that includes ethical dimensions in employment relationships, showing that loyalty is built through fair and consistent treatment. Technology itself carries an ambiguous role in this fairness equation, since it can either promote or hinder gender equality in the workplace depending on how deliberately it is designed and applied (Darmawan, 2024).

Organizations that implement ethical HR practices have a better reputation among prospective employees and other stakeholders. This reputational advantage functions much like how a strong marketing mix builds sustained competitive advantage in service-based markets, where consistent quality of experience shapes stakeholder perception over time (Darmawan & Grenier, 2021). A comparable pattern is observed in how consumers weigh service quality, product variety, and price perception in forming their purchase decisions, illustrating how consistent standards shape trust across very different contexts (Essardi et al., 2022). Arifin and Darmawan (2021) discuss access to technology and digital skills, showing that equal access to technology is part of fairness in the digital era. This extends to how organizations communicate and promote themselves externally, since social media has become a significant channel through which businesses reach and engage stakeholders (Infante & Mardikaningsih, 2022).

Ethical HR practice must include equal

access to technology and opportunities to develop digital skills. These shifts point toward a broader reconfiguration of work itself, where flexibility and employer branding are becoming central to how organizations attract and retain talent in the digital era (Mardikaningsih, 2025). Even the legal infrastructure supporting digital work is evolving, as the growing recognition of electronic signatures and the evidentiary strength of digital contracts reflects how deeply digitalization has reshaped organizational practice (Setiyono et al., 2026). Harmonious industrial relations and high employee well-being create a productive and innovative work environment. Organizations that successfully integrate ethics into HR practice gain sustainable competitive advantage in the labor market.

CONCLUSION

The practices of ethics, compliance, and justice in human resource management are an important foundation for managing industrial relations and employee well-being. Wage justice, gender equality, anti-discrimination, and employee data protection are interrelated ethical dimensions that influence employees' perceptions of organizational justice as a whole. Harmonious industrial relations are formed when management and workers share mutual understanding and trust built through consistent and transparent HR practices. Employee well-being, encompassing physical, psychological, and social aspects, increases significantly when organizations implement fair policies that value the contribution of each individual. Compliance with labor regulations serves as the basis for ethical HR practices and reduces the risk of conflict and litigation. Ethical leadership and an organizational culture that supports justice strengthen the implementation of fair and sustainable HR practices. Ethical HR practices not only benefit employees but also enhance organizational productivity, innovation, and competitive advantage.

Organizations need to conduct periodic ethics audits to identify and rectify potential violations of the principles of justice and equality. A recommendation for future research is to conduct empirical studies examining the causal relationship between specific HR ethics dimensions and indicators of industrial relations and employee well-being across various sectors and organizational

cultures. Organizations need to develop grievance systems and protection mechanisms for whistleblowers to detect and address ethical violations early.

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