

CHRISTIAN SERVICE UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

**THE ASSESSMENT OF EMPLOYEE GRIEVANCES HANDLING IN PRIVATE
COMPANIES: THE CASE OF A.G. TIMBERS AND NAJA DAVID VENEER &
PLYWOOD COMPANY LIMITED**

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this University or any other University.

Candidate's Signature Date

Name: Nkansah James

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the Christian Service University College.

Supervisor's signature..... Date

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ABSTRACT

Grievance management is an important topic in the area of industrial relations. Research on grievance management is burgeoning, and yet the understanding of its backgrounds and consequences remain rather unclear. This research discusses the grievance handling style at A.G. TIMBERS LTD and NAJA DAVID VENEER & PLYWOOD LTD. To achieve this objective, the study identified the styles used in the timber companies (sawmill) in handling employee grievances, explored employees' perceptions about the way their grievances are handled, discovered factors which hinder effective management of employees' grievances, and found out what should be done to effectively manage employees' grievances. In terms of research design and methodology, this study used an exploratory research design whereby interviews, questionnaires and desk review were used as data collection techniques. The population of the study included 1,258 staff out of which 98 were administrative, 230 were bush operations staff, 136 were transport staff, 52 were auxiliary staff and 734 were production staff. Among these 42 administrative staff were from the AGT, while 56 administrative staff were from NDVP. Also, 76 bush operations staff were from AGT, whereas 156 were from the NDVP, 72 transport staff were from AGT while 64 transport staff were from NDVP. Moreover, 23 auxiliary staff were from AGT while 29 were from NDVP and 342 production staff were from AGT while 392 were from NDVP. Data were collected from respondents, coded and analyzed using Microsoft Excel software (X) The study found that majority of supervisors dominating style in trying to solve their employees' grievances, whereas few supervisors used obliging style of managing employee grievance

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my dearest wife, friend, daughter and son, Jemima Animah,

Esther Yeboah, Francisca Prah Boadu Nkansah and Nana Yaw Boadu Nkansah

KEY WORDS

| | | |
|------|---|---------------------------------|
| AGT | = | A.G. TIMBERS |
| NDVP | = | NAJA DAVID VENE AND PLYWOOD |
| FIP | = | FACTORY IMPROVEMENT PROGRAME |
| X | = | MICROSOFT EXCEL |
| CBA | = | COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENT |
| MBA | = | “ME BA HA AKYE” |

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.3 Background of the Study

The predominant multiplicity at many work places around the world in relation to age, gender, nationality, ethnic and religious context of employees needs a planned way of handling or issues confronting employees. Principally because when there is disappointment from the employee, message turn to be poorly disseminated and misinterpretation thereof. Productivity dwindle as the morale of the employees diminishes to the lowest ebb eventually affects the whole organization or the company. Meyer (1994) stresses the fact that employee grievance indicates that a supervisor's conduct was unsuitable or the supervisor has unsuccessfully abide by the rules and regulations govern the employees. Bemmels and Reshef (1991) cited that in a particular cluster of employees, a lot of grievances are in abeyance due to a certain conduct of supervisors. Moreover, employee grievance are acknowledged and controlled, unwavering the likelihood of reducing the output and dislocation costs normally related to grievance process, thereby improving the effectiveness and cost of efficacy of the organization. Studies have shown that a number of grievance styles are used in handling employee grievances. For instance, the most functional grievances styles in handling employee grievances consist of integrating, compromising and dominating. Rahim and Magner (1995) also stated that another grievance style chiefly used in handling employee grievance is the obliging style.

To them, the style involves low concern for self. Furthermore, they point out that another style used in solving an employee's teething issue is avoiding style. Regardless, the studies have again indicated that if styles used in managing employee grievance, are used appropriately, they are important solutions to the discontentment coming from employees at their particular work places. Because of this, the use of an appropriate method in managing

an employee grievance is important to mitigating employees' discontent equally. The writer maintains that managing grievances immediately it has been reported is important so as to curb any further eruption of similar disagreements. Mante-Meija and Enid (1991) share that the choice of an effective way of managing an employee's grievance guarantees fairness in the management of employee grievance and aids managers to base their decisions on ethical codes of conduct.

Notwithstanding, Schakowsky and Slotsve (1992) and Tan (1994) state that grievance handling rest mainly on the strength of superiors and managers to ascertain, analyze, beneficial use of methodologies in handling employee complaint and spot-on the reasons of possible employee discontentment thereon becoming official grievances.

To Ivancevich (2001), suitable usage of grievance style in handling employee complaint empowers the manager to measure and seriously take employee grievances; collect all the necessary information presented, after accessing the available evidences, and offer an appropriate response to the worker who is venting the dissatisfaction. Effective handling of employee's grievance will enhance the manager to solve the complaint on a common understanding and attending to other issues. This research therefore show that it is important to delve into the styles used in managing employee complaint in private companies in order to ascertain their impact on curtailing or fueling employee grievance when used.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

It has been established that A.G. Timbers and Naja David Veneer Plywood Limited are the biggest employers in timber industry in Ghana, entrusted with responsibility of

bringing out competent human resource personnel endowed with requisite expertise to better handle which was poorly handled by foreigners (Expatriates) in our country. The proper handle of employees' grievances in these two companies have an issue of contention.

These challenges have been noticed by the fact that for the past two years AGT and NDVP have embarked on several strikes, demonstrations and picketing in that employee grievances have not been adhered to by management.

In the past, few studies including (Danku & Apepetey, 1999) on workplace grievance and (Assafuah 2017) on grievance handling procedures and employee performance have been conducted in Ghana. The researcher unveiled that improper grievance handling style in many organizations including AGT and NDVP for the study have caused high labour turn out poor human relation and ineffective communication. It is against this background that this study is focuses on grievances handle style at AGT and NDVP and its consequences on the workers output.

1.3 General Objectives

The over-all objective of this study was to observe by what means employee grievances are managed in private companies in Ghana using A.G. TIMBERS and NAJA DAVID VENEER & PLYWOOD Ltd. as case studies.

1.4 Specific Objectives

These specific objectives are to draw from the general objective:

1. Ascertain the style(s) applied by AGT and NDVP in handling employees grievance
2. Assess the employee perceptions about the way grievances are being managed

3. Unveiled the contributory factors to ineffective management of employees grievances
4. Ascertain what should be done to efficiently managed employees' grievance

1.5 Research Questions

1. What are the styles used at AGT and NDVP to manage employees' grievances?
2. What are the perceptions about the way the management handles your grievances?
3. What do employees think are the contributory factors of ineffective management of employees' grievance?
4. What should be done to effectively managed employees' grievances?

1.6 Significance of the Study

Positively the study is useful to many; a huge number of interested persons might gain knowledge and idea from the study. First and foremost, outcomes from the research would definitely enhance the frontiers in taking any decision by supervisors of private companies importantly timber industry to acknowledge the main causes of employee discontent of individual companies. Moreover, outcomes of the research will assist managers to find out if the resilience in working with staff complaint produce envisioned results otherwise, take suitable precautions thereof. Notwithstanding, the research might reveal the misconceptions of employees about how their superiors at their respective departments take care of their complaints. However, the research will give credence to ineffective management of employee grievances in private companies. Consequently, it is also expected that sawmill companies like AGT and NDVP could manage with the outcomes from the research as repository.

1.7 Delimitation

The restrictions of the population of the study to only employees of AGT and NDVP render the findings, conclusions and recommendations applicable largely to the organization.

1.8 Limitations

The reluctance by some of the interviewees to provide needed information caused the time for the study. Approval from authorities to carry out the interview, unavailability of respondents for the interview due to work shift system affected the time frame for the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

An apt consideration of the research will assess the related literature and empirical evidence in this chapter which eventually will create attention and improved direction. Because of this, the literature will explain the concept of grievance and make known expressed views concerning grievance handling procedures. Other sections of the literature such as grievance handling styles, causes of employee grievance will be discussed.

2.2 Definition of Key Concepts

2.2.1 Grievance

Rose (2004) expressed her view of grievance as any discontentment associated with the job and the working environment emanate from employee in an official way to the direct superior. Notwithstanding, D’Cruz (1999) contributes by defining grievance as an issue raised by employee to register discontentment with the organization’s directions in an attempt to effect variations. Furthermore, the author enhances that staff complaint could be seen as the method which includes an employee’s endeavor to indicate that he or she has victimized or been grieved, on occasion due to activities or pronouncements from the superior stand-in for the organization.

Essentially, the afore-mentioned explanation of complaint is obviously states what complaint is. Moreover, others though give out reasons that could trigger employee complaint at many places of work. Nonetheless, contributors are unable to offer the level where employee complaint can hamper employee’s output. Undoubtedly, the research therefore,

complaint could be seen as circumstances for that a certain employee exhibits his or her discontentment concerning how he or she is being treated to his or her immediate manager for further action.

2.3 The concept and scope of Grievances Procedure

Grievance procedures are avenues of dispute settlement that can be used to address grievances by employees against management or to resolve disputes between a company and its suppliers, customers, or competitors (Coleman, 2000). The greatest known submission of grievance procedures is a formal process outlined in labour union contracts. “The term grievance as it appears in the written contract refers to a formal complaint by people who believe that they have been wronged by a management decision” (Lewin & Richard, 1999).

According to Britton (1992), “grievance may be explained as any misunderstanding that occur between an employer and employee, which transmits to the implicit or explicit terms of contract of employment agreement”.

2.3.1 Management

Harold and Heinz (1990) “define management as the art, or science which aims at achieving goals through people”. They added that because at time supervisors also oversee, consequently the management could also be accompanied with making sure that employees do accordingly what they are assigned to perform. Per the available definition, management should be seen as the process fashioning and nourishing a setting where persons, performing work collectively in groups, proficiently achieve designated objectives.

Commonly, administration ought to be accompanied by winning capabilities as well as efficiency in such areas as problem solving, management, human capital administration, and structural governance. Administration per this study must be seen as the procedure

through which supervisors accomplish the entrusted obligations and tasks through their staff or employees in terms of handling grievances or complaints of employee, safeguarding the relationship between the management and workforce; and ensuring that the company focuses on attaining envisioned goals in either their particular sections or department.

The encouraging part of the explanation/contribution exhibits what management exactly is, and what management is unable to unveil a certain areas covered by the process. The supervisor is therefore, versatile, life-giving component in most business. Leadership skill is very important since the resources for production remain resource and unchanged if the human capital is not managed well by the manager. In modest environment and economy, the effective performance and quality managerial prowess of managers determine the future of a business; indeed, they determine its existence.

2.4 Theoretical Review

2.4.1 Scientific Management Theory

According to Olum (2004), Frederick Taylor is the father of management theory. It has therefore christened as Frederick Taylor's scientific management. In the late nineteenth and early twentieth century he started with the modern management and spread as the "awkward, inefficient, or ill-directed movements of men" as state harm. Taylor repeatedly wanted to discard management "by rule of thumb" and substitute it with right timed interpretations leading to "the one best" practice. He also spread the gradual training of workers in "the one best practice" rather than allowing them decide for their own job. He averred and thought that the jobs or tasks would be equally pooled together among the employees and management with management performing the science employees teaching

and the employees executing the labour, every one group performing the task for which it was best suited.

The strong point of the theory is the prerequisite to thoroughly explain difficult jobs into a several diminutive jobs; hence, its stop-watch measured time trials. However, the theory has been assessed for its propensity to degrade the workers.

2.4.2 Systems Theory

According to Olum (2004) systems theory has a substantial effect on management science and understanding organizations. The definition of a system is a collection of components of parts to achieve the entire objective. The theory claims that if a part is dysfunctional or a system is removed, it renders the whole system to change as well. A system ought to be viewed as having the following components. Firstly, materials that comprise of resources such as human capital, raw materials, financial, and logistics, Secondly, procedures which include motivating, controlling, planning, and organizing. Thirdly, outputs include services or produce/products. Lastly, products include improve excellence life or production for consumers. As a result, systems communicate information and share response among each of these four parts of the system.

In spite of the fact that the systems theory seems relatively important, years of management training and development couple with practices in the workplace has departed from this theory. Lately, because of the paradigm shift of technologies which has transform organizations and the effect of its operations thereof, instructors and supervisors have understand the new way of doing things. The strong point of the systems theory in management is that it empowers supervisors to look at the organization in a broader

perspective. Again, it allows supervisors to understand arrangements and procedures in the working environment such as being helping to notice the entire segments of the company, and, in actuality, the interconnectivities and relations of the parts. The theory is connected to this study since it directs supervisors to understand the entire department which form part of the organizations such as human capital, motivation, procedures which allow them to efficiently accomplish their envisioned aims.

2.4.3 Behavioral Theory

One major contributor of this theory is Elton Mayo. The origin of behaviorism is the human affairs program that was a product of the Hawthorne Works Experiment conceded by the Western Electric Company in the United States of America which commenced in the early 1920s (1927-32). Experiments steered by Elton Mayo and his comrades investigates controverted Taylor's beliefs that science dictated that the maximum production was establish in 'the one best way' and that way might be achieved by meticulous experimentation. The Hawthome education made an effort to decide the effects of lighting on worker productivity. When these investigations showed no clear connection between light level and productivity the investigations then took place looking at other aspects. These aspects that were well-thought-out when Mayo was engaged with a number of women involved rest breaks, no rest breaks, no free meals, more hours in the workday/work-week or fewer hours in the workday/work-week. By employeing of the afore-mentioned variations, production went up. When the women were engaged at their initial working environment being hours of work and conditions thereof, production upsurge.

The theory is grounded on the ensuing expectations. Firstly, labor gratification and therefore aching the desire result does not necessary come out of financial rewards, but it also

rest on other facets such as working conditions and attitudes, communications, constructive management response to workers complications, reinforcement and, working environment. Secondly, financial reward is not the single panacea to attain the effective relationship as well as staff performance. Thirdly, positive reactions thus improving working conditions (proper lighting system, good welfare package), showing gratitude and encouragement otherwise to the coercive strategies by superiors.

Consequently, the impact of the peer group is very high, therefore, the significance of real groups in the place of work. The theory is connected to this research as it defines elements that might inspire the presence or not at all of discontentment on emanating from the front of the workers as could have been explained above. Systems theory and behavioral theories were used in the research to express the significance of both managers and workers for efficient running of any department. The Classical Management Theory was not used in this research since it does distinguish the role of a worker in the existence of organizations or company. In this research particular, the two theories were used to uphold the role of workers and managers in the existence of both the AGT and NDVP.

2.5 Handling of Employee grievance: Conceptual Issues

Employee grievance has been explained as a way of articulating an employee's discontentment concerning work and environment display by the employee to his or her direct manager. Furthermore, employee discontent has been explained as the manner which includes an employees' effort to demonstrate he or she has been mishandled established on the activities or results made by the manager.

A grievance is also stated as any displeasure or sense of injustice in the work place, experience or expressed by employee or employees. The backgrounds of a grievance can be

real or unreal. For instance, grievances centered on real or tangible activities and happenings may contain getting information and data that are incorrect subject to a wage cut which renders an employee agitated. Factually, grievances can be rooted as unreal, for instance, a supervisor would wish to monitor and evaluate the performance of a lackadaisical employee. If the supervisor ambush or hide his intention to communicate, the employee may see the supervisor's behavior or conduct as invasive and bossy. In addition, other employees may see the action of the supervisor as showing nepotism and favoritism, and being bias. Such grievances are centered on false accounts and suppositions. In this study therefore, employee grievance meant the discontentment concerning a job and work place made known by employees at the AGT and NDVP. Researchers contend that in the working environment, grievances are grouped into two types namely: the group grievance and the individual grievance.

However, a group grievance is a grievance which distresses a cluster of employees. An example of group grievances could be a cut of remuneration or a redundancy exercise that includes a number of staff or the whole staff. Additionally, individual grievance is a grievance that disturbs one staff and involves a participatory method and wants the manager and employees to solve the issue assiduously and amicably. Assertion was made to the effect individual grievances could be perceived as when employee senses victimization in a promotion exercise or a situation of sexual abuse. Researchers advance an argument that a complaint could be triggered by a number of reasons; these consist of for example unfair treatment, low salaries, poor work conditions, relationship gab at the work place, self-centeredness among employees, lack of involvement of employees in policymaking, lacked human capital management skills.

Handling of a worker complaint is a complex one as people could envisage because it require an effective and productive methods. If the approach to manage the situation is unproductive, employee grievance could trigger to loss of job confidence among employees, poor performance, absenteeism, loitering, loss of productivity and high staff turnover. In lieu of buttressing on this statement, Holt and Devore (2005) claimed that methodologies employ in handling employee's grievances significantly influenced the way they associated to each other in a specific organization. Styles in managing employees' problem may give an impact in industrial relations philosophy (Holt & Devore, 2005). Avoidance and dominating styles are employed by more consolidated companies in making a decision on grievances (Green, 1987). Furthermore, integrating, compromising or obliging styles are continuously used by more decentralized in resolving grievances (Rose, 2004, Rahim, 1983). Researchers have fashioned autonomous scales to measure five styles used in managing employees' grievances and have found that integrating, obliging, compromising, dominating and avoiding are the normally used styles in managing employee grievances.

An integrating style exhibits deep involvement of both parties which involved in that particular grievance. The style includes cooperation between an employee and superior, which ought to contain, for instance unpretentiousness, proper dissemination of evidence and review of the circumstances; modification, so as to agree on satisfactory separation to both parties (Rahim & Magner, 1995). Accordingly this style has described as cooperating type, which he denoted to as connecting the capability of manager to work with his or her outranked to make sure that a lasting solution that should be wholly gratify the interests of both. This cooperation among the individuals could be fashioned in a different form to ascertain a divergence view to study from each other's acumen, with the aim of agreeing on a particular setting which will at that juncture have them contending for resources, or antagonizing and making sure to fashion a creative result to an relational problem.

An obliging style involves low concern for self. ‘This involves an obliging person attempts to emphasize commonalities which aim at satisfying the concern of the other party’ (Rahim & Magner, 1995). It is also called accommodating mode by telling it as a style that abandon one’s concerns to appease the concerns of the other person. In accommodating style, managers may take the form of altruistic openhandedness or assistance, conforming to another person’s needs and desirous to yield another’s point of view.

A compromising style encompasses enough concern for self as well as the other party involved in a conflict. The style is associated with give-and-take or sharing and build consensus, where each party give up something to make an agreeably reasonable decision. Compromising or cooperating style also refers to splitting the difference (no winner and no looser), swapping concerns or seeking a quick middle-ground position (Rahim & Magner, 1995).

Dominating style contains high concern for self and low concern for the other party involved in the conflict. “It has been identified with a win-lose orientation or with forcing behaviour to win position (Rahim & Magner, 1995)”.

Lastly, avoiding style is referred to as low concern for self as well as for the other party involved in conflict. The style is connected with withdrawal, passing-the-buck, circumventing or “see no evil, hear no evil, speak no evil” situations. This style emphatically shows in deep sense of tactfully dodging an issue, rescheduling a claim or an issue till a fertile ground or humbly withdrawing from a threatening situation. Employee grievances can be avoided when mediators or managers apply productive use of methodologies which demand the capability of mediators/managers and supervisors to identify, analyze, and spot-on the roots of possible employee discontentment before they become official grievances. Notwithstanding that, the use of suitable style in handling employee grievance empowers the

supervisor to take every grievance earnestly, collect all evidence available on the grievance, after considering all the facts, and make available an answer to the employee who is venting the grievance (Tan, 1994; Ivancevich, 2001).

2.6 Empirical Study

A research done by Hook et al (1996) on supervisor and manager styles in handling grievance. This study was involved about 95 supervisors and managers who attended a weekend training program in human capital management. Methodologically, four topics in terms of grievance condition were spread to the participants in order to ascertain styles used in handling grievances. Circumstances in each topic were different so as to categorize changed clarification styles used by participants for similar situations. The research further discovered that “tell and sell”, “tell and listen”, ask and tell”, “problem solving” and 20 “ask and listen” were styles used in handling employee grievance. However, the research revealed that the “telling” style was the style in which all the control was entrusted in the hands of the managers. The “ask and tell” method was the method where the employees assume most of the talking. The “ask and tell” method was very transparent and included the subordinates having a larger amount of control above the interaction. In the “problem solving” style authority and engrossment were mutual by both parties. In “tell and sell” method, the manager made known to the subordinate of the judgment that the manager has made and would then and there endeavor to encourage the subordinates of the exactness of those verdicts.

Consequently, findings of the study discovered that participants considered more part-taking styles in grievance management. However, the study also established that when supervisors and managers presume a circumstance that suggest as a exact warning to their power, they degenerated to a much more tyrannical style which was initially telling their

employee their verdict and then encouraging them of its exactness. This research is connected to this since it pinpoints the styles used by managers and supervisors to handle grievance of their subordinates and their consequences thereof to the survival of the organization.

A study directed by Tjosvold and Morishima (1999) on the behavior and perceptions of persons on grievance determination and its consequences. Methodologically, the study used investigative research policy in gathering data for the study. Buttressed by theory of conflict resolution fashioned by Deutsch (1949), this study has presumed that people understood their objectives were completely interconnected (in that they could both be successful) and were able to handle conflict more successfully than those with inexpensive goals. The study established that supervisors/managers used reasonable and accommodating styles to handle their employees' grievances. According to the study, reasonable method/style in handling employees' grievances included contrasting and uncompromising objectives which aimed at promoting a administrative agenda. On the supplementary, obliging style in handling grievances produced supple and unprejudiced argument between the executives and workforce. The main motives for accommodating goals involved a collective comprehension of the issue and its determination, union and management acknowledgement of each other's objectives. Findings of the study discovered that in accommodating style of handling employees' grievances, respondents were self-confident that they might cooperate efficiently and deliberate grievances problem flexibly and productively. Notwithstanding, accommodating style was connected with constructive outcome, well-organized determination and a creative, first-class resolution. On the contrary, competitive style weakened outlooks of an effective and unprejudiced interaction. Competitive style was established to be negatively connected to outlooks, productivity and superiority.

The study therefore recommended that supervisors/managers should use accommodating style in determining/resolving grievances since the method produced

encouraging outlooks, contentment for both the employee and management, and enhanced processes. The study is also connected to the study because it conferred the two styles used in handling employees' grievances by proposing the one that best suits the entire procedure of handling employees' grievances.

McGrane et al (2005) have completed a study on face-to-face conflict determination/resolution. The target population for the research involved individual employees in the British Isles who operated in small office settings. A total of 29 male and 61 female employees of decision-making and non-decision making levels were engaged as respondents to this research. Methodologically, the research used investigative/exploratory research design in gathering data for the research. In establishing face-to-face dispute resolution, McGrane and his contemporaries have established that four methods of conflict resolution which were frequently used by managers and their staff. The methods were fight, flight and intervention. Accordingly, the study found that, fighting style concentrated on ascertaining a winner and a loser. This habitually took the form of an employee invoking an organization's normal grievance procedure which a conflict was considered with high costs to all included.

Flight was another system of conflict management that was ordinarily used. This happened by sidestepping a dispute or moving away from a problem. Intervention was the third method of conflict resolution that is usually used. In this approach, employees entreated that their line manager arbitrated openly and handled their conflict for them. Nonetheless, the connection of a third person in the resolution of the conflict could add to the problem. According to Bemmels and Resyef (1991), the involvement of third party in grievance management will grind it to a halt which eventually aggravate employees' obstruction. Rahul and Deepati (1999) veiled the third party customarily was not acquainted and absence of

information on the dispute tallied by distressed worker. Research however suggested that problem between an employee's Manager ought not include a third party who do not have an in-depth knowledge of the root cause of the issue espouse by the distressed worker. This study is connected to the contemporary study since it reveals the differences in numerous grievance styles or methods used in handling employee complaint

A research conducted by Karambayya and Brett (1989) on handling conflict between employees and supervisor. Methodologically, the research used descriptive research strategy in collecting information for the study. Research have revealed that by using the varimax-rotated seven-factor answer, four different roles were realized as manager's behaviors in handling conflict. The first role was called interrogational role. Supervisors who administer an interrogational role maintained mutually procedure and result control for them. One these role supervisors forced on them the idea, made conclusive judgment and suggested their own thought.

The second role, per the research, included the mediational role. Mediational role allowed supervisors to enquire into the employee queries regarding dispute, solicited 16 suggestions from employees and managed to slot in the ideas into their employee's bids. The role signified is identified as procedural arranger. Supervisors enchanting this role defined the conflict-managing processes to be monitored and firmly prescribed those rules. The fourth role was the motivational role. In this role, managers usually depend on motivational control by consuming intimidations and incentives. If the issue of conflict could not meet equilibrium of settlement at the meeting, managers/supervisors will foretell likely consequences and applied weight to raise your spirits a timely settlement. In so far as the research did not suggest the appropriate method of handling employees' grievances, it is connected to this study because it has evidently deliberated limitless number of methods used to manage employees in diverse ways/environments.

2.6.1 Grievance Procedures

Grievance procedures are means by which workers' grievances are dealt with or settled. They also serve as a channel of communication between workers and managers, notify managers of possible trouble, offer an orifice for grievances, and sidestep stoppages, nonattendance, walkouts and mutilation (FIP guide). The grievance procedures differ from company to company and from union to union because of the disparities in the dimension of officialdoms, in trade union strength, in the management philosophy in the company traditions, in the industrial practices and in the cost factor. The procedure may have as limited as two steps or as many as ten, depending on the scope of an organization. In small organization, it might include no other than three steps. In intermediate and large organizations there may be four or five steps with negligible disparities (Mamoria, 1991:833).

2.6.2 Nature and Causes of Grievance

In an industrial setting a grievance may be offered by an employee or group employees, in case of any magnitude or circumstances that directly upsets the individual or is possibly to upset, the conditions of employment of many workers. In case a grievance is transmuted into broad assertion, whether by the union, or by a cluster of employees, then the assertion drops outside the lenses of grievance procedure as it is a collective grievance and wherefore it drops under collective bargaining.

2.6.3 Causes of Grievance

According to Gupta (2006) and Opatha (2001), grievances could be emanated from so many angles by employees but have been classified into four groups.

2.6.4 Grievances arising out of Working Conditions

They include: poor physical conditions of work place; very constricted production principles; non-availability of appropriate tools and equipment; unintended vicissitudes in programs and procedures; Failure to preserve suitable discipline; incongruity of the worker with the job, and poor connection with the supervisor.

2.6.5 Grievances emanating from Management Policy

They include; commensurate wage rates and system of wage compensation, overtime and incentives schemes; seniority, promotion, demotion and discharge; lack of opportunities for career development, imposition of punishments for wrongdoing, leave and antagonism from trade unionization.

2.6.6 Grievances emanating from Alleged Violation Agreement

The collective bargaining; company rules and regulations, past practice, central and state laws, and responsibilities of management.

2.6.7 Grievances arising out of Personal Neurosis

They include; over-ambition, extreme self-confidence, and impractical attitude to life.

2.6.8 Forms of Grievance

According to Ichniowski (1984), a grievance could be any dissatisfaction or discontent, whether **expressed** or not, whether valid or invalid, and arising out anything associated with the company that an employee thinks, believes, or even feels as unfair, unjust, or inequitable. A grievance may take any of the following forms:

2.6.9 Factual

When an employee is dissatisfied with his job, for genuine or factual reasons like a breach of terms of employment or any other reasons that are clearly attributed to the management, he is said to have factual grievance. Thus, factual grievances arise when the legitimate needs are unfulfilled. The problem that he has is real and not virtual.

2.6.10 Imaginary

When an employee's grievance or dissatisfaction is not because of any factual or valid reason but because of wrong perception, wrong attitude or wrong information he has a grievance is called an imaginary grievance. Though it is not the fault of management, the responsibility of dealing with it still rests with the management. So the problem is not real, it is in the mind or just a feeling towards someone or something.

6.6.11 Disguised

An employee may have dissatisfaction for reasons that are unknown to himself. This may be because of pressures and frustrations that an employee is feeling from other sources like his personal life. For instance you can reflect your day mood at home to your working place. We are all humans and are sensitive to the environment that we operate in.

2.7 Characteristics of Effective Grievance Procedure

The strength of effective grievance procedure should contain the following characteristics (Gupta *et al.*, 2006):

2.7.1 Legal Sanctity

The procedure should be in conformity with the existing law. It should be designed to supplement the statutory provisions. Wherever possible, the procedure should make use of machinery provided under legislation. The procedure may be incorporated in the standing orders or code of ethics or collective bargaining agreement of the organization.

2.7.2 Acceptability

The grievance procedure must be acceptable to all and should, therefore, be developed with mutual consultation among management, workers and the union. In order to be generally acceptable, the procedure must ensure:

1. A sense of fair play and justice to workers;
2. Reasonable exercise of authority to managers; and
3. Reasonable participation to the union.

2.7.3 Promptness

The grievance procedure must aim at speedy redressal of grievances. This can be ensured in the following ways:

- a. As far as possible the grievance should be settled at the lowest level;
- b. There should be only one appeal;
- c. Time limits should be prescribed and rigidly enforced at each level; and
- d. Different types of grievances may be referred to appropriate authorities.

2.7.4 Simplicity

The procedure should consist of as few steps as possible. Channels for handling grievances should be carefully developed. Employees must know the officers to be contacted at each level. Information about the procedure should be communicated to the employees.

2.7.5 Training

Supervisors and union representatives should be given training in grievance handling. This will help to ensure effective working of the grievance procedure.

2.7.6 Follow up

The working of the grievance procedure should be reviewed at periodical intervals. Necessary improvements should be made to make the procedure more effective.

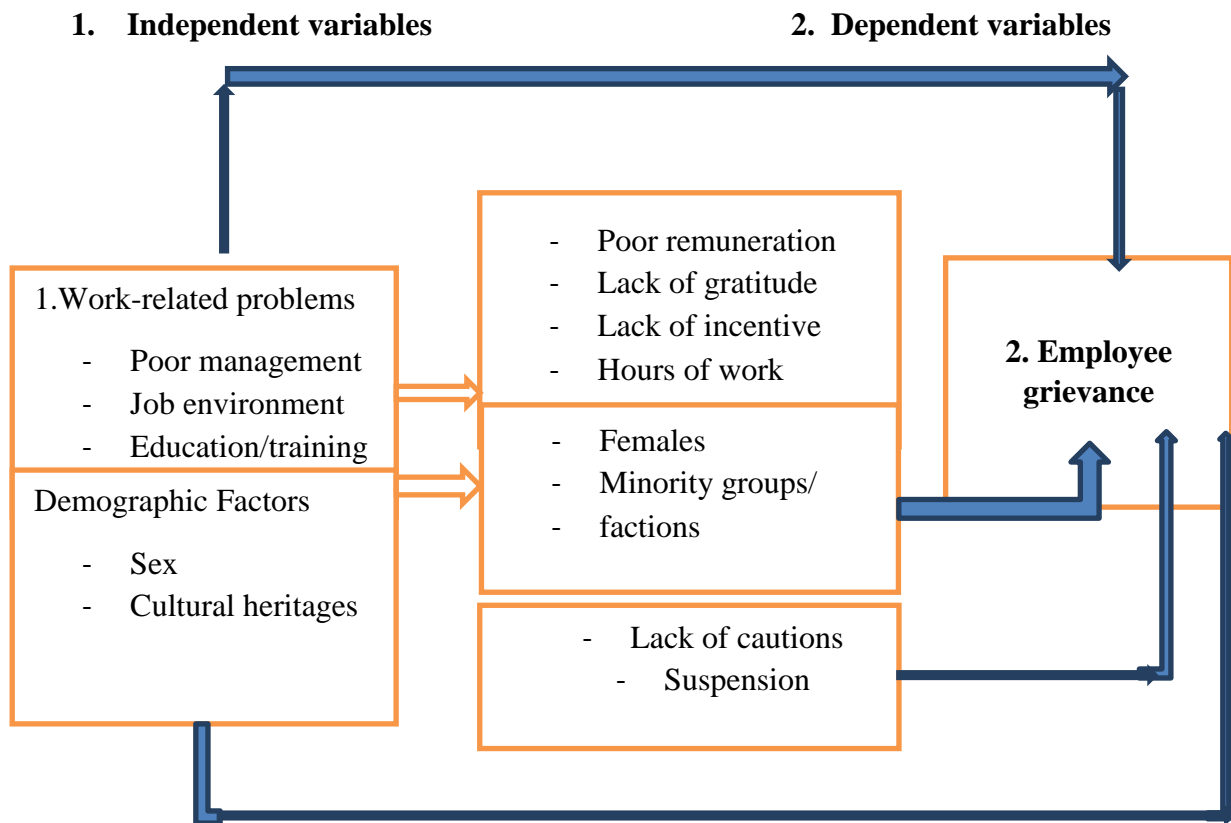


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing Independent and Dependent variables of Employees Grievance

According to Kombo and Tromp (2006), a conceptual framework explains the relationship among independent and dependent variables. They also state that a conceptual framework elucidates the probable linkage between variables and answers. This research is directed by the framework (see figure 1) above; the supposition is such that, both job-related causes such as poor management, work environment, and education/training could be the prime causes of worker complaint. In other words, they are the independent variables in the method of causing an employee's grievance.

Bamberger and Nahun-shami (2008) cited this statement when claimed that the prerequisite by managers to assist less as monitors and more as coaches and mentors; upsurges the effect on employee complaint actions. In other words, it is argued that on-the-job issues for employee complaints involved and unsafe work environment which exposes employees to work-related dangers more so unwarranted work hours.

In agreement it was seen that extreme work hours are predominantly pertinent of late because of current happenings in the type of work, whereby a lot of employers lately sought to cut labour costs by tumbling staff requirement. The upsurge of flexibility of the outstanding work force, thus employing better and temporal demands (showed by increase of hours of work) on their employees.

The framework also displays the demographic concerns might also be a cause for an employee's grievance. These consist of such things as sex and cultural heritage of the distressed employees. For instance, Duffy and Ferrier (2003) argued that employee grievance is seen in female and ethnic minority workers family to their male and ethnic majority group in un-conducive place of work circumstances. These authors see the connection on two important peripheries. First, it could be that certain unfriendly work environments are more visible to demographically defined groups of employees. For instance, the un-conduciveness of sequential job stresses may be more seen in women than their men, since family chaos

tend to restrict the vulnerability of women to answer back to employer demands to work overtime or extra hours.

Moreover, they extend the argued that another cause that best elucidates the connection between un-conducive work environments and worker complaints among women and factions is their level of connection to and belief for their supervisors. They claimed that self-assurance in the concern and capacity of an employee's manager to effectively follow a grievance plays an important role in employee decision making concerning the efficacy of taking on grievance among women and ethnic minorities. Lastly, the framework shows that other causes such as cautions or suspension could happen when an employee flops in meeting the performance or social standards set by the company or department.

In this sense, discipline is seen as a severe action executed on an employee and, given the harshness of punitive actions taken, companies set grievances. Once the process is through and employee grievance clears is acknowledged and handle accordingly, organizations are more probable to do away with or reduce degree of employee grievances. Consequently, all the afore-mentioned variables are connected to this study because, as discovered in the literature review, the variables are the major factors which stimulate the employee grievance in many working environment.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Paradigm

Saunders et al (2009) define a research hypothesis as a manner that a stud uses to observe social phenomenon from that specific understanding of these happening can be achieved and explanations endeavored. Basing on the example, the study will focused on condition that elucidations the forms of methodologies fashioned out to handle employee complaints and advance on agreed recommendations to allow the structural management deal efficiently and resourcefully with employees' disappointments. The method agreed basing on the thoughtfulness that companies are rational entities, in which balanced clarifications are required to make available explanations to rational problems.

3.2 Research Design

According to Fisher (2010) who claims that researches wanting to take a cross-sectional type of measure as a proposed that will aid their research. This approach that, the research was done in a way that should not assume to predict the outcomes that were derived from the research in other words measures revealed by the study. The main purpose of via cross-sectional survey approach was to advance new knowledge on the reasons for employee

complaints, procedures across all departments of policy makers to curb employee grievance, workers observations about the way the managers solve their grievances, the factors which thwart effective and cohesiveness management of employee grievance.

However, this study fashioned according to Fisher has been criticized earlier on that the tendency to generate a condescending connection between the researcher and the users of the study. More so, it has been criticized that neither reluctant nor un-reluctant respondents might wish to misinform the researcher by narrating stories best known to them that the researcher have no option but listen to them. To mitigate, the researcher's guaranteed that the research is carried out as envisioned and yields the planned outcomes by gathering and diagnosing the data very judiciously and assiduously.

3.2.1 Population Profile

Saunders et al (2009) defines a study population as the full set of cases from which a sample is taken or drawn. Based on the aforementioned, the population of the research involved 1,258 staff out of which 98 were administration, 230 were bush operations staff, 136 were transport staff, 52 were auxiliary staff and 734 were production staff. Among these 42 administration staff were from the AGT, while 56 administration staff were from NDVP. Also 74 bush operations staff were from AGT, while 156 were from NDVP, 72 transport staff were from AGT while 64 transport staff were from NDVP. Moreover, 23 auxiliary staff were from AGT while 29 were from NDVP and 342 population staff were from AGT while 392 were from NDVP.

3.2.2 Sample and Sampling Techniques

Sampling is a process of selecting the respondents and people selected are called sample or subjects. Therefore, sampling is the process of obtaining information about all the

population by tentatively taken only part of it. The researcher of this study selected only a few samples on the assumption that the sample data would represent all population parameters.

Purposive sampling which is a non-probability sampling technique was used to select the respondents. Saunders et al (2009) defines purposive or hypercritical sampling as the sampling method that enable the researcher to use his or her decision to choose from the lot that will best suit him or her to answer researcher questions and meet the researcher purposes. Being a cross-sectional research method, this research used purposive selection procedure so as to get the right respondent who would give the needed answers on how employee grievance are managed at A. G. Timbers Ltd. and Naja David Veneer & Plywood Ltd.

According to Fisher (2010), sample as a particular or a few number of conditions a researcher wanted to study by explaining it exactly that should be. In view of this, the standard will be the explicit figure of private companies' employees who were studied. Moreover, the author claims that because some of the protuberant question provide by researchers when planning the questionnaires is how many questionnaires should be distributed, the purposive allows researcher to agree on assumption that are representative of the whole population which has been selected so as to sidestep involvement of everyone in the sample. However, Saunders et al (2009) argues that a sample allows a researcher to cut down the cost associated with studying a large size population.

Notwithstanding, sampling enable researchers to manage well with time claiming that the procedure of collecting data becomes easily manageable if only a small size population are studied.

Henry (1994) cited in Saunders et al (2009) claims that using sampling makes the activities in the research perfect. Adding that the small population size of cases that a researcher desires to organize data shows that more time will be spent to make and

experiment the tools intended to gather data. Organizing data from a small number of happenings the author stated is the way the researcher was capable to gather the needed information that is more comprehensive. This research therefore, sampled its population so as to save time and organize comprehensive and needed information so as to produce an intellectually important work.

The population of the research involved one thousand two hundred and fifty-eight (1,258) staff from both AGT and NDVP. This population included administration staff and non-administration staff. Administration staff included heads of human resource departments and heads of department. Non-administrative staff included Bush Operations Staff, Transport Staff, Auxiliary Staff and Production Staff. However, questionnaires used for both qualitative and quantitative analysis were distributed to 72 respondents, and 10 Administration staff (interviewees) were interviewed making 82 respondents for the two categories using purposive sampling technique. This included 46 administration staff and 36 non-administration staff from both the AGT and NDVP. Among the administration staff, 20 were from AGT, 26 administration staff from NDVP and non-administration staff, 20 were from NDVP while 16 were from AGT. The population obtained through non-probability sampling techniques are explain below.

Table 3.1 Respondents Organizational Distribution

| Company | Target Sample Size | Selected Sample |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------------|------------------------|
| A.G.TIMBERS LTD | 50 | 35 |
| NAJA DAVID VENEER AND PLYWOOD LTD | 70 | 47 |
| TOTAL | 120 | 82 |

Source: Filed Data, July 2018

3.3 Data Collection

This section provides the type of information that were used for the research. It also presents the methods that were used to gather data which lead to the outcome of the work.

3.3.1 Primary Data

The researcher used both questionnaires to gather primary data. Primary data entailed the causes of employee grievance, measures put in place at every departments of policy making to curb the happenings of staff complaint, employees' misconceptions about the how the grievances are handled and gain the factors which hinder efficient handle of employee grievances. The reason for using the primary data was to achieve a full and comprehensive understanding of how employee grievances are handled in the selected timber companies.

3.3.2 Interviews

Saunders et al (2009) explain interviews as a purposeful discussion between two or more people. Furtherance to that, interviews assist researchers organize valid and reliable data which are important to the research questions and objectives. This study used semi-structured kind of interview as one of the processes to gather data. The use of semi-structured interviews is grounded on the presumption that the researcher could have a lot of questions that will be covered in lieu of the interviews.

Furthermore, base on Fisher (2010), one important concern that the researcher covered was to point out the parameters which were covered during the interview and to make sure that they are gathered of information were in order of priority and importance. In that the researcher was fully aware that due to some reasons beyond control the might flop to cover more areas planned to conduct the interview the researcher has identified problems with less importance which may sidestep since the cardinal informants were chosen through purposive sampling, wherefore, interviews included ones who had possible answers to the questions that

the researcher need most. Again, the researcher take time to go through one after the other to all scheduled interview alone since giving orders to ask questions on his behalf would yield or plunge the whole process into serious dilemma all the quest of gathering data. The respondents were segregated and administer to all manner of respondents..

3.3.3 Questionnaires

The questionnaire wanted to solicit answers from both supervisors and employees on the different styles used to manage employee grievances, employees' perceptions of the way supervisors manage their grievances, problems which hinder effective management of employees' grievances; and what should be done to effectively managed employees' grievances. Further, a questionnaire was used to collect data based on the assumption that respondents would have more time to express their views and opinions regarding how employees' grievances are handled in companies.

3.4 Data Analysis

Data gathered through the distribution of questionnaires were numerically serialized. After data has been serialized the researcher entered them into the computer software using Microsoft Excel by confirming that data were entered properly.

3.5 Validity of Data

To start with, the researcher made sure that explanation and conclusion were taken from the data gathered are perfectly deliberated and presented precisely. Again, the suitable methods were thoroughly and unambiguously used so as to produce the outcome which will validate and reflect the brain behind the research.

3.6 Reliability of Data

According to Kothari (2004) a data becomes consistent when the tools used to gather the data might be able to give out reliable outcomes. Saunders et al (2009) defines reliability of data as the tools used to gather data and interpret the data will unfailingly produce the same results. According to Eater by-Smith et al (2008 quoted in Saunders et al, 2009) reliability of data could be acknowledge by fashioned out the questions: First, was the apparatuses used to gather data gave out the exact result on related circumstances? Second, would the related outcome give exact result by another researcher? Lastly, was there any ambiguity in the unprocessed data gathered? Basing on the above descriptions, the researcher made sure the tools that were fashioned to gather the data were able to yield the exact outcomes if used by different researchers.

3.7. Ethical Issue

The researcher ensured that clearance letter was issued from appropriate office being the Human Resource Manager for both companies which enabled him to effectively conduct the research. The researcher also sought approval from the Managing Director's office for purposes of safety, confidentiality and conformity. Therefore, the researcher followed formal ethical approvals for the research to ensure compliance to rule and regulations thereof before the process of data collection.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH FINDINGS, ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter introduces and debate views of the respondents on the valuation of employee grievances management at AGT and NDVP. Data organization and diagnoses steps were done through Microsoft Excel (X) computer software.

Among the 46 administration employees 20 were from AGT, while 26 from NDVP. Moreover, 36 non-administration employees, 17 were from AGT while, 19 from NDVP.

Meanwhile, the outcomes were explained through simple descriptive statistics which were clarified using, frequencies and percentages. Notwithstanding, explanations to data and sources of secondary data are provided to answer research questions.

4.2 Respondents Characteristics

The objective of bearing in mind the sex of the interviewees were to ascertain the insightfulness to which men and women employees of AGT and NDVP were aware of how employee complaints are managed. Responses from the respondents were presented in table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Gender of Respondents per Company

| Gender | Company | | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------|---------|------|-----------|------------|
| | AGT | NDVP | | |
| Male | 30 | 40 | 70 | 85 |
| Female | 5 | 7 | 12 | 15 |
| | TOTAL | | 82 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July 2018

Table 4.1 shows that 70 respondents (85%) were male whereas 12 respondents (15%) were female. This however, reveals that majority of the respondent were male followed by the female respondent.

4.2.1 Respondents Level of Education- AGT Ltd.

This section is to ascertain educational level of the employees of AGT vis-à-vis their grievance handling style.

Table 4.2 Respondents Level of Education

| Education Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|
| Tertiary | 10 | 28.5 |
| Secondary | 20 | 57.1 |
| Primary | 5 | 14.2 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, July 2018

Table 4.2 shows that 10 respondents (28.5%) had tertiary education. 20 respondents representing (57.1%) completed secondary education, and 5 respondents (14.2%) had their education up to primary level. This indicate that majority of the employees of both

companies have achieved high level of education which could enable them understand and be aware of employees grievance handling in the respective companies.

Table 4.3 Respondents Level of Education – NDVP Ltd

| Education Level | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| Tertiary | 17 | 36.1 |
| Secondary | 22 | 46.8 |
| Primary | 8 | 17 |
| Total | 47 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, July 2018

Table 4.3 shows that 17 respondents (36.1%) had tertiary education. 22 respondents representing (46.8%) completed secondary education, and 8 respondents (17%) graduated from primary education. This indicate that majority of the employees of NDVP have achieved high level of education which would have helped the employees know grievance handling style of the company.

Table 4.4 Respondents Work Experience at AGT Ltd

| Work Experience | Frequency | Percentage |
|------------------------|------------------|-------------------|
| 1-5 months | 2 | 5.7 |
| 6-12 months | 9 | 25.7 |
| 1-5 years | 10 | 28.5 |
| 6-10 years | 8 | 22.8 |

| | | |
|--------------------|----|------|
| 10 years and above | 6 | 17.1 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July, 2018

Table 4.3 shows that 2 respondents (5.7%) have worked with AGT company between 1-5 months. 9 respondents (25.7%) have worked with the company between 6-12 months. 10 respondents (28.5%) have worked with the company between 1-5 years. Again, 8 respondents represent (22.8)% have worked with A. G. Timbers Ltd between 6-10 years. Respondents, who have worked with AGT company for more than 10 years were 6, representing 17.1%. Given the statistics above, the turnover rate was on the high side. There were indications that retention of employees is not encouraging at all. Some of the workers lamented that the companies engaged more casual staff than permanent staff.

Table 4.5 Respondents Work Experience at NDVP Ltd

| Work Experience | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------------|-----------|------------|
| 1-5 months | 5 | 10.6 |
| 6-12 months | 10 | 21.2 |
| 1-5 years | 15 | 31.9 |
| 6-10 years | 10 | 21.2 |
| 10 years and above | 7 | 14.8 |
| Total | 47 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July, 2018

Table 4.5 shows that 5 respondents (10.6%) have worked with the company between 1-5 months. Approximately 10 respondents (21.2%) have worked NDVP between 6-12 months. 15 respondents (32%) have worked with the company between 1-5 years. Moreover, 10 respondents represent (21.2%) have worked with Naja David Veneer & Plywood Ltd between 6-10 years. Respondents, who have worked with the company for more than 10

years were 7, representing 14.8%. Given the statistics above, the turnover rate was on the high side. There were indications that retention of employees is not encouraging at all. The phenomenon had ripple effect on the production.

4.3 Presentation and Discussion of Findings

Under this section the researcher provides data on how employee grievances are managed at AGT and NDVP. Opened and closed ended questions were used to gather data, which also assisted to asses respondents knowledge of how their superior/ handled their problems.

4.3.1 Style Used in Handling Employees Grievances

This part of the research sought to solicit respondents’ assessments on the style employed by the superiors’/managers at AGT and NDVP respectively on day-to-day management of their staff issues.

Table 4.6 Grievance Handing Style at AGT Ltd.

| Type of Style Used | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Obliging | 15 | 42.8 |
| Dominating | 20 | 57.2 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July 2018

Table 4.6 revealed that 15 respondents representing 42.8% pointed out that superiors/managers employed obliging style to resolve grievance, while 20 respondents

representing (57.2%) asserted that superiors/supervisors used Dominating style to settle conflicts in the company.

Deducing from table 4.6, 31 (38%) respondents pointed out that their superiors/supervisors used obliging style in solving employee grievances. Probed further, respondents said that superiors/supervisors used accommodating mode in solving their grievances. Further to that they asserted that their superiors/supervisors sacrifices for them in difficult times such as this.

A cooperative style embroils less concern for self, this shows that the employee willing to raised certain common that features and aim at make adequate concern of the party involved.

Moreover, 51 respondents (62%) discovered that superiors/managers employed dominating style/frightening approach in managing employee problems. In explaining, interviewees made known to the researcher in lieu of the best approach to handle the issues confronting employees. Superiors/managers frequently wish to support what employees observe to be correct and try to win and many a time unwilling to give ears to the affected workers. Subsequently, workers do not realize the importance of bringing forward their grievances to their direct superiors for solution.

Table 4.7 Grievance Handing Style at NDVP Ltd

| Type of Style Used | Frequency | Percentage |
|--------------------|-----------|------------|
| Obliging | 20 | 42.5 |
| Dominating | 27 | 57.4 |
| Total | 47 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July 2018

Table 4.7 revealed that 20 respondents representing 42.5% maintained that superiors/supervisors used obliging style to resolve grievance issues in the company, while

27 respondents representing (57.4%) resolved that superiors/supervisors used Dominating style to settle conflicts in the company.

4.4 Respondents Perception on Grievance Handling

Under this item the study aimed at obtaining respondent assessment (perception) on superiors/supervisors way of handling their grievances.

Table 4.8 Respondents Perception on Grievance Handling at AGT Ltd

| Employee Perception on Grievance | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Handling | Frequency | Percentage |
| Highly Effective | 5 | 14.2 |
| Effective | 8 | 22.8 |
| Somewhat Effective | 10 | 28.5 |
| Not Effective | 9 | 25.7 |
| Not sure | 3 | 8.5 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, July 2018

Table 4.8 shows that 5 (14.2%) respondents perceived that Superiors/supervisors approach in dealing with employee grievances is highly effective. Respondents said that management hastily attends to their problem by passing judgment without looking into the merit and demerit of the issue. The reason for this stand was that management wants production to go on rather than to sit on issues derailing production. About 8 (22.8%) respondents perceived that employee grievances at AGT are effectively handled. Again, 10 (28.5%) respondents reply to perceived that it is somewhat effective. The impact of it is not manifested in their quest to achieving a more effective and efficient handled of their

grievances. The lukewarm attitude of some of the supervisors shows that they are not prepared and willing to help their subordinate. When a grievance is presented to them the approach to the issue at times discourages you to go the person again. Eventually, you may look helpless and hopeless.

Notwithstanding, 9 (25.7%) respondents indicated that the manner in which managers attempt to resolve employee problems were not convincing enough. The interviewees pointed out that because some superiors assume the style of putting fear on the faces of employees, managers therefore worsen the plight of aggrieved employees more blamable to the problem rather of attempting to resolve the problem in a more collaborative manner. 3 (8.5) respondents are not sure of how grievance are handled in the company hence the high turn-over.

Respondents again indicated that lack of proper human resource practices among superiors was the main contributing factor for the attitudes exhibit by their superiors in managing employee problems. The statement disputes Ivancevich (1998) who asserts that organizations prefer satisfied employees simply because such employees make the work environment more pleasant.

Table 4.9 Respondents Perception on Grievance Handling at NDVP Ltd

| Employee Perception on Grievance | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Handling | Frequency | Percentage |
| Highly Effective | 8 | 17 |
| Effective | 9 | 19 |
| Somewhat Effective | 15 | 32 |
| Not Effective | 10 | 21 |
| Not sure | 5 | 11 |

| | | |
|-------|----|-----|
| Total | 47 | 100 |
|-------|----|-----|

Source Field data, July 2018

Table 4.9 shows that 8 (17%) respondents perceived that Superiors/supervisors approach in dealing with employee grievances is highly effective. Respondents said superiors swiftly react to issue by passing judgment without looking into the merit and demerit of the issue. Superiors approach is to maintain the standard of production by not derailing production. About 9 (19%) respondents perceived that employee grievances at NDVP are effectively handled. Furthermore, 15 (32%) respondents responded that it is somewhat effective. The unenthusiastic attitude of some of the supervisors shows that managers are not prepared and willing to help the subordinate.

Moreover, 10 (21%) respondents made known to the researcher on the manner superiors settle employee grievances were not effective enough. 5 (11%) respondents responded in a dangling manner of not sure of the grievance handle style.

Respondents maintained and identified that supervisors ought to have used the following procedures in helping the grievant in solving the raised issue but used different approach:

1. Supervisors should permit a full hearing of the issues. Be sure the worker has presented his whole case; be sure you have everything on the record that is pertinent.
2. Give the grievant reasonable latitude in the way he presents his case but advise not to take an excessive amount of time to demean management personnel.
3. Treat the worker with the respect due his office and demand the respect due your office from him.
4. Control your emotions, remarks, and your behavior.
5. Determine whether the matter can properly be constituted a grievance as defined by the agreement.

6. Determine whether the grievance was filed, appealed, and processed from step to step within the contractual time limits and whether the grievance meets all other procedural requirements dictated by the agreement.
7. Examine the relevance contract provision. Is it ambiguous or unclear? If so how has the provision generally been interpreted to him? Has there been consistent administration?
8. Determine whether you have treated employees differently under similar circumstances. If so why? Has the prior relationship with the grievant be good or poor, if poor why? Has the grievant be disciplined on a prior occasion.

4.5 Factors which Hinder Effective Management of Grievances

The study sought to obtain respondents' views on factors which militate against effective management of Employee Grievances.

Table 4.10 Factors which Hinder Effective Management of Employees' Grievances at AGT Ltd.

| Problems of Ineffective Management of | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Employee Grievances | Frequency | Percentage |
| Weak unionize Front | 11 | 31.4 |
| Lack of Proper Human Resource Management Practices | 9 | 25.7 |
| Lack of Commitment from Management | 5 | 14.2 |
| Bureaucracy | 10 | 28.5 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July, 2018

The results of the study revealed that 11 (31.4%) respondents from AGT company agreed that weak unionize front is one of the causal factors that make employee grievance difficult in their companies. The fear of being sacked or victimized in the company by the

managers deterred the union to one accord champion a course for the betterment of the entire employees.

In trying to explain the weak unionized front, the respondents explained that the respondents see union leaders being in bed with the management due to management's influence. The respondents averred that union executives were in dilemma which exposed their inconsistency and infirm to deal with any teething problem being confronted by them. Respondents said that it is enshrined in their Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA) that before an employee's contract of employment is terminated, he/she shall appear before a disciplinary committee comprising the Human Resource Office and the Union leaders but they see that article as outlawed. Respondents intimated that one employee's appointment was unlawfully terminated which took some workers intervention to hire a lawyer which gave them victory and eventually reinstatement of the affected worker. Because of the aforementioned, they see the union as weak.

Again, 9 (25.7%) respondents from the company attest that lack of proper human resource management practices is a contributor to ineffective management of employee grievances. The dos and don'ts of Labour Act (2003) are not made known to them.

Furthermore, 5 (14.2%) respondents from AGT company lamented that lack of commitment on the part of management is the cause of ineffective management of employee grievances. Stereotype of management is the order of day in that always managers use top-down approach in any of their grievances. Straight jacket type of management is what the respondents said there were experiencing, whatever they decide on is final. Respondents however maintained that human resource department has been put in place as a decoy to disintegrate the front of the union. The commitment from management to make employee grievance work is on the contrary. Management should have adopted the participatory

method in handling grievance in the companies but on the contrary, management used autocratic approach, respondents averred.

Finally, 10 (28.5%) respondents from both companies averred that bureaucracy is outlawing employees to channel their grievances for a possible solution. Span of control and chain of command which should be made known to employees for proper channel of grievances were rather cumbersome for employees to reach the authority. Respondents from both companies asserted that Superiors/supervisors use the tactics of “MBA syndrome” we were here before you; therefore it was difficult to adapt to change and made grievances tedious to channel them to the right authority. On the contrary, if a worker is found guilty in any charge, union and management will hastily act and prefer the necessary sanctions to the person. Union and management gleam over concern of employees making it cumbersome to reach solution.

Table 4.11 Factors which Hinder Effective Management of Employees’ Grievances at NDVP Ltd.

| Problems of Ineffective Management of | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Employee Grievances | Frequency | Percentage |
| Weak unionize Front | 17 | 36.1 |
| Lack of Proper Human Resource Management Practices | 10 | 21.2 |
| Lack of Commitment from Management | 9 | 19.2 |
| Bureaucracy | 11 | 23.4 |
| Total | 47 | 100 |

Source: Field Data July, 2018

The results of the study revealed that 17 (36.1%) respondents from Naja David Veneer & Plywood company Ltd agreed that week unionize front is a factor that thwart employee grievance. The victimization by the managers discouraged the union to push forward the grievances from the grievant.

Again, 10 (21.2%) respondents from the company attest that lack of proper human resource management practices is a contributor to ineffective management of employee grievances. The stipulations of Labour Act (2003) are not made known to them.

Furthermore, 9 (19.2%) respondents from NDVP company ltd lamented that lack of commitment on the part of management as one of the ineffective management of employee grievances.

Lastly, 11 (23.4%) respondents from the companies averred that bureaucracy is outlawing employees to pass on grievances for a promising solution. Span of control and chain of command which should be made known to employees for proper channel of grievances were rather cumbersome for employees to reach the authority.

4.6 Respondents views on what should be done

Respondents' opinion on what should be done so that AGT Company ltd could effectively handled employee grievances.

Table 4.12 Respondents views on what should be done

| Respondents views on proper Handle of Employee Grievances | | |
|--|------------------|-------------------|
| Grievances | Frequency | Percentage |
| Advocate for Strong and Firm Union Leaders | 11 | 31.4 |
| H R Practices should be Known to entire Employees | 9 | 25.7 |
| Management should be committed | 5 | 14.2 |
| Reduction in bureaucracy | 10 | 28.5 |
| Total | 35 | 100 |

Source: Field Data, 2018

Table 4.7 indicate that 11 respondents representing 31.4% suggested that the company's electoral system of selecting the union executives should be free and fair from management interference

Again, 9 (25.7%) respondent suggested employees should be furnished with human resource management practices. Employee Handbook which should spelt out the best practices such as procedures to channel employee grievances should be available. Many a

time grievance and complaint are used interchangeably due to the absence of the proper procedures and understanding.

Furthermore, 5 (14.2%) respondents advocated that management should open up to support the employees since the employees are their human capital. AGT company Ltd management should resource and support human resource department to print out enough handbook since majority of the workforce are literate. Respondents appealed to management to periodically organized training programs to equip employees the dos and the don'ts of labor regulations.

Lastly, 10 (28.5%) respondents from AGT suggested that bureaucracy which has stamped progress and performance should be eschewed so that employees can easily go to their respective supervisors at any point in time to channel their grievance without ill-feeling. Buttressing on this, respondents explained that in terms of hierarchical arrangement and span of control, employees ought to report to their immediate supervisors but it was not the case. Notwithstanding, employees explained that mode of communication was a teething problem in their companies since management don't take into account their views but decide on everything and impose on them. Advise was given to management to adopt participatory approach in dealing with grievances if any.

Table 4.13 Respondents views on what should be done at NDVP Ltd

| Respondents views on proper Handle of Employee | | |
|---|------------------|-------------------|
| Grievances | Frequency | Percentage |
| Advocate for Strong and Firm Union Leaders | 17 | 36.1 |
| H R Practices should be Known to entire Employees | 10 | 21.2 |
| Management should be committed | 9 | 19.2 |
| Reduction in bureaucracy | 11 | 23.4 |

| | | |
|-------|----|-----|
| Total | 47 | 100 |
|-------|----|-----|

Source: Field Data, July 2018

Table 4.7 indicates that 17 respondents representing 36.1% suggested that the company's electoral system of selecting should be devoid of management interference to allow the workers to elect their own executives.

Again, 10 (21.2%) respondent suggested employees should be provided with human resource management practices. At times grievance and complaint are used interchangeably due to the nonexistence of the proper procedures laid for the employees.

Furthermore, 9 (19.2%) respondents be in favor of the management to open up to support the employees since the employees are the human capital of the company. Respondents enticed management to occasionally organize on the job training for employees.

Lastly, 11 (23.4%) respondents from NDVP advocated that bureaucracy which has hindered progress and performance should be avoided. To strengthening on this, respondents elucidated that in terms of hierarchical arrangement and span of control, employees ought to report to their immediate superiors but it was not the case.

4.7 Summary

The research unearthed the number of managers who employed dominating style in an attempt to resolve employees' grievances.

Furthermore, respondents replied that some supervisors used obliging style in handling employee grievances. Accordingly, obliging style has been described as an accommodating approach which seeks to disregard one's concern to please the concerns of others.

The study has shown that majority of the respondents averred that local union executives have shirk on responsibilities and conspire with management in solving their grievances which has made them lose confidence and trust in the union.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This section elucidates the research summary of findings, conclusion, and recommendations. Recommendations are made for further studies. Specific objective of the research was to study how workers discontents are managed at A.G. Timbers Ltd. (AGT) and Naja David Veneer and Plywood Ltd. (NDVP). The discovery of employee misconception on how management solve their problems, determine the factors which hinder effective management of employee grievance, and assess what should be done to efficiently handled employee grievance.

5.2 Summary of Findings

Generally, objective of this study focused at finding the style employed in managing employee grievances in both A. G Timbers Ltd and Naja David Veneer and Plywood Ltd. The study discovered that a lot of managers complaints dominating style in the quest to resolve employees' grievances. Consequently, the research discovered that superiors used autocratic (win-lose) approach in settling employees' grievances through imposition of concepts on how to handle the discontent, thus reluctant or partially listen to problems faced by their employees. It was exhumed that in an attempt to resolve employees' problems, managers frequently and deliberately be apt to support what perceived to be perfect and try to

win. Many a time managers are hesitant to the concerns of the aggrieved workers, which render employees uncomfortable to table their grievances to their immediate supervisors for an amicable solution.

Again, the research established that other supervisors use obliging style in handling grievances encountered by their staff. Obliging style can also be termed as accommodating style, superiors may practice unselfish, big-heartedness or charity, submitting to other person's desires and wish to yield another's point of view. Nonetheless the research discovered that, in spite of the fact that a lot of the respondents indicated that their superiors employed dominating styles in resolving their grievances. Better, some respondents were delighted about the manner superiors worked out the conclusive reached during the talk on how to resolve the grievance.

Another specific objective was meant to investigate how respondents identify the way managers settle the grievances. It was found that respondents perceived the way their supervisors handled their grievances to be highly effective, effective, somewhat effective, not effective and not sure. Those who indicated that managing of the grievances was highly effective discovered that this was as a result of the grievances not managed well to their satisfaction.

Again, the research established that, the manner managers handle their grievances was effective because some managers accept as true the obliging style, which make the upset employees feel comfortable, fit into their shoes trying to resolve the problem in more accommodating manner. Supervisors target was to get permanent solutions to problems facing their staff.

Moreover, the study uncovered the manner managers handled their employees' grievances was somehow effective because most at times supervisors are caught in

“supervisor’s dilemma” meaning they cannot favor management to the detriment of employees, vice versa.

Notwithstanding, the study revealed that some of the supervisors approach to problem solving was not effective at all. Their views were that, they use dominating style which eventually makes it biased towards one side. Aggrieved employees then become disappointed due to the bias attitude from the supervisors,

Finally, the study found that some respondents are not sure about how supervisors handled employees grievances because they were not even aware of existence of employee grievances neither could they know the style used to handle the so called employee grievances. Though there is high level of education achievements among the employees, due to un-resourced human resource department to fashion out policies, they are challenged respondents asserted.

The third specific objective aimed at ascertaining problems which hinder effective handling of employee grievance. The study unearths the following factors:

First and foremost, most of the respondents asserted that the union executives are toothless. They maintained that union executives cannot defend or channel their grievances to the appropriate authority for redress hence their front is weak for the job as union executives thereby creating gab between supervisors and employees.

Again, the study found that lack of proper human resources management practices was a key factor to the problem. Though the respondents admitted to the fact that they have best human resource manager, the system is not in support to the fashion out HR policies to guide employees. They even said that on the production floor signs are difficult to come by likewise printing out employee Handbook to all the employees.

Also both companies maintained that lack of commitment from management is one of the factors that hinder the effective handling of employee grievances. They asserted that even

upon beaten the barriers of bureaucracy that existed in these companies; the grievance will not be attended to by the management thereby leaving room for rumors. Respondents averred that commitment to human resource department in terms of finances to print out employee handbook was a problem

Lastly a section of the respondents claimed in terms of bureaucratic procedures existed in this two companies, the study found that it was not easier for employees to meet the high level of decision-making body in order to inform them about their problems. The system was so cumbersome that to get to the high authority for redress was a challenge faced by the employees. Based on this that frequent sit down strikes are engulfed these companies.

5.3 Conclusion

Grounding on the summary of findings stated above, this study concluded on the following:

Firstly, AGT and NDVP have adopted two grievance handling styles by supervisors. However, this study found that majority of supervisors use dominating style in managing problems faced by their subordinates as compared to obliging style.

Secondly, there are a number of problems that hinder effective handling of employee grievances at both AGT and NDVP. These problems include weak unionize front, lack of proper human resource management practices, lack of commitment from management and, bureaucracy. Therefore, appropriate actions should be taken to ensure that these problems are worked out.

5.4 Recommendations

Grounding on the aforementioned conclusion, this study recommended the following
Both AGT and NDVP should ensure human resources department be equipped with the with human resources practices. These will enable these companies reduce the rate of employee

grievances turn over in this study as well as retaining the workforce and reduce high turnover in both companies.

Again, AGT and NDVP management should empower the unions to be able to educate the employees in grievance handling procedures, and make available employees handbook.

Furthermore, AGT and NDVP management should ensure to address the challenges identified throughout this study which culminated into record high loss of morale among employees, high turnover and frequent sit down strikes.

Also, AGT and NDVP should remove the bottlenecks that hinder effective handling of employee grievances and bureaucracy.

5.6 Suggestion for Further Studies

This study focused at the two giant timber companies namely, AGT and NDVP located at Kaase, a suburb of Kumasi. Therefore, similar studies should be conducted in other timber companies in other regions of the country in order to establish reliability of the findings obtained by this study and the conclusions.

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APPENDIX I

INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Name of the department/employee
.....
2. Age:.....
3. Gender:.....
4. Education:.....
5. Please what do you understand by the term employee grievance?
.....
.....
.....
6. What does the department do to deal with employee grievance?
.....
.....
7. Please as a head of department what are you doing to minimize employee grievance?

.....
.....
8. What is your plan in trying to deal with employee grievance in your department?

.....
.....

9. How often have you been involved in managing employee grievance?

10. To what degree do management tolerably dealt with employee grievance?

.....
.....

11. What are the means taken to manage employee grievance in future?

.....
.....

12. Please would you attest to the fact that employees are satisfied with management approach in dealing with employee grievance?

.....
.....

13. Do you encounter any challenge in dealing with employee grievance?

.....
.....

14. If any, what do you do to overcome them?

.....
.....

APPENDIX II

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES

I am Nkansah James, a student of Christian Service University College pursuing a Master's Degree in Monitoring and Evaluation. In fulfillment of my studies, am conducting a study on the Assessment of Employee Grievances Handling In Private Companies: the case study of A. G. Timbers Ltd and Naja David Veneer & Plywood Ltd at Kaase, Kumasi.

Grateful request your utmost and sincere ideas in respect of the topic under study by filing in the questionnaire. I fervently promised that the responds to the questionnaire will be anonymously and confidentially treated as such.

Directions/instructions in answering the questionnaire

Please mark with a tick across the options provided that exactly and closely represented your answer. If you have comment, suggest or question, you are allowed to write in any of the space and indicate the question or section in number.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

1. Gender Male () Female ()
2. Education Level
 - a. Primary education () b. Secondary () c. Tertiary () d.
 - Others.....
3. Work experience
 - a. 1-5 months () b. 6-12 months () c. 1-15 years d. 6-10 years () d.
 - 10 years and above ()

Section one: styles used in private companies to deal with employee grievances

4. Are there any measures taken to address employee grievance in your department?
Yes () No ()
5. If yes, would you please tick the appropriate styles in the table provided below?

| Integrating | Obliging | Compromising | Avoiding |
|-------------|----------|--------------|----------|
| | | | |

6. To what extent have those measures been effective in addressing employee grievance?

| Greater extent | Moderate extent | Lower extent | Not sure |
|----------------|-----------------|--------------|----------|
| | | | |

1 =Greater extent 2=Moderate extent 3= Lower extent 4= Not sure

7. What would you suggest to improve the measures taken to address employee grievance?

.....

.....

Sections Two: Employees perceptions about the way the management respond to their grievances

| Perception on employees' grievance handling. | Highly Effective | Effective | Somehow effective | Not Effective | Not sure |
|--|------------------|-----------|-------------------|---------------|----------|
| 8. How do you perceive the way management responds to your grievance? | | | | | |
| 9. How do you perceive the way supervisors attempt to lessen the rate of employee grievance? | | | | | |
| 10. How would you largely describe the way management responds to employee grievance? | | | | | |

1= Highly effective 2= Effective 3=Somehow effective 4=Not effective 5=Not sure

Section three: Factors that hinder effective management of employee grievance

11. Are there any factors that hamper effective management of employee grievance?

Yes () No. ()

12. If yes would you please list them in the space provided below?

.....
.....
.....
.....

13. If no, could you please explain why?

.....
.....
.....

14. What should management do to deal with those problems?

.....
.....
.....

Section Four: What should be done to effectively managed employees grievances?

15. Is there any need for private companies to find ways of effectively handle employees grievances?

Yes () No ()

16. What do you think should be done so as to effectively handled employees grievance?

.....
.....
.....

