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## A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF GRIEVANCE HANDLING AT ST. THOMAS GERMAN CHAMBER TILES FACTORY, PANAGUDI, TIRUNELVELI DISTRICT

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### ABSTRACT

*Employee grievances transpire in each & every workplace. Handling the grievances is a challenging and a huge task. It is very important to understand how grievances were handled in industries and also what is the process followed in managing the grievances. Grievance may be of any kind of dissatisfaction with regard to pay, promotion, suspension, working condition etc. This study focuses on understanding the effectiveness of Grievance Handling Mechanism in ST. Thomas German Chamber Tiles Factory, Panagudi from the perspective of employees. The objective of the study is to find the effectiveness of grievance handling mechanism followed in factories. Questionnaire was the tool to collect the data from employees and convenience sampling is used to select the samples for the study. The sample size was 173 and the tools used for analysing the responses were Percentage analysis, Mann whiney U Test and Wilcoxon Test. The study outcome revealed that grievance management system followed in factory is very effective and most of the employees were satisfied with the grievance management mechanism being followed by the ST. Thomas German Chamber Tiles Factory, Panagudi.*

### KEYWORDS

grievances, working condition, effectiveness, grievance handling mechanism.

### JEL CODES

J52, J53, M54.

### INTRODUCTION

A grievance can be defined as any sort of dissatisfaction, which needs to be redressed in order to bring about the smooth functioning of the individual in the organization. Broadly, a grievance can be defined as any discontent or dissatisfaction with any aspect of the organization. It can be real or imaginary, legitimate or ridiculous, rated or unvoiced, written or oral, it must be however, find expression in some form of the other. Discontent or dissatisfaction is not a grievance. They initially find expression in the form of a complaint. When a complaint remains unattended to and the employee concerned feels a sense of lack of justice and fair play, the dissatisfaction grows and assumes the status of grievance. A grievance can be of any type ranging from problems regarding promotion to discharge and dismissal and suspension but it is mandatory that the grievance should be related to work and not personal. The formal mechanism for dealing with such worker's dissatisfaction is called grievance procedure. All companies whether unionized or not should have established and known grievance methods of processing grievances. The primary value of grievance procedure is that it can assist in minimizing discontent and dissatisfaction that may have adverse effects upon co-operation and productivity. A grievance procedure is necessary in large organizations which has numerous personnel and many levels with the result that the manager is unable to keep a check on each individual, or be involved in every aspect of working of the small organizations. There may be variations in the procedures followed for resolving employee grievances. Variations may result from such factors as organizational or decision-making structures or size of the plant or company. Large organizations do tend to have formal grievance procedures involving succession of steps.

Usually, grievance relate to problems of interpretation of perceived non-fulfilment of one's expectation from the organization. Aggrieved employees usually manifest defiant behaviour. The grievance procedure can be divided into two parts:(i) A formal grievance redressal process and (ii)An informal process of grievance handling. A grievance may take any one of the following forms: (a) factual, (b) imaginary, (c) Disguised. A factual grievance arises when legitimate needs of employees remain unfulfilled, e.g., wage hike has been agreed but not implemented citing various reasons. The imaginary grievance is when an employee's dissatisfaction is not because of any valid reason but because of a wrong perception, wrong attitude or wrong information that he or she has. Such a situation may create an imaginary grievance. Though management is not at fault in such instances, still it has to clear the 'fog' immediately. The Disguised grievance is when an employee has dissatisfaction for reasons that are unknown to him/her. If he/ she are under pressure from family, friends, relatives, neighbour's, he/she may reach the work spot with a heavy heart. If a new recruit gets a new table, it may become an eyesore to other employees who have not been treated likewise previously.

Grievances may occur for a number of reasons. The Economic Reasons are wage fixation, overtime, bonus, wage revision, etc. Employees may feel that they are paid less when compared to others. The work environment reasons may include poor physical conditions of workplace, tight production norms, defective tools and equipment, poor quality of materials, unfair rules, lack of recognition, etc. The supervision reasons relate to the attitudes of the supervisor towards the employee such as perceived notions of bias, favouritism, nepotism, caste affiliations, regional feelings, etc. The work group reasons may include inability of the employee to adjust with his colleagues; suffers from feelings of neglect, victimization and becomes an object of ridicule and humiliation, etc and Miscellaneous reasons may include issues relating to certain violations in respect of promotions, safety methods, transfer, disciplinary rules, fines, granting leave, medical facilities, etc

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Dr. V. Mohanasundaram, N. Saranya, (2013)** in his article "Employee Grievance" has proposed that organisation is 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 Sharma, (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.

**Zulkiflee Bin Daud et.al. (2011)** found that extraversion is the significant predictor for integrating grievance handling style.

**Bernard Walker and Robert T. Hamilton (2011)**, have combinedly stated that an employee confronted by a perceived wrongdoing by their employer has options ranging from formal action, to informal action, or no action.

**Vidhya (2012)**, in her study of grievance procedure in IT companies has found that overtime, pay, Sunday work, other incentives, work procedure, shift allocation, leave policies are the major causes of grievances.

**Zulkiflee Daud et, al. (2013)**, their study has revealed that after attending training in grievance handling, managers will not utilize integrating style because this particular style demands a longer time for performance.

**Nilash Thakre (2013)** identified that dissatisfied workers cannot perform at full capacity, which leads to loss of production.

**Geetikaet.al (2014)**, their study proved that there is significant relationship between grievance procedure and employee satisfaction.

**Anju Thomas (2015)** has found the main reasons for sexual harassment incidents in educational institutions is the result of lack of courage, fear of disgrace and social isolation experienced by the victimized person on filing of a complaint against the abuser.

## STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Grievances are very common in all industries and it might be for pay, promotion, suspension, working condition etc. In factories, grievances are very common as most of the employees are from different age groups and it is a very big challenge to handle. It is necessary to take a great effort to handle the grievances. It is essential to evaluate the grievance processes to understand its impact. Hence there would be a need for study to understand how grievances are handled in factories, whether all the employee grievances are considered and also what is the process followed in managing grievances.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the effectiveness of grievance handling mechanism in the organization.
2. To identify that the grievance handling system leads to a mutual understanding between workers and the management.
3. To analyze the level of satisfaction towards the grievance handling procedure of the organization.
4. To identify the factors influencing the effectiveness of the grievance handling in the organization.

## HYPOTHESIS

### MANN WHITNEY U TEST

The Mann Whitney U Test is undertaken between the respondents to find out the relationship between the gender and grievance.

#### Hypothesis Statement

H<sub>0</sub>- There is no significant difference between gender and the grievance

H<sub>1</sub>- There is significant difference between gender and the grievance

### WILCOXON TEST

The Wilcoxon test is undertaken between the respondents to find out the significant difference between the employee satisfaction and employee-management relationship

#### Hypothesis Statement

H<sub>0</sub>- There is no significant difference between employee satisfaction and employee- management relationship

H<sub>1</sub>- There is significant difference between employee satisfaction and employee-management relationship

## METHODOLOGY

Nature of this study was descriptive, as the main purpose of this study was to gain more knowledge about the level of grievance handling among the employees in tiles factory. Primary data collection was through questionnaire method wherein the questionnaire was handed over to the respondents and the same were analysed. The sample size was 113 and the tools used for analysing the responses were Percentage analysis and Wilcoxon Test and Mann Whitney U Test. Area of the study was ST. Thomas German Chamber Tiles Factory, Panagudi.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The data has been collected by disturbing structuring questionnaire where the respondents had to choose the answer that seemed more appropriate to them.

**TABLE 1: THE DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF THE RESPONDENT**

| Demographic Factors                               | No. of. Respondent | % of the Respondent |
|---|--------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Gender of the employees</b>                    |                    |                     |
| Male  | 85                 | 75%                 |
| Female  | 28                 | 25%                 |
| <b>Age of the employees</b>                       |                    |                     |
| 21-30   | 33                 | 30%                 |
| 31-40   | 52                 | 46%                 |
| 40 above  | 28                 | 24%                 |
| <b>Educational qualification of the Employees</b> |                    |                     |
| Diploma   | 8                  | 7%                  |
| Ug  | 20                 | 18%                 |
| Others  | 85                 | 75%                 |
| <b>Experience of the employees</b>                |                    |                     |
| Less than 1 year                                  | 16                 | 14%                 |
| 1 Year-3 Year                                     | 23                 | 20%                 |
| 3 Years-5 Years                                   | 21                 | 19%                 |
| Above 5   | 53                 | 47%                 |
| <b>Marital Status of the Employees</b>            |                    |                     |
| Single  | 41                 | 36%                 |
| Married   | 72                 | 64%                 |
| <b>Department of the Employee</b>                 |                    |                     |
| Marketing   | 18                 | 16%                 |
| Production  | 67                 | 59%                 |
| Purchase  | 20                 | 18%                 |
| Finance   | 8                  | 7%                  |

The table provides an overview of the demographic factors among the respondents in a particular organization. The gender distribution shows that 75% of the employees are male, while 25% are female. In terms of age, the largest group falls between 31-40 years old, accounting for 46% of the respondents. The 21-30 age group represents 30%, and those above 40 make up 24% of the employees. When considering educational qualifications, the majority (75%) falls under the category of "Others," while 18% have an undergraduate degree (UG), and only 7% have a diploma. Moving on to experience, 47% of the employees have more than five years of experience, followed by 1-3 years (20%), 3-5 years (19%), and less than one year (14%). In terms of marital status, 64% of the respondents are married, while 36% are single. Lastly, the distribution across departments reveals that the production department has the highest representation at 59%, followed by marketing (16%), purchase (18%), and finance (7%). Overall, this table provides a snapshot of the various demographic factors among the employees in terms of gender, age, education, experience, marital status, and department affiliation within the organization.

**TABLE 2: MANN WHITNEY U TEST TO FIND OUT THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GENDER AND GRIEVANCE**

| GENDER OF THE EMPLOYEES | MEAN RANK | Z VALUE | P VALUE |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Male                    | 56.43     | 0.324   | 0.746   |
| Female                  | 58.73     |         |         |

The table presents the results of a Mann Whitney U Test conducted to examine the difference between gender and grievance among the employees. The mean rank for male employees is 56.43. The Z value, which measures the statistical significance, is 0.324. The corresponding p-value, which determines the significance level of the test, is 0.746. The findings indicate that there is no statistically significant difference between gender and grievance among the employees, as the p-value is greater than the commonly used threshold of 0.05. This suggests that gender does not play a significant role in influencing the occurrence or perception of grievances among the employees in this particular study.

**TABLE 3: WILCOXON TEST – TO FIND THE SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCE BETWEEN THE EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION AND THE EMPLOYEE-MANAGEMENT RELATIONSHIP**

| Variables                        | Mean Rank | Z-Value | P-Value |
|----------------------------------|-----------|---------|---------|
| Employee Satisfaction            | 52.54     | 8.314   | 0.000   |
| Employee-Management Relationship | 18.5      |         |         |

The table provides the results of a Wilcoxon test conducted to determine the significant difference between employee satisfaction and the employee-management relationship. The mean rank for employee satisfaction is 52.54, while the mean rank for the employee-management relationship is 18.5. The Z-value, which measures the statistical significance, is 8.314. The corresponding p-value is 0.000, indicating that there is a highly significant difference between employee satisfaction and the employee-management relationship. The p-value being less than 0.05 suggests that the difference is statistically significant and not due to chance. These findings suggest that there is a meaningful distinction between employee satisfaction and the quality of the relationship between employees and management within the organization.

**FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The analysis of the obtained data reveals several key findings. First, 75% of the respondents in the organization are male. Second, the largest age group among the respondents is 31-40 years, comprising 46% of the sample. Third, a significant majority of the employees (85%) do not hold a degree. Fourth, over half of the respondents (53%) have more than five years of experience. Fifth, the majority of the respondents (72%) are unmarried. Sixth, the production department has the highest representation, accounting for 67% of the respondents' departmental affiliation. Regarding grievances, there is no significant difference observed between male and female employees. Similarly, there is no significant difference found in terms of employee satisfaction and the employee management relationship. These findings provide valuable insights into the demographic composition, experience levels, marital status, and department distribution among the respondents, as well as the lack of significant differences in grievance and employee satisfaction related to gender and employee-management relationship.

**CONCLUSION**

The organization is recognizing the importance of satisfying the employees through remuneration (salary, rewards and incentives) and retaining them. Further improvements can be made so that all the members are aware of grievance committee and monthly meeting that are being held in the company. This could result in the transformation of a satisfied employee into a highly satisfied employee. The suggestions and recommendations when implemented will benefit the organization both at the present and in the coming years.

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