

EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCE HANDLING

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ABSTRACT: A grievance means any dispute or discontent or feelings of unfairness arise between an employer and employee in workplace. The employees express their grievances in terms of complaint. This review focuses on the grievance procedure research published in the past decade with specific attention on the application of social science theory to grievance research. The review concludes that the theoretical grounding of recent grievance research has improved over the earlier research, but remains quite inadequate. Recommendations on the direction that grievance research should take in the future to further improve on the theoretical content of grievance research are provided. It is argued that theory in grievance research should advance at two levels: the comprehensive systems approach, and the application of specific social science theories to narrower aspects of the grievance process.

Keywords: Employee Grievances, Causes of Grievance, Nature of grievance, Grievance Handling Procedure.

1. INTRODUCTION

A grievance is any dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice having connection with one's employment situation which is brought to the attention of management. Speaking broadly, a grievance is any dissatisfaction that adversely affects organizational relations and productivity. To understand what a grievance is, it is necessary to distinguish between dissatisfaction, complaint, and grievance.

1. Dissatisfaction is anything that disturbs an employee, whether or not the unrest is expressed in words.
2. Complaint is a spoken or written dissatisfaction brought to the attention of the supervisor or the shop steward.
3. Grievance is a complaint that has been formally presented to a management representative or to a union official.

1.1 Definition of Grievance

According to Michael Jucious, 'grievance is any discontent or dissatisfaction whether expressed or not, whether valid or not, arising out of anything connected with the company which an employee thinks, believes or even feels to be unfair, unjust or inequitable'.

In short, grievance is a state of dissatisfaction, expressed or unexpressed, written or unwritten, justified or unjustified, having connection with employment situation.

1.2 Causes of Grievances

1. Economic

Employees may demand for individual wage adjustments. They may feel that they are paid less when compared to others. For example, late bonus, payments, adjustments to overtime pay, perceived inequalities in treatment, claims for equal pay, and appeals against performance-related pay awards.

2. Work environment

It may be undesirable or unsatisfactory conditions of work. For example, light, space, heat, or poor physical conditions of workplace, defective tools and equipment, poor quality of material, unfair rules, and lack of recognition.

3. Supervision

It may be objections to the general methods of supervision related to the attitudes of the supervisor towards the employee such as perceived notions of bias, favouritism, nepotism, caste affiliations and regional feelings.

4. Organizational change

Any change in the organizational policies can result in grievances. For example, the implementation of revised company policies or new working practices.

5. Employee relations

Employees are unable to adjust with their colleagues, suffer from feelings of neglect and victimization and become an object of ridicule and humiliation, or other inter-employee disputes.

6. Miscellaneous

These may be issues relating to certain violations in respect of promotions, safety methods, transfer, disciplinary rules, fines, granting leaves, medical facilities, etc.

1.3 Need for a Formal Procedure to Handle Grievances

A grievance handling system serves as an outlet for employee frustrations, discontents, and gripes like a pressure release valve on a steam boiler. Employees do not have to keep their frustrations bottled up until eventually discontent causes explosion.

The existence of an effective grievance procedure reduces the need of arbitrary action by supervisors because supervisors know that the employees are able to protect such behavior and make protests to be heard by higher management. The very fact that employees have a right to be heard and are actually heard helps to improve morale. In view of all these, every organization should have a clear-cut procedure for grievance handling.

1.4 Steps in Grievance Handling Procedure

At any stage of the grievance machinery, the dispute must be handled by some members of the management. In grievance redressed, responsibility lies largely with the management. And, grievances should be settled promptly at the first stage itself. The following steps will provide a measure of guidance to the manager dealing with grievances.

1. Acknowledge Dissatisfaction

Managerial/supervisory attitude to grievances is important. They should focus attention on grievances, not turn away from them. Ignorance is not bliss, it is the bane of industrial conflict. Condescending attitude on the part of supervisors and managers would aggravate the problem.

2. Define the Problem

Instead of trying to deal with a vague feeling of discontent, the problem should be defined properly. Sometime the wrong complaint is given. By effective listening, one can make sure that a true complaint is voiced.

3. Get the Facts

Facts should be separated from fiction. Though grievances result in hurt feelings, the effort should be to get the facts behind the feelings. There is need for a proper record of each grievance.

4. Analyse and Decide

Decisions on each of the grievances will have a precedent effect. While no time should be lost in dealing with them, it is no excuse to be slipshod about it. Grievance settlements provide opportunities for managements to correct themselves, and thereby come closer to the employees.

5. Follow up

Decisions taken must be followed up earnestly. They should be promptly communicated to the employee concerned. If a decision is favourable to the employee, his immediate boss should have the privilege of communicating the same.

1.5 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Primary Objective

To study about employee grievance handling mechanism at eastern condiments.

Secondary Objectives

1. To find the opinion of employee that causes grievances in the organization.
3. To analyse the employee level of satisfaction in the grievance handling methods.
4. To identify relationship between factors influencing the effectiveness of the grievance handling in the organization.

1.6 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

Due to rapid growth of technology, industrialization has become a tough job to cope the employees with the machineries. Success of organization largely depends upon collective effort of the employer and employees. However, there are factors that results in employee dissatisfaction. There is no organization in which employee have no grievance.

Hence understanding and finding the root cause of employee grievance is itself a solution to it. Hence the study on grievance handling at eastern is undertaken to make an exploration into the grievance faced by employees. It is very essential to control the employee grievance in future fairly.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. V. Mohana sundaram, N. Saranya, (2013) in his article "Employee Grievance" organisation are made up of peoples and functions through people without people organisation cannot exist. The resources of men, money, material and machinery are collected, coordinated and utilized through people in the organisation. It is through the combined effort of people that materials and monetary resources are effectively utilized for the attainment of common objectives and goals without united human effort no organisation can achieve its goals.

Sonika Sharma, Niti S harma, (2011) in his research paper entitled " Listening Skills: A prerequisite for Grievance Handling " The ability to be an active listener is too often taken for granted. HR professionals play pivotal role in the

organisation. They inject a feeling of confidence and belief among the staff members by listening and solving their issues and concerns. Employee grievances are essentially human problems, real or imaginary.

Lawrence Nurse, Dwayne Devenish, (2007) in his working paper entitled “Grievance Management and its links to workplace justice” The purpose of this paper is to explore the influence of workers’ demographic characteristics on their perception of procedural justice from grievance management. A related aim is to determine whether procedural justice perception have an impact on perception of distributive justice.

Gordon and Miller, Allen and Keavney and Klass note the important role that expectancy theory could play in differentiating grievants and nongrievants. Although not a complete test of expectancy theory, Lewin and Boroff did include the employees perceived effectiveness of the grievance procedure as an explanatory variable. Surprisingly, this was not significantly related to grievance filing. Further research focusing on expectancy theory and grievance filing that more fully develops testable hypotheses derived from expectancy theory seems appropriate.

Bemmels, Reshef and Stratton-Devine included the shop stewards assessment of how frequently employees approach them with complaints. Although most grievances are formally filed by employees, the initiation of a grievance can come from employees or stewards. Complaining to the shop stewards is the employees’ role in the grievance initiation process. Both of these studies found the work group with employees who complained to the stewards more frequently had grievance rates. Employees’ complaining to their stewards is a precursor to grievance filing. The measure of consideration and structure were significantly related to frequency of employee complaints in Bemmels and the steward’s assessment of the supervisors’ knowledge of the collective agreement was negatively related to complaints.

Lewin and Peterson found a positive relationship with grievance procedure structure and grievance rates. They also found higher grievance rates under procedures that include provisions for expedited grievance handling. It was found that provisions allowing oral presentation of grievances was related to lower rates of written grievances, and screening of potential grievances was related to lower rates of written grievance, and screening of potential grievances by a committee or other union officials was associated with lower grievance rates. The number of steps in the grievance procedure and the length of time allowed for filing a grievance were not related to grievance rates.

Grievance procedures are related to other attitudinal measures and the behaviors of shop stewards in the grievance procedure. Grievance procedure effectiveness was related to union members’ overall satisfaction with the union. Grievance procedures have been found to relate to union commitment, employer commitment and dual commitment. Employer commitment has found to be negatively related to absenteeism and turnover and union commitment has found to have a positive relationship with union participation and with shop steward behavior in the grievance procedure. Many studies still report empirical analysis with no theoretical grounding, or only intuitive and ad hoc hypotheses

3. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

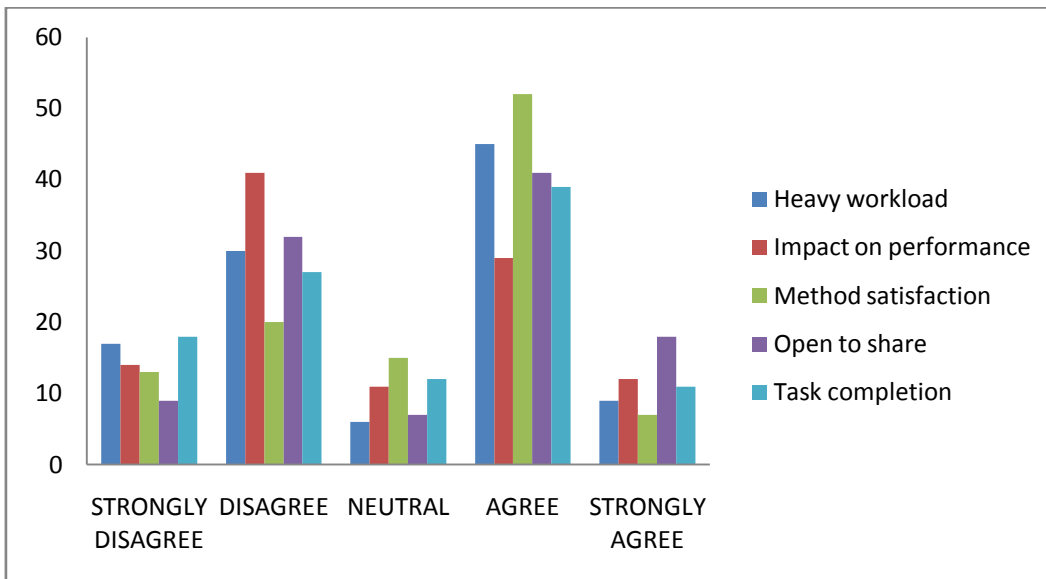
Level of Satisfaction about nature of grievance

PARTICULARS	STRONGLY DISAGREE	DISAGREE	NEUTRAL	AGREE	STRONGLY AGREE
Heavy workload	17	30	6	45	9
Impact on performance	14	41	11	29	12
Method satisfaction	13	20	15	52	7
Open to share	9	32	7	41	18
Task completion	18	27	12	39	11

Interpretation

From the above table it has been interpreted that 52% of respondents are agreed regarding present grievance handling mechanism, 45% of employees are agreed regarding heavy workload, 41% of employees states disagreed regarding grievance impact on performance, 41% of employees states agreed regarding sharing of grievances and finally 39% of respondents are agreed regarding task completion within schedule time.

Results in Graph



3.1 ONE WAY ANOVA TESTING

To find the significant difference between experience and job satisfaction level of employees.

Ho = Null hypothesis

There is no significant difference between the experience and job satisfaction level of employees.

H1= Alternate hypothesis

There is significant difference between the experience and job satisfaction level of employees.

Anova Result

ANOVA					
EXPERIENCE	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	7.776	4	1.944	1.940	.018
Within Groups	103.215	103	1.002		
Total	110.991	107			

Interpretation

The Null hypothesis is accepted and Alternate hypothesis is rejected . It can be concluded that there is no significant difference between the experience and job satisfaction level of employees at 5% level of significance

4. SUGGESTIONS

1. Based on this research most of the employees are satisfied with working condition so management should have to maintain the same working condition in the organisation.
2. Job descriptions, responsibilities should be as clear as possible.
3. Everyone should be informed of company's goals and expectation including what is expected from each individual.

4. Informal counselling helps to address and manage grievances in the workplace.
5. Conflict management in the organisation will be helpful to reduce the number of grievance rates.
6. Suggestion boxes can be installed. This brings the problem or conflict of interest to light.

5. CONCLUSION

The study was about employee grievance handling mechanism which has been conducted in Eastern Condiments Private Limited., Theni which helps to understand that employees are aware about the grievance handling mechanism done in the organisation. The study reveals that the grievance handling mechanism is satisfactory. The organisation is recognizing the importance of satisfying the employees and retaining them. Further improvement can be made so that all members are highly satisfied with the procedure. The suggestion and recommendations when implemented will still more benefit the organisation.

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