

INCIDENCE OF EMPLOYEE~MANAGEMENT DISPUTE IN ORGANIZATIONS

AN ANALYSIS OF SELECT COMPANIES FROM NATIONAL CAPITAL REGION OF DELHI

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PURPOSE

DISPUTE between employees and management is complex phenomenon that can have enormous impact on individuals and organizations alike. This paper examines the difference in groups of employees based on strength of employees, level of employees in the organizational hierarchy, age, and gender with respect to employee-management dispute rate in the organizations.

Design/Methodology/Approach: *A cross sectional design has been adopted for the study with collection of factual information about the employee-management dispute rate from 40 companies and demographic data relating to 400 employees working in these 40 companies.*

The sample includes employees from companies like Ernst & Young, TCS, SAIL, GE Company, and LG Electronics to name a few. Techniques used are Kruskal-Wallis H test and Mann-Whitney U test.

Findings: *There is significant difference between groups based on strength of employees, levels in organizational hierarchy, gender, and age with respect to employee-management dispute.*

Research limitations: *For the purpose of this study primary data have been collected, accuracy of study depends on accuracy of responses by respondents.*

Practical implications: *Results will be useful for organizations of different sizes, in relations to employees of different age, gender, and from different levels in organizational hierarchy, with respect to employee-management dispute incidence.*

Originality/Value: *The study is valuable for all types organizations as employees-management dispute incidence can affect any organization.*

Key Words: *Employees-management Dispute, Conflict Management, Dispute, Industrial Relations.*

Introduction

Dispute between employees and management is complex phenomenon that can have enormous impact on individuals and organizations alike. Human resource professionals have cited dispute in organization as important concern for organizations. This often reflects higher level of stress, poor relationship between management and employees, low job satisfaction, and low morale of employees. Employee-management dispute may cause psychological distance between the organization and employees.

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Dispute in organization may also adversely affect employees' commitment towards work, speed, and continuity of work. These may lead to disruption of work flow and lost productivity.

Organizational working disputes are inevitable. There can be different types of disputes viz worker-management dispute, inter-management dispute, management government dispute. Inter employee dispute, intra union dispute. However, the purpose of this study dispute refers to employee- management dispute only. (Makhmreh, 1981).

However, the purpose of this study dispute refers to worker-management dispute only. This article examines how incidence of employee-management dispute in organization takes place in relation to strength of employees in organization, level in organizational hierarchy, gender, and age of employees. Dispute results in high cost for organization.

Review of Literature

Employees are undoubtedly precious resource an organization possesses, who can contribute immensely in its survival, growth, and success. (Singh, Singh and Goel, 2006). Positive work culture can motivate employees and drive them towards efficiency (Singh et al., 2010; Sinha et al., 2011).

However, reality reflects that "Where people work together in an employing organization it would be expecting too much of human nature that disputes should not arise between employers and workers and for that matter between different groups of workers and with in management" (O.E.C.D. 1979).

Disputes can be individual and collective dispute. It is individual dispute of its object concerns only one employer and one employee without affecting a group. If the conflict affects the rights or interests of a group of workers, it is called a collective dispute.

The causes for dispute can be numerous, may include problem of communication, lack of workers involvement, absence of precise rules and their implementation, stress level in workers and management (Makhamreh, 1981).

Industrial disputes may take basically two forms (Makhamreh, 1981) strikes and grievances. According to Beach (1980) strike can be defined as a concerted withholding of labour supply in order to bring economic pressure to bear upon the employer to cause him to grant the employees' and/or the union demands. Grievance can be defined as any dissatisfaction or feeling of injustice in connection with one's employment situation that is brought to the attention of management (Beach, 1980).

Makhamreh (1981) found a positive relationship between the total numbers of workers involved in disputes (dependent variable) and the size of the firm, the ratio of unionized workers to total employment in the firm, and the ratio of worker's working years with current employer to the total working years in labour force. His study found inverse relationship between the total numbers of workers involved in disputes solved by the formal disputes settlement system to total disputes which occurred in the firm and with the ratio of worker's wage increase in 1980 to inflation rate in 1979. Results also depicted that socio-political, economic, work conditions, collective bargaining, and the fringe benefits factors were significant in affecting labor-management dispute.

Labour dispute generally refers to the disputes between employers and employees connected with the employment or non employment or the conditions of or affecting employment of any person (Suet Ching, 2001).

There are various types of dispute resolution mechanisms (Smith, 1998), which are as follows:

Avoidance: Avoidance of conflict uses the least coercive force and involves only the parties that are part of dispute, e.g., in case of a dispute with employer, an employee may resort to avoidance strategy and may just leave the job and may not demand any compensation from the employer.

Negotiation: It refers to process of communication between the parties involved in dispute with an intention to reach a settlement mutually agreed by both the parties. Both employer and employee may resolve the dispute through bargaining and compromise with seeking and using intervention of any third party.

Conciliation: It involves role and contribution of third party. The third party makes effort to bring together the parties in dispute, encourage them to discuss the differences, and helps them in developing their own proposed resolution to dispute.

Mediation: It also involves role of a third party which helps in dispute resolution. In this case third party plays more active part in assisting the parties to figure out solution to the dispute, acceptable to both the parties involved in dispute and even submit its own proposed solution for settlement of dispute (ILO,1980).

Arbitration: It is that mechanism of dispute resolution process, in which third party acts as a neutral arbitrator, gives opportunity to both parties to put their agreement in front of arbitrator, and makes a decision by which the parties involved in dispute agree to be bound (Stitt, 1998).

Litigation: It is last resort available to resolve a conflict in the event of employee-management disputes. In this case one of the parties can refer the case to court of law, in which case, the court then attends the whole case and gives judgment.

In the context of organization, as individual interact with one another disputes may happen more likely than not, given the individuals are boundedly rational, plagued by cognitive, limitations, and informational asymmetries (Suet, 2001). Dispute would not take place, if there is no interaction between the actors, the management and the employees. They interact by entering into the employment contract (Suet, 2001).

Dispute arises when two or more parties interact or do business and one senses an inguistic or feels wronged by the other. "Resolving the dispute is often a time consuming process that consumes resources of both time and money. So resolving dispute in an effective and efficient manner, is a goal of many in the field" (Anelli, 2002).

According to an analysis, virtually all managers resort to have an open-door policy for dispute resolution. All organizations need some form of employee voice procedure (Balfour, 1984).

Organizations must "recognize the importance, even the necessity of maximizing employee voice" (McCabe and Lewin 1992).

Colvin (2004), shows a link between employee involvement programmes and lower grievance rates. Higher involvement practices as shown by the high involvement work practice index, use of problem solving groups, and greater work group involvement in decision making, were all found to be associated with lower grievance rates.

The essay by Gibbs and Lach (1994a) proposes that gender differences exist in the origin, processes, and outcomes of work place disputes. Gender differences are related to gender roles, the sex composition of jobs, and institutionalized work structures.

Gibbs and Lach (1994b) using in-depth interview data from two contrasting firms indicates that institutional dispute processing forums (a union negotiated grievance procedure in one firm and an open-door policy in second firm) are ill-equipped to handle personality conflicts, causing women to laterally transfer, which in term to reduce their human capital. The authors suggest that workplace dispute resolution is an intra-organizational process which may create, maintain or nullify employment inequality.

Kenneth et al., (2008) aims at examining the way conflict styles vary by organizational level and

gender. Results show that assertiveness (competing and collaborating) increases at progressively higher organizational levels, while unassertive styles (avoiding and accommodating) decrease. The strongest gender finding was that men score significantly higher on competing at all six organizational levels.

Lewin (1987) attempts to match appeal system data drawn from company files with personnel data to determine the effects of age, race, sex, education, occupation, and work experience on appeal system usage, types of appeal issues, filed, and level of appeal settlement.

Vokic and Sontor (2010) depicted that individual characteristics like gender, marital status, and parenthood significantly affect the choice of conflict handling style.

Dispute is a natural phenomenon in all organizations. It is unavoidable component of human activity (Brahnam et al., 2005) which may lead to a situation in which two or more individuals are not very compatible (Darling and Fogliasso, 1999), this situation can arise when individuals perceive that others in organization are restraining them from attaining their objectives (Antonioni, 1998). An efficient leadership can help in reducing the dispute rate in an organization. A leader is not only by what a leader does but also how those actions are perceived, and that must also be taken into consideration (Singh and Kumar, 2013).

According to Vokic and Sontor (2010), disputes in organizations are inescapable. Disputes may be result of difference in individual needs, interest, and opinions. These days, companies concentrate on the 'conflict management' rather than 'conflict avoidance'. If conflict is properly managed, it can be a useful phenomenon. In 1930s and 1940s dispute or conflict in organization was considered adverse and sort of damaging. However, a contemporary viewpoint views dispute as potentially helpful to energize a company, specify problems, and unite a group (Banner, 1995).

In organization, conflict may affect productivity and job satisfaction adversely. It can also play a threat to relationship, satisfaction and endurance of relationship (Havenga, 2006.) Havenga (2006) found that the older the group becomes, the less dominating or competitive the style (of conflict management) is chosen. Western thought emphasizes collaboration in resolving conflict, the value system of various Asian cultures emphasizes unassertiveness (Mckenna and Richardson, 1995).

Culture needs to be developed in an organisation so that employees feel more involved and engaged in the organisation instead of being part of disputes (Singh, 1997; Singh, 2000; Singh and Sharma, 2008).

Definition Considered in the Study

Dispute rate: Employee-management dispute rate in an organization has been considered as an index of an organizational non-financial performance. It is the dependent variable in the study. Dispute is calculated using the following formula

$$\text{Dispute rate} = \frac{\text{Number of dispute in a year}}{\text{Total No. of employees}} \times 100$$

Dispute means a difference or apprehended difference between an employer and one or more employee as to matter relating to terms or conditions of employment or work done or to be done.

Objectives of the study

- (1) To find out whether groups based on strength of employees differ with respect to employee-management dispute.
- (2) To find out whether groups based on levels in organizational hierarchy differ with respect to employee-management dispute rate.
- (3) To find out whether groups based on gender differ with respect to employee – management dispute rate.
- (4) To find out whether groups based on age differ with respect to employee-management dispute rate.

Hypotheses

Based on objectives of study the following null hypotheses are formulated.

H01: There is no significant difference between groups based on Strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute rate.

H20: There is no significant difference between groups based on levels in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute rate.

H30: There is no significant difference between groups based on gender with respect to employee-management dispute rate.

H40: There is no significant difference between groups based on age with respect to employee-management dispute rate.

Study Sample

A cross sectional design has been adopted for the study with collection of factual information about the employee-management dispute rate. Primary data regarding dispute rate have been collected for the same accounting period from all 40 companies (Huselid et al., 1997). It was for the period April 1, 2010 through March 31, 2011.

The period of survey study is June 2011 to Dec 2011. A Study sample consists of 400 employees working in 40 companies of varied employee strength, from different industries, and operational in different sectors in National Capital Region of Delhi. The Study sample was drawn from all organizational levels (senior, middle, and junior) across departments in selected 40 companies. Participants belong to different age groups and gender groups.

The sample included employees from companies like Ernst & Young, TCS, SAIL, GE Company, and LG Electronics to name a few.

Methodology

Statistical Analysis has been carried out using the SPSS software (Version 16.0). Statistically significant skew indicating asymmetry in distributions was noted for the dependent variable, employee-management dispute rate depicting that dependent variable is not normally distributed. So to find out significant difference in groups based on strength of employees, level in organizational hierarchy, age, and gender with respect to Dispute Rate in the organization, Kruskal-Wallis H test has been used.

The Kruskal-Wallis H test is the non-parametric test, equivalent to the one-way ANOVA, used to make the comparison of two and more than two independent groups. It is an omnibus test statistic and can only tell that at least two groups are different but does not specify which groups are significantly different from each other.

Therefore, Mann-Whitney U test is conducted for post-hoc of Kruskal-Wallis test, to find out for which pair of categories of independent variable, the difference is significant.

A Kruskal-Wallis test is appropriate where the following two assumptions are satisfied:

- (1) Dependent variable should be measured at the ordinal or internal / Ratio level.
- (2) Independent variable should consist of two or more categorical, independent groups.

Typically, Kruskal-Wallis test has been used when there are three or more categorical, independent groups, but it can be used for just two groups also. Kruskal-Wallis test does not assume normality in the data (Laerd.com).

Data Analysis and Results

$H_0 1$: There is no significant difference between groups based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

(Group 1 denotes 1 – 100 employees

Group 2 denotes 101 – 200 employees

Group 3 denotes 201 – 300 employees

Group 4 denotes >300 employees)

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 1: Ranks

Strength of Employees		N	Mean Rank
DR	1	100	195.50
	2	60	135.50
	3	20	135.50
	4	220	226.41
	Total	400	

Table 2: Test Statistics^{a,b}

	DR
Chi-Square	55.494
Df	3
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. *Kruskal Wallis Test*

b. *Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees*

Table 1 and 2 show that $H(3) = 55.494$ and $p = 0.000$.

Mean rank is 195.50 for group 1 employees, 135.50 for group 2 employees, 135.50 for group 3 employees and 226.50 for group 4 employees.

As p value < 0.05 , the null hypothesis $H_0 1$ is rejected. It suggests there is significant difference between at least two groups based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Rodriguez (2010) reported in his study that the medium-sized firms report more dispute with their employees, compared to the smaller firms.

For deeper analysis Mann-Whitney U tests have been conducted for possible pairs of groups based on strength of employees.

(a) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 2 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 3: Ranks

Strength of Employees		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	1	100	89.50	8950.00
	2	60	65.50	3930.00
	Total	160		

Table 4: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	2.100
Wilcoxon W	3.930
Z	-4.692
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 4 shows U = 2.100 and p = 0.000. As p value is (.000) < 0.05, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (companies with 1 – 100 employees and group 2 (companies with 101 – 200 employees)

(b) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 3 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 5: Ranks

Strength of Employees		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	1	100	63.50	6350.00
	3	20	45.50	910.00
	Total	120		

Table 6: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	700.000
Wilcoxon W	910.000
Z	-2.817
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.005

a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 6 shows $U = 700$ and $p = .005$. As p value is $(.005) < 0.05$, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (companies with 1 – 100 employees and group 3 (companies with 201 – 300 employees).

- (c) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 4 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 7: Ranks

Strength of Employees	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 1	100	143.50	14350.00
4	220	168.23	37010.00
Total	320		

Table 8: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	9.300
Wilcoxon W	1.435
Z	-2.605
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.009

- a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 8 shows $U = 9.3$ and $p = 0.009$. As p value is $(0.009) < 0.05$, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (companies with 1 – 100 employees and group 4 (companies with > 300 employees).

- (d) Significant difference was not found in group 2 and group 3 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 9: Ranks

Strength of Employees	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 2	60	40.50	2430.00
3	20	40.50	810.00
Total	80		

Table 10: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	600.000
Wilcoxon W	810.000
Z	0.000
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	1.000

a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 10 shows U = 600 and p = 1.00. As p value is (1.00) > 0.05, there is no statistically significant difference between group 2 (companies with 101 – 200 employees and group 3 (companies with 201 - 300 employees).

(e) Significant difference was found in group 2 and group 4 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 11: Ranks

Strength of Employees	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 2	60	90.50	5430.00
4	220	154.14	33910.00
Total	280		

Table 12: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	3.600
Wilcoxon W	5.430
Z	-6.502
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 12 shows U = 3.60 and p = 0.000. As p value is (.000) < 0.05, there is statistically significant difference between group 2 (companies with 101 – 200 employees and group 4 (companies with > 300 employees).

(f) Significant difference was found in group 3 and group 4 based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 13: Ranks

Strength of Employees		N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	3	20	70.50	1410.00
	4	220	125.05	27510.00
	Total	240		

Table 14: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	1.200
Wilcoxon W	1.410
Z	-3.939
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Grouping Variable: Strength of Employees.

Table 14 shows U = 1.20 and p = 0.000. As p value is (0.000) < 0.05, there is statistically significant difference between group 3 (companies with 201 – 300 employees) and group 4 (companies with > 300 employees).

H02 : There is no significant difference between groups based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute.

(Group 1 denotes Junior Level

Group 2 denotes Middle Level

Group 3 denotes Senior Level)

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 15: Ranks

Level in Hierarchy		N	Mean Rank
DR	1	84	256.93
	2	238	189.28
	3	78	173.96
	Total	400	

Table 16: Test Statistics^{a,b}

	DR
Chi-Square	40.055
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. *Kruskal Wallis Test*

b. *Grouping Variable: Level in Hierarchy.*

Table 15 and 16 show that $H(2) = 40.05$ and $p = 0.000$.

Mean rank is 256.93 for group 1, 189.28 for group 2 & 173.96 for group 3.

As p value < 0.05 , the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. It suggests there is significant difference between at least two groups based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute.

Brewer et al., (2002) also depicted that there is significant difference in groups based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to conflict management style. Lower organizational status individuals reported greater use of 'avoiding' style and obliging style whereas upper organizational status people made greater use of 'integrated' style. Boru (2008) also revealed in his analysis that conflict management style differs in relation to position in the hierarchy.

For deeper analysis Mann-Whitney U tests have been conducted for possible pairs of groups based on level in organizational hierarchy.

(a) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 2 based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 17: Ranks

Level in Hierarchy	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 1	84	201.75	16947.00
2	238	147.29	35056.00
Total	322		

Table 18: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	6.615
Wilcoxon W	3.506
Z	-5.553
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. *Grouping Variable: Level in Hierarchy*

Table 18 shows $U = 6.61$ and $p = 0.000$. As p value is $(0.000) < 0.05$, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (Junior Level) and group 2 (Middle Level).

- (a) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 3 based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 19: Ranks

Level in Hierarchy	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 1	84	97.68	8205.00
3	78	64.08	4998.00
Total	162		

Table 20: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	1.917
Wilcoxon W	4.998
Z	-5.353
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Grouping Variable: Level in Hierarchy.

Table 20 shows $U = 1.91$ and $p = 0.000$. As p value is $(0.000) < 0.05$, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (Junior Level) and group 3 (Senior Level).

- (b) Significant difference was not found in group 2 and group 3 based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 21: Ranks

Level in Hierarchy	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR 2	238	161.49	38434.00
3	78	149.38	11652.00
Total	316		

Table 22: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	8.571
Wilcoxon W	1.165
Z	-1.354
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.176

a. Grouping Variable: Level in Hierarchy.

Table 22 shows $U = 8.57$ and $p = 0.176$. As p value is $(0.176) > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant difference between group 2 (Middle Level) and group 3 (Senior Level).

H_03 : There is no significant difference between groups based on gender with respect to employee-management dispute.

(Group 1 denotes males

Group 2 denotes females)

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 23: Ranks

	Gender	N	Mean Rank
DR	1	292	190.29
	2	108	228.09
	Total	400	

Table 24: Test Statistics^{a, b}

	DR
Chi-Square	12.804
Df	1
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. Kruskal Wallis Test

b. Grouping Variable: Gender.

Table 23 and 24 show that $H(1) = 12.80$ and $p = 0.000$.

Mean rank is 190.29 for group 1 and 228.09 for group 2.

As p value is < 0.05 , the null hypothesis H_03 is rejected. It suggests there is significant difference between the two groups based on gender with respect to employee-management dispute.

H_04 : There is no significant difference between groups based on age with respect to employee-management dispute.

(Group 1 denotes 30 or less years

Group 2 denotes 31-40 years

Group 3 denotes 41-50 years

Group 4 denotes more than 50 years)

Kruskal-Wallis Test

Table 25: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank
DR	1	185	221.99
	2	136	176.68
	3	50	187.50
	4	29	197.57
	Total	400	

Table 26: Test Statistics^{a, b}

	DR
Chi-Square	19.402
Df	2
Asymp. Sig.	0.000

a. *Kruskal Wallis Test*

b. *Grouping Variable: Age.*

Table 25 and 26 show that $H(3) = 19.40$ and $p = 0.000$.

Mean rank is 221.99 for group 1, 176.88 for group 2, 187.50 for group 3 and 197.57 for group 4.

As p value is < 0.05 , the null hypothesis H_0 is rejected. It suggests there is significant difference between atleast two groups based on age with respect to employee-management dispute.

Pinto and Ferrer (2002) also reported that negotiators above 40 years older tend to use 'compromising' style for conflict handling as the main style.

For deeper analysis Mann-Whitney U tests have been conducted for possible pairs of groups based on level in organizational hierarchy.

(a) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 2 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 27: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	1	185	176.41	32635.00
	2	136	140.04	19046.00
	Total	321		

Table 28: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	9.730
Wilcoxon W	1.905
Z	-4.238
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000

a. Grouping Variable: Age.

Table 28 shows U = 9.73 and p = 0.000. As p value is (0.000) < 0.05, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (age of 30 or less) and group 2 (age 31-40).

(b) Significant difference was found in group 1 and group 3 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 29: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	1	185	122.31	22627.50
	3	50	102.05	5102.50
	Total	235		

Table 30: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	3.828
Wilcoxon W	5.102
Z	-2.208
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.027

a. Grouping Variable: Age.

Table 30 shows U = 3.82 and p = 0.027. As p value is (0.000) < 0.05, there is statistically significant difference between group 1 (age of 30 or less) and group 3 (age 41-50).

(c) Significant difference was not found in group 1 and group 4 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 31: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	1	185	109.27	20215.00
	4	29	96.21	2790.00
	Total	214		

Table 32: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	2.355
Wilcoxon W	2.790
Z	-1.237
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.216

a. Grouping Variable: Age

Table 32 shows $U = 2.35$ and $p = 0.216$. As p value is $(0.216) > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant difference between group 1 (age of 30 or less) and group 4 (age > 50).

(d) Significant difference was not found in group 2 and group 3 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 33: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	2	136	92.15	12532.00
	3	50	97.18	4859.00
	Total	186		

Table 34: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	3.216
Wilcoxon W	1.253
Z	-.787
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.431

a. Grouping Variable: Age

Table 34 shows $U = 3.21$ and $p = 0.431$. As p value is $(0.431) > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant difference between group 2 (age 31 - 40) and group 3 (age 41 - 50).

- (e) Significant difference was not found in group 2 and group 4 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 35: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	2	136	81.49	11082.00
	4	29	90.10	2613.00
	Total	165		

Table 36: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	1.766
Wilcoxon W	1.108
Z	-1.221
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.222

a. Grouping Variable: Age

Table 36 shows $U = 1.76$ and $p = 0.222$. As p value is $(0.222) > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant difference between group 2 (age 31 - 40) and group 4 (age > 50).

- (f) Significant difference was not found in group 3 and group 4 based on age with respect to employee-management dispute.

Mann-Whitney Test

Table 37: Ranks

	Age	N	Mean Rank	Sum of Ranks
DR	3	50	39.27	1963.50
	4	29	41.26	1196.50
	Total	79		

Table 38: Test Statistics^a

	DR
Mann-Whitney U	688.500
Wilcoxon W	1.964
Z	-.478
Asymp. Sig. (2-tailed)	0.633

a. Grouping Variable: Age.

Table 38 shows $U = 688$ and $p = 0.633$. As p value is $(0.633) > 0.05$, there is no statistically significant difference between group 3 (age 41 - 50) and group 4 (age > 50).

Findings

- (1) There is a significant difference between groups based on strength of employees with respect to employee-management dispute. More precisely there is significant difference between all pairs of groups except between groups denoting companies with 101-200 and 201-300 employees.

It can be analyzed that companies with more than 300 employees show high mean rank with respect to employee-management dispute as compared to companies with lesser strength of employees. The possible reason may be that higher volume of transactions, higher level of complexity of activities and interactions among employees may lead to higher incidence of dispute.

Rodriguez (2010) also reports difference in dispute incidence in firms of different sizes. His study shows that the medium-sized firms report more dispute with their employees, compared to the smaller firms.

- (2) There is significant difference between groups based on levels in organizational hierarchy with respect to employee-management dispute. More precisely, there is difference between all pairs of groups except between groups denoting middle and senior level employees.

Employees at junior level show higher mean rank with respect to employee-management dispute. Possible reason for this behaviour can be lesser experience, lesser quotient of patience due to young age, and more aggressive behavior of employees at junior level.

A Study by Kenneth, Gail, and Schaubhut (2008) also shows that the choice of conflict-handling styles vary by organizational level. Results show that assertiveness (competing and collaborating) increases at progressively higher organizational levels, while unassertive styles (avoiding and accommodating) decrease.

Study by Brewer et al. (2002) also depicted that there is significant difference in groups based on level in organizational hierarchy with respect to conflict management style.

Boru (2008) also revealed in his analysis that conflict management style differs in relation to position in the hierarchy.

- (3) There is significant difference between groups based on levels in gender with respect to employee-management dispute.

It can be analyzed that mean rank of female employees with respect to employee-management dispute is higher than that of male employees. Facts like females are more sensitive by nature and in Indian scenario they have family and domestic responsibilities along with professional responsibilities may contribute in this regard.

The essay by Gibbs and Lach (1994,a) proposes that gender differences exist in the origin, processes, and outcomes of work place disputes.

A study by Vokic and Sontor (2010) depicts that individual characteristics like gender, marital status, and parenthood significantly affect the choice of conflict handling style.

- (4) There is significant difference between groups based on age with respect to employee-management dispute. More precisely there is significant difference between age group '30 and less' with 31-40 and 41-50 years. For all other pairs of groups there is no significant difference with respect to employee-management dispute. Mean rank of employees with '30 or less' years with respect to dispute is higher than the older employees, it may be because younger employees have lower quotient of patience and have more aggressive behaviour at work.

Pinto and Ferrer (2002) also report that negotiators from different age groups tend to choose different styles for conflict handling.

Conclusion

The overall aim of the present study was to understand the difference in groups based on independent variables viz strength of employees, level in organizational hierarchy, gender, and age with respect to employee-management dispute rate in organizations.

Results of the present study depict that mean rank for dispute incidence is comparatively higher in case of young employees (221.99), female employees (228.09), employees at junior level of organizational hierarchy (256.93), and for companies having more than 300 employees (226.41).

Though it is true that situation of absolutely zero-dispute, is not possible in the organization in reality but factors can be analyzed and efforts can be made to reduce the disputes. Effective grievance redressal system should be in place. As employees learn to work in a team, their adaptability capacity to adjust improves (Singh, 2002b; Singh and Antony, 2005) which trims down chances of dispute in organization. Rational, experienced, and empathetic leaders have to play role in order to wane the incidence of dispute.

Recommendations

It may be just an ideal and to the large extent unrealistic situation if organization assumes that there will be no employee-management dispute in organization. But management should find out that for which age group, gender group, and hierarchical level the incidence of dispute is more frequent, so that suitable strategies can be resorted to for managing and minimizing dispute incidence. If an organization is able to imbibe good work values in employees, the chances of dispute reduce and efficiency tends to increase (Singh and Goel, 2001; Singh, 2002a).

Results of the present study show that mean rank for dispute incidence is comparatively higher in case of young employees, female employees, and employees at junior level of organizational hierarchy. So dealing with young employees, female employees, and employees at junior level of organizational hierarchy calls for more conscious and psychological handling of issues and for giving them enough room to communicate their complaints, grievances, and suggestions.

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