A STUDY ON ABSENTEEISM IN PUBLIC SECTOR LIBRARIES IN TELANGANA

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ABSTRACT

“Healthier employees mean happier employee, there’s a less absenteeism improved productivity and lowered health care premium costs”.

Absenteeism is the term which states not present of an individual at some event or at work place. It has become a major problem in many industries wherein employees’ absence may result in lower efficiency, low moral value towards job, less integration among co-workers, superiors, subordinates. This study thrown light on public sector libraries where in it is very important of an employee to be present physically and mentally to provide the required information to the people. It is also analysed few factors for the absence of an employee from the work place is due to work climate and Leadership; Occupational variables like Library type, specialization; Employees’ characteristics like gender, age, marital status in public sector libraries in Telangana. In this Study, the findings revealed were Participative leadership style decreases the absenteeism, and family responsibilities were the main cause of increase in the absenteeism in the public sector libraries. Sometimes absence of co-worker also distracted the psychological mind-set of an effective employees’ and it has revealed some of the solutions such as conducting a family counselling sessions and also open communication should be implemented about the issues faced by the other employees because of one’s absence.

Keywords: Absenteeism, leadership, participative leadership, counselling.

1. INTRODUCTION

Absenteeism in the public sector is a social malady which effects work schedules, overload of work on peers, decreases employee productivity and lessens the morale of job. In a planned economy, Absenteeism creates obstruction for profit prospects, targets, investments and incentives to working class. Hence it is important to understand the concept of Absenteeism. Absenteeism refers to not present of an employee from work when he is assigned to be at work. Absenteeism is also considered as the practice of staying away from work. One of the reasons for increase in absenteeism could be low motivation of job. Absence is a complex phenomenon which gives rise to many industrial workforce and social Problems. It also reflects the attitude of worker towards work life. Today the success of
industrial development in a country is largely determined by the efficiency and experience of its labour force. In this regard, the problems of absenteeism and labour turnover are of great significance. It is the efficiency and experience and ability of workers largely depend on the elimination of the problem of absenteeism of workers in the industry.

2. LITERATURE SURVEY

2.1 Meaning of Absenteeism

According to Edwin B Flippo, “Absenteeism, we mean when an employee fails to come to work when he is scheduled to work.” According to Webster’s Dictionary, “Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being an absentee and an absentee is one who habitually stays away.” According to the Labour Bureau, Shimla, “Absenteeism is the total man shifts lost because of absences as a percentage of the total number of man shifts scheduled to work.”

To sum up, we may say that absenteeism means absence of worker from the regular/scheduled work. This absence of work is without prior permission, notice, and sanction. It may be stated as unauthorized leave from work. Employees on leave are not covered under absenteeism because there is prior information to their employer to their not reporting on duty/work.

2.2 Types of Absenteeism

There are four types of absenteeism

1. Authorized absenteeism
2. Unauthorized absenteeism
3. Willful absenteeism and
4. Caused by circumstances beyond one’s control
   i. Authorized Absenteeism is if a worker gets absent from work by taking permission from his superior and applying for leave then it is known as Authorized Absenteeism
   ii. Unauthorized Absenteeism is if an employee gets absent from work without taking permission from his superior and without applying leave is known as unauthorized Absenteeism
   iii. Willful absenteeism is if an employee absents himself from duty intentionally then it is called as Willfull absenteeism
   iv. Absenteeism caused by circumstances beyond one’s control: If an employee gets absent from duty owing to the circumstances which are not in his control like involvement in accidents or sudden sickness, relative’s death etc.

2.3 Features of Absenteeism

Research studies undertaken by different authors reveal the following features of absenteeism

i. On Pay day the rate of absenteeism is low, and it increases considerably on the days following payment of wages and bonus
ii. Absenteeism is generally high among young employees i.e. below 25 years of age and those of older age group i.e. 40 years of age
iii. The rate of absenteeism is high generally in manufacturing areas.
2.4 Causes of Absenteeism

The Royal Commission Labor observed that high absenteeism among Indian Labor is due to rural orientation and their frequent urge for rural exodus. According to Acharya “In modern industrial establishment the incidence of Industrial fatigue, mal nutrition and bad working conditions aggravate that feeling for change among industrial worker and sometimes impel them to visit their village home frequently for rest and relaxation.” In order to minimize the severity of the problem, it is necessary to find out its extent and causes. For this purpose, proper record should be maintained by the personnel department for various reasons of absenteeism.

The following roots may be accounted for absenteeism in Indian Industries.

**Sickness:** It is the main root for the absenteeism running as high as 50% of the absenteeism in few cases. It is because of bad health and malnutrition & under-nutritious food.

**Industrial Accidents, Hazards and Occupational Diseases:** Absenteeism is affected by rate of industrial accidents and occupational diseases. Accidents and occupational diseases depend upon the nature of the process and machinery used. The rate of absenteeism is high among accident-prone jobs. Occupational diseases like lung diseases (occupational lung disease include asbestosis among miners, black lung among coal miners, silicosis among tunnel operators and Byssinosis among cotton textile workers), skin diseases (occupational skin diseases include eczema, buturticaria, sunburn and skin cancer)

**Lack of Interest:** As a result of wrong placements sometimes, the employees have to do the job which is not of their interest. It is the responsibility of supervisor to place the right employee at right place. Their lack of interest in the job may be a reason for absenteeism.

**Attitude towards Management:** As a result of lengthy working hours, boredom, low wages etc. the workers’ attitude towards management and work becomes indifferent or negative. It may result in low confidence and high absenteeism.

**Autocratic Superior:** The autocratic behavior and attitude of the seniors/superiors in the organization is also one of the main causes of absenteeism. Difference of opinion with the management may also contribute to absenteeism.

**Migratory traits of Worker:** Many of the employees belonging to rural areas move to cities for the sake of job wherein they have to leave their families behind and to fulfill their family responsibility they visit their hometown frequently which makes an employee to get absent from workplace.

**Adjustment with Industrial Environment:** when a worker joins the company he has to understand the organizational climate and culture where in he may take some time to get adjust or he may find it difficult to adjust to such working conditions. He should also get adjust with the co employees who are from different demographical conditions like religion, region, gender, culture, etc. hence industrial and urban life becomes tedious and thus increases absenteeism.

**Societal accumulations:** Human being is considered as a social being wherein he is a part of the society. To be a part of the society he has to attend the congregations such as marriages,
festivals, etc. These activities affect the attention of the workers. Few times, the employees avail themselves unauthorized leaves to attend these social functions.

**Unsuitable accommodation:** One of the major problems faced by workers is accommodations problem. Sometimes this facility is provided by the management. However in most of the cases they have to make their own arrangement. They cannot afford good accommodation because of their low compensation. In most of the cases houses occupied by Industrial workers in India are regrettable leading to ill-health. Unsatisfactory and unhealthy staying arrangement is another important reason for sickness and encourages absenteeism.

**Industrial lethargy:** Unhygienic working and living conditions in the industries are solely responsible for industrial fatigue. Further workers prefers for part-time jobs to earn extra penny to improve their standard of living. This extra burden in addition to their regular jobs adds to their debility. Sometime it may compel the worker to remain absent from duty and take some rest.

**Wretched Working Conditions:** Poor and unhealthy working conditions like noise pollution, overcrowding, unsanitary, and unhealthy surroundings, low ventilation, odorous, in factories may force the workers to get absent after long hours of work.

**Incentives:** In some organizations, workers are paid wages based on incentive method. Efficient workers earn more in this method. Therefore in order to earn more money they work beyond their capacity and in order to relax they remain absent.

**Liable to Absent:** It has been observed through studies on absenteeism that some workers have a general tendency of absenting themselves. Studies estimate that almost 12% of the employees are absent prone. They are responsible for more than 78% absenteeism.

**Age factor:** Young employees tend to absent themselves for a short period more frequently, suggesting placements in low scale jobs. Older employees tend to absent themselves for a long period, suggesting health related problems.

### 2.5 Other Causes
- Absence of adequate welfare activities
- Alcoholism
- Indebtedness
- Improper & Unrealistic Personnel policies
- Inadequate Leave Facilities
- Night Duty
- Work shifts
- Family responsibilities

Absenteeism has been the subject matter of study by personnel department and research scholars. Various hypotheses concerning the specific and casual factors affecting absenteeism have been arrived at. The most important amongst then being that the Indian labour is rural oriented and prefer rural surroundings. Further the living habits of a worker where he earns more make him indulge in the activities until he spend all his money. Besides this factor, socio-economic and personal problems, illiteracy, drunkenness, policies of
management, housing problem, transport problem, lack of welfare problem facilities, living on day-to-day basis have further contributed to high rate of absenteeism.

3. ABOUT THIS STUDY
3.1 Scope of the study

An absent employee leads to decrease in production which causes huge loss to the organization. Productivity of an organization is adversely proportionate to absenteeism. Hence the scope of the study highlights many reasons of absenteeism among employees. The employee’s Perceptual thinking falls under the area of study.

3.2 Statement of the study

Absenteeism has become a crucial problem in every organization. There are various factors which are affecting absenteeism in libraries such as cutthroat competition, family responsibilities, autocratic leadership style, less qualified staff, work culture, disorganization of work and work schedules. If the Working and living conditions are not improved and required commitment of workforce in the work pace is stabilized, the problem of absenteeism cannot be effectively solved.

3.3 Objectives of the study
1. To understand the relationship between Leadership style and absenteeism.
2. To identify the factors causing absenteeism.
3. To learn the effect of absenteeism on individual and coworker.
4. To find out the remedies for absenteeism.

3.4 Hypothesis

Here In this study to analyze the status and causes for employee absenteeism in a public sector Library, Around 100 employees of age group between 30-50 years from well organized public sector Library have been taken as measure.

3.5 Research Methodology

Source of Data includes Primary data and Secondary Data.

Primary Data: The primary data collection is done through a structured questionnaire which contains open and closed questions.

Secondary Data: The secondary sources for the study are internet and books.

Statistical Tool: Simple percentage method is used for the analysis

4. RESEARCH ANALYSIS

In a public sector Library, around 100 employees of age group between 30-50 years from a well Organized public sector library have been taken as measure and asked some questions related to Library management and collected their opinion for various questions. Table-1 showing the list of questions asked in this study and the employee responses. Graph-1 shows the Same in a clear Manner.
Table 1: Questions asked to the employees in Employee Absenteeism Survey and their responses (Yes/No) as follows

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Questions Asked in the Survey</th>
<th>% of employees given responses as yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regular to office</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Availing of extra leaves</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recreational facilities</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Distraction due to co-worker frequent absent</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandatory to assign responsibilities to co-worker</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>library spacious</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>digital library</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Graph 1: Showing the % of employee responses given as Yes/No for the questions asked in Employee Absenteeism Survey

In this study, Various Causes for employee absenteeism have been analyzed and listed out the Reasons for employee absenteeism and the percentage of employees showing various causes For their absenteeism have been depicted in Table-2 and the same has show graphically in Graph-2 as follows:

Table 2: List of Issues Causes for Employee Absenteeism and their % of Absenteeism

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issues causes for Employee Absenteeism</th>
<th>% of Employee Absenteeism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family Issues</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health Problems</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Work Stress</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Co-Worker Frequent Absence</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improper Working Hours</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lack of Identity for Skills</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. RESULTS AND OBSERVATIONS

From the data analysis it is observed that there is direct relationship between leadership style and absenteeism. If a supervisor follows autocratic leadership style most of the employees are not willing to attend their work as it dominating and rigid. Employees in public sector library are happier with participative leadership style and in turn it shows decrease in absenteeism rate among employees. From data analysis it is also predicted that cooperation among workers, open communication, recreational facilities provided by management has decreased absenteeism. It is observed that family responsibility is playing a main role in the rise of absenteeism, and also chaotic library also makes employees to get absent as the working conditions like ventilation, systematic alignment of racks, calm study area, cleanliness etc., makes employees sluggish. It is also analyzed that older age employees are more regular and interested to spend more time in library as they find more peace in libraries whereas younger age group employees are prone to absent due boredom and zone of silent. Digitalization of library is also very important as it will decrease the level of work stress. It is analyzed that in Telangana state we could find very few 1 or 2 digital libraries especially in public sector. Hence it is said that the rate of absenteeism is low in participative leadership style and more in autocratic leadership style. Rate of absenteeism is high where working condition of library is not good and also for other reason is family responsibilities makes an employee to be absent from work place.

6. LIMITATIONS

1. Some of the respondents were not interested in giving much of the information due to their busy work schedule.
2. There is lack of co-operation from some of the respondents.
3. The study is limited to public sector libraries only.
4. Time is an important limitation in this paper.
5. The study is mainly concerned with the opinion and perception of the respondents

7. CONCLUSION

This study mostly highlighted many reasons of absenteeism among employees and explored the Behaviour of employees in a well structured Public organization and mentioned some recommendations. It is recommended that Public sector libraries should conduct family counselling to employees so that the rate of absenteeism due to family subject can be decreased. It is also suggested that for younger age group management should conduct motivational agendas. Implementation of digital library is very important as pace of technology is moving very fast relying on manual libraries will demotivate the employees. There should also open communication among employees regarding one’s absent how it effects the productivity of effective employee.

REFERENCES