

Problem of Absenteeism in Industry

Akshit Batra, Dr. Rama Srivastava

Master Of Social Work

*Department of Social Work of Amity Institute of Social Sciences
(Amity University, Noida)*

Date of Submission: 05-05-2024

Date of Acceptance: 15-05-2024

ABSTRACT

Absenteeism poses a significant challenge for the Indian industry, impacting productivity and economic stability. This study delves into the causes, consequences, and management strategies related to absenteeism in the context of a lactogen manufacturing industry. Through a descriptive research design, data was collected from 60 respondents using structured questionnaires and interviews. Findings revealed that absenteeism averages 2-4 days per month, predominantly attributed to health and family issues rather than alcoholism or political engagements. Management typically responds with deductions in pay and warnings for frequent absentees, though counselling facilities are also provided. Despite positive workplace relationships, absenteeism remains a concern, prompting recommendations such as health and wellness programs, family support services, and flexible work arrangements. By addressing the root causes of absenteeism and fostering a supportive work environment, the industry can enhance productivity and employee well-being.

I. INTRODUCTION

Absenteeism is one of the major challenges faced by Indian industry. Absenteeism is the failure of employees to report for work when they are scheduled to work. Employees who are away from work on recognized holidays, vacations, approved leaves of absence or approved leaves of absence would not be included. Absenteeism is becoming a serious practice in labour-oriented industries especially large industries where number of employees recruited are high. It is a matter of prime concern for the supervisors and managers. They have to find the ways to overcome absenteeism. Absenteeism not only affects the production loss but also causes reduction of gross national income, when the gross income of workmen reduces naturally the buying capacity of the labourers also reduces.

When they are not capable to manage their primary and secondary needs timely and properly it adds to the complexity of leading a fulfilled life. He has to face problems like poor family harmony, poor health, increased mental and physical tiredness which will again lead to absenting from work. Absenteeism is a major problem which adversely affects the entire industrial economy. The problem of absenteeism is of vital importance in Indian organizations because in comparison to the west, the rate is considerably higher in India. Absenteeism among workers is one the most establishing factors. In an organization, it results in production losses; an increase labour cost and reduces efficiency of operation. The losses and additional costs caused by absenteeism expressed in terms of money will be alarming.

The increased productivity of an industry mainly depends upon the best possible use of man power which is the most valuable and hampers the entire production process. It is a problem which needs everybody's attention. The effect of absenteeism in industrial productions cannot be measured easily. The Higher absenteeism greater the production loss for the country. People who are working in industry and other areas related to the industrial production also suffer.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

- The Labour Bureau (1962) defines, absenteeism as the total shifts lost because of absence as percentage of the total number of man shifts.
- Ernest B. Akyeampong (1995) has written a research paper Trends and Seasonality in Absenteeism. In this paper the author focus on that at which time period the employees are highly absent. In this paper he said that illness related absences are highly seasonal, reaching a peak during the winter months (December to February) and through during to Summer months (June to August).
- Mariajose Remero and "Young-Sun Lee has written a research paper A National Portrait of

Chronic Absenteeism in the Early Grades. In this paper he focused on the following points”.

- How widespread is the problem of early absenteeism?

- Does family income impact early absenteeism?
- What is the impact of early absenteeism on academic achievement?

- Ruchi Sinha (2010) in her reveals that there only 4% employees remain away from their work and that too due to personal reasons. There is very high level of job satisfaction among the employees.

- The CBS Interactive Network, (2007) “Reducing and Managing Workplace Absenteeism”, Productivity loss due to absenteeism is a serious and growing challenge. In the United States, the annual cost to employers for time lost due to accidents is almost \$100 billion, and other unscheduled worker absences costs even more. Absence management is a growing body of knowledge and experience that managers apply to the control and reduction of these costs.

- Muchinsky (1997) “Studies examining the psychometric properties of absence measures are reviewed, along with the relationship between absenteeism and personal, attitudinal and organizational variables chronic absentees into four categories such as; entrepreneurs, status seekers, family oriented and sick and old.”

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

- To identify the causes for the absenteeism.
- To know the consequences of the absenteeism.
- To know the steps taken by management to reduce absenteeism.
- To know about social work intervention.

CONCEPT

Absenteeism is a serious workplace problem and an expensive occurrence for both employers and employees seemingly unpredictable in nature. Legitimate illnesses still account for the majority of employee absences, but some studies have shown that less than one-third of absences from the workplace are related to poor health. A satisfactory level of attendance by employees at work is necessary to allow the achievement of objectives and targets by a department. Employee Absenteeism is the absence of an employee from work. It is a major problem faced by almost all employers of today. Employees are absent from work and thus the work suffers. Absenteeism of employees from work leads to back logs, piling of work and thus work delay.

Absenteeism causes production loss as well as also causes reduction of gross national income, when the gross wage of labourers reduces

normally his purchasing capability additionally reduces if he or she couldn't deal with the essential and optional needs of timely and properly. He or she needs to face issues like poor family harmony, more mental and physical tiredness which will again lead to absenting from work Absenteeism is the term generally used to refer to unscheduled employee absences from the work place.

Absenteeism means the failure of a worker to report for work when he or she scheduled to work. A worker is considered as scheduled to work when the employer has work available for him and the worker is aware of it. When a worker does not report for work after obtaining prior permission it is not absenteeism. Absenteeism is unauthorized, avoidable and wilful absence from duty. As such absence of a worker an account of strike or lockout or layoff i.e. involuntary absence is not considered absenteeism. Any worker who reports for duty even for a part of the day or shifts is considered present.

Absenteeism and turnover of employees are serious problems of industry in all countries. These problems are caused by several factors and they have many undesirable consequences. Therefore, managers are concerned about these problems and strive to check them so as to maintain efficiency and stability in industry. One of the biggest risks to Indian industry is absenteeism. Employees that fail to show up for work on time are considered absentees.

Workers absent from the workplace due to authorised leaves of absence, vacation, or recognised holidays would not be counted. In labour-intensive businesses, particularly in large ones where workers are employed in significant quantities, absenteeism is becoming a major trend. For managers and supervisors, it is a major worry. They must figure out how to combat absenteeism. Absenteeism leading to inadequate plant utilisation India is dealing with two issues: abnormal absenteeism in industries if absenteeism may be decreased, and unemployment on the one hand. Our gross domestic product can be increased without any investments. In addition to decreasing productivity, absenteeism lowers the gross national income because, when workers' earnings decline, their ability to make purchases decreases as well if they are unable to meet their basic and secondary demands on time and in a way that makes sense. He must deal with issues like discord in the family, bad health, and increased physical and mental exhaustion, all of which will cause him to miss work.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A research design is a broad plan that states objectives of research project and provides the guidelines what is to be done to realize those objectives. It is, in other words, a master plan for executing a research project. The word design has various meanings. But, in relation to the subject concern. The research design is similar to broad plan or model that states how the entire research project would be conducted. It is desirable that it must be in written form and must be simple and clearly stated. The real project is carried out as per the research design laid down in advance. In the present study descriptive research is used for surveying and fact finding the data. This is done with the help of a structured questionnaire.

This study is typically guided by an initial hypothesis. More clear specifications of who, what, when, where, why and how aspects are given at this research. It requires for formulation of more specific hypothesis and testing these through statistical inference techniques.

➤ **DESCRIPTIVE RESEARCH DESIGN:** In this research study, the researcher used descriptive research design. Descriptive approach is one of the most popular approaches these days. In this approach, a problem is described by the researcher by using questionnaire or schedule. This approach enables a researcher to explore new areas of investigation. Descriptive study who, what, when, how are the questions for the researcher to find their answers during the study. It is mostly qualitative in nature.

➤ **POPULATION/UNIVERSE:** Population or universe is the aggregate of all elements possessing certain specified characteristics which need to be studied and defined prior the sample population. The total population for the study are all the worker those who are working in lactogen making industry.

➤ **SAMPLING:** The basic idea of sampling is that by selecting some of the sample from the population, researcher may draw conclusions about the sample study and generalize for entire population. A population element is the individual participant or object on which the measurement took. The number of units taken as sample for the study is 60 respondents. Sample is scrutinized from the industry records exclusive of employees who are habitual of absenteeism.

SAMPLING FRAME: Sampling frame is selective to respondents who are regularly taking leave.

Researcher has taken 60 sample of the total population.

SAMPLE SIZE: The researcher taken 60 sample size for this research.

TYPE OF SAMPLING: The researcher used Purposive sampling of Non-probability sampling. In this sampling also known as judgemental sampling. The researcher purposely chooses persons who, in his judgement about some appropriate characteristic required of the sample members, are thought to be relevant to research topic and are easily available to him.

➤ SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION:

I. PRIMARY DATA: The researcher has to gather primary data as a fresh for the specific study undertaken by him. The researcher collected data from the respondents by administering a interview schedule and also through observation, interviews, and discussion with management team.

II. SECONDARY DATA: The researcher collected data from the office, libraries, newspaper and earlier related studies, etc.

➤ **TOOLS FOR ANALYSIS:** Data analysis will involve thematic and descriptive analysis of qualitative data obtained from interviews and observations. This process entails identifying patterns, themes, and relationships within the data to derive meaningful insights. Quantitative data collected through surveys will be analysed using statistical methods, including descriptive and inferential analysis.

GRAPHICAL AND PICTORIAL REPRESENTATION: Facts when displayed graphically are more interesting and easily understandable. The researcher with the help of various graphs has shown the data after the completion of the tabulation process.

DIFFICULTIES DURING RESEARCH:

- Researcher refined the questions on the recommendations of the industry as company employees were not comfortable about certain questions.

- Respondents i.e. labourers were on duty during the data collection and sometimes couldn't provide the required time and attention. Researcher was compelled to stop the interview midway and start afresh again

III. FINDINGS

Findings from the study on absenteeism revealed several key insights:

1. **Frequency of Absenteeism:** The research identified that employees tend to be absent

from work approximately 2-4 days per month on average.

2. **Causes of Absenteeism:** Contrary to common assumptions, alcoholism was not identified as a significant factor contributing to absenteeism. Instead, the primary reasons cited for absenteeism were health problems and family issues. Moreover, engagement in political activities was found to have negligible impact on absenteeism.
3. **Workplace Relationships:** The study indicated positive relationships between employees and their colleagues, supervisors, and Heads of Department (HOD), suggesting that conflicts or dissatisfaction in these areas were not significant contributors to absenteeism.
4. **Consequences of Absenteeism:** Management typically responds to absenteeism by deducting payment for extra leaves and issuing warnings to frequent absentees. However, there seems to be a lack of additional workload assigned to compensate for missed time. Interestingly, most employees do not report feeling morally upset after being absent, and there are generally no observable changes in the work environment upon their return.
5. **Management Interventions:** To address absenteeism, the management has implemented several strategies. Firstly, there is an acknowledgment that increasing payment can help control absenteeism. Additionally, counseling facilities are provided to assist employees dealing with absenteeism, including guidance on financial management for future stability.
6. **Social Work Intervention:** Despite the presence of a designated labor welfare officer within the industry, employees generally do not feel the need for additional social workers. Instead, management conducts regular sessions on work culture and financial planning to address employee needs and reduce reliance on external support.

Overall, the findings suggest that absenteeism primarily stems from health and family issues, and while management takes measures to address it, there is a recognition of the importance of both financial and emotional support in mitigating absenteeism effectively.

IV. DISCUSSION

The study of absenteeism is very important for any industry. The word absenteeism means the absence of an employee from work when

they are expected to be present at in workplace. Under this study, employees participated in the study to understand the main causes of absenteeism. The objectives focused on understanding the cause and impact relation of absenteeism and the mechanism used by the management to reduce absenteeism with reference to its perception among the employees. The study highlighted the behavioral patterns of the regular absentees and the facilities which management can provide to curb the same. The researcher led to some major findings and conclusions:

Causes for the absenteeism:

- Researcher found that frequency of remaining absent in a month is 2-4 days.
- Alcoholism is not the reason for the absenteeism.
- Main reason of absenteeism is mostly for the health problem and family problem.
- The study states that engagement in political activities is not a reason for the absenteeism.
- Through this objective researcher found that, respondent's relationship with colleagues, supervisor and HOD is good which hence cannot be a reason for absenteeism. Consequences after absenteeism:
 - Management always deducts payment for extra leaves but does not give extra work to the employee because of being absent.
 - Management always gives warning for those who are frequently absent.
 - Mostly employees do not feel morally upset and there are no changes in the work environment post joining.

Steps taken by management to reduce absenteeism:

- Increase in payment can control absenteeism in the industry.
- By providing counselling facilities, management deals with the absenteeism problem.
- Management also provides counselling facilities about income and expenditure for their future.

Social work intervention:

- Employees do not feel the need of social worker as the industry has designated a labor welfare officer for grievances.
- Regular sessions on work culture and to save and spend money are also arranged by the management to further reduce the need of social worker right fully.

V. RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings of the study on absenteeism, the following recommendations can be made to effectively address and reduce absenteeism in the industry:

Health and Wellness Programs: Implement comprehensive health and wellness initiatives aimed at promoting employee well-being. This can include regular health check-ups, access to mental health resources, and initiatives to encourage a healthy work-life balance.

Family Support Services: Provide support services for employees facing family-related challenges, such as childcare assistance, flexible work arrangements, and access to family counseling services.

Financial Education: Offer financial education and counseling programs to help employees manage their finances effectively. This can include workshops on budgeting, saving, and investing, aimed at improving financial stability and reducing financial stressors that may contribute to absenteeism.

Recognition and Rewards: Implement a system of recognition and rewards to acknowledge and incentivize good attendance and performance. This can include bonuses, awards, or other incentives for employees with excellent attendance records.

Effective Communication: Enhance communication channels between management and employees to ensure that expectations regarding attendance policies, consequences for absenteeism, and available support services are clearly communicated and understood.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAPs): Establish or enhance Employee Assistance Programs to provide confidential support and counseling services for employees facing personal or work-related challenges that may impact attendance.

Flexible Work Arrangements: Consider offering flexible work arrangements, such as telecommuting or flexible scheduling, to accommodate employees' personal needs and responsibilities while maintaining productivity and attendance standards.

Training and Development: Provide training and development opportunities for managers and supervisors to equip them with the skills and knowledge necessary to effectively support and manage absenteeism issues within their teams.

Regular Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement a system for monitoring and evaluating absenteeism trends regularly to identify emerging issues and track the effectiveness of interventions. Adjust strategies as needed based on feedback and data analysis.

By implementing these recommendations, the industry can take proactive steps to address the root causes of absenteeism and create a supportive and conducive work environment that promotes employee well-being, engagement, and attendance.

VI. CONCLUSION

The company is highly understanding of the responsibilities the employees have due to which they provide proper medical aid to the employee and their family. Educational scholarships are also provided to employees children under certain rules. Company rightly caters to the needs of the employees by providing workshops on organizational culture, expenditure and saving habits and specifically for job clarity. Majority of employees are completely clear of their job responsibility, and it benefits the industry through maximum efficiency of human resource. The managers and supervisors have good relations with the employees, and they have built a family like environment. Building healthy working relationships was found to be a major reason for the work ethics among employees. For employees who are taking frequent leaves company issues a warning and provides counselling for the same.

In reference to the study, the main cause for absenteeism is family and health related issues as all respondents said so. Industry Alcoholism is not a relevant cause for absenteeism and 98 per cent employees are not engaged in heavy alcoholic consumption and only 2 per cent take leaves because of the same. Political or social gatherings are also not the cause of absenteeism. As per the opinions of the employee, increasing payments will be helpful in reducing absenteeism. As the pay increases, the per day leave deduction amount will also raise which will build pressure on the employees to be regular. Apart from this, maintain healthy work culture and constant counselling which discusses challenges faced by the employees are also integral to absenteeism reduction

REFERENCES

Bibliography Books:

- [1]. Soumikchowdhury, A study of absenteeism in a manufacturing company, Sinhgat Business School, Pune, 2016
- [2]. Ahuja, Ram. 2001. Research Methods. Jaipur: Rawat Publications. Ahuja, Ram. 1992. Social Problems in India. New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
- [3]. Bajpai, S.R. 2005. Social Survey and Research. Kanpur: KitabGhar. Billore, S.R. Research in Social Work and

- Statistics. Bhopal: Madhya Pradesh Bhoj (Open) University Chandekar, Ramesh. 2013.
- [4]. Satprakashan Sanchar Kendra. Lal Das, D.K. and Bhaskaran, Vanila. 2008. Research Methods for Social Work. Jaipur: Rawat Publications. Lal Das, D.K. 2002. Practice of Social Research. New Delhi: Rawat Publications.
- [5]. Singh, Kultar. 2007. Quantitative Social Research Methods. New Delhi: Sage Publications Journals: Baumgartel Howard and Ronald Sobel, "Background and Organizational Factors in Absenteeism", Personnel Psychology Vol. XII No. 3 (Autum), 1959.
- [6]. Bhatia, S.K. and Valecha, G.K., "An Empirical Study Of Factors Associated with Absenteeism" Man Power Journal, New Delhi, Vol. XV, No 2, July-Sept., 1979
- [7]. Blumer, H., "Early Industrialization and the Labour Class, Sociological Quarterly, Vol, 1, No. 1, Jan 1964, pp.5-14.
- [8]. Chand, Prem and Rath Prakesh, "Absenteeism in Indian Industry", Productivity, Vol. II, No. 182, 1970, pp. 178-86. Pankal, J.J., "Industrial Absenteeism", Indian Journal of Social Work, 6 (4), pp. 264-77.
- [9]. Research Papers:
- [10]. Soumikchowdhury, A study of absenteeism in a manufacturing company, Sinhgat Business School, Pune, 2016
- [11]. Singh Chetankumar, Impact of Absenteeism on Organizational Productivity a study of selected Capital Goods industry, Uttarakhand Technical University, 2015
- [12]. Mikalachki et Jeffrey Gandz, (1979), "Measuring Absenteeism" Relations industrial's / Industrial Relations, vol.34, no. 3, , p. 516-545.
- [13]. Banks, J., Patel, C.J., & Moola, M.A. (2012). "Perceptions of inequity in the workplace: Exploring the link with unauthorized absenteeism." SA Journal of Human Resource management.
- [14]. Brian Francis Redmond, (2010), "Lateness Absenteeism Turnover And Burnout" Wouter Langenhoff, (2011), "Employee Absenteeism" network for studies on pensions, aging, and retirement.
- [15]. Online resources:
- www.hrglossories.com
 - www.hr-guide.com
 - www.google.com
 - www.soople.com
 - www.infosys.com
- www.agronremedies.com