

Effective Grievance Handling Mechanism in the Education Sector in India: Supporting Organisational Performance

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Abstract

Purpose: The primary determinant for the long-term success of a business lies in its ability to prioritize and sustain favorable employee-employer relationships. The failure of a company to attain its aims and objectives can be attributed to the absence of a harmonious relationship between management and employees, resulting in an unfavorable work environment. In the realm of education, it is vital to address grievances and comprehend their consequential influence on organizational performance. This research aims to analyze the primary variables contributing to employee dissatisfaction and examine the influence of employee grievance handling on organizational performance.

Methodology: This study is primarily characterized by its descriptive nature, as it relies solely on secondary data obtained from various online sources, research theses, research publications, and academic journals.

Findings: The study demonstrates that effective handling of employees' grievances is a primary determinant in cultivating positive relationships and harmony inside a company. This, in turn, contributes to solidifying employee loyalty to the organization, ultimately leading to the overall success of the firm. Conversely, an organization that fails to address employee grievances and lacks an effective system for resolving such issues will inevitably encounter a multitude of problems. These issues will ultimately lead to adverse organizational performance and outcomes, including diminished productivity, increased absenteeism, and a lack of discipline within the workplace.

Research limitations: The primary shortcoming of the present study is the dearth of relevant prior research, especially in the field of education. To learn its function, more study is required. In the future, the researcher intends to make an effort to do in-depth research with a broader scope, with an emphasis on the educational sector.

Practical implications: This study offers a comprehensive analysis of the importance of implementing a formal grievance system to effectively address employee issues in a timely manner. By doing so, it aims to prevent these problems from impeding organizational growth and enhance understanding of how organizational performance can be enhanced through effective grievance management.

Keywords: *Grievance Management), HR Practices, Organisation Performance, Grievance Handling*

INTRODUCTION

Maintaining healthy relationships in the workplace is considered a crucial and effective approach for enhancing employee morale, organizational performance, productivity, and

addressing various concerns. Consequently, managing employee grievances has emerged as a significant issue for organizations.

Grievance management has emerged as a crucial concern for managers across diverse businesses and sectors inside organizations. The authorities in question are prioritizing the implementation of appropriate decision-making strategies for their respective organizations, recognizing their personnel as a paramount asset. In order to cultivate an environment where employees see their value, it is imperative for management to implement measures that encourage optimal performance from the workforce. In the field of education, it is imperative to prioritize employee relations and address their issues in order to enhance both individual and institutional performance. In order to ensure a conducive environment, it is crucial to sustain a harmonious relationship between professors and faculty members, as well as foster positive employee-employer connections. In general, this would contribute to the organizational or institutional growth by enhancing the efficiency and performance of personnel, thereby ensuring the long-term sustainability and prosperity of the organization or institution. The implementation of employee-centric practices, which prioritize the well-being of employees and incorporate structured procedures to address their emotional needs and value their perspectives and opinions, can significantly contribute to the long-term sustainability of any organization. Recognizing the significance of teachers' trust and acknowledging their loyalty and dedication to the organization, it is imperative that every employee, including teachers and faculty members, be afforded a platform or avenue to address their concerns and express any grievances they may have. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the institution to establish appropriate protocols and avenues for addressing these issues.

In contemporary times, it is evident that firms are confronted with numerous obstacles, which can be attributed to the suboptimal handling of issues by personnel. Furthermore, any business or institution that purposefully disregards such instances of grievances is exposing itself to a higher risk of inefficiencies that might undoubtedly impact the entire organization. It is imperative for any firm to establish appropriate protocols and allocate suitable resources to effectively address and manage employee grievances. The establishment of effective mechanisms for addressing teachers' concerns is necessary in order to foster an atmosphere characterized by cordial interactions between management and employees/teachers. Consequently, it will exert a direct influence on the performance of the organization.

It is common for employees to encounter various forms of discomfort inside a company due to the presence of a diverse collection of persons with differing dispositions and opinions. Consequently, it is expected that employees may seek recourse through grievance procedures to address their concerns. If the management is able to effectively address the concerns raised by employees, it is likely to result in increased employee morale and commitment. Employees will develop a sense of trust in the management's ability to provide appropriate resolutions to their grievances. The cultivation of harmonious employee-employer relations inside the institution is of paramount importance, as it directly or indirectly contributes to enhanced organizational performance.

It is apparent that effective management entails more than simply recruiting teachers as workers and thereafter neglecting their concerns. It is imperative for the management to proactively engage in employee retention strategies, foster motivation, and periodically cultivate a sense of belongingness within the workforce. The effective management of grievances is crucial in attaining optimal organizational performance. Teachers also have the right to pursue remedies for employment-related issues when initial attempts at informal contact fail to resolve the dispute. Grievance handling procedures serve as a platform and mechanism for addressing various issues pertaining to work or the work environment, such as workplace relationships

and communication gaps. These procedures enable the identification and resolution of such problems. The growth of the institution will be enhanced if the challenges are addressed in a diligent manner, with a focus on identifying and resolving significant difficulties. Additionally, possible issues should be brought to attention and resolved fairly in order to promote overall progress.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees Grievance Procedure

According to Juneja (2018), a grievance can be described as a subjective or objective sense of dissatisfaction or unfairness experienced by an employee in relation to their employment, work-related matters, or the functioning, policies, and procedures of the management. This dissatisfaction is expressed by the employee and brought to the attention of the management.

According to Rose (2004), a grievance can be defined as an expression of discontentment by an employee with their work, employment, or workplace, communicated in a formal manner to their supervisor. Grievances are commonly seen as expressions of unhappiness or dissatisfaction by individual members regarding any activity within their employment.

According to D'Cruz (1999), a grievance can be understood as the articulation of employee dissatisfaction or perceived injustice against the management and the organization. It serves as a means to identify and advocate for necessary reforms.

According to Dwivedi (2009), a grievance can be understood as a state of discontent or dissatisfaction, regardless of whether it is expressed or deemed valid, that arises from any matter directly or indirectly related to the organization or its management. This discontent is perceived by an employee as unfair or unjust, resulting in their perceived experience of suffering.

Hence, a grievance may also arise from the inadequate or inaccurate interpretation, implementation, or violation of the terms outlined in the collective agreement between employees and management. This occurs when employees perceive that their expectations are not being fulfilled by the organization, leading to a sense of dissatisfaction or complaint. Employees typically file complaints, referred to as grievances, when they see that their rights have been disregarded or when there has been a disruption to the terms of their employment agreement with the company. According to these definitions, it can be argued that a properly structured method for addressing grievances has the potential to improve favorable organizational results and bolster the efficacy of management, while also fostering a harmonious relationship between management and labor.

Employee Grievance

Employee grievances often manifest as a sense of discontent or discord among employees, stemming from the behaviors or acts of colleagues, supervisors, or management choices. A grievance refers to a sentiment of inequity and dissatisfaction experienced by the individuals engaged in a professional setting. A grievance is commonly perceived as a form of complaint. Complaints can be understood as manifestations of grievances, which are characterized by a profound sense of dissatisfaction that motivates employees to undertake suitable measures in order to attain resolution and contentment.

According to Hardeman (2004), a grievance handling system is a formal mechanism through which employees can express their concerns and present their grievances against management choices or practices, with the aim of achieving speedy resolution.

According to Jones and Gorge (2000), it is inevitable for differences of opinion to exist inside any organization. The administration consistently endeavors to implement protocols for addressing and resolving grievances and complaints.

The various definitions presented necessitate the implementation of a carefully constructed and comprehensive system for addressing grievances (Narwat, 2024). This approach should aim to enhance favorable organizational outcomes and contribute to the efficiency of management, while also fostering amicable and conflict-free work relationships within the workplace. The aforementioned process is established as a formal method and must be adhered to diligently in order to guarantee favourable outcomes and organizational transformations. Hence, the grievances that are lodged undergo a series of steps. In more concise language, a grievance management system can be described as an upward communication mechanism employed by firms to bring employee issues to the forefront, facilitating their successful resolution.

According to Ubeku's (1975) research, it is argued that an employee's ability to perform effectively may be hindered if they have grievances against their supervisor or the organization as a whole. The individual's experience of sadness stemming from his grievances will lead to a decline in his morale, thereby resulting in a decrease in his overall efficiency, regardless of his level of job satisfaction or remuneration. The morale of an individual engaged in a job may be negatively impacted unless they see fair treatment.

If an individual perceives equitable treatment in their job performance, it is likely that their morale may be negatively impacted.

In situations where employees perceive neglect or encounter inequitable decision-making and practices by management, the organization affords them the opportunity to express their grievances or complaints to higher-level management authorities through established grievance handling procedures. Juneja (2018) asserts that the presence of a grievance can lead to a decrease in staff morale and production efficiency. If left unresolved or unaddressed, this issue has the potential to escalate into a more significant worry, ultimately resulting in reduced productivity, job dissatisfaction, disengagement, and several other negative outcomes.

In their study entitled "Examining the Factors Contributing to Teachers' Grievances in Secondary Schools," Mubarak, Aziz, and Shariff (2014) identified several primary causes of grievances among teachers. These include disparities in pay scales, limitations on leave entitlements, the management's attitude towards teachers, favoritism, age-related biases, the influence of seniority, instances of indiscipline among teachers, and factors pertaining to promotions and religious disparities. It is imperative to address employee grievances in a fair and suitable manner, since an efficient strategy to resolving such concerns has become increasingly crucial, as noted by Narwat and Mohsin (2022). Additionally, he emphasized the significance of promptly addressing grievances in order to prevent the escalation of conflicts. According to Mante-Meija and Enid (1991), the presence of a robust grievance-handling mechanism within an organization ensures justice in the management of employee grievances. This mechanism facilitates ethical decision-making by top authorities, who may rely on established rules of behavior to inform their decisions.

Purpose of the study

In the field of education, it is imperative to address grievances and comprehend their consequential influence on organizational performance. This study aims to determine the

primary elements contributing to employee dissatisfaction and examine the influence of employee grievance handling on organizational performance.

Methodology

The study is entirely descriptive in nature and is based on secondary data collected from internet sources, research thesis, research articles, journals, etc.

Discussions

Grievances have the potential to emerge within any workplace, irrespective of the sector or industry in which it operates. In order to cultivate a constructive work atmosphere and ensure occupational safety, it is incumbent upon teachers to conform to the prescribed code of behavior established by the educational institution. Disciplinary actions often come into play when standards are not fulfilled, serving as a means to motivate teachers towards achieving the appropriate performance levels within their profession. Disciplinary measures are typically employed as a method of addressing and managing instances of subpar performance or inappropriate behavior. The approach should be consistently and equitably geared towards fixing the problem, with a focus on addressing the issue rather than penalizing the teacher. Disciplinary measures will serve as a means to promptly inform teachers about the evaluation of their present performance and the expected level of performance.

There exist numerous factors contributing to teachers' grievances, which can have a direct or indirect influence on an individual employee's performance, thereby resulting in reduced productivity and overall institutional performance.

Following are some of the most prevalent reasons for employee grievances in teaching institutions:

1. Age discrimination
2. Workload factors
3. Timing
4. Leave allowed
5. Pay scale inequities
6. Biased behaviour of seniors and management
7. Favoritism
8. Attitude of management
9. Nature of teachers
10. In disciplined attitude among teachers
11. Promotion-related issues
12. Religious differences

Importance of Grievance Procedures

Grievances are a prevalent occurrence inside any given employment. In a professional setting characterized by a heterogeneous group of persons, it is nearly impossible for any organization to function without encountering some type of grievance. When discussing the education sector, the manner in which procedures are conducted and the efficiency with which concerns are addressed and resolved can serve as indicators of organizational harmony, performance, and productivity. Therefore, it can be inferred that the implementation of effective grievance procedures inside a company can lead to beneficial transformations that contribute to increased productivity and employee satisfaction.

When an employee is reluctant to voice their grievances or is unable to effectively communicate their grievances, it can result in adverse outcomes such as reduced productivity, increased employee absenteeism, diminished job quality, and various other repercussions.

Organizational performance and grievances

Organizational performance is commonly seen as the tangible outcomes or measurable outputs that a company has likely attained in relation to its predetermined goals and objectives. Organizational performance refers to the degree to which an organization is able to achieve its aims and objectives in relation to its competitors. The term "performance" refers to the evaluation of an organization's effectiveness based on specific criteria.

The individuals employed inside an organization are considered valuable resources for the institution. Specifically within the education sector, instructors play a vital role in the sustainability and advancement of the institution to which they are affiliated. It is imperative for the management to prioritize the establishment of a healthy work environment for teachers and promptly address any problems they may have. This is crucial since the dissatisfaction of a teacher can adversely impact their personal objectives, thus resulting in a fall in overall organizational performance.

One of the primary problems that administrators should address is the discontent experienced by instructors who perceive unequal and unfair treatment from their superiors. It is imperative for administrators to manage this issue in a fair and equitable manner. The following are few overarching areas of concern where grievances are frequently observed.

1. physical working conditions
2. financial issues relating to proper disbursement of salaries and pay concerning overtime
3. procedures in recruitment and promotion
4. benefits and incentives
5. termination and retirement
6. professional growth
7. school facilities

Relationship between the Employee Grievance Management and Organizational Performance

It is imperative to address the grievances of teachers, as their performance may be impeded and the overall organizational performance may be disrupted. Additionally, it is crucial to consider that their bad attitude towards their profession can also adversely affect the quality of education provided to children. An educator who experiences dissatisfaction may encounter challenges in effectively channeling their efforts towards educating pupils and delivering instruction in alignment with their intended objectives. In order to address teachers' complaints or grievances in a timely manner, it is imperative for educational institutions to have a well-defined institutional grievance framework. It is imperative for upper-level management to guarantee that all activities and actions are conducted in a manner that upholds the rights of teachers as both employees and important assets to the institution, thereby contributing to its growth and development.

Teachers should be recognized as the primary component within the education sector, analogous to how employees are considered valuable assets inside organizations and firms. The management should possess the ability to discern the underlying causes and factors contributing to the grievances experienced by teachers. It is imperative to use a constructive

approach in order to foster a climate of trust among teachers, encouraging them to confidently seek resolution for their concerns. The establishment of a harmonious and good working atmosphere would lead to the ideal performance outcomes expected from employees or teachers inside the institution.

In relation to this matter, teachers demonstrate increased dedication to their professional roles, so motivating them to exert greater effort in contributing to the overall performance of the company.

The effective management and resolution of teachers' grievances have a significant impact on organizational performance. This is due to the fact that individual performances contribute to the overall performance and productivity of the organization. By ensuring that teachers are satisfied, the likelihood of grievances can be minimized. Additionally, the implementation of a well-designed grievance mechanism allows for timely identification and resolution of underlying causes, thereby preventing recurring issues.

The presence of suppressed and unsatisfied personnel within an institution is likely to result in anticipated complaints. The preceding discourse clearly demonstrates that a teacher who is dissatisfied will be unable to perform optimally in their profession. This phenomenon may give rise to several challenges, such as decreased teacher motivation, an increase in absenteeism rates, and the emergence of commitment-related concerns. Conversely, a properly structured and efficient employee grievance management system would result in enhanced and favorable performance, whilst an inadequately constructed mechanism will have a more detrimental impact, as it will serve as a contributing factor to the emergence of grievances. The potential consequences of such actions include the disruption of workplace harmony and a subsequent decline in productivity and performance across the entire institution. Therefore, it is incumbent upon the management to fulfill their responsibility in order to effectively and promptly address conflicts, thereby enhancing organizational performance. This phenomenon can be attributed to the fact that engaging in such activities and exhibiting positive behaviors fosters effective communication and cooperation, ultimately contributing to the attainment of the desired organizational performance.

Recommendations

Based on the aforementioned literature and the study's result, it is recommended that grievances be accorded appropriate significance and not be disregarded. It is imperative to address these issues promptly, and it is also important for teachers to promptly report them to prevent any adverse effects on their performance, which in turn may damage the overall performance of the company.

Furthermore, previous research has indicated that a significant proportion of grievances are associated with performance appraisals, rewards and incentives, and working conditions. To cultivate a positive work environment, it is imperative for management to prioritize the establishment of an optimal organizational culture and consistently strive to prevent the recurrence of repetitive grievances raised by teachers.

Conclusions

The proficient handling of teachers' grievances facilitates the management's comprehension of the instructors' sentiments and attitudes towards the policies and procedures implemented inside the institution.

This platform will function as a means of facilitating upward communication inside the institution, allowing for effective contact between the top management and teachers employed at the institute. Consequently, this system will enable the quick identification of reasons and difficulties, thereby promoting a harmonious and transparent connection with the teachers. The use of this measure has the potential to mitigate instances of superfluous interpretations and miscommunications, hence fostering suboptimal performance and inefficiency within the organization.

The study elucidates the prevailing factors contributing to teachers' grievances, which have the potential to impede organizational effectiveness. In order to mitigate such occurrences, it is imperative for the management authorities to establish and maintain an effective grievance handling procedure within the institution's grounds.

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