

CHAPTER III

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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3.1 INTRODUCTION TO ABSENTEEISM

Absenteeism is being often mentioned as one of the chronic problems of our industries. Whenever management are being asked to mention a few important labour problems in their industries. This problem is invariably mentioned one of the acute but most common indications of employees dissatisfaction and unrest is absenteeism.

Absenteeism is one of the major problems that Indian industries, facing & rate of absenteeism varies from industry to industry. Still then due importance is not given to the problem of absenteeism in industries in India.

Absenteeism is nothing but the habit or practice of remaining absent.

3.2 BASIC CONCEPT'S & DEFINITION

The term 'Labour absenteeism refers to the workers absence from his regular task when he is normally scheduled to work this include time loss due to sickness, accident and their personal reasons. These absenteeism is either authorized or unauthorized but , usually involuntary lay offs, lack of work,

authorized leaves, vocation periods are not held responsible for the problem of absenteeism.

According to **Webster's dictionary** absenteeism has been defined as –
“ Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being an absence and an ‘absentee’ is one who habitually says away” [1]

According to **Labour Bureau, Simla**,
“Absenteeism is the total manshifts lost because of absences as a percentage of the total number of manshifts scheduled to work”. [2]

According to **Edwin Flippo**, “Absenteeism is the title given to a condition that waists when a person fails to come to work properly scheduled to work.”

According to **Hackitt**, “Temporary cessation of work for less than one whole day on the initiative of the workers, when his presence is expected.”

In India absenteeism data's 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 when he is scheduled to work.”

“Absenteeism is the total man shift lost because of absence as percentage of the total number of man shift scheduled to work.”

“In other word's , it signifies the absence of an employee from work when he is scheduled to be at work. It is unauthorized, unexplained, avoidable & willful absence from work.”

The 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 without any kind of notice, till he is being removed from the pay roll here, the workers is taken to be a person who is regular employee's and is not a casual or a badly 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 vacation's and overstay as period's when the workers is being scheduled to work.

A worker who reports for any part of a shift is to be considered present any employees may stay away from work if he has taken leave to which he is entitled, or an ground of sickness or some accident, or without any previous sanction of leave.

Thus absence may be authorized or unauthorized , willful or caused by circumstances beyond one's control.

Authorized absences are-

- 1.Sickness
- 2.Accident
- 3.Leave

Unauthorized absence are-

- 1.Fatigue of workman.
- 2.Bad habits like drinking gambling
- 3.Local festivals

In absenteeism being absent on accent of strike, lockout or pay-off is excluded & the scheduled holiday's are also not included.

3.3 FEATURES OF ABSENTEEISM

1. The percentage of absenteeism is generally higher in the night shift than the day shift. This is so because workers in night shifts experience more discomfort & uneasiness in the course of their work than they do during daytime.
2. Absenteeism in India is seasonal in character. It is the highest during March, April, May when land has to be prepared for monsoon sowing and also in the harvest season in September.

3. Absenteeism is generally high among workers below 25 years of age. the younger age group while the older people are not able to withstand the strenuous nature of work.
4. The rate of absenteeism varies from department to department within a unit in some department only a few workers are employed & physical conditions are better than in other departments, the rate of absenteeism is comparatively low as the size of a group increases, the rate of absenteeism goes up.
5. The percentage of absenteeism is much higher in coal & mining industries than in organized industries this high percentage of absenteeism is due to engagement of labours in the fields, marriages & festivals which in together are estimated to account for about 75% of the cases of withdrawals, drunkenness, relaxation or sickness.

3.4 CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM.

Absenteeism in India can be categorized into three types –

- 1) long absentees
- 2) Habitual absentees
- 3) occasional absences.

Though absenteeism has been believed by social scientists to be associated with job satisfaction and neurosis it is not solely due to them. As suggested below by Gawhane there could be several causes.

Personal Factors –

Age, marital status, number of children, sickness or prolonged illness, enjoyment, casual Quarrelsome nature etc.

Background Factors –

Rural urban background caste level of education, religion socio economic status pattern of occupational mobility family problems

Organizational Factors high wage structure length of service duty allocation

Trade Union activities –

Unionism, annual conferences, seminars and monthly meetings mass leave, labour unrest, pressure of trade unions.

Social Factors-

Neighborhood involvement, family disintegration, community involvement participations in voluntary organizations.

Other causes of absenteeism in detail discussed as follows.

1) Working conditions & Factory atmosphere :-

Environment in the factory premises affects the workers regularity. Generally working conditions consist of equipments supplied heat light sanitation ventilation etc. unsatisfactory environment long hours of work. Quality of materials & equipment supplied rotation of shifts also causes absenteeism.

2) Industrial Fatigue :-

Low wages compel to worker to seek some part time job to earn some side income, but this often results in constant fatigue which compels him to remain absent for their next days & if fatigue affects him seriously his absence may continue for quite some time.

3) Absence of adequate welfare Facilities

Absenteeism is also due to the inadequate welfare facilities available to workers. Welfare facilities include sanitation washing & bathing facilities ambulance drinking water canteens restrooms creches are inadequate.

4) Inadequate Leave Facilities

If leave facilities are provided to workers are not satisfactory then workers tend to remain absent as an unauthorised leave.

5) Shift System

In continuous production system where shift system is mostly used rate of absenteeism is high in night shifts rotating shifts disturbs the workers.

interest in the work particularly worker who have worked in first or general shift do not like to work in second or third shift.

6) Geographical Distance

Most of the organisations are located in the industrial areas which are outside the cities it is generally observed that because of non availability of suitable conveyance worker either remains absent or they are compelled to be late chle to bottleneclc in transportation workers have to remain absent.

7) Industrial Accidents :-

In many industries there is lack of safety measures so also work is entrusted to unqualified workers of adjustment of production & then there are much more chances to met with accident which hampers the workability that may also cause increase in absenteeism.

8) Unsatisfactory housing conditions

The workers who come to town usually find that they are not wanted & they sweu the number of unemployed & casual workers they also experience housing difficulties Houses occupied by industrial workers in india are unsatisfactory for healthful habitation health conditions are bad leading to consequent III health.

9) Seasonal Causes & Agricultural Work

During certain seasons like marriage of other social functions the employee remain absent from work most of the employees want to take leave of remain absent to spend their vacation with the member of the family or at their native places employee owing lands like to visit their lands in pre mansoon or harvesting seasons.

10) Itabits of drinking gambling

Workers are addicted to drinking & gambling in order to drive away fatigue of forget their worries this also leads to absenteeism.

11) Indebtness

Most of the workers suffer from a higher degree of indebtness workers are always worried about financial matters so that they ewre borroewd from their net pay such workers remain absent themselves.

12) Lack of Interest

If a worker does not feel any responsibility for the job has no personal involvement in it & if he easily replaceable there is no incentives for his come to work results in increase in absenteeism.

3.5 METHOD OF CALCULATING THE ABSENTEEISM RATE

The standard formula to calculate the absenteeism rate is the ration of no of manshifts lost due to absence to the no of manshifts scheduled to work thus

$$\text{Absenteeism Rate} = \frac{\text{Man shifts lost due to absences}}{\text{Man shifts Scheduled to work}} \times 100$$

Absence rates on different days in different months and years have been calculated from the data collected from the records maintained by the organisation using the above formula.

The absenteeism rate may also be calculated by using the following formulas

Absence Rate=

$$\frac{\text{Persons not working due to authorised unauthorised absence}}{\text{Man shifts actually worked}} \times 100$$

Absenteeism rate =

$$\frac{\text{Persons not working due to unauthorised absence}}{\text{Man shifts actually worked}} \times 100$$

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

Authorized Leave Rate =

$$\frac{\text{Persons not working due to authorised leaves other than sickness}}{\text{Man shifts actually worked}} \times 100$$

3.6 DISTINGUISH BETWEEN ABSENCE RATE & ABSENTEEISM RATE

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 absence during a particular period. This concept is nearer to the annual survey at industry (ASI) definition while absenteeism rate is a statistical expression of the sum total of time loss due to only all unauthorised absence during particular period.

Thus the absence rate inter alia might reflect on personnel practices such as rates relating to leaves, vacations etc. Absenteeism rate indicates 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 rate that will be required on certain day.

3.7 MEASURES FOR CONTROL OF ABSENTEEISM

Labour investigation committee 1946 was of the opinion that "Proper conditions of work in the factory, adequate wages, protection from accidents & sickness and facilities for obtaining leave for rest & recreation constitute the most effective means of reducing absenteeism".

The encyclopedia of social sciences suggests the following measures to reduce the rate of absenteeism

1) Absenteeism is probably a natural human reaction to the routine of modern factory life. There is a maladjustment between man's instincts, desires & regular working habits that are imposed upon him. This routine can be relaxed or

modified by grant of leave with pay by shortening or redistributing scheduled hours by having employees near to their work place & by adjusting the physical conditions of the plant especially noise and ventilation

2) Though personnel management should encourage notification especially in cases of sickness when the duration of absence is likely to be long.

3) In case of personal & Family circumstances e.g. illness of children in case of married woman employee which make absence unavoidable leave should be granted liberally.

4) To reduce unavoidable absence due to sickness & industrial accidents programs of industrial accident & safety should be strengthened.

5) Regularity in attendance can be encouraged to some extent by the offer of a bonus & other pecuniary inducements.

Some of the measures for control of absenteeism are as follows:

1) Adoption of Well defined recruitment procedure

The management should look for aptitude & ability and the prospective worker employers should take in to account the fact that selection should be for employees development

2) Motivation of Workers Welfare and social measures

The management should recognise the needs of workers & offer them adequate & cheap housing facilities free or subsidised Food Free medical aid & transportation facilities Free educational facilities for their children As for social security measures such as the provision of provident fund E. S. I. Facilities gratuity and pension all these need to be improved so that worker may have sense of belonging

3) Cordial relations between supervisors and workers

Supervisor should create an atmosphere in which willing co-operation exists between them and the work force and workers would freely discuss their problems with their supervisors.

Mann Baumgartel observe “Supervisors who make their men feel free to discuss job problems with them have appreciably less absence in their work than do supervisors who display the opposite behavior”

4) Improved Communication & Prompt Redressal Of Grievances

Since majority of the workers are illiterate timely illustrations & instructions meeting and counseling should be used as ways of communication only essential notices should be put on the notice board which should be placed nearer the entrance inside the canteen and in areas which are frequently visited

The management should arrange a fair & prompt redressal of grievances supervisors should be trained to handle a workers grievance in an informal and human manner.

5) Liberal grant or leave

The management should take a liberal attitude in granting leave when the workers need for them for genuine purposes. liberalized leave rules will reduce absenteeism effectively

6) Provision of healthful & hygienic working conditions

The workers should be provided with proper & healthy working condition the facilities of drinking water canteens lavatories rest rooms lighting & ventilation need to be improved All these help in keeping the employee cheerful & increase productivity & efficiency of operation throughout the plant.

7) Development of workers education

The management should make effective propaganda and efforts to educate the employees the educational programme according to the national commission on labour should be to make a worker

- a) Aware of his rights and obligations
- b) understand the organization and functioning at a trade union and develop allalities of learlanship loyalty and devotion to it work so that he may intelligently participate in its affairs.
- c) Aware of his rights and obligations
- d) understand the basic economic and technical aspects of the industry and the plant where he is employed so that he may take an intelligent interest in its affairs.
- e) A responsible and alert citizen
- f) Lead a calm clean & health life based on a firm ethical foudation.

3.8 ABSENTEEISM EFFECTS ON INDUSTRY

Effects on Industry:

A) Adverse effect on market reputation

Due to high labour absenteeism the production suffers the employer fails to execute the order accepted also finds difficult to maintain regular swwpply of goods to market this affects the market reputation and whole business in the long run.

B) Monetary Loss

Due to high labour absenteeism the prodution goes down but the factory expenses remain the same. Absenteeism in industry stop machines processes creates production bottle necks hamper smooth flow or continuity of work upsets production targets increases direct overhead costs This to the monetary loss to the margin also goes down.

Effects on workers

A) No work no money

Frequent absenteeism adversely affect the economy of the worker himself It reduces his earnings and adds to his indebtedness decreases his purchasing power makes it difficult for him to meet necessities of life leading to personal problems of attitudes and moral and in many cases loss of employment.

B) Additional pressure of work on workers

On many occasions workers who are present have to do the work of those who are absent in the department this increases the pressure of work on those who are regular in their attendance.

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