

# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE, IT & MANAGEMENT

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- Sharma T., Kwatra, G. (2008) Effectiveness of Social Advertising: A Study of Selected Campaigns, Corporate Social Responsibility, Edited by David Crowther & Nicholas Capaldi, Ashgate Research Companion to Corporate Social Responsibility, Chapter 15, pp 287-303.

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## DISCIPLINARY ACTION TAKEN ON EMPLOYEES AND ITS IMPACT ON THE MORALE OF THE EMPLOYEES: A STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

*Discipline must be maintained in any culture, including the culture of any private sector organization. An employer has a legitimate right, if not an obligation, to expect employees to meet acceptable standards of performance and behavior, including maintaining satisfactory attendance, performing work in a careful, accurate and efficient manner, following job instructions, following safety rules and practices, and accepting job assignments or instructions from supervisors. Management should always keep in mind the educational function of corrective discipline. Consistent discipline helps to set limits: It lets employees know what they can and cannot do. Inconsistent discipline inevitably leads to confusion and uncertainty. When some rules are permitted to go unenforced, employees may either (1) decide to ignore all rules, or (2) become confused about what is really required of them. However, exceptions to the consistent application of discipline should be limited to extraordinary situations. The exception should not, in other words, "swallow the rule." Also, when there is a well-deserved departure from standards, the employee should be told that (s)he is being given extra consideration and that his/her conduct would normally result in a more severe disciplinary action. The action taken should, in turn, be documented as "the exception." Discipline is a must for every organization that wants to move forward. It is very essential for the smooth running of any firm. It is also very important for peace and harmony in an organization. Peace between employees, customers and clients. It is always necessary for discipline to be instilled in employees to get the best out of your workforce.*

### KEYWORDS

Discipline, Employer, Employee, Standards, Organization, Performance.

### INTRODUCTION

'Discipline Builds Culture'

'No Man Ever Grows Untill He Is Disciplined'

'Discipline Is The Bridge Between Goals And Accomplishment'

**D**iscipline is generally administered when an employee violates company policy or falls short of work expectations. Members in an organization need to respect the rules and agreement that govern the organization. Overview the control function provides supervisors with opportunities to improve systems on a continuous basis. An emphasis on coaching and counseling can prevent discipline problems. For example, poor performance due to low ability or inadequate training, learning problems, drug and alcohol dependency, physical or mental illness, marginal health, or disability respond much better to coaching and counseling than to punitive measures. However, disciplinary action as a behavioral control technique is necessary when self-discipline breaks down. Effective discipline can eliminate ineffective employee behavior (Margaret Mader-Clark, Lisa Guerin, 2009)

To discipline thus means to instruct a person or animal to follow a particular code of conduct, or to adhere to a certain "order." An employee should be disciplined when he or she chooses to break the rules or is not willing to perform the job to standards. Discipline is corrective actions taken by a supervisor when an employee does not abide by organizational rules and standards. (Douglas, Murray A, Straus, 2007).

To be disciplined is either a virtue (the ability to follow instructions well) or a euphemism for punishment (which may also be referred to as disciplinary procedure). (Pickett, Joseph P, 2000)

Discipline is a must for every organization that wants to move forward. It is very essential for the smooth running of any firm. It is also very important for peace and harmony in an organization. Peace between employees, customers and clients. It is always necessary for discipline to be instilled in employees to get the best out of your workforce. Discipline can be seen or defined as a force that prompts individuals, organizations, nation etc to observe rules and regulations stipulated which are deemed necessary for the effective and efficient running of the group, organization or nation. In this article discipline in firms can be seen as an orderly conduct by employees of an organization to adhere to the rules and regulations as well as policies guiding the activities and running of the organization.

Effective discipline in any organization is not about penalizing and punishing the behavior you don't want to see; it is much more about encouraging the behavior you do want to see. That means making clear what a good job looks like in the first place. Since most people actually prefer to do a good job, just making that clear will lead to the vast majority of your employees conforming to your reasonable standards without a problem. After all, external discipline exercised occasionally by you will never work as well as self-discipline exercised by the individual every hour of the day.

The IT boom has brought with it, its own set of challenges to organization. How to put in place and processes that should be in tune with IT revolution, how to strategize, compete with globalization?

One of the booming and growing industry is the IT industry. The performance and profitability of the organization will depend on the quality of services offered by individuals. The creativity, innovativeness, knowledge and skill of the employees are the most important assets. The organization cannot manage these assets when employees get into indiscipline and the company is forced to take disciplinary action.

It is important for any organization, large or small to maintain discipline. There should be proper communication of the rules concerning discipline in the firm. To avoid indisciplinary actions these rules should be written in the employee handbook and also put in notice boards. By so doing no employee can say he or she is not aware of the rules and would not affect the productivity of any employee.

This study is going to be all about these IT industries who have managed to avoid indisciplinary actions among employees which if not managed could affect the productivity of the employee as well as of the organization.

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Discipline is a most important for every organization that wants to move forward. It is very essential for the smooth running of any firm. It is also very important for peace and harmony in an organization. Peace between employees, customers and clients. It is always necessary for discipline to be instilled in employees to get the best out of your workforce. Discipline can be seen or defined as a force that prompts individuals, organizations, nation etc to observe rules and regulations stipulated which are deemed necessary for the effective and efficient running of the group, organization or nation

Misconduct includes theft, falsifying employment application, willfully damaging organizational property, punching another employee's time card, and falsifying work records. On-the-job Problem Behaviors. (Frank Lafasto and Carl Larson, 2007)

Another study examines about the disciplinary action.

Before conducting a discipline discussion, the supervisor should be able to:

a) Describe the incident by answering: Who? What? When? Where? Witnesses? Why?

- b) Refer to the policy or procedure that was violated.
- c) Determine whether the employee was previously notified of the correct operating procedure and be able to provide documentation, if it exists.
- d) Determine whether other employees have violated the same policy/procedure and what discipline, if any, they received. (Source Part one – Articles by forum member,2006)

In discipline discussions with an employee, the supervisor points out the unsatisfactory behavior, explains the need for and purpose of the rule or practice that is being violated, and expresses confidence in the employee's willingness and ability to make the necessary changes in behavior. Discipline decides action ,action defines norms.(M.S BALA,1979)

During a discipline discussion the supervisor should be objective in reviewing the situation and give the employee specific examples of the behavior that is causing the problem. The employee should be allowed an opportunity to present his or her own case. The supervisor needs to make sure the employee has a clear understanding of the consequences of his or her behavior. The supervisor and the employee should agree on specific recommendations for correcting the performance. ( Sunil Ramlall,2006)

**STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

The performance and profitability of the organization will depend on the quality of services offered by individuals. The creativity , innovativeness, knowledge and skill of the employees are the most important assets .The organization cannot manage these assets when employees get into indiscipline and the company is forced to take disciplinary action.

The impact of disciplinary actions on the morale of the employees can be positive and negative .How we can incorporate and help them in achieving the ultimate goal i.e. exceptional performance would be a real challenge.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To identify and describe the disciplinary actions taken on employees in an organisation.
- To analyse the impact of the disciplinary actions on the morale of the employees.
- To review the situation arising out of indisciplinary action.
- To give suitable suggestions and recommendations.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

**DATA COLLECTION**

An exploratory research study is conducted and a sample method is employed. Descriptive research study has been used for the purpose of the study.

**SAMPLE TECHNIQUES**

Random sampling has been used for the purpose of the study, so that the sample could be split into different groups based on the convenience of the researcher.

**SAMPLE SIZE**

All organizations have similar disciplinary issues/concern. As such my focus has been mostly on medium industry. Hence the study covers approximately 50 employees.

**CONTACT METHOD**

In –depth interview through Questionnaire

**STATISTICAL TOOLS USED FOR ANALYSIS**

Percentage analysis: Percentage analysis refers to a specific kind of ratio used in making the comparison between two or more series of data. Percentage is used to describe relationship and can also be used to compare the relative terms, the distribution of two or more series in data.

Percentage of respondents = (no. of respondent/total no. Of respondent)\*100

**HYPOTHESIS**

**(a) NULL HYPOTHESIS(Ho):** There is no relationship between disciplinary actions and productivity of the organization.

**ALTERNATIVE HYPOTHESIS(H1) :** There is relationship between disciplinary actions and productivity of the organization.

**(b) NULL HYPOTHESIS(Ho):**Disciplinary action does not affect the morale of the employees.

**ALTERNATE HYPOTHESIS(H1):**Disciplinary action affects the morale of the employee

**LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

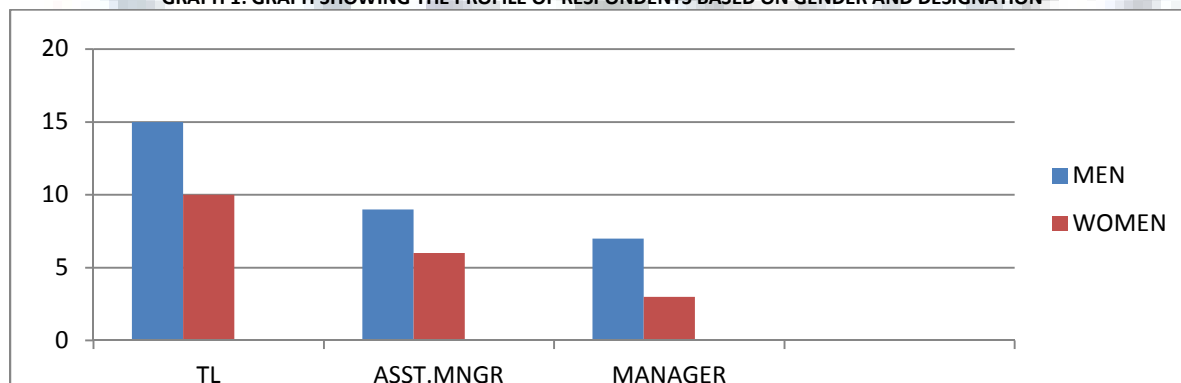
- Indisciplinary actions are usually observed and are common in labour intensive industry run by trade unions .A close interaction with such form of unions could not provide insight on the issues.
- Indisciplinary actions are also observed with minimum intensity in high tech industry. Data was limited and confidential to organisation.
- In depth knowledge of various complicated issues causing indiscipline could not be found.

**RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

**TABLE 1:TABLE SHOWING THE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON GENDER AND DESIGNATION:**

DESIGNATION	TL	ASST.MGNR	MNGR
MEN	15	10	7
WOMEN	10	5	3

**GRAPH 1: GRAPH SHOWING THE PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS BASED ON GENDER AND DESIGNATION**



Source: field survey



**INFERENCE**

The above graph clearly depicts that the Male respondents are more than the female respondents in the mentioned designations(TL, Asst. Manager, Manager)

**TABLE 2:TABLE FOR IDENTIFYING COMMON DISCIPLINARY ISSUES AN EMPLOYEE FACES:**

PARTICULARS	PERCENTAGE
Sexual harassment	30
Theft	15
Falsifying employment application	40
Willfully damaging organizational property	5

**INFERENCE**

Sexual harassment creating indiscipline is 30%Theft creating indiscipline is 15%Falsifying employment application creating indiscipline is 40%Willfully damaging organizational property creating indiscipline is 5%. The above chart clearly depicts that falsifying employment application creates the maximum disciplinary issues in an organization.

**TABLE 3: TABLE FOR IDENTIFYING ON THE JOB PROBLEM BEHAVIORS**

AREAS	PERCENTAGE
Fighting	37
Sleeping	10
smoking	48

**INFERENCE**

From the above chart it is observed that 37% of On the Job Problem Behaviors are due to Fighting.10% of On the Job Problem Behaviors are due to Sleeping and 48% of On the Job Problem Behaviors are due to Smoking.

**TABLE 4: TABLE SHOWING THE CAUSES OF INDISCIPLINE**

PARTICULARS	PERCENTAGE
Favoritism	15
Lack of communication of policies and norms	50
Lack of leadership	10
Bad habits	25

Source: field survey

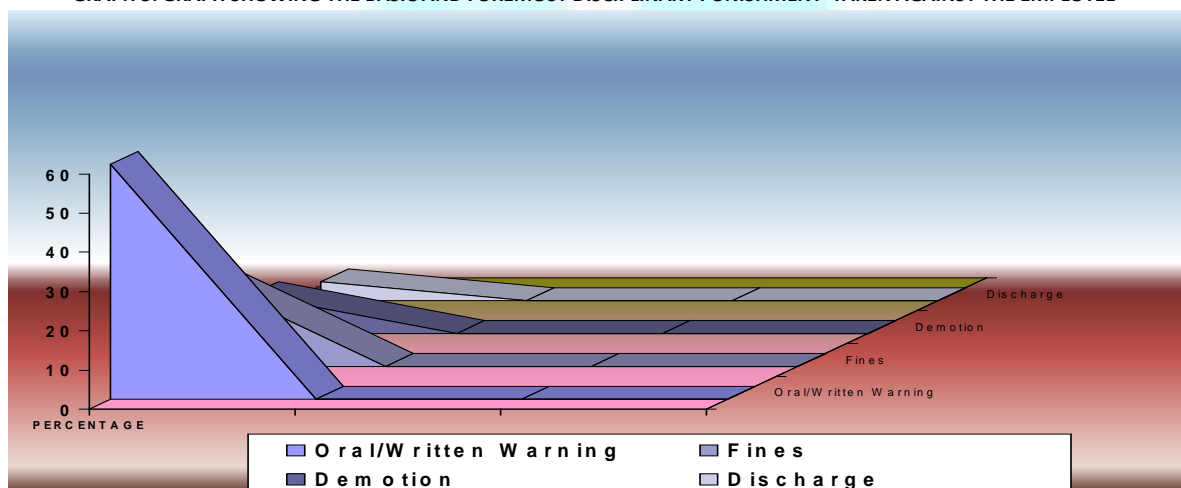
**INFERENCE**

The answers portrayed significant change. As the graphic indicates, almost 50% of the employees causes indiscipline due to lack of communication of policies and norms in the organization. 25% of the employees were indisciplined due to bad habits. 15% of the employees were indisciplined due to favoritism and 10% were indisciplined due to lack of leadership.. Therefore the above chart clearly indicates that the main cause of indiscipline is lack of communication of policies and norms.

**TABLE 5:TABLE SHOWING THE BASIC AND FOREMOST DISCIPLINARY PUNISHMENT TAKEN AGAINST THE EMPLOYEE**

PARTICULARS	PERCENTAGE
Oral/Written Warning	60
Fines	25
Demotion	10
Dismissal	5

**GRAPH 5: GRAPH SHOWING THE BASIC AND FOREMOST DISCIPLINARY PUNISHMENT TAKEN AGAINST THE EMPLOYEE**



Source: field survey

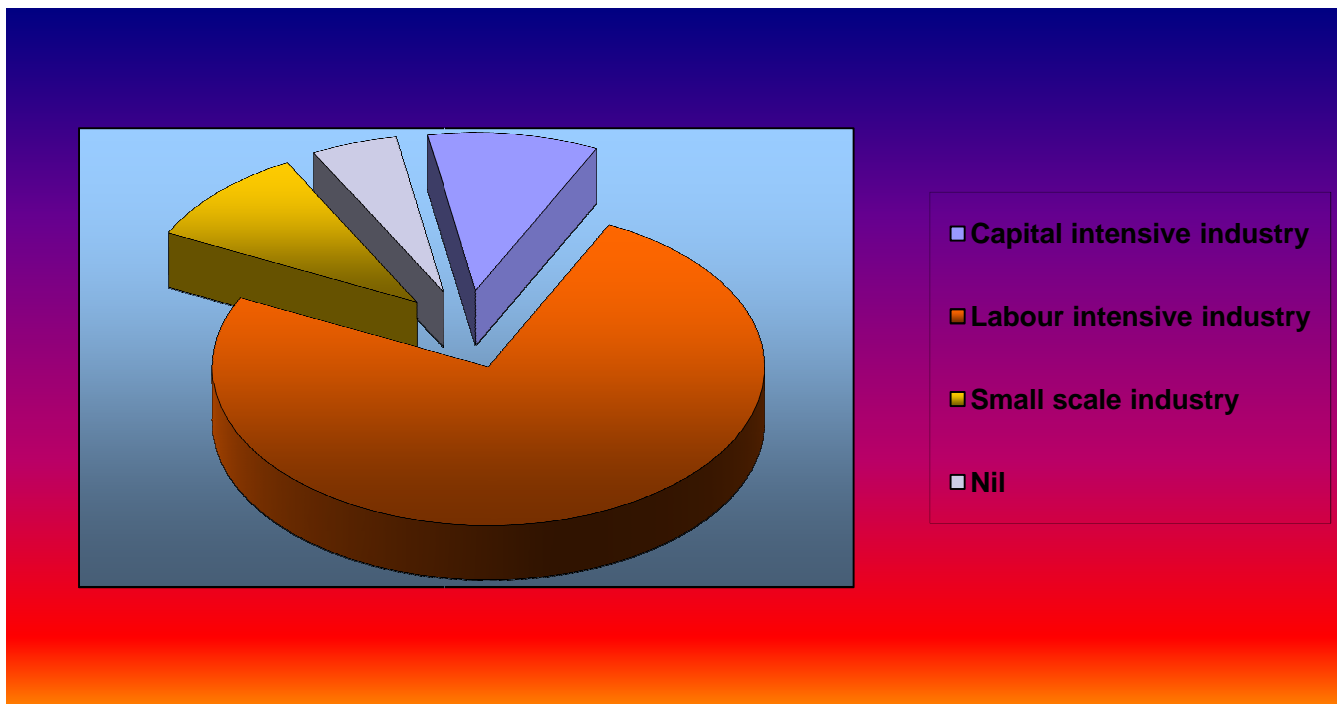
**INFERENCE**

As the graph indicates that 60% of them says that the basic and foremost disciplinary punishment to be taken against the employee is Oral/Written Warning. 25% of them says that that the basic and foremost disciplinary punishment to be taken against the employee is Fine.10% of them says that that the basic and foremost disciplinary punishment to be taken against the employee is Demotion.5% of them says that the basic and foremost disciplinary punishment to be taken against the employee is dismissal.

**TABLE 6:TABLE SHOWING WHETHER DISCIPLINARY NORM /POLICIES / PROCEDURE ARE IMPORTANT TO BE COMMUNICATED TO EMPLOYEES**

PARTICULARS	PERCENTAGE
Yes	89
No	7
Can't Say	4

GRAPH 6:GRAPH SHOWING INDISCIPLINARY ACTION ARE HIGHLY NOTED IN WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING INDUSTRY



Source: field survey

**INFERENCE**

10% of Indisciplinary action are noted in Capital Intensive Industry.75% of Indisciplinary action are noted in Labour Intensive Industry.10% of Indisciplinary action are noted in Small scale industry and 5% of Indisciplinary action are noted in none of the industries.

**HYPOTHESIS ANALYSIS**

**(a) HYPOTHESIS STATEMENT**

The disciplinary actions will have an impact on the performance and productivity of the organization.

**NULL HYPOTHESIS**

Ho: There is no relationship between disciplinary actions and productivity of the organization.

**ALTERNATE HYPOTHESIS**

The chi-square test is one of the simplest and most needly used non parametric test in statistical work. The quality of chi-square describes the magnitude of the discrepancy between theory and observation.

**TABLE 7: TABLE SHOWING HYPOTHESIS**

HYPOTHESIS	STATEMENT
Null	Ho
Alternative	H1

**TABLE 8: TABLE SHOWING HYPOTHESIS AND DEGREE OF OPINIONS**

	SL.NO	OPINIONS	RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
A		Highly disagree	0	0
B		Disagree	2	4
C		Can't Say	8	16
D		Agree	25	50
E		Highly agree	15	30
Total			50	100

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS,RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION**

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS**

- Majority of the respondents says falsifying employment application is the common disciplinary issues an employee faces in an organisation and few of them agrees that sexual harassment, theft and wilfully damaging organisational property are also some of the common disciplinary issues that an employee faces.
- Majority of the respondents says that smoking is the frequent on the job behaviour. were as few of them says fighting are also one of the frequent on the job behaviour and very few of them says sleeping is also one of the on the job behaviour.
- Majority of the respondents says lack of communication of policies and norms are major cause of indiscipline and few of them agrees that favouritism, lack of leadership and bad habits are the causes of indiscipline.
- Majority of the respondents says that Unrecognition is the cause of dissatisfaction that leads to indiscipline and few of them says that salary and favouritism are also the cause of dissatisfaction that leads to indiscipline.
- Majority of the respondents agrees that the degree of disciplinary action taken for misbehaviour on employees is strict whereas many of them feels that the degree of disciplinary action taken for misbehaviour on employees is Normal and few of the respondents even feels the degree of disciplinary action taken for misbehaviour on employees is low.
- Majority of the respondents agrees that the disciplinary actions provide congenial environment in the organisation whereas many of them feels that the disciplinary actions doesn't provide congenial environment in the organisation and few of the respondents have no idea about it.
- Majority of the respondents agrees that disciplinary norms/policies/procedure are important to be communicated to employees whereas few of them doesn't agree that disciplinary norms/policies/procedure are important to be communicated to employees.

- Majority of the respondents says that knowledge of rules are essential for good disciplinary actions whereas many of them feels that prompt action, fair action, well defined procedure, constructive handling of disciplinary action are the essentials of good disciplinary action.
- Majority of the respondents says that indisciplinary actions are highly noted in labour intensive industry whereas many of them says that indisciplinary actions are highly noted in capital intensive industry and small scale industry and few of the respondents have no idea about it.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- **Rules and regulations should be clearly stated:** For discipline to be instilled in employees there should be clear rules and regulations that stipulates what is expected of each employee and what is not expected of them. The employee handbook for instance should be clear in the dos and don'ts of the firm.
- **There should be no discrimination in enforcing rules and regulations:** To make sure that there is discipline in an organization there should be a general rule for every defaulter. Whatever applies to A when he defaults should also be applicable to B. This will prevent employees from getting involved in discipline should be discouraged and prevented and the productivity of an individual would not be affected.
- **There should be proper communication of the rules concerning discipline in the firm:** These rules should be written in the employee handbook and also put in notice boards. By so doing no employee can say he or she is not aware of the rules. Disciplinary actions should be in such a way that defaulters will not want to be disciplined a second time after defaulting for a first time.
- **Flexible working:** Flexible working will help the employees to be disciplined in the organisation. The rules, regulations and norms of an organisation should not be so strict that the employees are forced to get involved in discipline which in turn would affect the productivity of an individual as well as of the organisation.

## CONCLUSION

Discipline is most important for every organization that wants to move forward. It is very essential for the smooth running of any firm. It is also very important for peace and harmony in an organization. Peace between employees, customers and clients. It is always necessary for discipline to be instilled in employees to get the best out of your workforce. Discipline builds high integrity among employees. Predefined policies increases the productivity of employee. Clarity of communication safe guards the respect of employees specially woman work force. Awareness of actions likely to be taken against employees for a particular offense he/she found involved into.

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