GRIEVANCE: A MODERN DAY PROBLEM IN PRIVATE SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT:

No organization can afford to lose on human productivity of their employees on grounds of growing grievances. It is simply not an option that they can even afford to think about. Hence, the business scenario now prevailing in private sector organizations have provided an ample scope and opportunity to research on grievances and management of grievances. It is being looked as a step towards optimum utilization of human resources, profit maximization and building a smart new age organization. Thus, to sum up it can be said that grievances are growing as a result of work related stress and this research aims to address that problem.

This research may be called the application of some ideas or questions that were found previously. Hence, the type of research approach adopted in this study is applied.

A structured questionnaire was prepared and data was captured through it by interviewing respondents. There were 150 respondents who willingly participated in this survey. It took about 45 minutes to explain the purpose of the survey and then capture the data from them, in each case. 150 respondents were chosen because due to working shifts and other professional problems it was difficult to reach out to more number of respondents.

The data captured from them was put under analysis to reach conclusions and then frame the recommendations accordingly.

Key Words: *Grievance, private sector, employer, employee.*

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INTRODUCTION:

All private organizations target maximized profits. They are ready to use resources to the optimum level. In these word 'resources", human resources are also included. It is always more difficult to manage human resources because humans have fear, ambition, they get hurt, they can be happy, they can get sad. Emotions and feelings play a vital role in determining the productivity of human resources. It can influence their state of mind very easily. Thus, no organization can afford to lose on human productivity of their employees on grounds of growing grievances. It is simply not an option that they can even afford to think about. Hence, the business scenario now prevailing in private sector organizations have provided an ample scope and opportunity to research on grievances and management of grievances. It is being looked as a step towards optimum utilization of human resources, profit maximization and building a smart new age organization.

Thus, to sum up it can be said that grievances are growing as a result of work related stress and this research aims to address that problem.

Every research needs to have some research objectives which are to be fulfilled by the end of the research. A research without any objective is like an undetermined path and is likely to not reach anywhere. This research is also not an exception to this norm. For making it effective it was necessary to fix some research objectives.

After studying the research problem, the literature available on the topic and related topics and the general objectives of this study, the following research objectives were framed for pursuing it and making it effective:

1. To explore the bond between the employer and employees.
2. To list out the cause that lead to grievances and effects of it.
3. To describe how grievances are redressed in private sector organizations.
4. To explore whether the employees are satisfied and how they are benefited by the current grievance management.
5. To explore the problems faced by employees in current grievance procedures and how to improve on it.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This research is not a first of its kind. It is based on the conclusions of prior researches. So this research may be called the application of some ideas or questions that were found previously. Hence, the type of research approach adopted in this study is applied.

DATA:

The topic of this research is grievance about work environments in the minds of employees of private sector organizations. So, the process of collection of data for this research is quite complex. To a huge extent the dependence was on primary data i.e. the data collected from an interviewing of respondents through a structured questionnaire.

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION OF DATA:

Grievance is a psychological phenomenon. So capturing the data for this research was a very complicated job. This is because it was seen that to make proper interpretations, it was necessary to capture primary data. Moreover, it had to be collected in an organized manner. A structured questionnaire was prepared and data was captured through it by interviewing respondents. There were 150 respondents who willingly participated in this survey. It took about 45 minutes to explain the purpose of the survey and then capture the data from them, in each case. 150 respondents were chosen because due to working shifts and other professional problems it was difficult to reach out to more number of respondents.

The summary of the analyzed data are presented as follows:

Bond between employer and employees:

The respondents said that most of them felt a strong bond between the employer and them at the initial phase of their career. But with the period of time when their small daily demands were neglected by the employer, the uneasiness started setting up in their relationship. Many a times, it was also seen that the employers were not even looking at the requirements of the employees from a humanitarian angle. Most of employees felt very strange about this. But with the course of time they started feeling awkward and then angry about this sort of a behaviour depicted towards them.

The respondents commented that with time somehow the employers get more profit oriented. That is why they do not take care of the requirements of their employees. So it is the daily negligence from the part of the employer that takes the shape of a huge uproar. Finally it erupts in the form of a grievance. At the initial phase when this grievance is born, many employees make a serious attempt to kill it within them. They consider the respect that they have for their employer and thus try to do this. They think most of the time that the grievance is temporary and once again the bond that they experienced in the initial phase of their journey with the employer can return back. But usually that does not happen. The respondents said that once the grievance

grows and that is not given importance by the employer, that grievance continues to grow bigger and bigger in terms of volume. Thus, finally the bond between them and their employer gets broken.

Cause& effect that lead to grievance:

Most of the respondents opined that they had expectations from their employer when they joined the job. Those expectations were not given importance in due course of time by the employers. Some also pointed out that when they went ahead to speak to their employers about this, their employers did not give enough attention and sort of neglected their talks. The respondents rated expectation and negligence from the employer as the main reasons behind grievances. Apart from this majority of the respondents were of the opinion that they had seen that the employers were not eager to reinvest and upgrade the work environment. The profit generated from out of the business was being maintained in the form of secret reserves. Less importance was given by the respondents to factors the employers awareness and knowledge about up gradation of the work environment. Absolutely no importance was given to factors like governmental control and social problems being the main cause of delay and stopping of improvement of work conditions.

How grievances are addressed in private sector organizations:

The respondents said that once grievances are identified in private sector organizations there are some legal ways to handle them and then there are some unethical ways to handle them. The respondents pointed out clearly that the management gives the responsibility to an officer within the organization to handle the matter. Most of the time, such officers come to settle the matter with the person who has raised the grievance. In their communication, most of the time, the officer tries to counsel the person who has raised the grievance. The officer tries to please the grievant without making an effort to understand that why this sort of a grievance has been raised. Quite often it is seen that the concerned officer does not have much knowledge about it. Generally, the management has the tendency to choose a person who has very good communication skills and is close to the management. So when such a person comes to talk to the grievant, he speaks about that how the management is concerned about the grievant and her/ his grievance. Many grievant opined that such an officer turns out to be messenger of the management. He does not make any sincere effort to settle the grievance because he lacks knowledge of the subject. On asking about if the concerned personnel are unbiased or not, the respondents pointed out that since the personnel given the responsibility to talk to the grievant is from within the organization and is dependent on the management of the organization, is usually not unbiased. He finds it very challenging to absorb the demands and expectations of the management of the organization. Very rarely, the professionals who have the knowledge and experience to settle grievances are brought from outside. Because these professionals are not dependent on the management, their ways of settling the matter is much unbiased and process oriented. But since they do not give much importance to the demand and expectations of the management, the management prefers to avoid bringing a person from outside.

Are employees satisfied with the current grievance management system? How are they benefited with it?

On being asked a direct question about if employees are satisfied with the current grievance management system or not, they said that they were not. To be specific, about 54% respondents said that they were not satisfied with the current grievance management system.

Since most of the employees said that they were not satisfied with the existing grievance management system, they also opined that they do not get benefitted with it. They were of the opinion, that instead of getting benefitted they are harmed with the existence of such a slow and biased system. But in cases, where this system works nicely and as per the legal considerations, which according to them are very rare, the respondents felt that it makes a huge difference to their motivation levels. Thus, that has a long lasting impact on their productivity. It boosts the productivity of their organizations, thereby increasing the profitability of the organizations. There is a direct impact of this on the region and on the national economy. This direct impact could be felt by the employees. When a region excels in business, the benefits showered on that region, by the government brings even more, even greater levels of productivity. Thus, that region grows in terms of importance. Respect and social recognition follows as a result of this.

What are the problems faced by employees in current grievance procedure? What improvements should be brought in it?

The respondents opined that they face certain problems in the current grievance procedure. These problems were rated by them in the order of their preference. The list included slow pace, lack of properly trained and experienced personnel, lack of unbiased personnel, influence of management of the private sector organizations in the grievance management procedures and negligence of the management of the organizations in identification of grievances. The ratings given to these problems were 4.53, 3.27, 3.09, 2.34 and 1.78 out of 5, respectively.

When asked about improvements to be brought in the current grievance management system, the respondents talked about the following:

Most of the respondents opined that first of all, improvements have to be brought in the pace at which grievances are dealt with. They thought that the management of private sector organizations most deliberately slower the pace of the process so that its importance and fervor gets lost. This helps the management to camouflage if there is wrong from their side.

Then the respondents talked about bringing changes in the personnel who are given the responsibility of the grievance management. Here, they talked about the internal officers who are given the responsibility to deal with the grievance. From the data gathered from the respondents it was clear that the internal officers of the organization who are given the duty of grievance management should earn the necessary knowledge and experience to do so. They should be unbiased. For this, they should not be pressurized by the management of the concerned organization. At the same time, in case they feel this pressure, there should be bodies in whose notice they should bring this pressure. That may be within the organization or outside the organization.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The analysis of the data helped to reach interpretations of it (the data). It was on the basis of these interpretations that conclusions were reached. On the basis of these conclusions the recommendations were framed. A discussion on these is as follows:

Bond between employer and employees:

To solve this problem, the employers are being recommended to carry on maintaining the communication with the employees. Under no circumstances, should the employers stop communicating with the employees. When the communication stops, the employees start feeling neglected. That becomes the starting point of many grievances. The maintenance of communication between the employer and the employees are expected to bridge the gap and help them prove that they are beside each other always and particularly in times of distress.

Cause and effect that lead to grievance:

Employers are being recommended to design their administrative system in such a way so that the expectations of the employees are met periodically. Suppose, an employee joins the organization with her/ his career progression in mind, then the concerned department should take care of this. That would keep the employee motivated and as a result no grievances will arise. In a nutshell, it is being recommended to tackle the psychological phenomena, in a manner psychological manner.

How grievances are addressed in private sector organizations:

It is being recommended here that the concerned management must look at a grievance with a human approach. When there is a grievance, then there must be a genuine reason behind that. The management must not try to sweep that 'under the carpet', which is a very common practice, as it has been understood from the responses of the respondents. The management must give the responsibility of settling the grievance to a competent officer. If it is required to fetch a grievance settler from external sources, then the management must not delay the process and try to purchase time. And, last but not the least; the management has to maintain an unbiased approach while trying to settle a grievance.

Are employees satisfied with the current grievance management system? How are they benefited with it?

The recommendation for this is that the management must try to win back the confidence and faith of the employees regarding grievance settlement. They can do this easily by maintaining an unbiased approach. Delegation of responsibility of grievance settlement to competent personnel, bringing of external professionals as and when required and maintaining of good working conditions within the premises of the organization are some measures which the management can get done to ensure an unbiased approach.

What are the problems faced by employees in current grievance procedure? What improvements should be brought in it?

So a decentralization of powers is being recommended. The bargaining capacity of the employees will have to be increased. The legislature and the judiciary may take care of this problem. It has to be brought into their notice by going through the proper channel.

On being asked about improvements, the respondents referred to the pace at which the grievance management procedure works. This also indicates towards the control of the management in the entire process.

To overcome this problem, it is being recommended that when the management of the concerned organization is handling the grievance of the organization, then there must be an external and independent body to look after the various aspects of the grievance management process.

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