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INTERNATIONAL HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

SECOND
EDITION

THE TRANSFORMATION OF WORK IN A GLOBAL CONTEXT





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8 Developing economies: globalization, politics and employment relations

Naresh Kumar, Robert MacKenzie and Miguel Martínez Lucio

Learning objectives

- To understand the limitations of the discussion on developing economies and to appreciate the greater complexity of such countries in terms of work and regulation
- To engage with the way a broad range of actors including the state intervene in relation to multinational corporations (MNCs) in such contexts
- To outline some of the challenges in terms of employment relations and the way worker rights and worker representation are developed

Introduction

The activities of MNCs and their impact on host countries are understandably dominant themes within the international human resource management (IHRM) literature, but there is a tendency for the emphasis being on international capital as the proactive agent and the host country as a largely passive recipient of change. This tendency is particularly notable in relation to the impact of MNCs on developing economies. This problematic engagement is perhaps partly related to the difficulty of defining what is meant by the notion of 'developing'. In some cases, China is presented as developing, which is not always plausible given the extent of its social and economic development. Similarly, the language of 'developing' and 'developed' is problematic when categorizing countries with rich and often