

CHAPTER - II

DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

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- C) Scope of Study.
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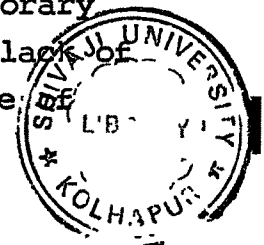
(adopted for the study)

A) BASIC CONCEPT AND DEFINITION :

Labour Absenteeism is being often mentioned as one of the chronic problems of our industries. Whenever, managements are being asked to mention a few important labour problems in their industries, this problem is invariably mentioned. Thus, one of the acute but most common indications of employee's dissatisfaction and unrest is absenteeism.

This term 'Labour Absenteeism' refers to the workers absence from his regular task when he is normally scheduled to work. This includes time lost due to sickness accident and also due to their personal reasons, whether this absenteeism is authorised or unauthorised one. But, usually involuntary lay offs, lack of work, authorised leave or vacation periods and stoppages of work are not here responsible.

Sometimes it is said that 'Tardiness' is a temporary form of absenteeism having reference to the workers' lack of punctuality in arriving at his work place. Any absence



less than a half day is generally being considered as 'Tardiness'. It thus seems that both the terms are somewhat different.

¹ In India, absenteeism data are collected and compiled by two main agencies namely, The Labour Bureau at Simla and the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI). Both the agencies define absenteeism as " the failure of a worker to report for work when he is scheduled to work."

However, they differ in the interpretation of term 'scheduled to work'. The Labour Bureau does not regard spells of absences from work due to authorised vacations and privilege leave, strikes, lock-outs and lay-off and of 'expostfacto' regularies period of overstay following authorised leave as falling within the scope of the term 'scheduled to work'. Thus Labour Bureau considers a worker as scheduled to work, when he is being granted leave due to accident or sickness or casual leave. A worker is also considered to be absent, if he stops coming to work without any kind of notice, till he is being removed from the pay roll. Here, the worker is taken to be a person who is regular employee and is not a casual or a badali one.

The ASI interpretation of the definition on the other hand is wider than that of Labour Bureau. It is in the sense that it considers all kinds of vacations and overstay as periods when the worker is being scheduled to work.

However, the choice of definition is determined by the purpose of the study. The ASI is interested in knowing 'the

1. K.N.Vaid - " Paper on Absenteeism "
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cost of time' lost as a percentage of the total labour cost, whereas the Labour Bureau wants to know ' the extent of total time scheduled to work'. Thus, these two respective definitions serve their respective purposes.

The term absenteeism was properly defined for the first time in a circular of the Labour Department, Govt. of India, issued to the provincial Govts. several years back. Accordingly, the absenteeism rate is defined as " the total manshifts lost because of absences as a percentage of the total number of manshifts scheduled."

Always, the choice of the working definition depends upon the purpose of study undertaken. Here, my purpose is to find out the causes of absenteeism and suggest some measures so that the mills will be in a position to reduce the increasing rate of absenteeism. Also the purpose is to avoid the evil effects of absenteeism on the production of cloth and to avoid the dislocation of work and thus to make the man-power planning more realistic.

Thus, the term taken here for study is as " The absenteeism means - the physical absence of a worker from work, when he is being scheduled to work."

ABSENCE RATE AND ABSENTEEISM RATE DISTINGUISHED :

Sometimes distinction is made between the absence rate and absenteeism rate. Absence rate is defined as a statistical expression of the sum total of time loss due to all authorised leaves and unauthorised absences during a particular period. This concept is nearer to the Annual Survey of Industries (ASI)

1. R.C.Saxena - Labour Problem and Social Welfare.

definition. While absenteeism rate is a statistical expression of the sum total of time loss due to only all unauthorised absences during a particular period.

Thus, absence rate, inter alia might reflect on personnel practices such as rules relating to leaves vacations etc. Absenteeism rate indicates more or less unavoidable time loss at a given point of time. Both these concepts are useful to management. The former enables to examine and suitably modify the personnel policy. The absenteeism rate indicates the additional labour that will be required on certain day. For my study I have not considered any such type of distinction.

However, for the study of the problem of absenteeism it is necessary to understand the following certain other concepts.

1) AUTHORISED LEAVE : It includes permitted vacations sickness, accidents, or casual leave, "ex post facto" regularised overstays and any other absence condoned by the management prior to after the occurrence. Here pay is immaterial. Authorised leaves are permitted under the standing orders of the company and by an external statutory body - The Employees State Insurance Corporation. As per the standing orders of the company under study authorised leaves granted are as follows :-

Earned Leave	- 23 days in a year.
	- For 15 days 1 day.
Casual Leave	- 9 days in a year.
Sick Leave	- 9 days in a year.

2) UNAUTHORISED LEAVE : It includes all those cases where work is available, the worker knows about it, he fails to report for duty and the employer has no prior information of the workers failure. Uncondoned absences and overstays and unauthorised absences preceeding discharge are also included in this category. However absences due to strikes, lock-outs any lay-off are excluded as on such days the work itself is not available.

3) WHAT IS SCHEDULED TO WORK ?

An employee is said to be scheduled to work when the employer has work available and the worker is aware of it, and when the employer has no reason to expect well-in-advance that the worker will not be available for work at the specified time and shift.

Similarly an employee who reports himself for any part of shift or working period and is admitted to work is to be considered as present when there is a regularly scheduled vacation, the employee should neither be considered as absent nor as scheduled to work.

Worker who stops coming to work without notice is considered absent till removed from the pay-roll.

B) METHOD OF CALCULATING THE ABSENTEEISM RATE :

The standard formula to calculate the absenteeism rate is " The ratio of no.of manshifts lost due to absences to the no.of manshifts scheduled to work." Thus,

$$\text{Absenteeism Rate} = \frac{\text{Manshifts lost due to absences}}{\text{Manshifts scheduled to work}} \times 100$$

While using this formula, an organisation can have a choice of three figures as the divisor -

- (a) The first figure is the total employment as found on the muster or pay roll of the company. But this figure is bigger than the actual no. of vacancies. This is due to the employment of badali (substitute) workers, in substantial nos. manshifts scheduled to work are real only if they have actually be worked. So it is obvious that pay-rolls strength cannot be used as divisor.
- (b) The second choice is that of sanctioned strength. This number equals the no. of men that could be employed to work the installed capacity at a given point of time, and
- (c) The third choice is to use "Manshifts actually worked" as the divisor because on any given day all persons who work for wages and marked " present " in the attendance register indicates manshifts actually worked and is also equal to manshifts scheduled to work.

The absenteeism rate may also be calculated by using the following formula -

$$\text{Absence Rate} = \frac{\text{Persons not working due to authorised + Unauthorised absence}}{\text{Manshifts actually worked}} \times 100$$

Absenteeism Rate = $\frac{\text{Persons not working due to unauthorised absence}}{\text{Manshifts actually worked}} \times 100$

Sickness Rate = $\frac{\text{Persons not working due to certified sick leave}}{\text{Manshifts actually worked}} \times 100$

Authorised Leave Rate = $\frac{\text{Person not working due to authorised leave other than sickness}}{\text{Manshifts actually worked}} \times 100$

C) SCOPE OF STUDY :

1) Selection of Unit :

I have selected " The Kolhapur Steel Ltd., Kolhapur" as the unit to study the problem of labour absenteeism.

2) Selection of period of time :

A period of five years from 1979 to 1983 is selected for the study purpose.

3) Sources of Data Collection :

The data required for study are collected from the various sources as follows :-

- i) Various records maintained in the personnel department of the company.

The records available were -

- (a) Muster Rolls.
- (b) Returns kept on Absenteeism.
- (c) Leave notes.

(d) Returns ~~Under~~ Rule 72-A of
B.I.R.Rules.

ii) Interviews of employees taken on the basis
of questionnaire prepared.

iii) Discussions with officers of the
Company.

iv) Library resource - various books and
journals on personnel.

4) Preparation of questionnaire :

In order to facilitate the conducting of
interviews of workers the questionnaire was
prepared, a specimen of which is given in the
Appendix.

5) Selection of Sample of Workers :

Out of the total staff 300 and odd, a
sample of 50 workers from different departments
was selected for the study and they were
interviewed and the questionnaire was taken
duly filled in from them.

D) LIMITATION OF THE STUDY :

Since the study is undertaken as a part of the
fulfilments of the requirements of the degree course of
Master of Philosophy in Commerce, I have limited it to only
one unit in the engineering industry.

Further since the dissertation is required to be submitted to the university within a prescribed period of time. The period of study is limited to five years from 1979 to 1983.

More-over the absenteeism rates are calculated for the workers of the company and the office staff - is excluded for the study.

Another main difficulty in conducting the study was the suspicious attitude of the workers interviewed. They were not ready to give me the real information regarding their reasons behind remaining chronically absent from work.