



Antiquated Settlement Practices: Eye-Opener for Improving Grievance Machinery

Jennifer V. Castellano¹

¹College of Arts and Sciences, Mindanao State University Buug Campus, Buug, Zamboanga Sibugay
Email: jennifer.castillano@msubuug.edu.ph

ABSTRACT

The study investigates the grievance settlement process for poor interpersonal relationships at Mindanao State University – Buug (MSU-Buug), aligning it with Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 02, S. 2001. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research utilizes case study and process-tracing methods to analyze seven grievance cases. Findings reveal a dual approach to settlement involving ad hoc committees and senior officials, influenced by cultural norms, particularly among Maranao parties. Procedures vary widely, from extensive dialogues to expedited resolutions, often achieving superficial outcomes to prevent escalation. Significant shortcomings include low awareness of established policies among committee members and aggrieved parties, contributing to procedural inconsistencies. While strengths include prompt action and flexibility, weaknesses in policy adherence hinder effectiveness, failing to foster harmony and productivity among the parties. The study emphasizes the need for policy awareness campaigns and procedural standardization to enhance grievance handling efficacy and organizational justice at MSU-Buug. Future research should further explore these dynamics to refine conflict resolution strategies and promote a supportive workplace environment.

Keywords: settlement practices; grievance machinery; public sector

1 INTRODUCTION

This study proceeds from the basic premise that the grievance committee of Mindanao State University – Buug (MSU-Buug) in Zamboanga Sibugay performs a significant role in the implementation of Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 02, S. 2001 dated January 26, 2001 otherwise known as “Revised Policies on the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector” aimed at settling grievances and performing responsibilities for the promotion of harmony in the workplace and foster productivity of each member of the organization by providing basic policies with which government agencies must comply. These basic policies pertain to the constitution and composition of the grievance committees, their responsibilities, and the procedures for settling grievances.

The paper describes and analyzes the grievance settlement process through the grievance machinery, emphasizing the constitution and composition of the grievance committee, their responsibilities, and the procedures for arriving at grievance settlements. On the belief that mere existence of grievance machinery will not assure the successful handling of grievances and that certain characteristics should be present in the procedures for its success (Gamage and Hewagama, 2007), this paper also examines the elements and/or factors affecting the process of grievance settlement and the salient

features that would be useful in describing the nature and process of grievance settlement.

This is an exploratory study that uncovered how MSU-Buug grievance machinery settled poor interpersonal relationship grievances. It is also descriptive because it provides facts about what MSU-Buug grievance machinery is through a review and study of seven (7) cases involving poor interpersonal relations by utilizing the case study method, process-tracing procedure, questionnaires, interviews, and document review.

Numerous factors in the workplace affect employee productivity, whether in the private or public sector. Among them are work-related issues that give rise to employees’ dissatisfaction, known as grievances (Saeed et.al., 2013). Acknowledging this fact and to foster productivity of each member of the organization, the Civil Service Commission issued Memorandum Circular No. 02, S. 2001 dated January 26, 2001 re: Revised Policies on the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector. The Mindanao State University-Buug at Zamboanga Sibugay, a public higher educational institution, is among the recipients of MC No. 02, S. 2001. As such, it is mandated to settle grievances in accordance with the Revised Policies on the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector.

Conflict can occur at any time and place within a healthy organization (Daft and Castro, 2017). As a government agency, MSU-Buug is not exempt from conflicts such as interpersonal disagreements. Being an organization of individuals with different behaviors, grievances are natural occurrences. When things like these happen, MSU Buug constitutes Ad Hoc Committees to resolve them, or the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or Office of the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance with the Campus officials act to settle the same, or the Chancellor himself settles it.

In order to describe and analyze the MSU-Buug grievance machinery to settle poor interpersonal relations vis-à-vis the basic policies laid down in CM No. 02, s. 2001, the researcher studied how grievances were settled, the constitution and composition of the grievance committee, the procedure they practiced in settling poor interpersonal relations grievances, the elements and/or factors affecting the process of grievance settlement, and the salient features that were useful in describing the nature and process of grievance settlement in order to address the gap of limited empirical research on the extent of compliance with Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 02, s. 2001, specifically within the context of poor interpersonal relations grievance settlement practices at MSU-Buug. This gap is critical because effective grievance resolution hinges on adherence to established policies and guidelines, which are designed to ensure fairness, transparency, and procedural consistency. Understanding the degree of compliance with these standards is essential for evaluating the efficacy of MSU-Buug's grievance machinery in promoting harmony and productivity in the workplace.

1.1 Significance of the Study

This study is significant to the MSU-Buug administration, in particular, and to all public administrators, in general. Its significance is justified for numbers of reasons. First, the outcome of the study is expected to provide the MSU-Buug administration with a basis for the constitution of a proactive grievance committee. Second, it will serve as a catalyst for the grievance committee members to develop their capabilities in grievance settlement. Third, it will call for the improvement of the procedure of the existing grievance machinery to conform to the Commission's mandate. Fourth, the outcome of this study will definitely help the MSU-Buug Campus as it will serve as a valuable guide in improving its grievance machinery, thereby improving interpersonal relationships among employees and resulting in a more productive organization. Fifth, the outcome of the study may serve as a useful reference in understanding and conceptualizing the settlement of grievances in the workplace. As such, this study will serve as a guide to other researchers who will conduct similar research on grievance machinery in the public sector. As grievances can affect harmony in the workplace and the productivity of individual members in every organization, this study will serve as an eye-opener for other public administrators to act in order to improve their own grievance machinery by complying with CSC CM No. 02, s. 2001.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

This study examines the resolution of problems or complaints at MSU-Buug, focusing on the processes undertaken by the grievance committee responsible for handling these issues. The researcher aims to investigate the factors influencing the outcomes of grievance settlements and assess the alignment of these procedures with CSC CM No. 02, s. 2001 guidelines. Additionally, the study seeks

to identify the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the current grievance resolution system. Finally, the researcher explores how enhancements to this system can contribute to fostering a more harmonious and productive environment within the campus community.

1.3 Scope and Limitations of the Study

A grievance is a sign of an employee's discontentment with his/her job or his/her relationship with his/her colleagues, senior or juniors (Domzone, 2017). This study, however, describes and critically examines the settlement practices of the MSU-Buug grievance committee on poor interpersonal relationships *only*. It focuses on the composition of the committee, the procedures involved in arriving at settlements of grievances, the elements and/or factors affecting the process of grievance settlement, the salient features that describe the nature and process of grievance settlement, and the strengths and weaknesses of the MSU-Buug grievance machinery.

Unfortunately, this study is fraught with limitations. First, there are *only* seven (7) grievance settlements involving poor interpersonal relationships investigated using the case study method and process tracing procedure thereby limiting the generalizability of the study's conclusion. Second, there is limitation in measure validity due to the use of a non-validated and non-pilot tested questionnaire resulting into reduced validity and lower reliability. Third, the research activity is bound by limits of time and space and thus was conducted under time constraints and within the researchers' workplace only. Nevertheless, through the application of the case study method, process-tracing procedure, interviews, questionnaires, and document review, the study provides a thorough understanding of the poor interpersonal relations grievance settlement process at MSU-Buug. By examining compliance with regulatory frameworks and identifying areas for improvement, the study intends to contribute valuable insights for enhancing the effectiveness of the grievance machinery for fostering a harmonious and productive work environment within the organization. Also, the study presents a foundation for future research.

2 RELATED LITERATURE

Grievance resolutions in the Philippines are regulated by the Civil Service Commission (CSC) Memorandum Circular No. 02, issued in 2001, which underscores the importance of procedural equity, transparency, and prompt resolution of grievances within the public sphere (Civil Service Commission [CSC], 2001) to address work-related issues in the Philippines' public sector, promoting harmony and productivity while prohibiting legal counsel involvement. Along this line, empirical studies of grievance handling practices were reviewed to understand the grievance machinery.

To know the importance of procedural equity in grievance settlement, De Vera (2015) investigated the effectiveness of grievance mechanisms in local government units (LGUs), focusing on procedural fairness, accessibility, and responsiveness to employee concerns. He found that grievance mechanisms in LGUs are effective when procedural fairness is prioritized for trust and satisfaction, accessibility to the process is clear and easy and responsiveness is demonstrated through prompt addressing of grievances. His recommendations for improvement include transparency, clear communication, and efficient handling of grievances. For him, these factors influence employee satisfaction, trust, and organizational

climate.

Further, procedural equity and transparency were highlighted in the study conducted by Castillo and Ramos (2017). In their study, they explored the influence of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice on employee satisfaction and outcomes related to grievance resolution. The findings of the study revealed the following: (1) that employees perceived distributive justice, which refers to the fairness of outcomes and rewards, as significantly influencing their satisfaction with grievance resolution; (2) fair and equitable distribution of outcomes following grievance resolution contributes positively to employee satisfaction; (3) that procedural justice, which pertains to the fairness of the procedures used in grievance handling, is crucial; (4) employees who perceive procedural fairness are more likely to accept the outcomes of grievance resolution, even if they do not entirely agree with the decision; (5) interactional justice, which focuses on the interpersonal treatment like respect and transparent communication during grievance handling, enhances their satisfaction with the overall process; (6) that perceptions of distributive, procedural, and interactional justice collectively influence employee morale, trust in the organization, and willingness to engage in the grievance process; and (7) positive experiences with grievance resolution can lead to improved organizational commitment and reduced turnover intentions among employees. Based on their findings, Castillo and Ramos recommended organizations to enhance distributive justice by ensuring fair and transparent outcomes, improve procedural justice through clear and consistent grievance procedures, and promote interactional justice by training grievance handlers in effective communication and empathy.

Along with procedural equity and transparency requirements comes the lack of awareness or understanding of grievance policies among employees and management making the grievance settlement more challenging. In a study by Bautista and Santos in 2016, focused on the perception and comprehension of grievance policies within an organization, limited knowledge among both employees and management was revealed. The implications of this lack of awareness include under reported grievances due to uncertainty about procedures, inconsistent handling of raised grievances, and potential reflections of broader issues in organizational communication and trust. Recommendations based on these findings involve improving communication and training on grievance policies, ensuring clarity in procedures, fostering openness and trust, and updating policies to align with best practices and legal requirements.

In summary, when grievances are handed fairly, transparently, and promptly by following the grievance procedures outlined in the policy, employees are more likely to trust the system, feel satisfied with the outcome, and have positive view of the organization as a whole. It is essential for the organization to promote fairness, transparency and awareness of grievance policies to create a positive and trusting work environment.

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This study aims to explore and analyze the grievance settlement process for poor interpersonal relationships at Mindanao State University – Buug (MSU-Buug) in Zamboanga Sibugay, focusing on its alignment with Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 02, S. 2001. This circular outlines policies for grievance resolution in the public sector, emphasizing the role of grievance settlements in promoting workplace harmony and productivity. The study utilizes a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative and quantitative techniques to achieve its objectives.

The methodology employs two primary research methods: the case study method and process-tracing procedure. These methods are chosen for their ability to provide in-depth insights into the grievance settlement processes and to trace the procedures followed in specific cases of poor interpersonal relationships. Also, triangulation was used as research strategy in the hope of enhancing the credibility and validity of findings by combining interview, survey and document review in view of the failure of the researcher to use validated and pilot-tested questionnaire.

To examine and analyze the settlement practices of MSU-Buug grievance committee, case study method was employed. Seven cases of grievance settlements related to poor interpersonal relationships were studied by reviewing the minutes and special orders relevant to the cases under study. Data from case studies were analyzed qualitatively to describe the constitution and composition of the grievance committee, and the procedural steps involved in settling poor interpersonal relationship grievances.

To trace and understand the procedural steps followed in grievance settlement for poor interpersonal relationships at MSU-Buug, process tracing procedure was employed. This method involves examination of the sequence of events and decisions made during grievance handling through document review. Documents were reviewed to gather data on the chronological unfolding of poor interpersonal relationship grievance settlements and the adherence to procedural guidelines.

3.2 Data Collection Instruments

The data for this research was gathered through interviews, structured questionnaires, review of special orders, other pertinent documents and minutes of the poor interpersonal relationship grievance settlements. The interviews focus on understanding the settlement process, assessing compliance with policies, and gauging stakeholder perspectives on grievance handling while the structured questionnaires were distributed to gather quantitative data on the grievance machinery's compliance with CSC CM No. 02, S. 2001. These surveys are designed to elicit specific responses that can be quantitatively analyzed to measure adherence to procedural standards. The minutes of the poor interpersonal grievance settlements as well as other pertinent documents were reviewed, examined and summarized through narratives to gain insights and information relevant to the cases.

3.3 Respondents

The respondents in this research were the Chancellor, the grievance

committee members, and the aggrieved parties. The Chancellor provided insights into the composition and rationale behind the grievance committee constitution and composition. The grievance committee members, on the other hand, provided data necessary to identify the alignment or non-alignment of MSU-Buug poor interpersonal relations grievance settlement with Civil Service Commission Memorandum Circular No. 02, S. 2001. Moreover, the aggrieved parties provided feedback on their experiences with the grievance machinery and the perceived impact of these experiences on their harmony and productivity.

3.4 Data Gathering Procedure

This study has for its coverage the grievance settlement of poor interpersonal relations of MSU-Buug Campus. As such, the researcher sought the permission of the Chancellor and the issuance of a special order authorizing the conduct of the research, to gather the data needed and to access official records, special orders, minutes of the meetings and other pertinent documents which had a bearing on the study. Special Order No. 265-OC, s. 2017 was issued signaling the start of data gathering through questionnaire, interview and document review. Questionnaires were disseminated among the targeted respondents, ensuring uniformity and objectivity in responses. Interviews were conducted based on an interview guide to maintain consistency and focus on research objectives. Relevant documents such as special orders, minutes of the grievance settlement and other documents pertaining to the poor interpersonal relations grievance cases were reviewed and collated to construct narratives on the sequence of events and decisions made during the conduct of poor interpersonal relations grievance settlements.

3.5 Data Analysis

The study employs quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis. Data from questionnaires are analyzed using simple frequency counts and percentages to assess compliance with CSC CM No. 02, S. 2001 while data from interviews and documents review were subjected to narrative thematic analysis. Instead of the traditional coding of isolated data segments, the researcher constructed narratives of each of the seven (7) poor interpersonal relations grievance settlement in order to shed light on the procedural steps taken. Fish bone analysis was also employed to understand the conformance or non-conformance of the MSU-Buug grievance machinery with CSC CM No. 02, S. 2001.

4 RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Grievances in MSU-Buug are settled either by a grievance committee constituted for the purpose or by the Chancellor, the Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs or the Vice Chancellor for Administration and Finance, with some MSU-Buug officials in attendance.

As observed, in two (2) cases that occurred, a grievance committee was constituted for the purpose of settling the grievance at hand. Thereafter, grievances were settled by MSU-Buug officials, either by the Chancellor or any of the Vice Chancellors. It is further observed that when one of the parties to the grievance is a Maranao, their culture and tradition interface in the conduct of settlement, thereby making the grievance machinery complex.

In the settlement of grievances, the procedures adopted vary from one case to another. In the first case, a series of meetings were held until an amicable settlement was reached. Additionally, family members' decision was given weight by the committee, and a dialogue was conducted. In the second case, the grievance was resolved on the same day as the investigation. The respondent was informed of the reason for the meeting and the grievance. The settlement proceeded with a direct questioning technique in the absence of the aggrieved parties. Despite the absence of the aggrieved parties, the settlement yielded positive results. In the third case, since the parties to the grievance were Maranaos, the "katitimo" or meeting and "kapamangthuma" or sermon were employed. The grievance was addressed on the same day as the incident, preventing the problem from escalating into a "ridu" or clan war, but genuine reconciliation was not achieved. In the fourth case, the settlement began with a prayer and introductory advice. Both the grievant and respondent were given the opportunity to be heard as a technique for settling the problem, resulting in the reconciliation of the parties. Similar to the fourth case, due process was observed in the fifth case. Both parties were given the opportunity to speak and present their sides of the story, and witnesses were allowed to testify. However, the grievance was not successfully resolved as reconciliation was not achieved. In the sixth case, the settlement began with introductory advice on the importance of marriage and family life. Afterwards, the aggrieved party was allowed to speak and the respondent to respond. However, reconciliation was unlikely. In the seventh case, since both parties involved were Maranaos, the "katitimo" or meeting and "kapamangthuma" or sermon were employed again. Both parties were allowed to meet face to face in the hope of reconciliation, but the opposite result was achieved. There was no reconciliation.

The elements and/or factors affecting grievance settlement in MSU-Buug can be gleaned from all the cases studied. Reconciliation was not fully achieved due to the interface of culture and tradition in settling problems within MSU-Buug. The Maranao pride, or "maratabat" and the Maranao culture of kinship, together with the relationship of the conciliator to both parties, affected the conduct of settlement as well as the outcome. Additionally, superficial reconciliation, just to avoid "ridu" did not result in genuine settlement. However, the most notable factor that affects grievance settlement in MSU-Buug which is evident in all of the cases, is MSU-Buug's non-cognizance of the proper protocol in the settlement of grievances. This means that neither the rank-and-file nor supervisory personnel on campus are familiar with the proper ways of settling grievances.

To describe the nature and process of grievance settlement in MSU-Buug, salient features serve as guides. In Case No. 1, the grievance committee was constituted upon receipt of a letter from the respondent and not from the aggrieved party. In addition, the respondent's willingness to swear on the Holy Qur'an and sign the Oath of Affirmation not to threaten the aggrieved party again are salient features of the settlement discovered in this case. In Case No. 2, the notable feature is that the grievance was between the students and the instructor communicated through the Director of Student Affairs. It is not a grievance per our definition, but by virtue of a special order, it became one and was therefore cognizable by the grievance committee. In Case No. 3, the most notable feature in the settlement is the method used by the Chancellor of hearing each party separately without informing the other party of the alle-

gations imputed upon them. Furthermore, the expeditious settlement was not intended to reconcile the parties but rather to avoid “ridu.” In Case No. 4, the notable feature is the improper channel and venue of the settlement. This is furthered by Case No. 5 and Case No. 6, where the grievant had no knowledge of where to file their complaints, and the conciliator had no cognizance of the proper procedure for settling employee grievances. In Case No. 7, the settlement looked more of a family dispute resolution than a resolution of a grievance in the public sector. In all of the examined cases, the grievance settlements were not conducted in accordance with the Revised Policies in the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector, commonly known as Memorandum Circular No. 02, s. 2001 or CSC MC No. 02, s. 2001.

4.1 Analysis of MSU-Buug Grievance Machinery vis-à-vis Memorandum Circular No. 02, s. 2001

Considering the adoption of the Revised Policy on the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector, an analysis of MSU-Buug’s system for settling grievances with reference to the provisions of the aforementioned policy is had. The following tables will reveal whether or not MSU-Buug’s settlement practices are in conformity with the policy.

4.1.1 Responses of the grievance committee members or person/group of persons who resolved the grievance

TABLE 1
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THERE A GRIEVANCE, VERBAL OR WRITTEN, BEFORE YOU ACTED UPON IT?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	5	0	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0

The table shows that in Case No. 1, Case No. 2, Case No. 4, Case No. 5, Case No. 6 and Case No. 7, 100% of the respondents said that there was grievance received before they acted upon it while in Case No. 3, 100% of the respondents said that there was no grievance received.

TABLE 2
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THE GRIEVANCE SETTLED BY THE IMMEDIATE SUPERVISOR OR NEXT HIGHER SUPERVISOR, AS THE CASE MAY BE?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	0	8	0	10	1	0	0	3	0	1	0	5	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	0	100	0	100	100	0	0	100	0	100	0	100	100	0

The above table shows that in Cases Nos. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance was not settled by the immediate supervisor or the next higher supervisor while in Cases Nos. 3 and 4, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance was resolved by the immediate supervisor.

TABLE 3
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THERE A COMMITTEE CONSTITUTED TO ACT UPON THE GRIEVANCE?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	0	1
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100

The table above shows that in Cases Nos. 1 and 2, 100% of the respondents said that there was a committee constituted to act upon the grievance while in Cases Nos. 3,4,5,6, and 7, 100% of the respondents said that there was no committee constituted to act upon the grievance.

TABLE 4
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“IF YES, WAS THE CONSTITUTION BASED ON THEIR INTEGRITY, PROBITY, SINCERITY AND CREDIBILITY?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---

The table shows that in Case No. 1 and Case No. 2, 100% of the respondents said that the constitution of the grievance committee was based on their integrity, probity, sincerity, and credibility. in Cases No. 3,4,5,6, and 7, the question is not applicable since there was no grievance committee constituted to settle the grievance.

TABLE 5
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“AS PERSON WHO SETTLED THE GRIEVANCE, WERE YOU AWARE OF THE REVISED POLICY IN THE SETTLEMENT OF GRIEVANCES IN THE PUBLIC SECTOR?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	0	8	0	10	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	0	1
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100

The table above shows that 100% of the respondents, who are persons who settled the grievances in all cases under study, said that they were not aware of the Revised Policy in the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector.

TABLE 6
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THE GRIEVANCE ACTED UPON WITHIN TEN (10) WORKING DAYS FROM RECEIPT OF THE GRIEVANCE?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	0	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0

The table above shows that 100% of the respondents in all seven (7) cases stated that the grievance was addressed within ten (10) working days from the receipt of the grievance.

TABLE 7
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THERE A DECISION WITHIN FIVE (5) WORKING DAYS AFTER INVESTIGATION?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	0	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0

The table above shows that 100% of the respondents in all seven (7) cases said that a decision was made within five working days after the investigation.

TABLE 11
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“DID YOU KNOW WHERE TO CHANNEL YOUR GRIEVANCE?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	1
Total	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Percentage	0	100	100	0	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100

The above table shows that in Cases 1, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, 100% of the aggrieved parties did not know where to channel their grievances, while in Case No. 2, 100% of the aggrieved party knew.

TABLE 8
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“WAS THERE A CONDUCT OF DIALOGUE BETWEEN AND AMONG THE PARTIES INVOLVED?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	8	0	10	0	0	1	3	0	1	0	5	0	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0

The table above shows that 100% of the respondents in Cases No. 1, 2, 4, 5, 6 and 7 said that there was a dialogue conducted between and among the parties involved, while 100% of the respondents in Case No. 3 said that there was no dialogue conducted.

TABLE 9
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“CAN YOU CONSIDER THE GRIEVANCE AS EXPEDITIOUSLY RESOLVED?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	0	8	10	0	1	0	3	0	1	0	5	0	1	0
Total	8		10		1		3		1		5		1	
Percentage	0	100	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0

The above table shows that in Case No. 1, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance was not expeditiously resolved. However, in Cases No. 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, and 7, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance was expeditiously resolved.

4.1.2 Responses of the aggrieved parties

TABLE 10
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“ARE YOU AWARE THAT THERE IS GRIEVANCE MACHINERY IN MSU-BUUG?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1
Total	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	100

The above table shows that in Cases No. 1, 2, 4, 5 and 6, 100% of the aggrieved parties said that they were aware that there is a grievance machinery in MSU-Buug while in Cases No. 3 and 7, the aggrieved parties stated that they were not aware.

TABLE 12
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“ARE YOU SATISFIED OF THE CONDUCT OF SETTLEMENT DONE ON YOUR GRIEVANCE?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	1	0	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	1	0
Total	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	100	0

The above table shows that in Cases No. 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 and 7, 100% of the respondents were satisfied with the conduct done on their grievances. However, in Case No. 5, 100% of the respondent was not satisfied.

TABLE 13
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“DID THE GRIEVANCE MACHINERY PROMOTE HARMONY IN MSU-BUUG?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Total	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	0	100	0	100	0	100

The above table shows that in Case No. 1, 2, and 4, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance machinery promoted harmony in MSU-Buug while in Case Nos. 3, 5, 6 and 7, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance machinery did not promote harmony in MSU-Buug.

TABLE 14
RESPONSES TO QUESTION
“IN GENERAL, DID THE GRIEVANCE MACHINERY HELP FOSTER/ENCOURAGE PRODUCTIVITY IN MSU-BUUG?”

Case Study	1		2		3		4		5		6		7	
Answer	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No
No. of Responses	1	0	1	0	0	1	1	0	0	1	0	1	0	1
Total	1		1		1		1		1		1		1	
Percentage	100	0	100	0	0	100	100	0	0	100	0	100	0	100

The above table shows that in Cases Nos. 1, 2, and 4, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance machinery fosters productivity in MSU-Buug. However, in Cases Nos. 3, 5, 6 and 7, 100% of the respondents said that the grievance machinery did not foster productivity in MSU-Buug.

4.2 Strengths

Based on the findings, the following are the strengths of MSU-Buug grievance machinery: settlements commence after receipt of the grievance; constitution of grievance committees is based on the members' integrity, probity, sincerity, and credibility; grievances are addressed within ten (10) working days from the receipt of the

grievance; grievances are decided upon within five (5) working days after investigation; dialogues are conducted between and among the parties involved; and grievances are expeditiously resolved.

4.3 Weaknesses

As proven in this study, the weaknesses of MSU-Buug grievance machinery are as follows: grievances are not settled at the proper level; the Chancellor, Grievance Committee members, immediate supervisor/next higher supervisor, and aggrieved party are not aware of the Revised Policy in the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector; aggrieved parties do not know where to channel their grievances; and in the context of the aggrieved parties to poor interpersonal relations grievance settlements, the grievance machinery does not promote harmony and does not foster productivity in the workplace.

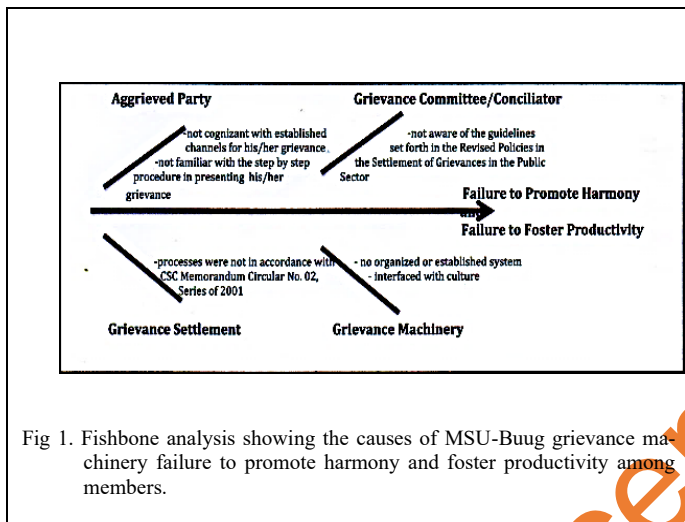


Fig 1. Fishbone analysis showing the causes of MSU-Buug grievance machinery failure to promote harmony and foster productivity among members.

5 CONCLUSION

Based on the findings presented, the grievance machinery at MSU-Buug reveals a complex landscape marked by varying approaches and outcomes in resolving grievances. The study underscores several critical observations. Firstly, grievances at MSU-Buug are primarily settled either by specially constituted committees or by senior officials such as the Chancellor or Vice Chancellors, often with the involvement of MSU-Buug officials. This dual approach indicates a decentralized yet potentially inconsistent method of handling grievances. Secondly, cultural and traditional factors significantly influence the grievance settlement process, particularly when one of the parties involved is Maranao. Practices such as "katitimo" (meeting) and "kapamangthuma" (sermon) are employed, highlighting the intersection of cultural norms with formal grievance procedures. Thirdly, the procedures adopted for grievance settlement vary widely across cases, ranging from extensive dialogues and multiple meetings to expedited resolutions conducted on the same day as the incident. Despite efforts to resolve issues promptly, genuine reconciliation is not consistently achieved, which may lead to superficial outcomes aimed at averting larger conflicts rather than addressing underlying issues comprehensively. Moreover, a notable finding is the lack of awareness and adherence

to established policies and guidelines, such as the Civil Service Memorandum Circular No. 02, s. 2001, among both grievance committee members and aggrieved parties. The aggrieved parties and the grievance committee members are not cognizant of the step by step process from the filing of the grievance at the lowest level possible to the opportunity to present the grievance step by step following the hierarchy of positions if not settled at the lowest level contributes significantly to procedural inconsistencies and undermines the effectiveness of the grievance resolution process.

In conclusion, while MSU-Buug's grievance machinery demonstrates strengths in prompt action and procedural flexibility, its weaknesses in policy awareness and procedural adherence hinder its ability to promote harmony and productivity effectively, per aggrieved parties' context. In the context of the aggrieved parties, the grievance at MSU-Buug did not foster harmony and productivity in the workplace. This implies that the aggrieved parties experienced dissatisfaction or unresolved issues that affected their perception of fairness or justice within the workplace and the grievance handling process or the resolution itself may have been perceived as inadequate, leading to continued discord or discontent among those involved. As a result, instead of resolving conflicts and promoting a positive work environment, the grievance process at MSU-Buug failed to address underlying issues effectively.

This conclusion underscores the paramount importance of adhering to established policies and practices to ensure fair and efficient resolution of grievances, thereby cultivating a work environment that promotes productivity and harmony among all stakeholders at MSU-Buug. It is also suggested that an information dissemination campaign regarding the Revised Policies in the Settlement of Grievances in the Public Sector be carried out among the MSU-Buug community, along with proactive measures such as employee assemblies, "talakayan" sessions, counseling, and other related activities conducted at least once per quarter. Moreover, given the limited generalizability, diminished validity, and reduced reliability of the study due to the utilization of non-validated and non-pilot tested research instruments, as well as the emergence of gaps in policy compliance and awareness, cultural sensitivity, grievance handling, consistency and standardization, effectiveness of grievance resolution, and educational interventions and capacity building, further investigations are warranted to gain a more profound insight into the dynamics and challenges within the MSU-Buug grievance mechanism in order to enhance organizational justice and conflict resolution practices in similar settings.

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