

CHAPTER - IV

EXTENT OF ABSENTEEISM AND
PROCEDURE ADOPTED TO DEAL
WITH ABSENTEE WORKERS IN
THE FACTORY

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the extent of absenteeism and procedure adopted to deal with absentee workers in Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni, Taluka Chandgad, District Kolhapur. For this purpose the data were collected from the office of the factory.

4.2 EXTENT OF ABSENTEEISM

At the time of the present study the total strength of permanent workers employed in Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni was 754. When enquired about the workers who frequently remain absent on their jobs, the concerned authorities of the factory told that as per the official attendance record, there are 84 such employees who frequently remain absent. Of these 44 workers were 'permanent' workers and 40 workers were 'seasonal' workers. The information thus suggested that, out of 754 employees the problem of absenteeism was in case of 84 employees. In other words, in the Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni the problem of absenteeism was in case of 11.14 per cent workers.

4.3 FACTORY WORKERS : AUTHORISED LEAVES

Before dealing with the absentee record of the 'absentee' workers it will be worthwhile to see the details regarding the authorised leaves which workers can consume during the working year in Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni (District- Kolhapur).

The details regarding the authorised leave in case of workers in Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni are presented in the Table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1
AUTHORISED LEAVES

Sr. No.	Type of Leave	Permanent Workers	Seasonal Workers
1	Earned Leave	30 days	09 days
2	Sick Leave	12 days	07 days
3	Casual Leave	12 days	07 days
4	Declared Holidays	15 days	07 days
5	Incidental Holidays	03 days	02 days
6	Total Sundays	52 days	26 days
Total:		124 days	58 days

It can be seen from the Table 4.1 that, in a year, total authorised leaves for permanent workers are 124 days and for seasonal workers 58 days. It means in a year total working days for permanent workers are 241 and for seasonal workers 107.

The 84 absentee workers referred above consume all the authorised leaves and frequently tend to enjoy some more days as unauthorised leave.

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4.4 ABSENTEE WORKERS : THE DATA REGARDING UNAUTHORISED LEAVES -

The data regarding the number of unauthorised leaves taken by the 84 absentee workers was obtained from the factory office which is presented in the Table 4.2 below.

Table 4.2

ABSENTEE WORKERS : UNAUTHORISED LEAVES DURING 1990-91, 1991-92 AND 1992-93

Sr. No.	No. of Unauthorised leaves in a year	Y E A R		
		1990-91 No. of Workers	1991-92 No. of Workers	1992-93 No. of Workers
1	1 - 10 days	45	42	43
2	11 - 20 days	18	18	15
3	21 - 30 days	09	10	10
4	31 - 40 days	07	08	09
5	41 - 50 days	05	06	07
Total		84	84	84

The table 4.2 shows that out of 84 absentee workers the proportion of workers taking unauthorised leaves for 1 to 10 days in a year is high and those taking unauthorised leaves for 41 to 50 days is very low.

4.5 HOW DOES THE FACTORY MANAGEMENT DEAL WITH
THE ABSENTEE WORKERS ?

After having enjoyed the unauthorised leave the worker meets the head of his department in the factory. The head of concerned department enquires about the reasons for remaining absent on the job without prior permission. The worker by giving various reasons tries to convince the head of his department as to how it was impossible to attend the duties. However, the head of the concerned department not being the final authority to take any concrete decision refers the case to the Labour Officer. The Labour Officer again enquires about the reasons for remaining absent on the job. If it is the first instance of remaining absent in case of the worker concerned, the Labour Officer usually advises the worker not to commit the same mistake next time. It was told that, the Labour Officer being considerate, usually excuses the worker even if he (worker) remains absent without prior permission for 2 to 3 times. However, the Labour Officer orally warns the worker each time not to remain absent without prior permission.

Some absentee workers without reporting to the head of the concerned department, directly meet the Labour Officer and request him to excuse 'this time'.

Some absentee workers contact the trade union leaders and ask them to try and convince the Labour Officer about

their absentee behaviour, and try to turn the decision in favour of them. This researcher has personally seen such cases. The worker comes along with the trade union leaders and the trade union leaders request the Labour Officer not to take any legal step against the concerned worker. The trade union leaders request to do this on humanitarian grounds. The meeting usually ends with the Labour Officer's oral warning to the concerned worker. The trade union leaders also warn the concerned worker not to remain absent in front of the Labour Officer.

It is very clear from the above description that, the factory management excuses the absentee worker in case of the first few instances on humanitarian grounds and gives then an opportunity to improve their work behaviour. However, what about the workers who continue to remain absent without prior permission in spite of the considerate attitude of the management ? In such cases, the 'disciplinary actions' are taken against the workers as per the rules and regulations in this connections.

4.6 VARIOUS DISCIPLINARY ACTIONS OR LEGAL STEPS TO DEAL WITH 'ABSENTEE' WORKERS

The factory management to deal with the 'absentee' workers the factory management undertakes certain steps intended to enforce or restore discipline. The information collected on this aspect is as under -

- (1) If any worker remains absent without prior permission for half day, full day, 2 days, 3 days; a written warning is issued.
- (2) If any worker remains absent without prior permission for 10 or more than 10 days consecutively first show-cause notice is issued. If the explanation to the notice issued is unsatisfactory, charge-sheet under suspension during the pendency is issued.
- (3) If any worker remains absent without prior permission for 4 days or more, on more than 4 occasions, it is treated as habitual absenteeism for which first show-cause notice is issued. If explanation is unsatisfactory, he is issued charge-sheet under suspension during the pendency of departmental enquiry.
- (4) Punishment -
If habitual absenteeism is proved at the first time management awards punishment of maximum 4 days suspension without pay.
- (5) Dismissal -
If the worker remains absent consecutively for more than 3 to 6 months and if it is proved in the departmental enquiry, management dismisses the worker as a punishment for remaining continuous absent for a long period (see specimen copies of

written warning letter, final warning letter, show-cause notice, charge-sheet under suspension and dismissal order in the appendix.)

It was reported that in practice the factory management tries to avoid to dismiss the workers on humanitarian grounds and taking into consideration the factors such as age of the worker concerned, his character, family responsibilities of the worker, whether he himself is shareholder of the factory or whether he is son of the shareholder and whether he is involved in other social service activities.

Thus, this chapter has dealt with the extent of absenteeism and procedure adopted to deal with absentee workers in Daulat Shetkari Sahakari Sakhar Karkhana Ltd; Halkarni. Against this background the next chapter is devoted to present and analyse the data regarding the personal, socio-economic background of the respondents and their attitude towards their work.

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