Evaluating Employee Relations and Organisational Performance

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Abstract

Workers are the most important part of any company. They are crucial to a company's success and expansion. If businesses want to keep their employees happy, they need to treat them like valued members of the company, not just workers. Employee skills and knowledge are crucial to the prosperity of any business. The amount of organisational productivity is highly dependent on how well companies foster a happy work environment that meets the emotional requirements of their employees. This research aims to investigate the connection between productive employee interactions and business success. Secondary information gleaned from scholarly publications and other sources is used in the analysis. According to the data presented, treating employees poorly and further discouraging them results from ignoring their psychological needs, which are the need to be respected, valued, and recognised in the organisation.

Managers are urged to build strong relationships with their staff and furnish an atmosphere conducive to productive work throughout this paper. In addition, businesses should foster an atmosphere of open dialogue and education among employees.

Keywords: Employee Relationships, Employee Needs, and Organisational Outcomes.

I. INTRODUCTION

Competition has risen across all economic sectors in recent years due to advances in technology, but it has been particularly fierce among smaller businesses. In order to thrive in today's global economy, businesses need to implement policies that foster positive employee relations and give them an edge over their competitors. Due to technological advancements and greater rivalry, businesses now have to battle it out to provide their staff with the best possible training, guidance, and morale-boosters (Measom, 2021). The impact of employee relations on the productivity of small businesses has become a topic of intense study as a result of this shift.

In today's competitive business environment, if there isn't a healthy relationship between employers and employees, it's possible that the organisation won't be able to achieve its goals. Constant technical advancement in today's business climate creates fierce competition. Therefore, in order to stay in business, it is essential for management to establish and maintain positive relationships with their staff. This connection is critical at all stages of the employment cycle, including hiring, onboarding, and departure (Rose, 2018; Samwel, 2018) because it motivates workers to improve their performance and output (Burns, 2012). Human resource management that makes use of interpersonal connections is increasingly important in today's cutthroat corporate climate (Christen, Iyer, & Soberman, 2016).

The interaction between an organisation and its workforce is known as employee relations (ER). The interaction between managers and employees is receiving more attention in the field of ER, which also considers other types of interpersonal dynamics in the workplace. There are many facets to the employee-employer relationship, and all of them fall under the umbrella term "employee relations." Efforts made by an organisation or the human resources department to manage the relationship with its employees are also highlighted by the term employee relations (Verlinden, 2020).

Even if a company has highly skilled, educated, and motivated workers, their productivity could still be at risk if office tensions and conflicts persist.

Bhattacharya (2018) argues that this connection is important enough for firms to pay attention to if they want to expand and thrive. Managers put a lot of thought into employee relations and consistently put them into practise to foster teamwork, which is proven to increase employees' dedication to the company (Nnaeto and Ndoh, 2018). Whether or whether union contracts exist, Pearce and Robinson (2019) argue that businesses should make an effort to foster positive relationships with their staff. Since the goals of employee relations are to achieve harmonious employee relations and minimise conflict practises in employment (Torrington, and Hall, 2018), a company's success depends on its employees' ability to work together peacefully towards the achievement of their goals and objectives.

The modern employment relationship may be traced back to the advent of free labour markets and massive industrial organisations employing thousands of wage workers during the industrial revolution, both of which greatly influenced the development of employee relations. Labour issues occurred as society tried to adjust to these seismic shifts in the economy and society. High employee turnover, violent strikes, a pessimistic outlook on the workplace, and the risk of social unrest were all a result of low wages, long working hours, boring labour, and abusive management practices(Ackers, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

It's common knowledge that positive interactions between workers may do wonders for productivity in the workplace. Successful businesses are commonly thought to adopt employee relationship management strategies. This is because, to a certain extent, a company's capacity to survive rests on the quality of its employee relations management. Current state of labour relations appears to be one of crisis. Even when the vast majority of employees are there, output is inadequate. This is due of their toxic working interaction with their coworkers and superiors. When workers are dissatisfied with their superiors, the government, or even their peers, they are less likely to give their best efforts on the job. Because of the potential for low output if an organisation does not embrace and practise employee relations, this research takes on further significance. As a result, there is a risk that goals will not be met and that there will be a showdown among employees and disagreement between employees and bosses. The organisation may experience rapid deterioration and maybe fail due to these issues.

Research Method

Organisational performance and employee relations literature formed the backbone of this investigation. We searched relevant databases within Research Gate, Google Scholar, etc., using the keywords provided in the abstract portion of this study and others that serve to validate the association between employee relations and organisational performance. Books from the library and papers presented at related conferences were also reviewed. Thus, new themes were uncovered, allowing for the formation and guiding of opinion on the impact of employee relations on productivity.

Conceptual Framework
Approach in Human Relations

In contemporary businesses, the very idea of employee interactions is fluid and ever-changing. Human relations theory can be credited with elevating workers' social interactions within organisations. Mayo (1880-1949) is credited as being an early proponent of the human relations approach due to his extensive body of research in the field. The Hawthorne Experiments, undertaken by the Western Electric Company at its Hawthorne Plant between 1924 and 1932, are credited to Mayo, as stated by Tonwe (2009b). This study was also seen as the organization's clinical method of analysing employee behaviour. It makes an effort to centre attention on workers' actions and output while also taking into account their mental, physical, financial, and physiological conditions. According to Crainer (1998, p. 111) the Hawthorne studies were significant because they demonstrated that managerial actions and attitudes significantly influenced employee motivation and productivity.

The human relations perspective, in effect, considers the organisation to be informal, with formal options always there. The ideals and attitudes of the employer and coworkers play a significant effect in shaping how employees feel about their work and the company they are employed for.

Relations with Workers as a Concept

The connection between a company and its workforce is known as "employee relations" (ER). The interaction between managers and their teams is receiving more attention in the field of ER, which focuses on both individual and group dynamics in the workplace. The employee-employer relationship has several facets, including the legal, operational, and even psychological and interpersonal. It's also used to call attention to the measures taken by an organisation or its HR division to keep things amicable.

A formal employee relations policy or programme is often the result of such efforts. The effectiveness of ER has a major bearing on how well an organisation operates as a whole. This is due to the fact that improved employee well-being and productivity result from well-managed employee relationships (Verlinden, 2020).

The way you engage with your staff members is a crucial aspect of employee relations. Organisational leadership has an obligation to its staff to provide them with information, guidance, and assistance in order to foster an atmosphere that is conducive to high levels of production and morale. Managing workplace problems that originate from misconceptions or inappropriate behaviour is another aspect of employee relations duties (Measom, 2021).

The term "employee relation" can also refer to the broad range of interactions between an organization's management and its staff. It touches on things like pay, hours, dress code, benefits, job security, working conditions, opportunity for advancement, and workplace diversity. In addition, it discusses topics pertinent to human resources, such as sexual harassment accusations and investigations, which might shed light on unfair dismissals (Katreena, 2021).

Since its inception in the 20th century as a replacement for the industrial relations, the concept of employee relations has attracted scholarly definitions. In order to effectively promote the organization's aims and objectives, it's important to foster a positive work environment that fosters positive interpersonal relationships among employees. According to Donohoe (2015), the study of employees' and employers' relationships is known as "employee relations." Employee engagement, motivation, and output all increase when the human aspect in an organisation is valued highly through effective employee relations.

Employee relations is a subfield of human resource management and development, according to Yongcai (2010), who point to the strategic importance of employee relations in modern businesses. According to Jing (2013), an organization's focus on employee relations means it has adopted multiple techniques to control the interactions between workers and ensure that the business's goals are met.

According to Pareek and Rai (2012), a company's ability to manage employee relations positively affects workers' levels of trust, commitment, and optimism. In support of this claim, it has been shown that an employer can increase trust and loyalty among their workforce by maintaining an atmosphere of open communication, instituting a system of regular feedback, and delegating responsibilities (Janssens et al., 2003).

A negative impact on the employer-employee relationship is inevitable if the employer is unable to earn the respect and trust of their staff. Employer-employee relations, as defined by Nikoloski et al. (2014), focus on communicating the organization's goals to workers so that they can follow in management's footsteps. An important part of maintaining positive connections with workers is making sure they feel safe enough to voice any concerns they may have or offer any thoughts or suggestions they may have without fear of retaliation. In the end, workers develop a strong sense of community and confidence. Research by Janssen et al. (2003) shows that all workers have a fundamental need to be treated fairly and with respect. According to Bhattacharya et al. (2008), the goal of good HR management is to boost morale and productivity in the workplace.

Relations with Workers: Key Elements
Affective Quotient

It's critical to recognise the crucial role that emotional intelligence plays in fostering positive working relationships inside a company. Due to its significance in assessing a manager's efficacy when interacting with employees, emotional intelligence (EI) has begun to acquire prominence in the workplace. Hassan et al. (2014) define emotional and social intelligence as the capacity to comprehend situations, form positive relationships with people, and deal with the stresses of daily life. In the workplace, Fuge (2014) argued, there are always a variety of interactions going on between coworkers, both positive and negative, that have an effect on the business as a whole. Managers and workers alike need the ability to effectively communicate and discuss issues, listen to the concerns of others, resolve conflicts, and motivate one another to perform at a higher level in order to thrive in this setting. An employee's effectiveness, productivity, and performance in the workplace can all be improved by developing and using their emotional intelligence (EI).

Further, Fuge (2014) defined EI as the capacity of workers to monitor and regulate their own emotional states for the sake of professional development. Insight into one's own and others' emotional states has obvious benefits in the workplace, including better stress management and the capacity to handle intimate, yet professional, interactions between superiors and subordinates.

According to Cherniss (2001), EQ is crucial for the majority of careers and workplace situations. One person can set the mood for a whole group simply by setting an example with how they express their own emotions.

According to Cherniss (2001), a manager's emotional intelligence affects the quality of his or her relationships with subordinates, which in turn affects the likelihood that those subordinates' talents will be nurtured and put to good use.

According to McPheat (2018, p. 9), an emotionally intelligent person possesses a set of skills that allows them to monitor and manage their own feelings, identify and comprehend the feelings of others, and put this understanding to work for themselves and others. He claims that emotionally intelligent people are aware of how stress and other unpleasant emotions affect their health, happiness, relationships, and chances of success. They learn to keep their feelings in check, allowing them to use their feelings to fuel their actions and improve their standard of living. People who are in tune with their feelings and act accordingly have been shown to achieve greater success in the workplace.

Personal Insight

The ability to recognise and acknowledge one's own emotional state is crucial to maximising the benefits of emotional intelligence in the job. Self-awareness is how Feldman and Mulle (2007, pp. 13-24) defined it. This is the bare minimum requirement for emotional acuity. It's the foundation from which all other forms of EQ flourish. Feldman's definition of self-awareness is tuning into one's emotional state and coming to terms with it. Without being in touch with one's feelings, it is impossible to begin channelling one's strength towards one's desired end. The need of self-awareness in developing one's Emotional Intelligence (EI) was also emphasised.

Increased sensitivity to others' feelings results from a high level of emotional self-awareness. An individual with high social awareness is attuned to others' feelings and wants; adept at reading and responding to nonverbal signs; at ease in social situations; and cognizant of power relationships within groups and organisations (Fuge, 2014).

To be socially aware, in McPheat's (2018) definition, is to be cognizant of and responsive to one's own and one's immediate social context. Being empathetic entails putting oneself in another person's shoes and recognising their experience of those emotions. Recognising patterns and connections within a group or a person's social network is essential. To be socially aware, he said again, is to realise that one's own pleasure is tied to the success of those around them.

Empathy

The ability to demonstrate empathy is a crucial talent in the realm of social awareness. When it comes to improving workplace relationships, empathy is essential. OdugbesanOmede (2018) argues that a leader's ability to empathise with

subordinates is fundamental to effective leadership. One of the largest roadblocks to successful managerial skill is the tendency of some managers to neglect or show disrespect for their employees' feelings.

Odugbesan-Omede (2018) claims that managers who take the time to acknowledge their employees' feelings are more likely to foster the kind of trusting partnerships that boost worker output. Employees' feelings are being given more weight in the workplace, so it's crucial that companies take into account their employees' perspectives and motivations while also making them feel like they're an integral part of the company's success.

Trust

The foundation of productive relationships and enthusiastic participation among workers is trust. Sanders (2020) argues that "trust is one of the most valuable commodities a community or an organisation can have." She continued, "it lubricates relationships and the exchange of knowledge and is crucial to cooperation." We can't do any of this without trusting one another. Asamani (2015) argues that trust is crucial for a healthy employee-employer relationship, providing further evidence for the necessity of trust in the workplace. Employees' moods and actions will inevitably take a turn for the worst if they don't trust their employer.

A lack of a safe space for employees to express their thoughts, feelings, and ideas can have a negative impact on trust within an organisation. Cooperation decreases when workers provide less information to managers, voice viewpoints hesitantly, and avoid conversations, as found by Reece and Reece (2017, p. 19). However, when there is a trustworthy environment, people are more open to sharing ideas and information. This is why a lack of trust in the workplace can have such a negative impact on productivity, innovation, stress, and the ability to make quick decisions, as well as the flow of information inside the company.

Helena and Ann (2018) conducted a study on 175 workers at Polish telecommunications companies and found that high levels of trust between coworkers were associated with high levels of competence and positive working relationships. The authors concluded that encouraging team building and positive communication between management and staff could help increase trust in the workplace. It was shown that managers need to establish their credibility through building long-term connections with their staff if they want to acquire their employees' trust.

The Solution to Conflict

Management researchers' studies have uncovered a link between trust and friction inside organisations. The significance of this link has been noted. When managers act negatively towards their staff, it can damage morale and even cause conflict. Thompson (2015, p. 4) argues that conflicts between people are inevitable because it is impossible to avoid situations in which two or more social entities (i.e. individuals, groups, organisations, and nations) with conflicting goals come into touch with one another. When many entities compete for a scarce resource, when they have mutually exclusive behavioural preferences for doing action together, or when they lack common ground in terms of their attitudes, values, beliefs, or abilities, inconsistencies in their relationships are likely to arise.

Conflict is "a dynamic process that occurs between interdependent parties as they experience negative emotional reactions to perceived disagreements and interference with the attainment of goals," as defined by Barki & Hartwick (2004). Unresolved disagreement can have far-reaching consequences for an organisation. Boateng (2014) claims that research shows not all conflicts are negative. Positive outcomes, such as inspiration, creativity, invention, and a strengthened friendship over time, can sometimes result.

Due to the fact that the success of any business depends on the combined efforts of its employees, conflict resolution skills are crucial in every organisation. According to Boulle and Nesic (2009, p. 24), any process that ends conflict by techniques that can include violence or warfare can be considered conflict resolution. On the other hand, it can be seen as a peaceful method of resolving differences without resorting to physical force, such as through negotiation or the intervention of a neutral third party. There is a spectrum of approaches to settling disputes, from cooperative, participatory, informal processes (like mediation, conciliation, and third-party negotiation) to adversarial, fact-oriented legal construction and imposed decisions originating in institutions like courts and tribunals.

Miller and King (2005, p. 5) argue that conflict resolution is different from conflict management and conflict transformation since it involves a variety of approaches targeted at ending disputes through constructively solving problems. According to Ramsbotham et al. (2005), when conflict is resolved, the underlying causes of the dispute have been dealt with, the parties involved have altered their behaviour such that it is no longer violent, and their attitudes no longer hostile.

Employee Relations and their Impact on Organisational Success

Each individual has a fundamental need to be autonomous in their profession and to be treated with dignity and esteem by their superiors. If a company doesn't take these aspects of humanity into account, managers are more likely to treat their people with disdain. As a result, the employees become demoralised as a result of this behaviour. Money is only one part of the motivational equation. It includes catering to workers' emotional need as well. In reality, inspiring workers to work hard has long been considered crucial to positive workplace dynamics. According to Reece (2017), one can gain insight into why people act the way they do by considering their motivations. While there may be an indefinite number of factors at play, each person's motivations are unique and subject to change over time. People's motivations for their actions are often obscured from their conscious awareness. Maslow (1943) argued that companies should take note of their workers' desire to be treated with dignity and respect. He wrote in his book "A Theory of Human Motivation" that "all people in our society (with a few pathological exceptions) have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based, (usually) high evaluation of themselves, for self-respect, or self-esteem, and for the esteem of others." By "self-esteem with solid foundations," we meant a sense of pride in one's own abilities, accomplishments, and social standing. First, there is the yearning for power, success, a sense of worth, self-assurance in the face of adversity, and autonomy. Second, there's the need for (what we may call) status (defined as regard or admiration from other people), fame, fortune, honour, or acclaim. There seems to be growing support for this idea in today's society. Their central importance is becoming increasingly apparent in today's society.

Effective employee relations are the result of managers and leaders treating their staff with respect and valuing them, as suggested by the above phrase. Employees are inspired to give their all as a result of this action. Maslow also noted that employees feel inadequate and inferior when they are consistently ignored and looked down upon. Inadvertently, this will cause people to become dissatisfied and possibly detach from the company.
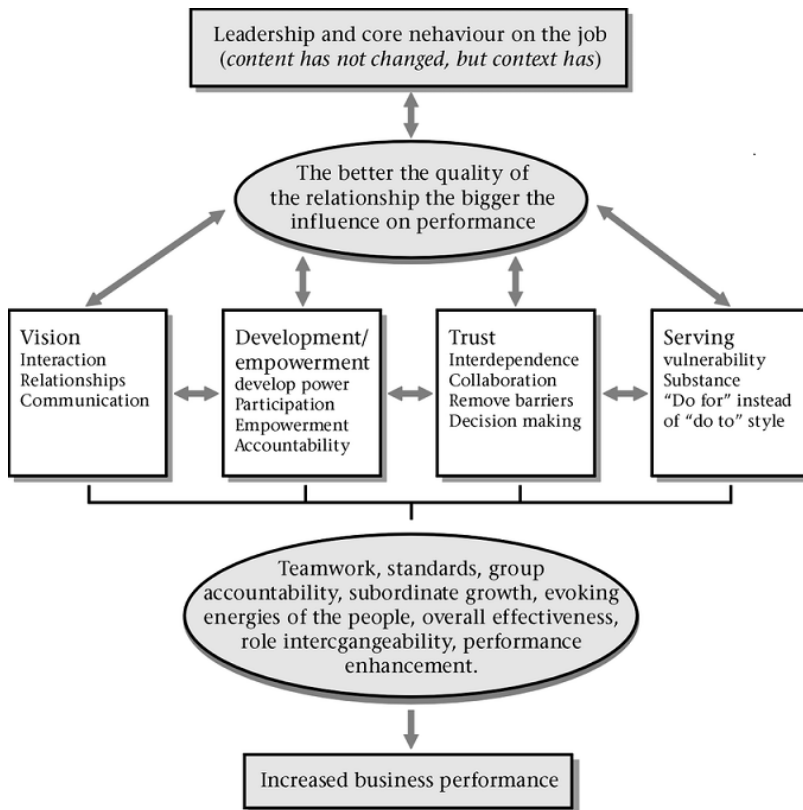
Theoretical Framework

After been developed by Mary Parker Follett, Chester Barnard's (1886–1961) "The Functions of the Executive" in 1938 brought the acceptance theory of authority to a wider audience. According to the Acceptance Theory of Authority, a manager's authority over his or her subordinates is contingent on the subordinates' acceptance of the manager's right to make commands and the subordinates' desire to comply with those orders. The acceptance theory is a management concept that, although largely adhering to the traditional top-down method, also recognises the necessity to offer subordinates with a clear understanding of business policies and initiatives. The idea behind this notion is to promote questioning subordinates who comply, but not blindly.

Chester Bernard (1968) argues that the extent to which subordinates accept supervisory commands is indicative of the legitimacy of those directives. According to his Acceptance Theory of Authority, managers' authority is contingent on whether or not their staff members accept it. According to the acceptance theory of authority, subordinates must be willing to accept superiors' authority before it can be exercised effectively.

The acceptance hypothesis, often known as bottom-up authority, proposes that power is transmitted from the bottom up rather than the other way around. In this sense, the transfer of power is more akin to a request from upper management that, if granted, allows managers to exercise their control over their employees.

II. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The research shows that an employee's commitment to their current employer can be boosted by cultivating a positive work relationship based on mutual regard and appreciation for each individual's unique set of skills and experience. This lends credence to the findings of Follet, who discovered a correlation between productive teamwork and organisational success. Workplace morale can be improved or damaged, depending on the leadership style of the company's top brass. Employee motivation, it was concluded, requires focusing on the psychological and sociological factors of organisational behaviour in addition to monetary incentives. Managers' incapacity to recognise these emotional aspects of their staff will lead to dismissive treatment. The results of this study corroborate the recommendations of the Likert scale for assessing managerial effectiveness, which state that managers should combine employee-centered leadership with broad supervision to boost organisational effectiveness. In this light, suggestions have been made for enhancing workplace relationships between employers and workers. Managers are expected to rethink their ideas about power, inspiration, and leadership. Most significantly, they will be better able to comprehend and control employee behaviour when they have developed competency in emotional intelligence. Managers need to build strong relationships with their staff and furnish an enabling setting in which workers can feel comfortable carrying out their responsibilities.

An efficient communication system that promotes understanding and learning is essential for fostering human connection in the workplace. Members of the organization's lower ranks will be able to offer constructive criticism and ideas for the company's future development without fear of retaliation if decisions are made using a bottom-up methodology. Organisational trust, teamwork, and a shared sense of purpose are all qualities that would benefit from being fostered by employers. When it comes to carrying out their duties, employers do everything they can to earn their trust. Employees are more dedicated to their work when their bosses earn and keep their trust through demonstrating high standards of honesty, character, and competence.

Finally, more study of models is required. Organisational effectiveness research can concentrate on contrasting the Marker Parker Follet Theory with the Rensis Likert Theory.

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