



COMPLAINTS AND PROCEDURES OF HANDLING COMPLAINTS IN PUBLIC ENTERPRISES OF NEPAL

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ABSTRACT

***Background** - Employee's complaint is a result of dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice/unfair treatment, either real or imaginary, related to his/her employment situation, which is formally filed and in written form.*

***Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to examine the level of complaints that take place in the public enterprises in Nepal. Similarly, this study examines the causes and solutions of complaints in selected public enterprises.*

***Methodology Used** – Descriptive and analytical research designs have been used for the study. Primary data have been collected through the questionnaires using judgmental sampling from the public enterprises of Nepal. Questionnaires have been developed in five scales and mean, standard deviation and coefficient of variation have been used as tools.*

Cronbach's alpha test has been done to test the reliability of the data.

***Findings** – All the public enterprises have faced complaints from their employees and they try to resolve that complaints to their best.*

Key words: Employee Complaints

Paper Type: Research

1. Background

A complaint is any type of problem, concern or grievance about work or the work environment. All employees shall be provided a work environment free from sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment. Employees, who believe themselves as victims of the discrimination/harassment, start to complain. Employee's complaint is a result of dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice/unfair treatment, either real or imaginary, related to his/her employment situation, which is formally filed and in written form (Griffin, 2000)

When dissatisfaction or problems arise before the employees, they communicate the problems to the management in the form of complaints. There may be various factors which cause employees to complain in an organization.

- a.** Complaint results in undesirable consequences like low productivity, low motivation, absenteeism, late arrival, deteriorated product quality/work quality, increased scraps and rejects, indiscipline, unhealthy labor management relation, etc.
- b.** Interpretation differences between management and employee due to unclear and ambiguous agreement of employment contracts and its terms and conditions also create complaint.
- c.** Management practices also results complaint like supervisory styles, violation of established procedures and precedents, unfair treatment by the management, violation of laws, agreements by management.
- d.** Politically motivated labor unions may also results complaint because they encourage employees to report complaint so that unions might assert their presence and increase membership.
- e.** Sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discrimination/harassment also creates complaint.

1.1 Procedures of Handling Complaints (Remedies)

First of all the Executive Director shall appoint at least two complaint managers, one from each gender. The Director shall publicize the names, addresses and telephone numbers of current complaint managers.

Employee should notify a complaint manager if he/she believes that the Board, its employees or agents have violated his/her rights guaranteed by the Labor Act or Board Policy.

The Complaint Manager will attempt to resolve complaints by encouraging or inviting employees to walk-in any time to express their complaints to higher level management so that

matters will be settled immediately by correcting situations or convincing/counseling. If it is not possible to do so then the following procedures will be followed (Griffin, 2000)

a) Filing a Complaint

An employee who wishes to avail him or herself of this complaint procedure may do so by filing a complaint with the complaint manager. The employee may request a complaint manager of the same gender. The complaint manager may request the employee to provide a written statement regarding the nature of the complaint. The complaint manager may assist the complainant as needed.

b) Investigation

The complaint manager will investigate the complaint or appoint a qualified person to undertake the investigation on his /her behalf. The complaint and identity of the complainant will not be disclosed except (a) as required by law or policy, or (b) as necessary to fully investigate the complaint, or (c) as authorized by the complainant. The complaint manager shall file a written report with the Executive Director of the organizations. If a complaint of harassment contains allegations involving the Executive Director, the written report shall be filed with the Board, which will make a decision in accordance with the policy. The Executive Director will keep the Board informed of all complaints.

c) Decision and Appeal

After receiving the complaint managers report, the Executive Director's shall mail his/her written decision to the complainant by mail or through complaint manager. If the employee is not satisfied with the decision, the employee may appeal the decision to the Board by making written request to the complaint manager. The complaint manager shall promptly forward all materials relative to the complaint and appeal to the Board. Thereafter, the Board shall affirm, overrule or modify the decision and render a finding which shall be provided to the complainant. This complaint procedure shall not be constructed to create an independent right to a Board hearing.

Public Enterprises (PEs) in Nepal

Public enterprise refers to state ownership and operations of industrial, agricultural, financial and commercial undertakings. “Public enterprises are autonomous or semi autonomous corporations and companies established, owned and controlled by the state and engaged in industrial and commercial activities” (Mallay). The basic aims of public enterprises are to provide goods and services to the public at a reasonable rate and social services.

The major objectives of establishing public enterprises in Nepal are:

- to provide basic necessary goods and services to the public at fair prices
- to generate the employment opportunities
- to develop the economic and social infrastructure for sustainable development
- to increase efficiency and independency and to promote economic growth and people’s welfare for social justice.
- to earn foreign exchange and utilize foreign aid
- to obtain economic, political and social objectives of the nation by mobilizing available capital and labor resources.

Currently there are 37 PEs operating in Nepal. The contribution of public enterprises to GDP of Nepal has been Rs.270 billions. 37 PEs formed under five different acts operate under full and partial ownership of the Government of Nepal, they are, Company Act, Corporation Act, Special Act related to enterprises, Communication Corporation Act and Banks and Financial Institutions Act (Economic Survey, 2015).

Classification of Public Enterprises in Nepal

Industrial	Business/Trades	Service	Social	Utility	Financial
1. Dairy Development Corporation	1. Agriculture Inputs Co. Ltd.	1. Nepal Civil Aviation Authority	1. Nepal Television Corporation	1. Nepal Telecom Co. Ltd.	1. Agriculture Development Bank Ltd.
2. Jankpur Cigarette Factory	2. National Seeds Co. Ltd.	2. Nepal Airlines Corporation	2. Cultural Corporation Sanathan	2. Nepal Electricity Authority	2. Rastriya Beema Sansthan
3. Nepal Orind Magnesite Ltd.	3. The Timber Corporation of Nepal Ltd.	3. Industrial Estate Management Ltd.	3. Gorkhapatra Sanathan	3. Nepal Water Supply Corporation Ltd.	3. NIDC Development Bank
4. Nepal Drugs Ltd.	4. Nepal Food Corporation Ltd.	4. Nepal Transit & Warehousing	4. Janak Education Materials Center Ltd.		4. Rastriya Banijya Bank Ltd.
5. Hetauda Cement	5 Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.		5. Nepal Housing Co. Ltd.		5. Deposit &

Factory 6. Udayapur Cement Factory 7. Herbs Production and Processing Co. Ltd.		Co. Ltd. 5. National Productivity & Economic Development Center Ltd. 6. National Construction Co. Nepal Ltd. 7. Engineering Consultancy Service Center Ltd.			Credit Guarantee Corporation Ltd. 6. Nepal Housing Finance Ltd. 7. Nepal Stock Exchange Ltd. 8. Citizen Investment Trust 9. Hydroelectricity Investment & Development Co. Ltd.
7	6	7	5	3	9

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of the study are:

- to analyze complaints that take place in the public enterprises in Nepal.
- to examine the causes and solution of complaints in selected public enterprises in Nepal.

3. Methodology Used

This study has followed both descriptive and analytical approach of research. A questionnaire survey has been conducted for getting the answer of research questions because information related to complaint cannot be collected through published and secondary data. The questionnaire survey includes 22 questions. Questionnaires were distributed to 15 top, middle and lower level employees of each public enterprise. In order to increase the reliability and number of responses, personal visits to each and every respondent were made to distribute and collect the questionnaire.

Primary data has been analyzed using the different analytical statistical tools, i.e. the mean, the standard deviation and the coefficient of variance.

There are total of 37 public enterprises in Nepal, which constitute the population of the study. For this study, only twelve public enterprises two from each sector have been selected as sample. Selection of sample was based on convenience and judgmental basis.

Industrial	Business/Trades	Service	Social	Utility	Financial
1. Dairy Development Corporation (DDC) 2. Hetauda Cement Factory (HCF)	1. Nepal Food Corporation Ltd. (NFC) 2. Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd. (NOC)	1. Nepal Airlines Corporation (NAC) 2. Industrial Estate Management Ltd. (IEML)	1. Nepal Television (NTV) 2. Gorkhapatra Sansthan (GS)	1. Nepal Telecom Co. Ltd. (NTC) 2. Nepal Electricity Authority (NEA)	1. Agriculture Development Bank Ltd. (ADBL) 2. Rastriya Banijya Bank Ltd. (RBBL)
2	2	2	2	2	2

Cronbach's Alpha test has been done to test the reliability of data. Each and every variable have been tested and it was found that every variable reliability test was above 84%.

4.1 Respondent's Profile

In this section, characteristics of respondents have been presented first gender wise and then after designation wise.

a) Gender Wise Respondents

Name of the Public Enterprises	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
Dairy Development Corporation	10	5.55	5	2.78	15	8.33
Hetauda Cement Factory	11	6.12	4	2.22	15	8.33
Nepal Airlines Corporation	11	6.12	4	2.22	15	8.33
Industrial Estate Management Ltd.	10	5.55	5	2.78	15	8.33
Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.	9	5.00	6	3.33	15	8.33
Nepal Food Corporation Ltd.	9	5.00	6	3.33	15	8.33
Gorkhapatra Sansthan	9	5.00	6	3.33	15	8.33
Nepal Television	10	5.55	5	2.78	15	8.33
Nepal Telecom Company Ltd.	9	5.00	6	3.33	15	8.33
Nepal Electricity Authority	10	5.55	5	2.78	15	8.33
Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited	8	4.44	7	3.89	15	8.33
Agriculture Development Bank Ltd.	9	5.00	6	3.33	15	8.33
Total	116	64.44	64	35.56	180	100

Majority of respondents were males i.e. 64.44%. But female respondents were also satisfactory in number i.e. 64 out of 180.

Highest number of male respondents was in NAC and HCF and females were in RBBL i.e. 11 and 7 in number out of 15 respectively. Similarly lowest number of males respondents were in RBBL and female were in NAC and HCF i.e. is 8 and 4 in number out of 15 respectively.

The reason behind low number of female respondents is that all banks have high number of male respondents.

b) Designations Wise Respondents

Name of the Public Enterprises	Lower Level	%	Middle Level	%	Upper Level	%	Total
Dairy Development Corporation	5	2.78	6	3.33	4	2.22	15
Hetauda Cement Factory	6	3.33	5	2.78	4	2.22	15
Nepal Airlines Corporation	6	3.33	5	2.78	4	2.22	15
Industrial Estate Management Ltd.	5	2.78	6	3.33	4	2.22	15
Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.	5	2.78	5	2.78	5	2.78	15
Nepal Food Corporation Ltd.	4	2.22	7	3.89	4	2.22	15
Gorkhapatra Sansthan	4	2.22	7	3.89	4	2.22	15
Nepal Television	5	2.78	6	3.33	4	2.22	15
Nepal Telecom Company Ltd.	4	2.22	6	3.33	5	2.78	15
Nepal Electricity Authority	6	3.33	5	2.78	4	2.22	15
Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited	5	2.78	5	2.78	5	2.78	15
Agriculture Development Bank Ltd.	4	2.22	6	3.33	5	2.78	15
Total	59	32.78	69	38.33	52	28.89	180

Majority of respondents were found in middle level 69 out of 180 i.e. 38.33%. Minority respondents fall in the category of upper level which was 52 out of 180 i.e. 28.89%. Respondents in category of lower level were 59 i.e. 32.78%.

4. Analysis and Findings of the Study

Analysis of different elements of complaints and procedures of handling complaints has been done in this section:

4.1 Analysis of Different Elements of Complaints

Name of the Public Enterprises	PP	WR	PI	MP	OI	Total	Mean	S.D.	C.V
Dairy Development Corporation	2.38	3.75	4.00	3.38	3.15	16.66	3.33	0.63	18.92
Hetauda Cement Factory	2.35	3.46	3.89	3.33	3.16	16.19	3.24	0.57	17.59
Nepal Airlines Corporation	2.11	3.67	3.83	3.52	3.17	16.80	3.36	0.69	20.54
Industrial Estate Management Ltd.	2.28	3.61	3.97	3.45	3.16	16.47	3.29	0.64	19.45
Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.	2.03	3.39	3.93	3.36	3.17	15.88	3.18	0.70	22.01
Nepal Food Corporation Ltd.	2.56	3.64	3.83	3.34	3.10	16.47	3.29	0.50	15.20
Gorkhapatra Sansthan	2.40	3.70	4.11	3.51	3.18	16.90	3.38	0.64	18.94
Nepal Television	2.12	3.34	3.89	3.46	3.15	15.96	3.19	0.66	20.69
Nepal Telecom Company Ltd.	2.14	3.33	3.92	3.44	3.14	15.97	3.19	0.66	20.69
Nepal Electricity Authority	2.11	3.45	3.95	3.67	3.15	16.33	3.27	0.71	21.71
Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited	2.30	3.35	3.75	3.35	3.13	15.88	3.18	0.54	16.98
Agriculture Development Bank Ltd.	2.10	3.61	3.82	3.43	3.12	16.08	3.22	0.67	20.81

PP (Personal Problems) explains employee's personal problems. Two questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

In all the PEs, the value has been below average, i.e. 3. In case of NOC, it has been the lowest, i.e. 2.03 and in case of NFC, it has been the highest i.e. 2.56 compared to others. This indicates that in all the PEs complaint related to personal reasons have not been lodged by the employees.

WR (Work Related) explains work related problems, i.e. motivations, low productivity, indiscipline, products & work quality, increase in scrap and work environment. Three questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

The value of 'WR' in all the PEs has been above average, i.e. 3. Highest value has been observed in case of DDC, i.e. 3.75. This shows that work related complaints have been faced by all the PEs. Most of them have problems on working environment of the enterprises.

PI (Political Issues) inquires complaints from political motivated labor unions and other political issues. Two questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

In all the PEs, the value of 'PI' has been above average, i.e. 3. Highest value has been found in case of GS and DDC i.e. more than 4 and lowest value has been observed in RBBL i.e. 3.75. This shows that all the PEs has faced problem related to political as the values of all the PEs have been more than 3.75.

MP (Management Practices) entails differences between the employees and management due to unclear policies, rules and contract as well as leadership & supervisory style, unfair treatment with the employees and violations of law & agreement by management. Three questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

The value of 'MP' has been above average in all the PEs. Highest value has been observed in case of NEA, i.e. 3.67 and lowest value has been found in HCF i.e. 3.33. This shows that every PEs has given more concern to clear its policies, rules and contract among the employees. Similarly, PEs has to improve its leadership and supervisory style.

(OI) Others Issues entail sexual, racial, ethnic and religious discriminations and harassment. Three questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

The value of 'OI' has been near to average in all the PEs, i.e. 3. Highest value has been observed in case of GS, i.e. 3.18 and lowest value has been observed in case of NFC i.e. 3.10. All the PEs has problems of racial, ethnic and religious discriminations compared to sexual.

From the above table, it has been clear that the mean value of "Complaint" in all the PEs has been near to average, i.e. 3. This clearly indicates that all the PEs has faced complaints from their employees. In all the cases, the value of standard deviation has been below 1 and coefficient of variation has been 15.20% to 22.01%, which indicates that the average was more representative across the PEs as well as across the different components of complaint.

4.2 Analysis of Different Elements of Remedies

Name of the Public Enterprises	SM	CM	BD	FP	Total	Mean	S.D.	C.V
Dairy Development Corporation	3.13	2.93	3.83	3.63	13.52	3.38	0.42	12.43
Hetauda Cement Factory	3.38	2.94	3.95	3.67	13.94	3.49	0.43	12.32
Nepal Airlines Corporation	3.27	3.13	3.78	3.73	13.91	3.48	0.28	8.06
Industrial Estate Management Ltd.	3.50	2.97	3.77	3.66	13.90	3.48	0.35	10.06
Nepal Oil Corporation Ltd.	3.67	3.18	3.88	3.49	14.22	3.56	0.30	8.43
Nepal Food Corporation Ltd.	3.29	2.83	3.65	3.48	13.25	3.31	0.35	10.57
Gorkhapatra Sansthan	3.12	2.92	3.75	3.56	13.35	3.34	0.38	11.38
Nepal Television	3.65	3.34	3.67	3.42	14.08	3.52	0.17	4.83
Nepal Telecom Company Ltd.	3.75	3.25	3.87	3.58	14.45	3.61	0.27	7.48
Nepal Electricity Authority	3.56	3.35	3.76	3.66	14.33	3.58	0.18	5.03
Rastriya Banijya Bank Limited	3.98	3.45	3.98	3.78	15.19	3.80	0.25	6.58
Agriculture Development Bank Ltd.	3.78	3.40	3.88	3.67	14.73	3.68	0.21	5.71

SM (Special Measures) has been concerned about special measures taken by the management to handle complaints. Two questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

The value of 'SM' has been above average in all the PEs i.e. 3. Highest value has been found in RBBL, i.e. 3.98 and lowest value has been seen in GS, i.e. 3.12. This indicates that every PEs has been more concerned about handling any kind of complaints.

CM (Complaint Manager) explains appointing complaint manager to resolve the complaints. Two questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

In all the PEs, the value of 'CM' has been near to average, i.e. 3. In case of NFC, it has been only 2.83 whereas in RBBL it has been 3.45. In case of DDC, HCF, IEML, NFC and GS the value has

been less than 3. This shows that every PEs has not appoints complaint managers to resolve the complaints.

BD (Bilateral Dialogue) is concerned with bilateral dialogue with the concerned people. Two questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

This value has been higher than the average in all the PEs, i.e. 3. Individually, RBBL outperforms all by scoring 3.98. In case of NFC, it has been 3.65 each. This shows that all the PEs has put its effort to resolve the problems by a bilateral dialogue.

FP (Following Procedure) has been made to resolve the complaint by following certain procedure, i.e. filing a complaints, investigations and decision & appeal. Three questions were asked to the employees in this regard.

In all the PEs, the value of 'FP' has been above average, i.e. 3. In case of RBBL, it has been the highest, i.e. 3.78 and in case of NTV, it has been the lowest, i.e. 3.42. This shows that all the PEs have been using procedures like, filing a complaint, investigation and at last decision will be given to resolve the complaints.

From the above table, it has been observed that mean value of 'Remedies' in all the PEs has been above average, i.e. 3. Highest value has been found in RBBL, i.e. 3.80 and lowest value has been observed in NFC, i.e. 3.31. This indicates that all the PEs has been using this approach to resolve the complaints of the employees.

In all the cases, the value of standard deviation has been below 1 and coefficient of variation has been 4.83% to 12.43%, which indicates that the mean calculated has been representative across different PEs and across different components of 'Remedies' and hence mean is trustworthy.

5. Conclusions

An employment complaint is a complaint filed by an employee against their employer, supervisor, or company. It is resulted from employee's dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice/unfair treatment related to his/her employment situation. And remedies are the attempt to resolve complaints by encouraging or inviting employees to express their complaints to the management so that matters will be settled immediately by correcting situations or convincing/counseling. Complaints arise due to lack of communication, unfair pay, no job

security, lack of appreciations, nepotisms & favoritisms, work overload, incompetent leader, sexual & religious harassment & discriminations and lack of opportunity etc. Every public enterprises have faced same types of complaints from their employees and they try to resolve that complaints to their best. Most of the public enterprises have faced political, work related and management problems compared to personal.

6. Recommendations

It is suggested that following points should be considered to minimize complaints from the employees in the organizations

- Proper communication system should be developed
- Rewards and allowances should be properly distributed
- Employees should feel job securities from their job
- Proper policy should be made for motivating employees
- Nepotisms and favoritisms should be avoided
- Work load should be managed properly
- Quality of leadership should be developed
- Opportunity should be provided to every employees
- Strict actions should be taken to avoid sexual and religious harassments and discriminations
- Effective system should be developed to handle and resolve the complaints in the organizations

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