

Chapter One



INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Absenteeism
- 1.3 Selection of Topic and Research Auspices
- 1.4 Level of Research
- 1.5 Statement of the Problem
- 1.6 Kolhapur City - the Study Area
- 1.7 Rocket Engineering Corporation
Private Limited - The Study Organization
- 1.8 Rocket's Workforce - the Study Universe
- 1.9 Objectives of the Study
- 1.10 Methodology adopted
- 1.11 Sample Design
- 1.12 Sources of Data Collection
 - (a) Primary Sources
 - (b) Secondary Sources
- 1.13 Scope of the Study
- 1.14 Significance of the Study
- 1.15 Chapter Scheme

CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH DESIGN

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The present Dissertation titled "**A Critical Study of Absenteeism in Rocket Engineering Corporation Private Limited, Kolhapur**" is a report of an investigation into the phenomenon of absenteeism in an industrial manufacturing unit at Kolhapur against the Management Science's perspective. In this opening Chapter, the basic concepts of the topic under investigation and the research design adopted for conducting the present study are being presented.

1.2 ABSENTEEISM

'Absenteeism' means the failure of a worker to report for work when he is scheduled to work and when the employer has work available for him. More specifically, absenteeism refers to an unauthorized absence from work. Unauthorized absence includes all cases where work is available and the worker knows about its availability, but fails to report for duty and the employer has no prior information on the worker's intention of not reporting for duty.¹

In an industrial organization, absenteeism is one of the ever-present annoyance for both the production and personnel managers. To the former, it means idle machines, reduced output, extra mental strain to keep work groups and machines functioning and an increase in the cost of production. To the latter, it means maintenance of records, enquiries and quite possibly, a corresponding increase in labour turnover. It presents him, first, with the necessity for a practical procedure for recording the absenteeism and an analysis that may reveal causal factors and suggest remedial measures. This analysis has its statistical and clinical aspects. Thus, absenteeism results in dislocation of work, increase in labour cost, reduction in productivity; and if unchecked, increases indiscipline. Although some amount of absence will always be inevitable, most of it can be avoided. (A detailed presentation of the conceptual premises of absenteeism is being offered in Chapter-2).

1.3 SELECTION OF TOPIC AND RESEARCH AUSPICES

'Management' belongs to the realm of 'Applied Sciences'. In the context of manufacturing organizations, management, to be really effective in its functional areas of finance, production, marketing and human resources, needs a dependable body of knowledge. In applied sciences, such a body of knowledge can be accumulated only through research. It would, therefore, be appropriate to evaluate the phenomenon of absenteeism in an industrial manufacturing organization with the methodology of applied research under the auspices of Management, which itself is an Applied Science.

1.4 LEVEL OF RESEARCH

Evaluating the phenomenon of absenteeism in an industrial manufacturing unit on a case-study basis, identifying the causal factors of the phenomenon and suggesting remedial measures are the questions that are being investigated under the present work. Hence, on this count, the present work really is a *formulative exploratory* level research endeavour.

1.5 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

It is obvious that excessive absenteeism has many direct and indirect costs for the employer - loss of production, poor service to customers, training and replacement costs, reduced earnings, resulting in higher cost of goods and services. Some of the 'hidden' costs of tardiness and absenteeism include such costly areas like quality fluctuations, overstaffing, idle machinery and equipment, work disruption, scrap and material wastages, excessive overtime payments, higher inventories and time lost in conducting employee discipline and counselling sessions on absenteeism.

Against this background, the present researcher, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Master of Philosophy in Commerce and Management, has taken up the present research work titled "**A Critical Study of Absenteeism in Rocket Engineering Corporation Private Limited, Kolhapur**".

1.6 KOLHAPUR CITY - THE STUDY AREA

Kolhapur City has a rich cultural heritage. In recent centuries, it has swiftly

changed from a vibrant garrison-transit town of yester dynasties to a Seat of Royalty (1731 A.D.), and from mid-19th century onwards, to a fast urbanizing centre. The yester centuries' Princely State of Kolhapur today is the headquarters of a District of the same name in the State of Maharashtra.

Geographically, Kolhapur City is situate at 16°62' North latitude and 74°54' East longitude at a mean sea level of 1872 ft. on the eastern slopes of the Sahyadrian Mountain Ranges in the Western Maharashtra. The city's sprawl covers an area of 66.82 sq.km. and it is a home for 4 lakh-plus population.

As regards the city's industrial landscape, at present, Kolhapur has three specially designed and developed industrial zones, Shivaji Udyamnagar (set up in 1947 and extended into Y.P.Powarnagar and now planning further expansion to Mudshingi village nearby), Shirol MIDC Industrial Estate (1971) and Gokul-Shirgaon MIDC Industrial Estate (1982 and now planning to expand on additional 2200 hectares between Kolhapur and Kagal on the south). In addition, Kolhapur Municipal Corporation set up its Panjarpol Industrial Estate mainly for servicing industries. Besides these major industrial areas, clusters of foundries, machinshops, assembly shops have long since come up in the areas of Vikramnagar, Uchagaon, while Jawaharnagar area has been earmarked for leather industry.

1.7 ROCKET ENGINEERING CORPORATION

PRIVATE LIMITED - THE STUDY ORGANIZATION

Rocket Engineering Corporation Private Limited, Kolhapur (hereinafter 'Rocket') was started as a small-scale unit in rented premises by Vasa-family way back in 1960 for producing crude oil engines, then used in agricultural irrigation. Later on, it joined hands with another enterprising family - Doshis - and entered

into the production of diesel oil engine and pumpsets. The alliance, however, could not last longer as the Doshi family permanently shifted its operations to Ahmedabad. With growing business, Rocket shifted its production facilities to Udyamnagar Industrial Estate in Kolhapur on own industrial plot. In later years, as the demand for diesel pumpsets started waning because of intensive rural electrification, Rocket diversified into the manufacture of radial, vertical and horizontal drill machines and soon specialized in it. In 1975, Rocket's products received ISI certification and it began exporting them. Today, it produces special purpose electric motors also. It has started a second assembly unit in MIDC-Shiroli Industrial Estate, near Kolhapur, in 19__.

Constitution-wise, Rocket has now changed into a Private Limited Company incorporated under the Companies' Act, 1956, and its turnover in fiscal 2002-03 stood at Rs.24 crore. On the whole, Rocket is wellknown for its success story in the industrial realm of Kolhapur City.

1.8 ROCKET'S WORKFORCE - THE STUDY UNIVERSE

As in March, 2005, Rocket's workforce stood at 163, comprising 8 executive directors, 7 managers, 30 supervisors, 38 administrative employees and 80 technical employees. This entire workforce of 163 thus constitutes the universe of the present study.

1.9 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In view of the introductory remarks, foregoing discussion about the research topic and the study organization, the following have been set out as the objectives of the present study:

1. To study the nature of absenteeism in the study organization;
2. To evaluate the workplace atmosphere, working conditions and employee welfare facilities in the study organization (as these have a direct bearing on the absenteeism);
2. To identify and analyze socio-economic, psychological, personal and environmental factors inducing absenteeism in the study organization's workforce;
3. To suggest such measures as may be appropriate and feasible for remedying absenteeism in industrial manufacturing organizations.

1.10 METHODOLOGY ADOPTED

For fulfilling the above objectives, both primary and secondary data were collected. For collecting the primary data, *Survey Method* was adopted. Survey data was collected by administering a structured interview schedule containing both open- and close-ended questions to the sample respondent-workers of the study organization. The respondents were selected by using *purposive quota accidental sampling* technique. For cross-verifying the data collected through the survey method, *Observation Method* was also adopted. The necessary secondary data was mostly compiled through the *Library Research Method*.

1.11 SAMPLE DESIGN

In the purposive quota accidental sampling technique adopted for the present study, 'purposive' mean those respondent-workers that belonged to a particular staff category, namely, managerial/supervisory workers, technical workers and administrative workers; 'quota' meant the predetermined sample size of 60

respondent-workers (representing 37% of the study universe), comprising the sub-quotas of 20 workers from each staff category; and 'accidental' meant only those respondent-workers that were willing to participate in the survey were administered the structured interview schedule. The actual respondent-workers were selected by visiting both the plants of the study organization, one in Shivaji Udyamnagar Industrial Estate in Kolhapur City and another in MIDC Industrial Estate at Shirol, about 8 km outside Kolhapur City.

1.12 SOURCES OF DATA COLLECTION

(a) Primary Sources

The primary data was mainly collected from a sample of 60 respondent-workers of the study organization through the media of a pre-tested structured **interview schedule**. Additional/background information of primary significance was collected through **personal interviews** of the persons knowledgeable in human resource management in industrial organizations. The researcher also relied on the **observation method** to gain first-hand insights into treatment of absenteeism in the study organization.

(b) Secondary Sources

The secondary data necessary for completing the investigation was collected mainly from the **published sources** in academic libraries and the archives of the study organization. Further verbatim secondary data was obtained as background material, from the persons knowledgeable in different aspects of the research topic as also reputed academicians through **informal discussions**.

1.13 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present work, in fact, is a case study of a single organization, hence, it could be termed as its *geographical scope*; the topical scope covers the phenomenon of absenteeism in the study organization; the *analytical scope* covers the fulfillment of the objectives set out for the study; while the *functional scope* is confined to offering a set of meaningful suggestions for remedying absenteeism in industrial manufacturing organizations.

1.14 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The fundamental drive of research in Management Science is sustained by its quest for the acquisition of new knowledge useful for successfully meeting the challenges posed by the environment.

Industrial manufacturing units, particularly the small scale units, have a very large potential in trade and commerce as well as national economy, if only it is judiciously exploited. Hence, the problems relating to the functioning and performance of these units lie in the domain of management researchers. To that extent, the present work has attempted to offer meaningful solutions to the problem of absenteeism in these units. An exploratory research of the phenomenon of absenteeism in such a unit may represent the first step in the eventual development of a practice theory for controlling and preventing absenteeism for being implemented by similar units elsewhere. The present work, the researcher believes, is a step in this direction.

1.15 CHAPTER SCHEME

The Dissertation has been divided into Five Chapters as under:

- Chapter-1 : Introduction and Research Design;**
- Chapter-2 : Conceptual Premises - Absenteeism;**
- Chapter-3 : Profile of Kolhapur City and Rocket Engineering Corporation Private Limited, Kolhapur;**
- Chapter-4 : Data Analysis and Interpretation**
- Chapter-5 : Conclusions and Suggestions**

The structured interview schedule used for collecting the primary data from the respondent-workers forms the Appendix and a Select Bibliography concludes the Dissertation.

References

1. Sarma, A.M. (n.d.): "Personnel and Human Resource Management", Mumbai: Himalaya Publishing House, p.249.