

A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF GRIEVANCE HANDLING

MECHANISM AT LUCAS TVS, CHENNAI

U. ULAGESWARI¹ & S. VENKATESH²

¹Research Scholar, Department of management, Prist University Vallam, Tanjor, Tamil nadu, India

²Associate Professor, Prist School of business, Prist university Vallam Tanjore, Tamil nadu, India

ABSTRACT

The study surmises the satisfaction of employees, with the procedures for grievance handling. It was comprehended that, the employees were highly satisfied with the mechanism being followed. A grievance is, any discontent or feeling of unfairness. In the workplace, this definition could extend to the system and nature of work. This study intends to determine whether, employers efficiently manage the grievances of their employees. The study acknowledges that, the most common factors for grievances in the workplace are disparity in wages and salary, working conditions, promotions, transfer, lack of communication, inter-departmental relationship, etc.

In addition, the study also explores to identify the foundation for grievances, their triggering factors, grievances handling techniques, and the management procedures, for resolving the issues. Effective grievance management, ensures good employee relations, smooth and successful running of the organization, and improved productivity at work. The root cause of any grievance must be ascertained by the employer, along with best possible means of redressal, to ensure the satisfaction of employees in an organization.

KEYWORDS: Grievance, Grievance Handling, Redressal, Employer & Employee

INTRODUCTION

The study aims to determine an effective grievance handling mechanism, in place to ensure that, employee's problems are acknowledged and appropriately reviewed in a prompt and timely manner. A good grievance mechanism, guarantees a harmonious and healthy relationship between employee and employer. The grievance mechanism, must deal with the employee's concerns in an impartial and upright manner. In addition, the grievances must be resolved without delay, discrimination, coercion, restraint or reprisal against any employee,6 who may submit or be associated with a grievance.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Grievance

Grievance is disorder or problem, in occupation relation. Grievances are of two types: informal and formal. Appropriate meditation must be given to every grievance presented, which must be dealt with accurately, within usually 28 days. This is in line with the Dispute Resolution, Regulations 2004, of Northern Ireland Employment Order 2003. Discontent of employees with the job is an indication of grievance. The foundations for such grievances are usually laid during the daily association between an employee and the organization. Dissatisfaction on the judgments of the management, may be presented by the trade union, who complaints, for the employees. Grievance, helps to gain insight on the functioning of large organizations. The managers at various hierarchies, are usually unable to monitor each individual

and cater to their varied needs. However, when their concerns are presented, the method employed for dealing with such employee discontent is called, grievance procedure. Any unionized organization should follow reputable and standard grievance procedures, that help in reducing dissatisfaction. In the book “Strategic grievance handling,” the alteration between dissatisfaction, grievance, and complaint is discussed. Discontent is fostered when an individual is not cheerful in his job, and when the organization does not recognize the individual’s goals. This dissatisfaction leads to grievances, when an individual discusses it with another employee in the organization. When any dissatisfaction, pertaining to work is brought to the notice of the management, the complaint becomes a grievance. Wyman (1971) suggested that, “executives must give a written solution regarding grievance resolution outcome, to distressed subordinate”. He also coded that, unlike oral answers to spoken grievances, the written answer must conform to established protocol, set down by the management. Procedure decrees that, the written grievance must be free of every other impinging feature, however pervasive and controlling. A printed answer for grievance management serves as a record. It could serve as an example, in case the same issue arises in future. Recorded grievance is mandatory, to proceed to the next step in the grievance procedure (Industrial Harmony Code for Conduct, n.d). Karambayya and Brett (1989), state in their employee discontent research that, four roles have been determined, which involve manager’s actions, for handling grievances. The first role of managers was cross-examining. Managers, who were involved with cross-examination, retained both the process and result control for them. In this role, managers forced their own ideas to resolve the issue, made the final decision, and employed their own ideas for future prevention. The second function of managers, involved a mediational role. Mediational role permitted managers to enquire their employee regarding conflicts, enabled them to request suggestions from employees to resolve issues, as well as allowed incorporating their ideas into employees’ proposals. The third role of the managers signified technical organization. Managers, involved in this role designated the dispute-handling procedures, to be followed and strictly imposed those rules. The fourth task of the managers was, the motivational role. In this role, managers always depend on motivational control by using fears and incentives to arrive at a solution. If the issue of dispute could not be resolved at a meeting, managers will forecast probable outcomes and utilize pressure to encourage a timely settlement (Chaykowski & Slotsve, (1992); Tan, (1994)). Ivancevich (2001) mentioned that, “supervisor should take grievance exceptionally, gather all the facts which is related to grievance, then do investigation and give answer. After the grievance is commonly settled, the managers have to move on to the added matters”. Gordon and Miller (1984), studied the influences impacting the supervisors’ approach, in identifying the issue of grievance. It also highlighted the importance of setting up rules, for the supervisors. Tjosvold & Morishima (1999) recommended that, “supervisors must have competence and willingness to discuss the difficulty with the employee and union rep, at initial stage”. It must be noted that, supervisory elegance affects grievance rate and their disposition.

GRIEVANCE PROCEDURE WITH REGARD TO HR HANDBOOK

The grievance must be reported to the higher ups and also appealed likewise. The grievance procedure is common to all the staff.

- Conference among the aggrieved employee, the supervisor, and the union steward.
- Conference between middle management and middle union leadership.
- Conference between top management and top union leadership.
- Arbitration.

Variations in the procedures may be followed, for resolving employee grievances. Variations usually are dependent on factors such as, organizational or decision-making structures, or size of the plant or company. Large organizations, do tend to have formal grievance procedures involving a succession of steps.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The procedure used by researchers to describe, explain and predicting phenomena is called, Methodology. Methods comprise the procedures used for generating, collecting, and evaluating data. Methods are the ways of obtaining information, useful for assessing explanation.

TYPE OF RESEARCH

Descriptive research is used in this study. It involves fact finding, related largely to the present, abstracting generations, by cross-sectional study of the prevailing conditions. This method is most popular in physical and natural sciences. However, in social science, it is commonly used in socio-economic surveys, as well as job and activity analysis.

Data Collection Method

Data collection using questionnaires is a popular method employed, while incorporating a large number of participants. This method was used in this study. This method is not only used for individual research, but is also frequently used by private and public organizations; even the government embraces this method for data collection. A questionnaire consists of a number of questions, that pertain to both specific and general enquiries, related to grievance handling.

Sources of Data

Collected data are categorized as **primary** and **secondary**.

Primary Data

Primary data was fresh data amassed by surveying the employees using questionnaire.

Secondary Data

Secondary data was gathered using books and internet.

Research Design

Research design describes the pattern, by which the methods were performed and the procedure adhered to, for acquiring the information needed to solve the problem.

This study uses a descriptive research design. This study aims to find the effectiveness of Grievance Handling, at Lucas TVS Limited.

Sample Design

Sample Element: Employees at Lucas TVS Limited.

Sample Size: 35 participants

Sample Test: Percentage Method and Correlation

Sample Medium: Questionnaire

Sampling Method: Simple Random Sampling

DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH AIMS

- To describe the features of a particular individualistic situation, or that of a group (with or without specific initial hypothesis regarding the nature of the features).
- To ascertain the frequency of an occurrence, or the frequency of its association with something else (usually, but not always, with a specific initial hypothesis).

The descriptive method has certain limitations. One major limitation is that, the research may make description itself an end in itself. Fundamentally, research is creative in nature and requires the discovery of facts; however, this discovery must be in a sequence, which helps to decipher a solution to the problem. A second limitation is associated, whether the statistical techniques dominate. Overemphasis of central tendencies and representation, in terms of average, correlation, means and dispersion may not always be required. This limitation arises because statistics, which is partly a descriptive tool of analysis, can aid but not always explain causal relation.

DESIGN OF DESCRIPTIVE STUDIES

Descriptive studies, help to accurately depict the features of a particular group or solution. This method may be employed to determine work in a factory, as well as health and welfare issues, for example, the right to strike, capital punishment, prohibition, etc.

A descriptive study involves the following steps:

- Formulating the objectives of the study.
- Defining the population and selecting the sample.
- Designing the method of data collection.
- Analysis of the data.

Description of Statistical Tools Used

- Percentage method
- Correlation

Percentage method

This study uses the percentage method for data analysis. The following is the formula:

Percentage of Respondent: $(\text{No. of Respondent} / \text{Total No. of Respondents}) \times 100$

CORRELATION

Correlation analysis, deals with the association between two or more variables. It does not tell anything about cause and effect relationship. Correlation is described or classified in several different ways. Three of the most important types of classification of correlation, are as follows:

- Positive and Negative
- Simple, Multiple and Partial
- Linear and Non-Linear

Karl Pearson’s method is popularly known as Pearson’s coefficient, of correlation. It is denoted by the symbol ‘r’.

Formula for Karl Pearson’s coefficient is as follows: $r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{\sum x^2 * \sum y^2}}$

Usion and Recommendation for Further Improvement in the Practices

The value of the coefficient of correlation, as obtained by the above formula shall always lie between +1 and -1. When r = 1, it means there is perfect positive correlation between variables. When r = -1, it means, there is perfect negative correlation between variables. When r = 0, it means no relationship between variables.

Distribution of Respondents with Regard to Temporary Relief

Table 1

Sl. No.	Temporary Relief	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	19	54.3
2	No	16	45.7
	Total	35	100

Inference

From the data in Table 5.1, it can be concluded that, 54.3% of respondents consider that, they are being provided with temporary relief and 45.7% consider that, they are not being provided relief.

ANALYSIS USING CORRELATION

To determine whether there is correlation between the thoughts (Feel), regarding the decisions taken and the real basis for those decisions.

Let X be Feel about decision given.

Let Y be Real basis identification.

Table 2

Real Basis Identified			Agree	Total
Strongly Agree				
Feel about decision given	Highly satisfactory	25	6	31
	Moderately satisfactory	2	2	4
Total		27	8	35

Table 3: Values for Correlation

$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$
180.5	364.5	256.5

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 * \sum y^2)}}$$

Substituting the values of $\sum x^2$, $\sum y^2$, $\sum xy$ in the above equation we get.

$r = 1$

Inference

Since, the value of r is equal to one the variables are positively correlated. A variation in one variable will cause variation in another.

ANALYSIS USING CORRELATION

To know whether there is correlation between discussion and conference, and supervisor has skill

Let **X** be Discussion and conference.

Let **Y** be Supervisor has skill.

Table: 4

Supervisor Has Skill					Total
Very Highly Skilled			Moderately Skilled		
discussion and conference	strongly agree	28	1		29
	agree	4	2		6
Total		32	3		35

Table 5: Values for Correlation

$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$
420.5	264.5	333.5

$$r = \frac{\sum xy}{\sqrt{(\sum x^2 * \sum y^2)}}$$

Substituting the values of $\sum x^2$, $\sum y^2$, and $\sum xy$ in the above equation we get.

$r = 1$

Inference

Since, the value of r is equal to one, the variables are positively correlated. A variation in one variable will cause variation in another.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

A total of 54.3% of respondents felt that, they are being provided with temporary relief, until final decision was taken. Among this population, 82.9% were between the age group of 26-30 years. A total of 91.4% of respondents,

considered their supervisors to be highly skilled and that, they possess necessary human relation skills. A total of 100% of respondents were aware of the various committees, which are framed for redressing their grievance. About 88.6% of respondents were highly satisfied, towards the decision given by the management. A total of 65.7% of respondents, communicate to their coworkers, and this was considered as an informal channel of communication. 77.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that, the real basis of their grievance was identified. A total of 97.1% of respondents agreed that, the mechanism being followed resolved their grievance. 82.9% of respondents strongly agreed that, discussion and conference facilitated grievance redressal, rather than executive authority interference. 45.7% of the respondents, found immediate redressal for their grievance, through committee members. 88.6% of the respondents had higher secondary education. 25.7% of the respondents are aware of tea, gas, canteen, and transport committees, available to resolve matters regarding these areas of welfare.

SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Job descriptions, and its responsibilities, should be clearly outlined in an organization. Every employee should be aware of the company's goals and expectation, including what is expected of them. Informal counseling helps to address and manage grievances, in the workplace. Conflict management, reduces the number and frequency of grievances. Open door policy has a positive effect. Personal contact and mutual understanding help to pull down the hierarchical walls. Suggestion boxes must be installed, which help to bring any problem or conflict of interest to light. Accident rates, requests for transfers, resignations, and disciplinary cases should be analyzed, because they might reveal general patterns, such as dissatisfaction, that may not otherwise be apparent. Temporary relief, may then be provided immediately, to avoid increase in frustration and anxiety by the employee, as this would affect the employees' morale and productivity.

CONCLUSIONS

Administration must ensure that, a smooth system is in place, to receive grievances. In addition, action must be taken promptly, so that, the workers get the necessary satisfaction that, their concerns are being addressed. As already stated, redressal of grievances is mandatory to preserve good labor management relations and industrial peace. The distressed employee, first approaches the frontline supervisor. If the concern is catering to the majority, a representative of the trade union is associated with the supervisor, for handling the grievance. All grievances are usually resolved in this step. However, if they may be beyond the authority and competence of the manager, in the next step, the mid-level manager, generally the personnel officer, along with a mid-union officer, attempts to tackle the grievance. In the third step, the top administration and top union leaders, assemble together to settle grievances concerning companywide issues. If the grievance continues to remain unsettled, it is referred to an external arbitrator for redressal.

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