

The Importance of Ethics in the Management of Prevention of Disputes in the Workplace: A perspective of MBA Students from Agartala, Tripura

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Abstract: Ethics is considered important in reduction and prevention of grievances and disputes in the industrial world. Companies which implement ethical practices are more likely to have employees who focus more on productivity and profitability and eliminate loss making behaviour like unnecessary conflict. Ethical behaviour can improve the way teams' function and the dynamics between the team members as well. Ethical practices are ingrained in the organization by the beliefs and philosophy of the management and these same beliefs can be implemented amongst the juniors at all levels of management. Ethical training of employees is therefore a very important element of corporate philosophy and can be utilised extensively to enhance productivity, to reduce absenteeism and turnover, to boost the morale of the employees, to reduce wastage, pilferage and even stand up against tough industry competition.

A descriptive study was conducted on a team of management students from Agartala, Tripura and they have been utilised to understand their mind-set about what constitutes ethical management behaviour for prevention and resolution of disputes in the corporate world. Their ideas of what constitutes ethical behaviour from the management's perspective form the basis of study of the research paper.

Key Words: ethics, disputes, conflict management, professionalism **Introduction:**

Ethics play a major role in the management and resolution of workplace disputes (Babalola et al., 2016). A company that is directed by ethics creates the right conditions to build fairness, respect, and trust between all its employees and management. The fact that ethics are always the focus means that there is issue responsibly solved; the employees are not only made to feel valued but also are treated equally. Such an environment is the one where staff is encouraged to communicate openly and honestly through that, they are able to resolve the small issues before they grow into disputes and these are the hallmarks of trust, openness, and productivity.

Ethical management is important because it mandates that conflicts should be handled honestly and fairly so that discrimination and favouritism do not occur, and employees, in turn, feel confident dealing with any issues. Additionally, professionalism provides the rules of the game (Hyatt and Gruenglas, 2023)

Resulting from having fewer conflicts, the organization with ethical management as the basis is noted to be the place where teamwork and appreciation of other people are at the highest level. Employees are considered to be the main players and hence they are the ones to make decisions along with the leadership and at the same time, those who strictly adhere to ethics will gain companies' firm support and hence they will be more secure in their work.

Trust is another issue that comes to reduce tension and sustains a peaceful working relationship which is key to both high productivity and high morale. Indeed, ethics in the workplace are a fundamental ingredient for the maintenance of peace, justice, and an effective environment that prevents disputes from happening at the workplace.

Ethics as a Foundation for Conflict Prevention:

Research reveals the presence of organizational ethical frameworks to be a critical factor in the sustainment of harmony among team members at the workplace. As specified by Kaptein (2023), those company with perfect ethical policies report very little or no conflicts at the workplace because employees understand the boundary lines of acceptable behavior.

Hyatt and Gruenglas, (2023) states that ethical behaviors are the ones which basically involve honesty and equality in decision-making, this serves to cut down on issues of misinformation and resentment among team members

Brown et al. (2005) states that a corporate culture based on ethics is one that helps employees to speak their minds openly; thus, they discuss beforehand the conflicts that may arise.

Ethical Management in Conflict Resolution:

The ethical leadership should definitely be factored in the case of disputes to be handled. Ethical managers are recognized as unbiased, fair, and concentrating on the employees' welfare, which in turn is the cause of the tensions to be lowered. Bies and Moag (1986) shows that this kind of relationship is important for the employees and the employer because ethical leadership accelerates the trust between employees and their management which means that the mediations of all the conflicts will be successful and the solutions to them will be considered as just and fair.

Long-Term Benefits of Ethical Dispute Management:

It is a fact that the long-term rewards of bringing ethics into the resolution of disputes are extensively acknowledged. Luthans (2002) says that institutions that make an ethos an operational target have mitigation of the impact and waxing upfront as employees blossom because they feel that they are respected and valued.

Gap Analysis:

- One significant gap is the limited examination of how ethical frameworks are applied differently across various industries. Research on workplace ethics often focuses on general principles without considering how ethics may need to be adapted based on industry-specific challenges.
- Another gap in the literature is the scarcity of studies that examine the long-term effects of ethical conflict management on organizational outcomes; there is a lack of evidence showing how these practices impact employee loyalty, productivity, and retention over the long run.
- There is a need for more empirical studies and case analyses that demonstrate the real-world applications of ethical dispute management.

Objectives:

1. Analysing Ethical Principles in Workplace Dispute Prevention.
2. Examining Ethical Leadership and Dispute Resolution.
3. Identifying Industry-Specific Ethical Practices.
4. Evaluating Long-Term Impact of Ethical Conflict Management.
5. Exploring Real-World Examples of Ethical Management.

Research Methodology:

Research Design:

- **Descriptive Research:** This will allow you to paint a clear picture of how ethical principles are currently being applied in various workplaces. Consider including specific case examples or anecdotes that illustrate these applications, which can enrich your findings.

- Exploratory Research: Exploring the relationship between ethical leadership and dispute prevention is crucial. You might also want to consider how different leadership styles (e.g., transformational vs. transactional) impact ethical behavior and conflict resolution.

Data Collection Methods Primary Data:

- Sample Size: 120 questionnaires were distributed to final year MBA students for their understanding on the topic of study from Agartala city; only 90 fully filled up responses were received from the students.
- Semi-Structured Interviews: These are excellent for gathering in-depth insights. Prepare open-ended questions that encourage participants to share their experiences and beliefs about ethics in conflict scenarios.
- Surveys/Questionnaires: Ensure that your surveys include both quantitative and qualitative questions to capture a broad range of data. Using Likert scales can help quantify perceptions of ethical practices

Secondary Data:

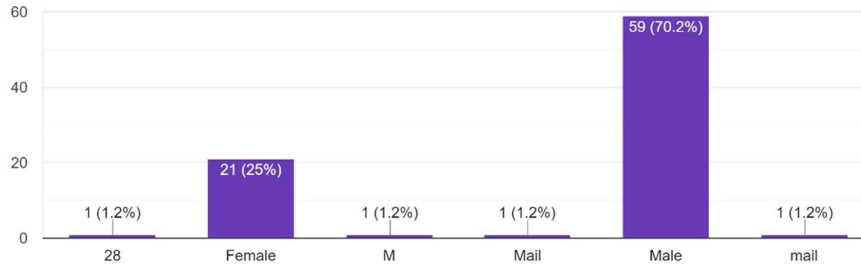
- Literature Review: This will help contextualize your findings within existing research. Focus on identifying gaps in the literature that your study could address.
- Document Analysis: Collecting a diverse range of documents (e.g., policy manuals, training materials) will provide a comprehensive view of how ethics are operationalized within organizations.

Data Analysis:

Gender:

Gender

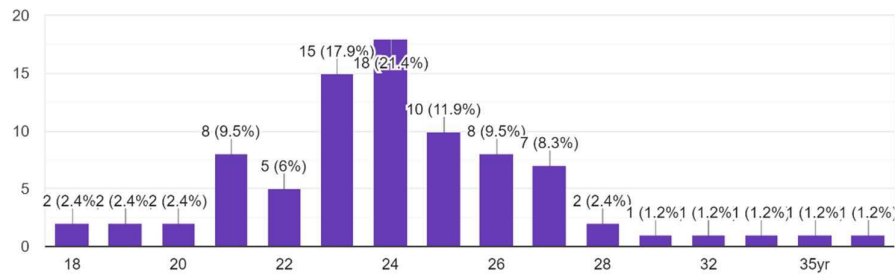
84 responses



Age:

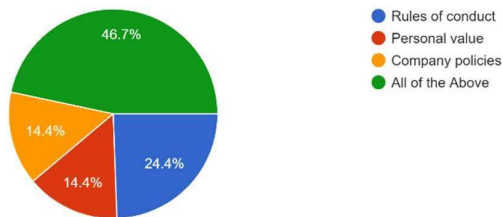
Age

84 responses



1.How would you define workplace ethics?

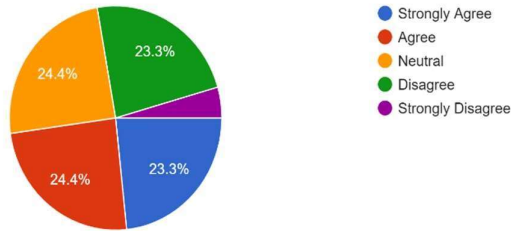
90 responses



Result: - Most respondents define workplace ethics as "All of the Above," followed by "Rules of Conduct," with fewer choosing "Personal Value" and "Company Policies."

2. Do you believe ethical behavior influences dispute resolution?

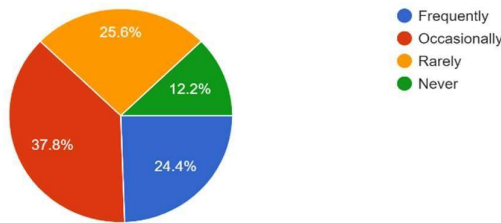
90 responses



Result: Respondents are divided on whether ethical behavior influences dispute resolution, with nearly equal responses across "Strongly Agree," "Agree," "Neutral," and "Disagree," and a small portion choosing "Strongly Disagree."

3. How often do you encounter ethical dilemmas at work?

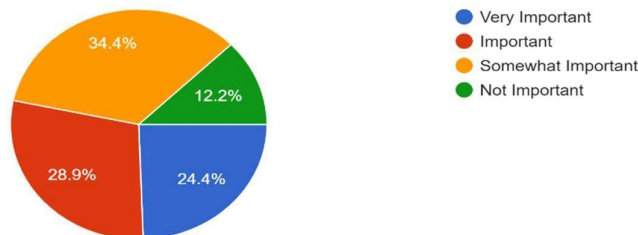
90 responses



Result : Most respondents encounter ethical dilemmas at work "Occasionally," followed by "Frequently" and "Rarely,"

4. What role do you think management plays in promoting ethical behavior?

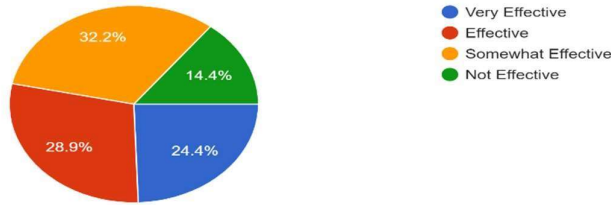
90 responses



Most of the respondents think management plays a very significant role in promoting ethical behaviour.

5. How effective are your organization's policies in preventing disputes?

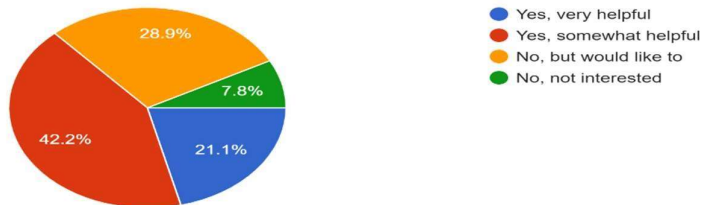
90 responses



Result: Majority people believe organization policies are effective and somewhat effective.

6. Have you received training on ethical behavior?

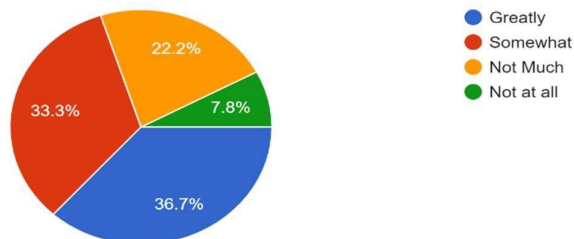
90 responses



Result: Majority of the respondent said they have received ethical training

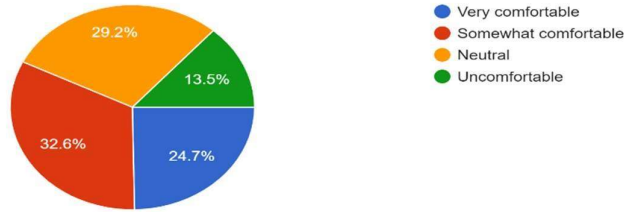
7. In your opinion, how can ethics improve team dynamics?

90 responses



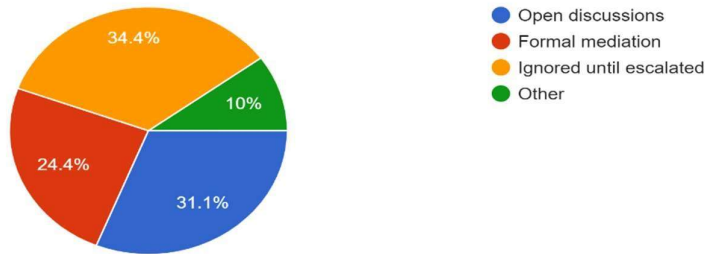
Result: Majority of the respondent believe ethics can improve dynamics greatly and somewhat.

8. Do you feel comfortable reporting unethical behavior?
89 responses



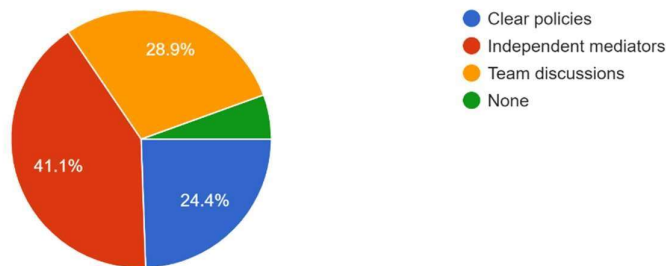
Result: Most of the respondent are very comfortable or somewhat comfortable reporting unethical behaviour.

9. How does your organization handle conflicts?
90 responses



Result: Open discusiion and ignore untill escalated and Formal mediation are used to handle organization conflicts.

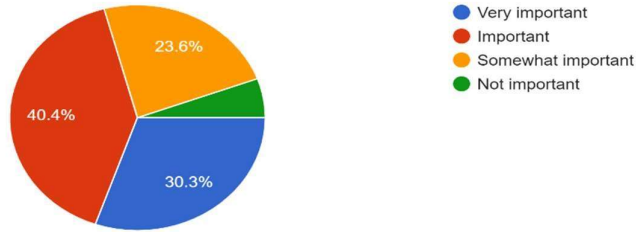
10. What measures ensure fairness in dispute resolution?
90 responses



Result : Team discussion and independent mediators are the measures ensure fairness in dispute resolution.

11. How important is it for leadership to model ethical behavior?

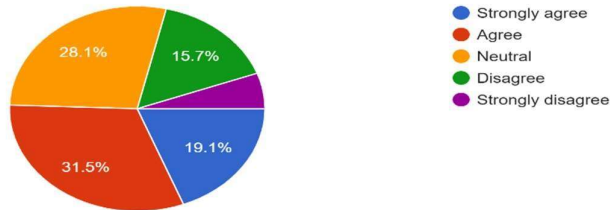
89 responses



Result: Most of the respondent believe leadership is very important and important and 23% respondent believe somewhat important.

12. Do you believe ethical practices reduce employee turnover?

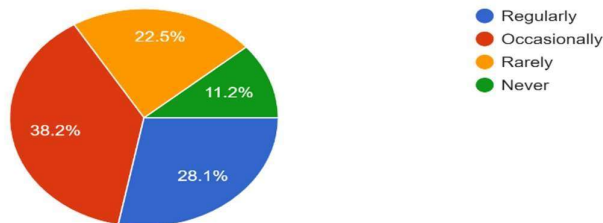
89 responses



Result : Most of the respondent agree or being neutral that believe that ethical practices reduce employee turnover.

13. How often are employees involved in discussions about workplace ethics?

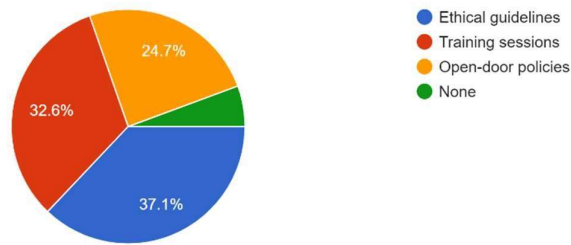
89 responses



Result: Most of the respondent believe regularly and occasionally employee involved in discussion about workplace ethics.

14. What resources help employees navigate ethical issues?

89 responses



Result: Most people believe ethical guidelines and training sessions help employee navigate

15. How does your organization recognize ethical behavior?

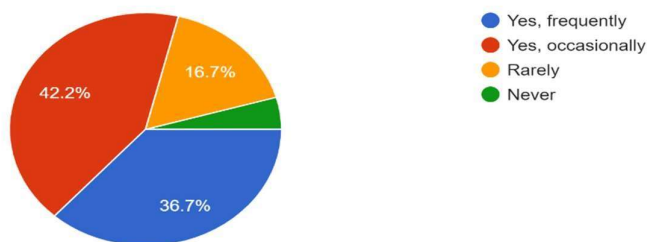
89 responses



Result : Most of the people believe Awards and Public Acknowledgement that recognize ethical behavior

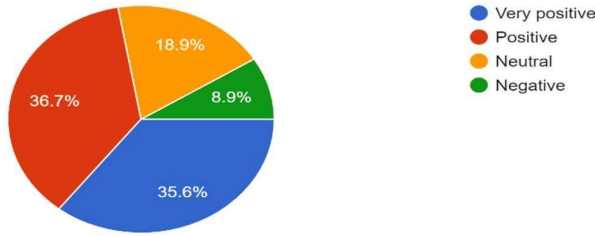
16. Have you witnessed a conflict escalate due to lack of ethics?

90 responses



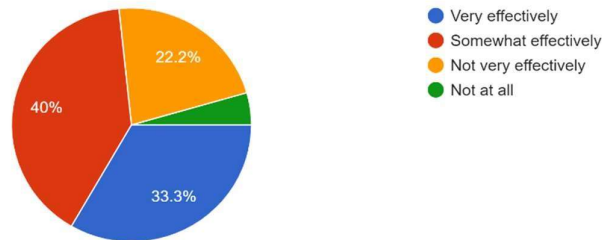
Result : Most of the respondent witnessed conflict frequently or occasionally due to lack of ethics.

17. What impact do you think ethical behavior has on morale?
90 responses



Result: Most of the People believe very positive and positive impact ethical behavior has on morale.

18. How can ethical decision-making frameworks assist in preventing disputes?
90 responses



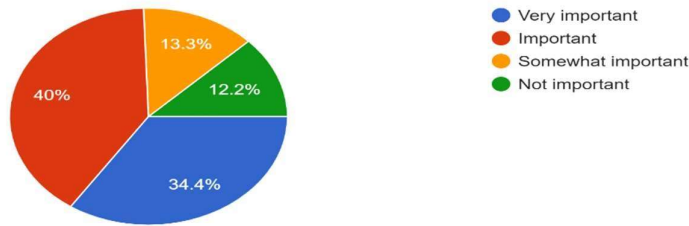
Result: Most of the respondent believe very effectively or somewhat effectively ethical decision making frameworks assists in preventing disputes.

19. Do you think ethical standards vary across departments?
90 responses



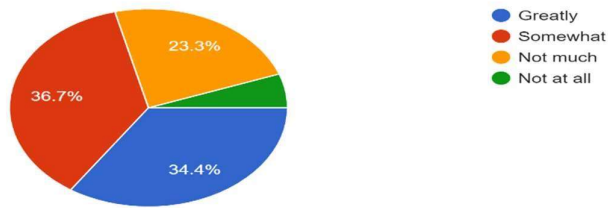
Result: Most of the people believe significantly or somewhat ethical standards vary across departments.

20. How important is transparency in managing workplace disputes?
90 responses



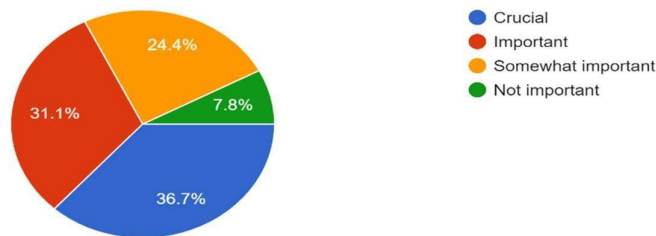
Result: Most of the respondent believe transparency very important or important in managing workplace ethics.

21. How can diversity initiatives contribute to ethical practices?
90 responses



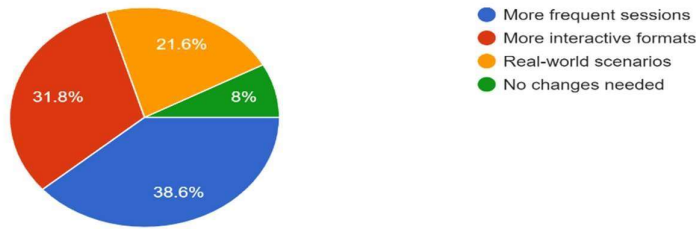
Result: Most of the people believe diversity initiatives contribute greatly or somewhat to ethical practices.

22. What role does feedback play in maintaining ethical standards?
90 responses



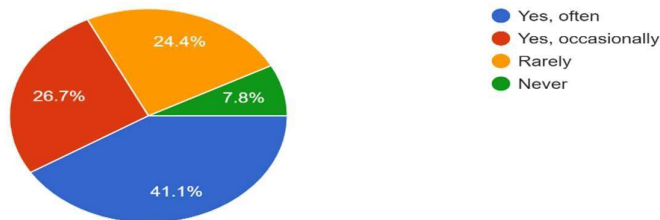
Result: Most of the respondent believe feedback plays crucial and important role in maintaining ethical standards.

23. How could ethical training be improved?
88 responses



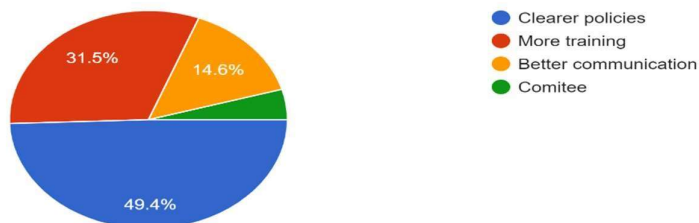
Result: Most of the respondent believe more frequent sessions and more interactive formats could ethical training be improved.

24. Have you ever felt a dispute was handled unethically?
90 responses



Result: Most of the people said they felt dispute often and occasionally.

25. What changes would you recommend for enhancing ethics in dispute management?
89 responses



Result: Most of the respondent belive Celar policies and more training and bettter communication would be recommended for enhancing ethhics in dispute management.

Discussion on Survey Results:

This analysis provides insights based on survey data on workplace ethics, covering respondent demographics, their understanding and perception of ethics, the influence of ethics on workplace dynamics, and recommendations for improvement. .

Definition of Workplace Ethics

Result: The majority view ethics as a comprehensive concept, selecting “All of the Above.” This suggests a broad understanding of workplace ethics that encompasses personal values, company policies, and rules of conduct.

Ethical Behavior and Dispute Resolution

Result: Respondents have mixed views on ethical behavior’s impact on dispute resolution, with opinions spread across all options from “Strongly Agree” to “Disagree.” This reflects varied experiences and perceptions regarding how ethics influence conflicts at work.

Encountering Ethical Dilemmas

Result: Most encounter ethical dilemmas “Occasionally,” followed by “Frequently” and “Rarely.” This may imply that ethical challenges are part of regular work life but not overly frequent.

Perception of Organizational Policies

Result: A majority believe organizational policies are “Effective” or “Somewhat Effective.” This suggests policies are viewed positively, though there may be room for improvement in clarity or implementation.

Ethics Training

Result: Most respondents have received ethics training, suggesting companies are investing in ethical education. However, further details on training content or frequency could provide additional insights.

Impact on Workplace Dynamics

Result: A large portion believes ethics can significantly improve workplace dynamics, indicating that ethics is seen as a cornerstone for positive interactions and relationships.

Comfort with Reporting Unethical Behavior

Result: Respondents are generally “Very Comfortable” or “Somewhat Comfortable” reporting unethical behavior, suggesting a relatively open environment for addressing ethical concerns.

Conflict Resolution Methods

Result: Conflicts are typically managed through “Open Discussion,” “Formal Mediation,” or “Ignored Until Escalated,” reflecting a range of approaches, with formal processes likely only engaged when issues persist.

Fairness in Dispute Resolution

Result: Fairness is primarily ensured through “Team Discussion” and “Independent Mediators.” These methods indicate that collaborative and neutral approaches are valued in dispute handling.

Leadership’s Role in Ethics

Result: Most believe leadership is “Very Important” or “Important” for workplace ethics, underscoring the need for leaders to model and reinforce ethical behavior.

Ethical Practices and Employee Turnover

Result: Respondents generally agree that ethical practices help reduce turnover, suggesting that ethical work environments contribute to employee retention.

Employee Involvement in Ethical Discussions

Result: Most employees discuss workplace ethics “Regularly” or “Occasionally,” indicating a moderate to high level of engagement with ethical issues.

Guidance on Navigating Ethical Issues

Result: Employees feel that ethical guidelines and training sessions are beneficial in managing ethical challenges, emphasizing the importance of structured support.

Recognition of Ethical Behavior

Result: Awards and public acknowledgment of ethical actions are viewed as valuable, showing that employees appreciate recognition for upholding ethical standards.

Conflict from Ethical Lapses

Result: Many witness conflicts “Frequently” or “Occasionally” due to ethical shortcomings, highlighting that lapses in ethics can disrupt workplace harmony.

Impact of Ethical Behavior on Morale

Result: A majority believe ethical behavior positively affects morale, indicating that an ethical environment enhances overall workplace satisfaction.

Effectiveness of Ethical Decision-Making Frameworks

Result: Most respondents see decision-making frameworks as “Very Effective” or “Somewhat Effective” in preventing disputes, indicating that structured ethical guidelines help mitigate conflicts.

Variation in Ethical Standards Across Departments

Result: Respondents feel ethical standards differ across departments, which may point to inconsistent training or expectations between teams.

Transparency in Managing Workplace Ethics

Result: Transparency is seen as “Very Important” or “Important” for managing workplace ethics, suggesting employees value openness in ethical matters.

Contribution of Diversity Initiatives to Ethics

Result: Most believe diversity initiatives contribute to ethical practices, recognizing the role of inclusivity in supporting ethical behavior.

Role of Feedback in Maintaining Ethics

Result: Feedback is viewed as “Crucial” or “Important” in upholding ethical standards, indicating that feedback mechanisms are valued for ethical guidance.

Improving Ethical Training

Result: Respondents recommend more frequent, interactive training sessions, suggesting a desire for hands-on, practical ethical education.

Frequency of Disputes

Result: A majority report disputes “Often” or “Occasionally,” indicating regular workplace conflicts, though not necessarily frequent.

Recommendations for Enhancing Ethics in Dispute Management

Result: The majority recommend clearer policies, additional training, and improved communication, indicating that these areas are key to strengthening ethical dispute management.

Key Takeaways

- **Broad Understanding of Ethics:** Most respondents have a comprehensive view of workplace ethics.
- **Varied Opinions on Impact:** There is a division in perceptions about the role of ethics in dispute resolution, but leadership’s role in fostering ethics is widely acknowledged.
- **Importance of Recognition and Feedback:** Recognition and feedback are valued as ways to encourage ethical behavior.
- **Need for Consistent Policies and Training:** Consistency across departments and more interactive, frequent ethics training could enhance workplace ethics further.
- **Opportunities for Improvement:** Clearer policies, better communication, and more structured ethical decision-making frameworks are recommended for improving ethics management in the workplace.

These insights suggest that while ethical practices are valued and supported by training, there are opportunities for increased consistency, improved communication, and more dynamic training methods to enhance ethical culture across organizations.

Summary of Workplace ethics survey:

The workplace ethics survey reveals diverse perspectives and highlights the importance of ethical practices in the workplace. Respondents largely agree that ethics encompass various elements—rules of conduct, company policies, and personal values—indicating a broad understanding of ethical standards. Most employees encounter ethical dilemmas occasionally, and while some see ethical behavior as integral to dispute resolution, opinions on this vary. Employees are generally

comfortable reporting unethical behavior, showing openness to addressing ethical concerns within their organizations. Conflict management typically involves methods like open discussions, formal mediation, or escalation when necessary, with team discussions and independent mediators ensuring fairness.

A notable majority recognize the importance of leadership in setting ethical standards, seeing ethical practices as instrumental in reducing employee turnover and improving workplace morale. Organizational policies are viewed as mostly effective, though there is room for improvement in clarity and application across departments, as ethical standards are perceived to vary between teams. Ethics training is common, and most respondents believe it positively impacts their ability to navigate ethical issues. Recommendations for training improvements include increasing frequency and interactivity, showing employees' desire for more engaging and practical sessions.

Recognition of ethical behavior, through awards and public acknowledgment, is seen as valuable. Transparency and diversity initiatives are also believed to support ethical practices, with feedback mechanisms playing a critical role in maintaining these standards. Additionally, a majority of respondents report experiencing disputes often or occasionally due to ethical lapses, suggesting a need for stronger frameworks to prevent conflicts.

Overall, the survey underscores the value employees place on ethics in the workplace and highlights recommendations for enhancing ethical practices. These include clearer policies, improved communication, and frequent, interactive training sessions to foster a stronger ethical culture.

Conclusion:

Ethics play a vital role in managing and preventing workplace disputes, creating an atmosphere of trust, fairness, and mutual respect. Organizations that prioritize ethical principles establish a culture where open communication, equality, and transparency are essential.

By setting clear ethical guidelines, companies can not only avoid conflicts but also promote early resolution of potential disputes before they escalate. Employees feel valued and secure, knowing that their concerns will be addressed fairly and without bias, leading to higher morale and overall productivity.

Ethical leadership is crucial in guiding conflict resolution, ensuring that managers handle disputes impartially and prioritize employees' well-being. This ethical approach fosters greater trust between staff and management, resulting in a more collaborative workplace where issues are resolved constructively.

In the long run, an ethical culture boosts employee loyalty, reduces turnover, and strengthens the organization as a whole. Furthermore, industry-specific ethical practices, when tailored effectively, can tackle unique challenges faced by different sectors, offering more relevant solutions to potential ethical dilemmas. The long-term advantages of ethical management in preventing

disputes include lasting peace, improved relationships, and a positive public image. These factors can enhance the organization's reputation and success.

In conclusion, ethics serve as the foundation for preventing and resolving workplace conflicts. This leads to a harmonious, productive, and fair work environment. By incorporating ethical principles at every level of management, organizations can achieve both immediate conflict resolutions.

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