

# Employee Grievances Handling for Ambulance Staff at GVK EMRI, Gujarat

**Babu Thomas & Sameer Pingle**

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*A grievance is any discontent or feeling of unfairness within the work. Grievances at the work should be supported by the inspiration of employer-employee relationship and employment-related system. Existence of a credible process for prompt resolution of grievances is a major contributor towards employees' trust in the management, which leads employee engagement. This study seeks to understand perception of employees about the effectiveness of grievance handling process followed by GVK EMRI, a labor intensive social project, for their dispersed manpower, ambulance crew and deployed 24X7 at various locations of the state. The result shows a bright future of GVK-EMRI at Gujarat as the employees are found to be loyal and committed to organization policies and procedures.*

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## Introduction

Human Resource refers to the people or personnel or work force inside a company chargeable with serving the tasks given to them for accomplishment of the goals and objectives of the organization. Human resource or human KMM/capital defines the set of people and conjures the work force of a company, sector, or economy. It is a crucial imperative for the prosperity and growth of a company. Its performance is actually a problem of concern for the management of all organizations who retain them.

There is a bigger diversity within the geographical point these days, comprising workers from completely different age, position and gender, ethnic and non-secular background. In such a work atmosphere, miscommunication or misunderstanding is aggravated, if not managed properly, such misunderstandings can have an effect on employees' morale and productivity. With workers being net savvy and therefore exposed to social media, such unhappiness might also be promulgated on social media platforms like Face Book or Twitter. Such negative promotion will have an effect on the employers'

image and inflict excessive embarrassment to the management. Therefore, grievances of separated employees too need to be handled with care and urgency. An organization like GVK EMRI, which is into a socially oriented service, it is imperative to address and resolve grievances well in time so that the employees' attention remains focused on live saving.

### Definition

A grievance is any discontent or feeling of unfairness and within the geographical point, it ought to be work related. A grievance is an additional form more established than a criticism. Complaints magnify expressions of grievances, however a grievance is deep-seated such that the worker takes applicable remedial action to hunt satisfaction.

Work connected grievances at the geographical point should be supported by the muse of employer-employee relationship and employment-related system. For an improved understanding of work-related grievance, reference is invited to the definition of commercial matters found within the Industrial Relations Act expressed below (emphasis added): "industrial matters" means that matters relating the relations of employers and workers that amplify and connected with the utilization or non-employment or the terms of employment, the transfer of employment or the conditions of labor of a person.

### Significance of Grievances System

A grievance handling system is to connect the outlet for worker frustrations, dis-

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contents, and cramp like a shaking carbonated soft drink can. Employees do not need to keep their frustrations bottled up till eventually discontent causes explosion. The existence of an efficient grievance procedure reduces the need for whimsical action by supervisors as a result of their grasp that the employees are ready to shield such behavior and build protests to be detected by higher management. The actual fact that the staff have a right to be detected and are literally detected helps to enhance morale. Therefore, each organization ought to have a clear-cut procedure for grievance handling. In a service oriented organization, it is highly desirable that grievances of employees are proactively identified and recorded well in time for speedy and effective resolution. Such prompt systematic approach would create trust of employees towards management and supervisors, which would further drive as a factor of employee engagement. An organization like GVK EMRI, which is labor intensive and engaged in 24X7(day and night) ambulance operation, must have a robust employee grievance management system so that employee's grievances are captured in time and resolved effectively. EMTs and Pilots are working in the Emergency Management work for both day and night shifts. Most of their activities are not supervised real time but they work on pre-decided SOPs. Moreover, on an average

in a shift, only 3 cases of emergencies are attended by each ambulance crew and rest of their time they remain idle and wait for assignment from the control room. This idling time might give opportunity for the staff to identify various grievances and spread among their fraternity. Therefore, existence of a robust, employee friendly and effective system to capture grievances real time and resolve them effectively for this dispersed manpower would definitely help build a healthy environment.

### **Grievances Handling**

Various organizations follow different mechanisms to identify and resolve grievances among employees. In modern organizations there are various formal and informal methods to address the issue. If the organization is unionized, the management team comprising the chief operating officer, relevant heads of department (HODs), together with the senior HR professional would first meet and share data with the organization official and members of the trade union. There is often the need for a written agreement obligation once the associate leader acknowledges a union; it acknowledges that the union represents all workers inside the scope of the contract, in matters concerning all terms and conditions of service. Communication with the workers will be administered through notices or circulars, followed by employees' conferences for feedback, addressing considerations and providing assurances in an exceedingly unionized organization. The management ought to settle for the trade union's help in communication as a result of typical, workers additional receptivity to have com-

munication from the organization. In other cases there are processes whereby an employee can raise a grievance through his supervisor or HR/welfare department.

### **Theoretical Background**

There are no complete theories behind grievance handling systems, though various theories have focused on different dimensions of grievances. Exit, loyalty and voice theory of Hirschman (1970) is one of the most popular theories for studying employee grievance handling system. According to this theory, employees have primarily two responses when they perceive that the organization is decreasing benefits given to them. They withdraw from the relationship (exit), or they try to communicate their concerns by complaining. The decision to voice or exit depends on loyalty. Where there is loyalty to the organization, exit may be reduced, especially when the employees have limited options available. Industrial discipline theory is another important theory where Wheeler has categorized discipline as positive and negative. Positive discipline means discipline without punishment and negative discipline calls for punishment and it adheres to rules and regulations.

Theory defines distributive justice as evaluation of the allocation outcome which depends on several factors like equity, equality and the rule itself. Distributive justice is concerned with the fair distribution of benefits and burdens, such as income, bonuses, and taxes. Jasso (1978) carried out research in distributive justice in which inputs and outcomes are given and the subject is asked to evaluate the

fairness of the combination of inputs and outcomes. According to Rawls (1971) a pie can be divided between two persons as fairly as possible. He suggested the use of a procedure in which the allocator, divides the pie and the other person chooses which piece s/he wants. This leads to theory of procedural justice. Lind and Tyler (1988) and Tyler and Lind(1992) concluded that procedures are not only important with regard to outcomes, but have an important function of their own—a self-expressing function.

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### **Review of Literature**

Salipante and Bouwen, (1990) in their study have reported less use of activity ideas developed on structure conflict. Such ideas develop the premise for a model of grievance behavior that relates the sources of grievances to grievance actions and outcomes. Sources of grievance leading to conflict were explored by analyzing interviews with Belgian and yank workers regarding their complaints within the geographical unit. As an alternative to the limiting substantive classifications historically used, a categorization of grievances is bestowed that corresponds to grievant own formulations of the causes of conflict. Applying this categorization theme to the interview knowledge discovered that the majority of grievances have multiple sources which a grievant generally distorts in his/her public statements regard-

ing the sources of the grievance. Activity analysis of grievances will profit the investigator and professional person by providing insight into the structure of conflict and into employees most elementary beliefs regarding the organization's values. According to Knight (1986a, 1986b) grievance resolution contributes to the quality of relationship between the parties. As per Mamoria (1991) "Most grievances seriously disturb the employees. This may affect their morale, productivity and their willingness to cooperate with the organization. If an explosive situation develops, this can be promptly attended to if a grievance handling procedure is already in existence."

Nurse and Devenish (2007) explored the influence of workers' demographic characteristics on their perceptions of procedural justice from grievance management. A connected aim is to work out whether or not procedural justice perceptions have a bearing on the perceptions of distributive justice. Walker and Hamilton (2011) have reported that the main target of commercial conflict has shifted from collective confrontation to grievances between the worker and leader. This narrative review encompasses a spread of international analysis on individual employee-employer grievances.

According to Daud and Yahya (2011) research on grievance is an ongoing process and it is a dynamic concept which keeps on evolving. This research discusses the styles in handling grievances among heads of departments at a Telecommunication headquarters and branches located in Peninsular Malaysia

along with determination of personalities in selecting the appropriate styles.

Sundaram and Saranaya (2013) have highlighted the importance of people in organizations and that there can be no survival of organization without its employees. All resources (money, materials, methods, markets and machinery) are coordinated by human resource of an organization. The combined efforts lead to fulfillment of organizational objectives and individual objectives. Survival in a tough competitive market depends on productivity of human resources in the organization.

There are three types of grievances: 1) Factual: A factual grievance originates because of non-fulfillment of any genuine cause such as poor working conditions, lack of basic safety measures, forced overtime, etc. 2) Imaginary: An imaginary grievance originates because of invalid causes, wrong perception, wrong attitude or misleading information. 3) Disguised: A disguised grievance originates not from employee himself but from immediate surroundings. This type of grievance is the result of employee's inability to cope with certain situations but it also affects job performance significantly and therefore, management must provide employee assistance programs and counseling facilities to its employees (Deb, 2009). Literature shows that most studies are done in manufacturing firms in India and less studies are conducted in service organizations.

### **Company Profile**

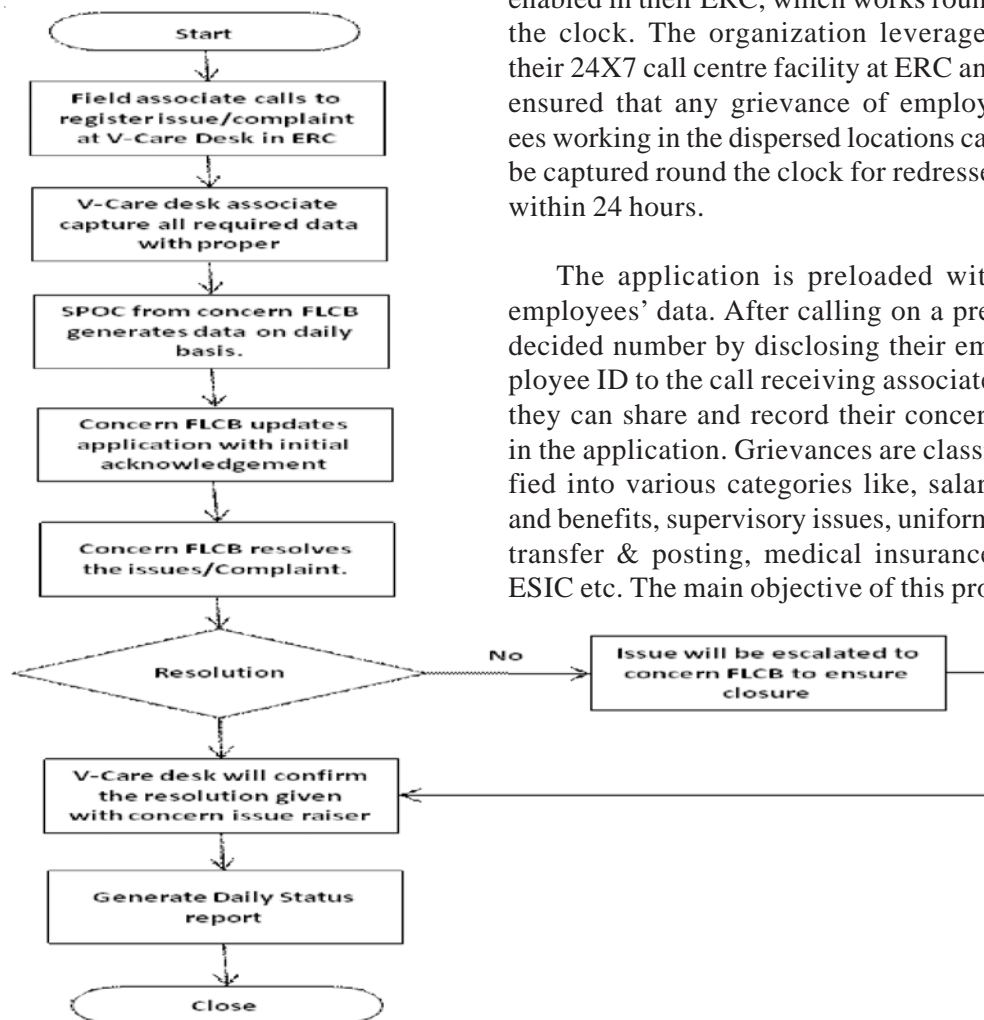
GVK EMRI is a not-for-profit organization and a CSR wing of GVK group.

They are the pioneers of integrated emergency management in India using three digit toll free number and ambulances. The service is popularly known as 108 emergency services. They follow model of Sense, Reach, Care and Follow up, which means sensing the emergency by receiving call of 108 toll free number at their Emergency Response Centers (ERC), reaching the victim by their ambulances and trained staff, and caring the victim by their emergency medical technician ( paramedic) and pilot ( driver). The services have become very popular in India during last 9 years and currently they operate the services in 17 states and UTs. Their operation is labor intensive due to round the clock operation of ERC and ambulances. In a state like Gujarat 3200 employees are working to operate 531 ambulances. 95.2% of these employees are working in ERC and ambulances round the clock. Another uniqueness of this manpower is that all EMTs and pilots, which form around 90% of total manpower, are based in 531 dispersed locations across the state and connected through mobile communication and a vehicle tracking GPS system. While 10% of the remaining workforce are based out of the state head office and can access various functions to resolve their grievances, EMTs and pilots who are posted at the ambulances are working day and night shifts and would be in a difficult situation to raise their concerns and receive a satisfactory reply.

GVK EMRI has been experiencing difficulties in managing the employee grievances emanated mainly from its dispersed manpower working in various ambulance locations. For instance, their

Gujarat operation has currently 531 operational locations where the ambulances are dynamically located. Employees at the cadre of EMTs and pilots are posted at these locations. Moreover, as they are into emergency service almost 60% of their shift duty, the employees are free and waiting for any emergency call to their control centre. On an average, they attend only 3-4 emergencies only in a shift session of 12 hours.

**Fig.1 V Care Management Process**



EMTs and pilots are connected with supervisors or state head quarter through mobile communication. Being a labor intensive dispersed operation there were many employee grievances going unresolved or unattended in the initial time of their operation. In order to address this issue, the organization implemented an innovative grievance handling tool in the year 2010, which they call V-Care (fig.1).

This is a simple computer application enabled in their ERC, which works round the clock. The organization leveraged their 24X7 call centre facility at ERC and ensured that any grievance of employees working in the dispersed locations can be captured round the clock for redressal within 24 hours.

The application is preloaded with employees' data. After calling on a pre-decided number by disclosing their employee ID to the call receiving associate, they can share and record their concern in the application. Grievances are classified into various categories like, salary and benefits, supervisory issues, uniform, transfer & posting, medical insurance, ESIC etc. The main objective of this pro-

cess is the quick identification & resolution (redress) of any technical/non-technical issue faced by field staff which can affect the daily operations.

### Objectives of the Study

1. To know the employees' perception of grievances redressing mechanism by analyzing numerous aspects associated with operating atmosphere.
2. To seek out whether or not the workforce is happy with the management and subordinates.

### Hypotheses

#### Hypothesis 1

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and satisfaction of grievance redressal system of V- Care.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and satisfaction of grievance redressal system of V- Care.

#### Hypothesis 2

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and time taken to resolve in grievance redressal system of V- Care.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and time taken to resolve in grievance redressal system of V- Care.

#### Hypothesis 3

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and gathering of information about grievance.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and gathering of information about grievance.

#### Hypothesis 4

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and Simple Easy Grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and Simple Easy Grievance procedure

#### Hypothesis 5

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and empathy and care in the grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and empathy and care in the grievance procedure.

#### Hypothesis 6

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and no shouting from immediate supervisor in the grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and no shouting from immediate supervisor in the grievance procedure.

#### Hypothesis 7

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and top management serious view and action in the grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and top

management serious view and action in the grievance procedure.

#### Hypothesis 8

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and genuine concern and resolution in the grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee role and genuine concern and resolution in the grievance procedure.

#### Hypothesis 9

H0: There is no significant relationship between the employee role and the care during grievance procedure.

H1: There is significant relationship between the employee roles and the care during Grievance procedure.

### Methodology

Data was collected through a self-designed questionnaire administered to 252 employees at GVK EMRI. To begin with, the profiles of respondents were reviewed to set the background for the study. The results of the analysis are summarized on the basis of role allocated to an employee in the organization. In the role of EMT, 26 respondents are females i.e. 10.31%, rest 121 are males i.e. 48.01% (Table 1). In the next Pilot role all the 105 respondents or 41.66% of the total sample administered in the study are males.

Next the roles of EMT and Pilot are classified based on the age into five categories. The highest shares of respon-

**Table 1 Gender Distribution of Respondents**

Role	Gender	Total	Percentage
EMT	Female	26	10.31
	Male	121	48.01
Pilot	Male	105	41.66
	Total	252	100

dents of EMT and Pilot are found in age slabs of 20- 25 and 26 -30 (Table 2).

**Table 2 Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Age Slab	EMT	Pilot	Total	Percentage
20 to 25	91	8	99	39.28
26 to 30	41	36	77	30.55
31 to 35	11	41	52	20.63
36 to 40	4	13	17	6.74
More than	40	7	7	2.77

The Cronbach's Alpha for reliability of the self-designed questionnaire was 0.853 which is above par. All ten items were included, as there was no dropping out of item as given in Table 3.

**Table 3 Reliability Statistics**

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
0.853	10

**Table 4 Case Processing Summary**

	N	%
Cases Valid <sup>a</sup>	252	100.0
Excluded	0	.0
Total	252	100.0

a. List wise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

The collected data were analyzed with the help of appropriate statistical tools. To analyze the data, Factor Analysis- Principal Component with Varimax Rotation Method and One way ANOVA test are used. Giving score to each re-

sponse as 1,2,3,4 &5 the perceptions of the workers were measured in the standard scale, 1- Strongly Agree,2- Agree, 3- Neutral, 4- Disagree, 5- Strongly Disagree. Based on factor loadings extracted from the factor further analysis of variance is applied on the basis of employee role.

Further data analysis was performed using SPSS version 21. Factor Analysis

– Principal Component Varimax Rotation Method- was applied to extract signifi-

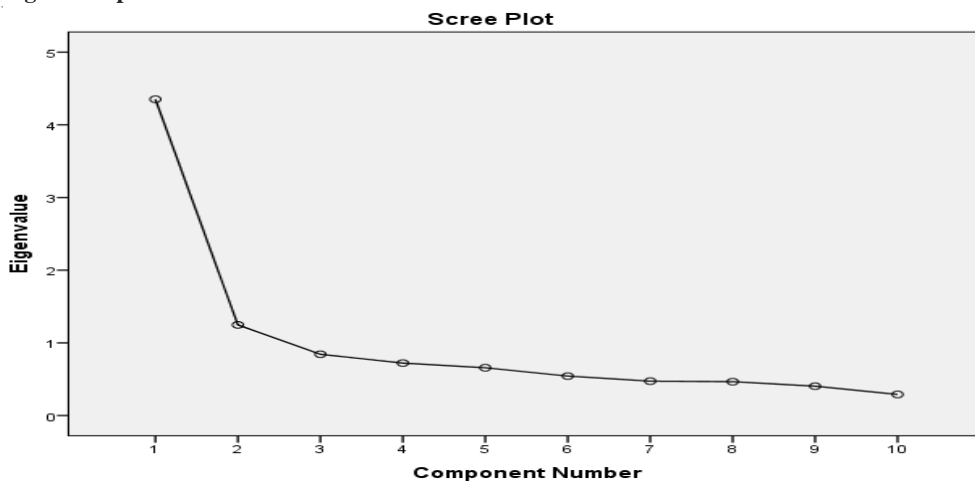
**Table 5. KMO and Bartlett’s Test**

Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		0.871
Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	860.722
	Df	45
	Sig.	.000

**Table 6 Total Variance Explained (Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis)**

Component	Initial Eigen values			Extraction Sums of Squared Loadings			Rotation Sums of Squared Loadings		
	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %	Total	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	4.352	43.516	43.516	4.352	43.516	43.516	3.096	30.958	30.958
2	1.248	12.477	55.993	1.248	12.477	55.993	2.503	25.035	55.993
3	.843	8.435	64.428						
4	.722	7.223	71.651						
5	.658	6.579	78.230						
6	.543	5.431	83.661						
7	.473	4.734	88.396						
8	.466	4.662	93.058						
9	.404	4.039	97.097						
10	.290	2.903	100.000						

**Fig. 2 Graphical Plot Obtained from SPSS**



cant factor along with respective factor loadings. To check the suitability of the data, KMO and Bartlett's test were used which gave sampling adequacy above .871 which is above par of the value of .05 (Table 5)

Principal Component Analysis when applied initially resulted in two factors having a variance of 55.993 percent. First factor has an EIGEN value of 4.35 having a variance 43.516 percent. Second factor has an EIGEN value of value of 1.248 having a variance of 12.477 percent. Only factors having an EIGEN value of greater than one are accepted as per principles of Factor Analysis Method.

Rotation method explained the significant factor loadings associated with the two factors given in Table 7. Component 1 has five factor loadings from .814 to .627. Second component has four factor loadings from .769 to .583. The components are termed as 'Loyalty' and 'Commitment' (Table 8).

Further one way analysis of variance on the basis of employee role i.e. (EMT

& Pilot) was conducted on components extracted in Factor Analysis- Principal Component with Varimax Rotation Method. All nine variables hypothesis testing of Component 1 and Component 2 have been taken for one way ANOVA. The results are shown in Table 9. The relationships are not significant. Hence we accept Ho for all hypotheses. Thus there is no significant relationship between the variables.

**Table 7 Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>**

	Component	
	1	2
VAR00008	.814	
VAR00001	.773	
VAR00007	.772	
VAR00002	.697	
VAR00009	.627	
VAR00003		
VAR00004		.769
VAR00006		.761
VAR00005		.730
VAR00010		.583

Extraction Method: Principle Component Analysis.

Rotation Method: Varimax with Kaiser Normalization

a. Rotation converged in 3 iterations.

**Table 8 Rotated Component Matrix as Loyalty & Commitment**

	Component	
	1 LOYALTY	2 COMMITMENT
Genuine Concerns are resolved	0.814	
Satisfied with G.R.S	0.773	
Top Management Views and Concerns in delay	0.772	
Satisfied with time taken to resolve	0.697	
Encourage colleagues to raise their genuine needs	0.627	
Procedure is easy and simple		0.769
Immediate Supervisor shows no negativity		0.761
Empathy and proper care from G.R.S		0.730
Belief in G.D.R system		0.583

**Table 9 Hypothesis Testing Result from One Way ANOVA for Component 1 & 2**

Component	Variable	F	Sig.	Result
1	I am happy and satisfied about the grievance redressal system of V- Care	3	0.08	P >0.05, Not significant
1	I am satisfied with the time taken to resolve concerns raised through V- Care	0.02	0.88	P >0.05, Not significant
2	V-Care adequately gathers all information. about grievance	1.59	0.21	P >0.05, Not significant
2	The procedure of V- Care is easy and simple	1.09	0.3	P >0.05, Not significant
2	When I raise grievance, the V- Care desk receives call with empathy and proper care	2.22	0.14	P >0.05, Not significant
1	My immediate supervisor never shouts at me for raising V- Care	0.07	0.79	P >0.05, Not significant
1	Top management takes serious view of delay in resolving V- Care issues & helps in taking prompt action if delayed	0.22	0.64	P >0.05, Not significant
1	I believe that my genuine concerns are properly resolved through V-Care	0.24	0.63	P >0.05, Not significant
2	I believe that, GVK EMRI takes proper care of its employees	1.33	0.25	P >0.05, Notsignificant

As per the findings, in the current situation, the cadre of EMTs and Pilots who are working in the ambulances are contented to have a system for grievance handling called V-care. They are happy about its functioning. All employees taken in the study seem to be satisfied with factor loadings of component 1 and component 2 i.e. working grievance redressal system of V- care resolves concerns raised, gathers all information about the grievance and the procedure is simple and easy. V-care desk receives call for grievance with empathy and proper care, immediate supervisors never shout, top management takes serious actions if required, genuine concerns are resolved and takes proper care of its employees.

### Managerial Implications

The results show a bright future of GVK EMRI in Gujarat as the employees sample is loyal and committed to organization policies and procedures. This is the scenario for the organization at present but sufficient measures have to be implemented to preserve the same level in future. Factor Component1 constructed upon the basis of unalterable facts that constitute a personal connection between the subject and the object of the loyalty. Loyalties differ in strength. They can

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range from supreme loyalties, which override all other considerations to merely presumptive loyalties that affect one's presumptions, providing but one motivation for action that is weighed against other motivations. Factor Component 2 depicts emotional commitment, means engaged employees actually care about their work and their company. The same is validated in hypothesis testing of nine variables using One way Analysis of Variance in which all are not significant. They do not work just for a paycheck, or just for the next promotion, but work to achieve the organization's goals.

### Conclusion

The survey was about grievance handling system which has been conducted on 252 employees of GVK EMRI which helps to understand and assess the employees' concern about the grievance handling system implemented in the organization. This is a case of win-win situation for the organization, its employees as well as its grievance redressal system.

### Limitations

1. The study is limited to a single organization.
2. The study is confined to field ambulance staff of GVK EMRI
2. Comparative studies can be done across organizations, sectors and geographical locations.
3. Further longitudinal studies can be undertaken.

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