

A STUDY ON THE ABSENTEEISM OF EMPLOYEES AMONG TEXTILE OUTLETS IN PALAKKAD

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ABSTRACT

Absenteeism at workplace is a serious problem and an expensive occurrence for both employers and employees seemingly unpredictable in nature. A satisfactory level of attendance by employees at work is essential for the achievement of objectives and targets in an organization. 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 backlogs, piling of work and thus causes delay. This study is aimed to find out the reasons for absenteeism among the employees of textile outlets operating in Palakkad. The Research Problem in the present Study involves the various factors influencing absenteeism. Data was collected from 50 employees who are working in textile outlets in Palakkad based on convenient sampling method. The data was analyzed with the help of statistical tools like simple percentage analysis and chi square test. This study also gives suitable suggestions to the organization for improving the employees' attendance as well as enhance the quality of work force.

Key words: Absenteeism, Textile units, working condition, Productivity

INTRODUCTION

Employees' presence at work place during scheduled times is highly essential for the smooth running of an organization in particular and the concerned industry in general. Despite the significance of their presence, employees sometimes fail to report at work place during the scheduled time, which is known as 'absenteeism.' It's a major problem faced by almost all employers of today whether it be large, medium or small. When employees absent themselves from work, possibly due to a number of factors, the work suffers causing work disruption and normal work schedules. Less satisfied employees are more likely to be absent from work due to avoidable reasons. This is known as 'Voluntary Absenteeism' as against 'Unavoidable Absenteeism' which could be due to illness or other emergency reasons. Absenteeism can be modified by certain factors. Research has found that people who believe that their work is important have lower levels of absenteeism as compared to those who do not feel that way.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Christopher A. Kearney(2008)** conducted a study “**School absenteeism and school refusal behavior in youth:**”This article involves a contemporary research review on absenteeism prevalence, common physical and psychiatric conditions, classification, contextual risk factors, cross-cultural variables, assessment, intervention, and outcome. Contextual risk factors include homelessness and poverty, teenage pregnancy, school violence and victimization, school climate and connectedness, parental involvement, and family variables, among others. A description of intervention includes medical, clinical, and systemic interventions. Medical professionals, community and school-based mental health professionals, and educators are encouraged to fully understand the parameters of school absenteeism to develop better, consensual policies regarding definition, classification, assessment, and intervention of youths with problematic school absenteeism.
2. **Sarah Moore, Claire Armstrong& Jill Pearson (2008)**conducted a study “**Lecture absenteeism among students in higher education: a valuable route to understanding student motivation.**”The reasons associated with lecture absenteeism among student groups could shed significant light on student motivation levels and orientations in university settings. Paying attention to the rationales for lecture absence provided by students themselves could also help institutions to diagnose levels of student engagement and respond in appropriate ways. This study demonstrates these assertions by engaging in a critical analysis of the evidence linking lecture attendance and academic performance, using a qualitative analysis of student accounts of their absenteeism. It argues that innovative approaches to higher education would benefit from the extension and development of this kind of inquiry.
3. **J.Paul Leigh (1984)** conduct a study “**The effects of unemployment and the business cycle on absenteeism**”This study, apparently the first of its kind, looks at the relation between unemployment and absenteeism. It is hypothesized that high unemployment is associated with low absenteeism for two reasons: (1) when unemployment is high, layoffs are high and workers laid off are more likely to have been absence-prone than retained workers, and (2) when unemployment is high, currently employed workers, fearing job loss, will avoid absences to decrease their chances of becoming unemployed. Data from the Panel Study of Income Dynamics support both hypotheses.
4. **Clegg, Chris W. (1983)** conduct a study “**Psychology of employee lateness, absence, and turnover**”.Data on organizational commitment, job satisfaction, lateness behavior, unauthorized absence behavior, voluntary employee turnover, and biographical and situational information were obtained for 406 employees of an engineering plant in England. Results suggest the need for examination of the impact of behavior on affect. It is concluded that the generalized notion of "withdrawal" is misleading and that a redirection of research in this area both through methodological improvements and theoretical innovation is needed.
5. **Morgan, Lillie G., Herman, Jeanne B. (1976)** conduct a study “**Perceived consequences of absenteeism**”. This Study investigated whether organizational policies and practices can be effective deterrents to absenteeism. Hypotheses about the relationships between consequences of absenteeism and past and future absenteeism were based on an expectancy model of behavior. Data were collected from 60 blue-collar employees in one department of a unionized automobile-parts foundry. Results indicate that for some employees absenteeism provided an opportunity to experience consequences that tended to encourage absenteeism and that were not offset by organizationally controlled consequences that would tend to deter absenteeism. An absenteeism policy that both rewards attendance with consequences that usually motivate absenteeism and one that penalizes absenteeism are proposed.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The major problems faced by all employers today are absenteeism. There are many reasons for absenteeism. Some may be avoidable while some other may be unavoidable. Whatever the reason may be, absence of employee from his/her work affects the productivity and in turn affects the profitability and growth of the firm. Hence it is very important to take suitable measures to control absenteeism. In this regard this study is aimed to find out the reason of absenteeism among the employees of various textile units in Palakkad which employ a large number of employees in different age groups. Many textile units both wholesale and retail operate in Palakkad city due to its proximity to many textile-weaving units in Coimbatore, Tirupur, Erode and nearby cities which are marketed through distribution outlets in Palakkad to small towns and villages.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To find out the factors affecting the absenteeism and the rate of absenteeism in textile outlets.
- To study and evaluate the working conditions, health problems, salary structure, bonus and other incentive schemes offered to the employees.
- To provide suggestions to reduce the rate of absenteeism and improve the working conditions of hundreds of employees working in this sector.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study is aimed to know the reasons for absenteeism among the employees working in different textile outlets in Palakkad. This study can gain a practical knowledge about the various factors that lead to absenteeism of employees. This study helps to analyze the demographic and other reasons of the employees who absent themselves from regular work. The researcher had an opportunity to directly interact with the workers as well as clerical staff of various textile outlets in Palakkad in order to know about various factors which influence absenteeism such as working conditions, bonus and incentive systems, salary structure among others. This study also gives suitable suggestions to the organization for improving employees' attendance as well as improve the quality of their work force.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is based on primary data. Primary data was collected through a well-designed and structured questionnaire based on clear objectives. The sampling method used in this study is convenient sampling. The sample size taken for the research was 50 respondents working in different textile outlets in Palakkad.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Analysis is done with respect to the socio-economic characteristics of respondents over different aspects. This was carried out for each question in the questionnaire. The statistical technique used for data analysis is simple percentage and Chi square analysis. The following demographic factors explain the composition of the group of 50 (54% male and 46% female) in different age groups and marital status.

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTOR

Chart 1

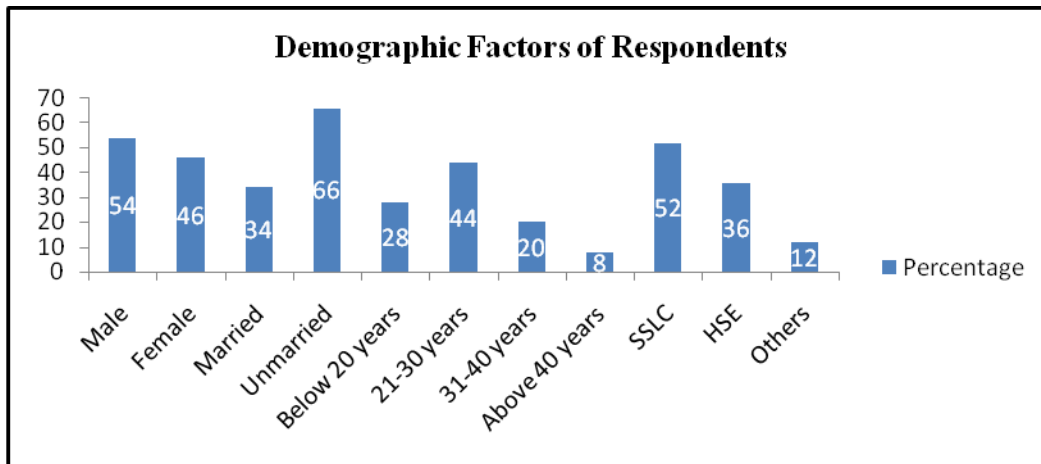
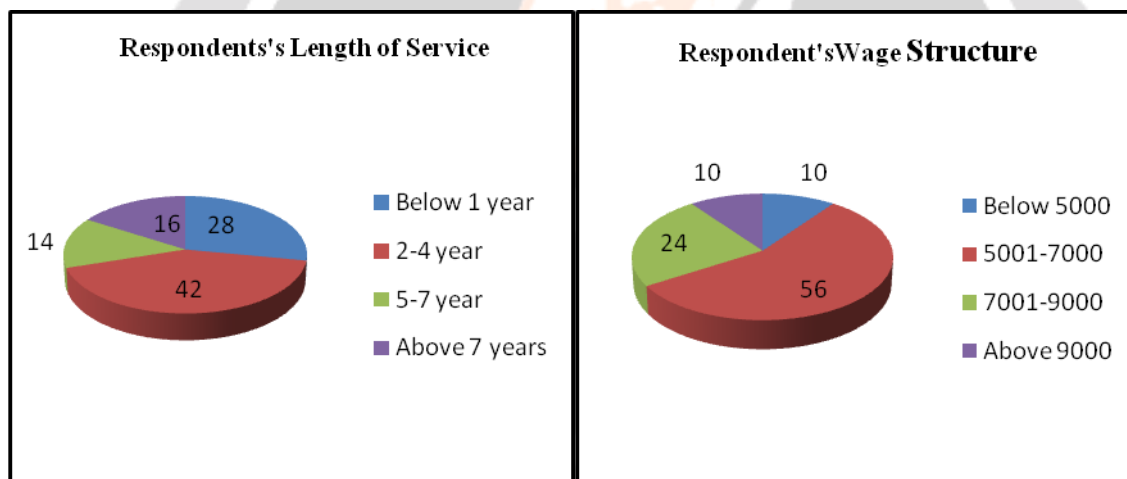


Chart 2

Chart 3



The above charts show that out of 50 respondents, Majority (54%) of the Respondents are male employees. Most (44%) of the Respondents are in the age group of 21 to 30 years old. Most (66%) of the respondents are unmarried. Most (42%) of the respondents had a work experience of 2-4 years. Majority (52%) of the respondents are qualified SSLC and Majority (56%) of the respondents are getting wages in the range of Rs. 5001-7000.

Table 1
Number of leave days per month

Category	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1 day	15	30
2 days	23	46
Above 2 days	12	24
Total	50	100

Opinion on the working condition of the Firm

Opinion of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	18	36%
Satisfied	15	30%

Neutral	10	20%
Dissatisfied	5	10%
Highly Dissatisfied	2	4%
Total	50	100

Health Problem Related to Work load

Opinion of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	12	24
No	38	76
Total	50	100

Factors affecting the absenteeism

Opinion of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Family Problems	14	28
Festivals & Functions	3	6
Long Working hours	9	18
Lack of good relation with colleagues	4	8
Others	20	40
Total	50	100

Inadequate Incentive and Bonus Scheme leads to absenteeism

Opinion of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	14	28
No	36	72
Total	50	100

Opinion about the Present Wage structure

Opinion of Respondents	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	11	22
Satisfied	16	32
Neutral	15	30
Dissatisfied	3	6
Highly Dissatisfied	5	10
Total	50	100

Table 2 shows that out of 50 respondents Most (46%) of the respondents take leave 2 days per month, Most (36%) of the respondents are highly satisfied with the working condition of the firm. Majority (76%) of the respondents have not experienced any health problem related to workload. Most (40%) of the respondents' absenteeism is due to other problems, Majority (72%) of the respondents have not agreed that Inadequate in bonus and incentive scheme leads to absenteeism, Most (32%) of the respondents are satisfied with the present wage structure.

**Table 2
Gender and opinion regarding working condition**

Gender	Opinion regarding Working Condition					Total
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	
Male	10	9	4	3	1	27
Female	8	6	6	2	1	23
Total	18	15	10	5	2	50

Null Hypothesis:

Let us assume that there is no significant relationship between Gender and the opinion regarding working condition.

Calculated chi square value = 1.108

Degree of freedom = 4

Table value at 5% level of Significance = 9.488

At 5% level of significance the calculated value (1.108) is less than the table value (9.488), so the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between gender and opinion regarding working condition.

Table 3
Age and Level of satisfaction towards present Wage structure.

Age	Opinion regarding present Wage structure					Total
	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	
Below 20 years	6	3	4	1	0	14
21-30years	4	7	7	2	2	22
31-40 years	1	5	2	0	2	10
Above 40 years	0	1	2	0	1	4
Total	11	16	15	3	5	50

Null Hypothesis:

Let us assume that there is no significant relationship between Age and Level of satisfaction towards present Wage structure.

Calculated chi square value = 11.453

Degree of freedom = 12

Table value at 5% level of Significance = 21.026

At 5% level of significance the calculated value (11.453) is less than the table value (21.026), so the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between age and Level of satisfaction towards present Wage structure.

Table 4
Age and Health problem related to workload

Age	Opinion about health problem related to workload		Total
	Yes	No	
Below 20	3	11	14
21-30	6	16	22
31-40	2	8	10
Above 40	1	3	4
Total	12	38	50

Null Hypothesis:

Let us assume that there is no significant relationship between Health problem related to workload.

Calculated chi square value = 0.271

Degree of freedom = 3

Table value at 5% level of Significance = 7.815

At 5% level of significance the calculated value (0.271) is less than the table value (7.815), so the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between age and health problem related to workload.

Table 5
Length of Service and Inadequate in Bonus & incentives scheme leads to absenteeism.

Experience	Inadequate in Bonus & incentives scheme		Total
	Yes	No	
Below 1 year	3	11	14
21-30	8	13	21
31-40	1	6	7
Above 40	2	6	8
Total	14	36	50

Null Hypothesis:

Let us assume that there is no significant relationship between Years' of Service and Inadequate in Bonus & incentives scheme leads to absenteeism.

Calculated chi square value = 2.05

Degree of freedom = 3

Table value at 5% level of Significance = 7.815

At 5% level of significance the calculated value (2.075) is less than the table value (7.815), so the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between Length of Service and Inadequate in Bonus & incentives scheme affect leads to absenteeism.

Table 6
Marital status and number of leave days per month.

Marital Status	Number of Leave days per month			Total
	1 day	2 days	Above 2 days	
Married	4	9	4	17
Unmarried	11	14	8	33
Total	15	23	12	50

Null Hypothesis:

Let us assume that there is no significant relationship between marital status and Number of leave days per month.

Calculated chi square value = 0.631

Degree of freedom = 2

Table value at 5% level of Significance = 5.991

At 5% level of significance the calculated value (0.631) is less than the table value (5.991), so the Null hypothesis is accepted. Hence it is concluded that there is no significant relationship between Marital Status and Number of leave days per month.

SUGGESTIONS

- Employers should start to consider a wage revision for all their employees. As productivity is directly related to output, it is important that the Employer should review existing wage structure and offered better emoluments to keep employees happy and contented.
- It is suggested the employer should review their leave policy and provide more leave especially for religious occasions as well as medical leave, which may reduce absenteeism to some extent.
- Offering of incentives and bonus for improved performance is a standard method used in many organizations to motivate staff. Therefore, it is suggested that employers start introducing an incentive scheme to reward better performers and performances.
- Family problems and other factors which were not mentioned in questionnaire due to personal nature of some issue are cited as on major area of unhappiness. Employers could take some lead in this and arrange staff get-togethers, staff parties, picnics and others to interact with staff at a personal level and ensure that they maintain a friendly and cordial relationship with each other's in general and their family members in particular.
- Since the employees has expressed some dissatisfaction with working condition, It is suggested that the employer should try to enhance the working condition such as coffee/Tea/Refreshment break, Proper meal time with uniform allowances for all staff and also give small gifts during religious holidays etc.
- The Working hours must be maintained at 8(eight) hours per day maximum for better productivity and sufficient rest for employees

CONCLUSION

Absenteeism is a universal problem and every organization should strive to tackle the problem for future development. This problem is mainly due to the poor educational background of the workers and the backwardness of the society in which they are living. The management should provide a good working environment which would create a feeling of job satisfaction among the employees. Absenteeism can be reduced to a great extent if the management takes initiative in making the workers feel responsible towards their job by introducing various motivational schemes. It is hoped that if the suggestions are implemented, to some extent, absenteeism of employees of textile units in Palakkad can be reduced to a great extent.

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