

## CHAPTER II

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### REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.

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1. The key concept
2. Meaning & Definition of Absenteeism
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### THE KEY CONCEPT

Absenteeism means broadly, a tendency on the part of the workers to remain away from the scheduled work. Even in ideal conditions workers' absence occurs. The frequent absenteeism in Industrial establishment has constituted a great drain on the production resources of this country as the experience and efficiency of the labour. Absenteeism signifies the absence of an employee from work that is unauthorised, unavoidable and willful. Statistically absenteeism is measured by percentage of manshifts schedule to work for calculating the rate of absenteeism, therefore, two factors are - required number of persons scheduled to work and the number actually present.

Frequent absenteeism in industries is a great handicap both to workers and the industries. As 'No work No Pay' is usually the general rule, when the worker fails to attend the usual work the income of the worker reduces. Health and efficiency affects adversely in the irregularity of the workers. The loss of the employees and industry due to absenteeism is still greater as both discipline suffer. Further the management has to depend solely on workers who present themselves at the factory gate and who are generally inefficient. The maintenance



of an additional employment of workers lead to serious complications and evils. In this context 'Labour Investigation Committee' in India pointed out, it provides an instification to the employee to provide sufficient work to the substitute worker and the management have to 'Pay offers' workers and for some of them to take compulsory leave. Thus both employers and workers suffer a distinct losses due to absenteeism.

The success of an organisation largely depends upon the efficiency and experiences of its workers. Hence the extent to which it can reduce absenteeism of the worker is of soft great importance to the success of an industry. However, for long this term neither properly defined nor clearly understood and very few industrial concerns collected figures for absenteeism. The percentage of working days that the employee actually feports for work has provide at a time very useful criterian. If one employee is present 97 percent to 85 percent of time (other characters of two being equal) the former would usually be considered the more desirable employee.

### MEANING AND DEFINITION OF ABSENTEEISM

Absenteeism refers to the absence of a worker when he is properly scheduled to work. A worker who reports for any part of shift is to be considered as present. An employee on a regularly scheduled vacation, is, therefore, not to be considered as scheduled to work. The same is true during an employer ordered lay-off. On the contrary, an employee who requests time off at other than a regular vacation period should be considered as absent from scheduled work until he returns, or until it is determined that the absence will be of such duration. Similarly an employee who quits without notice should be considered as absent from schedule work until his name is dropped from the active list, but preferably this period should not exceed one week in either case. If a strike is in progress, workers on strike should be considered as neither scheduled to work nor absent since data on time lost because of strikes are collected under the head of man days lost on account of industrial dispute. 1

Date Yoder opines that, several common disciplinary problems like absenteeism and tardiness, labour turnover

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1. Report on labour welfare activities for industrial workers convened by I.L.O. in 1963, Ministry of Labour Govt. of India, Manager, Publications New Delhi, 1969.



are recognised as possible symptoms of low morale.<sup>2</sup>

Absence with pay also includes absence with part pay. For recording absence with full or part pay, the number of workers who were on leave with pay in each shift on each working day of the month should be added up.

Absence without pay includes absence of workers who do not get any pay for the period of absence even if they receive social security benefits for sickness, maternity etc. for the period of absence. Weekly and scheduled holidays are not to be included.

K.N.Vaid, holds the view that absenteeism is not the result of slackness in production or low standard of living as despite an expansion in production and a rise in living standards there has been a rise in absenteeism rates over the last twenty years or so. He argues with the help of fifty case histories that for a meaningful understanding of the deviant work behaviour the goals or conceptions of self motivation, attitude towards job, personality traits and socially defined status of individual workers need to be analysed.

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2. V.V.Giri, Labour Problems in Indian Industry  
Asia Publishing House, Bombay-1972.

### DEFINITION BY LABOUR DEPARTMENT GOVT.OF INDIA

The term absenteeism, for the first time, was defined in a circular of the Labour Department, Govt.of India. It was issued provincial governments. The circular defined absenteeism rate as "the total manshifts lost because of absence as a percentage of the total number of man shifts scheduled".

According to Websters' dictionary, absenteeism is the practice or habit of being an 'absentee' and an 'absentee' is one who habitually stays away". 1

The working party for the cotton textile industry defines absenteeism as "The average percentage workers absent from work per day for any reason".

According to labour Bureau of Simla,"absenteeism is the total man shift lost because of absence as a percentage of the total number of manshift scheduled to work". 2

The Labour Bureau, Simla and Annual Survey Industries are getting some difference in consideration of the absenteeism concept. As these are separate organisations

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1. T.N.Bhajoliwal, Economics of Labour & Social Welfare, Chap. II Page 40.
  2. S.N.Mehrotra, Labour Problems In India, Chap-IV Page 42.

their object to collect the labour statistic is different. So there is difference in interpretation. The labour Bureau does not regard authorised vacation, privilege leave, strike, lockout, lay-off or regularised overstay as absenteeism, however, all kinds of vacation and leave are looked upon by the Annual Survey of Industries as period when the worker is scheduled to work.<sup>1</sup>

Difference due to the fact that annual Survey of Industries is concerned with the cost of the time lost as percentage of the total labour cost, while labour Bureau concern with the extent of the total time lost due to the human factor as a percentage of the total time scheduled for work.

Summarising the theme of above definitions as, absence is the failure of worker to report for work when he is scheduled to work. An employee is considered to be absent when the employer has work available and the employee is aware of it, and when an employer has no reason to expect, well in advance, that the employee will not be available for work at a specified time.

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1. Dale Yoder, Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, Chap.VI.

In addition to this, an employee who requests time off at other than a regular vacation period should be considered as an absentee until he returns or until it is determined that his absence is of such a duration that his name should be removed from the list of active employees and that after this date, he should not be considered as one who is scheduled to work.

Absenteeism on the part of worker does not include when strike or lockout is in progress or if worker is laid off, he is not treated as an absentee, a worker who reports for duty even for a part of the day or a shift is not treated as an absentee. A worker on a regular scheduled vacation is not counted as scheduled to work or absent.

#### THE ABSENTEEISM RATE

- 1) The formula recommended for by the United States Department of Labour for computing the absenteeism rate at the end of each month is as follows :

$$\text{Absenteeism Rate} = \frac{\text{No. of employee days lost through Job absence during period}}{\text{Average no. of employees} \times \text{No. of workxx days.}} \times 100$$

- 2) According to K.N.Vaid, unauthorised absence is the case of absenteeism measurement, and he says this is determined by - 1

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1. K.N.Vaid, Papers on Absenteeism, Journal of Industrial Relations, Vol.2, No.4 April. 1967.



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

It is also called frequency rate of absenteeism.

$$\text{Total Manshift lost} = \text{Manshift scheduled} + \frac{\text{The no.of actually present.}}{\text{Total man shifts scheduled to work in hours.}}$$

3) The following rate is called as frequency rate of absenteeism.

$$\text{Absenteeism Rate} = \frac{\text{Manshifts lost in hours}}{\text{Total man shifts scheduled to work in hours.}} \times 100$$

The severity rate of absenteeism is taken into consideration in practice. However, another way of looking at absenteeism is in terms of its frequency rate. According to it, any absence by one workman over a continuous period of days is treated as one absence.

Elton Mayo rightly put it, 'it seemed wise to take figures that would, at least to some extent, minimise successive days of absence and maximise frequency of absence. A worker who is absent for a number of successive days in a given period will be taken as absent once as against another worker who remains absent for the same number of days in total but throughout the period rather than in succession. While the first was ~~was~~ scored as absence one, the second was absent the number of times he kept himself apart from his sche-

duled work. The problem of absenteeism is more serious in the second case than that of first one and, therefore, frequency rate is regarded as the better yardstick than the severity rate.

Frequency rate are often computed from daily individual records to provide more valid comparisons when large numbers are involved. 1

#### Definitions of concerned terms :

The terms which are concerned with the study are defined as follows :

##### Lay Off :

According to Section 2 (Kkk) of the Industrial Dispute Act, a lay-off has been defined as the failure, refusal or inability of an employer, on account of shortage of coal, power or raw materials, on the accumulations of stocks or breakdown of machinery or for any other reason, to give employment to a workman whose name is borne on the muster roll of his individual establishment and who has not been retrenched. 2

##### Retrenchment :

The Industrial disputes Act, 1947, defines retrenchment as the termination by the employer of the services of workmen for any reason<sup>1</sup>.

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1. C.B. Matoria, Personnel Management, Management of Human Resources, Page 231.
  2. Ibid/Op.Lit.C.B. Matoria, Personnel Management.

Simply it is permanent termination of the services of an employee for economic reasons in a going concern.

Strike :

The Industrial Dispute Act, 1947, defines strike as, a cessation of work by a body of persons employed in any industry acting in combination, or a concerted refusal, or a refusal under a common understanding, of any number of persons who are or have been so employed to continue to work or to accept employment".

Holidays and Leave :

Since the study is concerned with the labour absenteeism, it is important to focus on the concept of holidays and leave with pay which are getting to the workers. If workers are getting holidays and leave it may result in minimising the incidences of chronic absenteeism. The need and value of such holidays therefore, appears to be very great.

Holidays are days of exemption from labour or work and hence a period of rest and recreation.

Man is not a machine. Even machine needs some stoppage when they get hot in the course of production.

As a matter of fact, every person engaged in any trade or occupation has an urge to break away and needs at

least occasional relief from toil and harsh and enervating conditions of existence. The need of holiday requires from the consideration of health, efficiency, alleviation of the evil effects of industrial fatigue. There is close relationship of holiday, efficiency, health and productivity. These are interdependent. To remove physical and mental exhaustion among the worker, they need some rest, otherwise workers will suffer from physical and mental strain and illness resulting with many other diseases and ultimately it will affect on productivity of the organisation.

As regards the question of costs arising out of the system of granting holidays with pay, it may be pointed out that the percentage of the cost of providing such holidays in relation to the total expenses of the industry is very small. Moreover, the increase in industrial productivity is likely to be large enough to absorb the cost with much difficulty in a short time. The general effect of adoption of the scheme would be to increase purchasing power and consequently consumption, than adding business development. 1

It may be pointed out that holidays with pay is a measure of social justice which contributes to a fairer distribution of employment and leisure. Further,

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1. Indian Labour Statistics, Bureau of Statistics, 1962 P. XVI.

holidays, adequate in length and based on proper rate of wages, reduce the burden of absenteeism probably as much as any single preventive measure. Thus influencing attendance records favourably. In fact the great set off against the cost of holidays with pay is the decrease in sickness and consequently in the rate of absenteeism.

The labour Investigation Committee 1946 observed in case of grant of holidays and leave with wages. In most concern the principle of no work no pay is observed. Some concerns show weekly holiday on register only but getting work done on holidays too. Even workers unable to get the sick leave due to influences and bad recommendations.

The Holiday with pay Act 1946, - The act was passed and enforced from Jan.1, 1946 in India, applicable to perennial factories but not seasonal factories. It ensured compensatory holidays to workers deprived of the weekly rest by an exemption from the provisions of Sec.35 of the Factories Act, 1934. The act went further than the International Labour Convention and provided that "every worker who has completed a period of twelve months" continuous service in factory, shall be allowed, during the subsequent period of twelve months, holidays for a period of 10 days or if a child, fourteen consecutive days". The holidays could be accumulated for the period of two years.

For these holidays, payment was to be made 'at a rate equivalent to the daily average of the workers' wage for the days on which he actually worked during the three preceding months - half the wages to be paid before the worker proceeded on leave and the balance on his return'. Provision was also made in the Act, 'entitling the worker to get his wages for holidays in the event of his being discharged from employment before he was allowed the holidays or even if he left his employment having been refused such holidays. 1

Under the provisions of factories Act of 1948, every adult worker is entitled to about fifteen days' leave with pay. This provision is over and above the benefits to which worker may be entitled under any other law or under the terms of any award, agreement or contract of service.

In case of national and festival holidays, the National Commission recommended the every employee should be allowed in a calender year three paid national holidays, viz. 15th August, 26th January and 2nd Oct. and five paid festival holidays as may be declared by the appropriate government in consultation with the representatives of employers and employees. 2

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1. Seal KC. Survey of Absenteeism Pattern, In Indian Survey Techniques, Labour Bureau Pamphlet series 6, 1964, PP 92,122.
  2. K.N.Vaid, Papers on Absenteeism.

The success of these legislative measures depends on actual enforcement which is possible by adequate inspection and responsible cooperation on the part of employer.

Since these legislations are enforced still they might defaults on the part of the workers or employers. Because they are getting holidays, leaves still the rate of absenteeism is high. There may be other reasons for such absenteeism, for what the industrial malady is affecting.

#### NATURE AND TYPES OF LEAVE :

In the light of above discussion, the object of leave ~~and~~ is cleared. More over, object is included in the type of leave i.e. leave taken for the same purpose.

##### 1) CASUAL LEAVE.

The leave which is taken irregular and the event which are happening by chance. It is an occasional leave. For mill workers in all four days casual leave is granted. Leave is granted to meet some urgent and unforeseen work which may arise.

##### 2) PRIVILEGE LEAVE.

Privilege leave is also called as earned leave. The worker has right to get this leave. The aim behind

granting the leave is to wash out the mental and physical strains by taking rest and worker should enjoy some social life to develop his social personality.

### 3) SICK LEAVE

Due to fatigue or any other reason, worker may suffer from temporary decrease. He may suffer from illness.

To cure such illness, the worker requires medical treatment and rest. For such period worker is entitled to get sick leave.

In case of sick leave, following points should be noted

1. Granting of sick leave is not subject to an urgent need of business.
2. Sickness will not excuse non-performance of duty.
3. There is no necessity to send the application in advance.
4. Worker has to produce medical certificate afterwards when he joins the work after his sickness.
5. Medical certificate should be produced before concerned officer or the management.
6. Fitness certificate in case of long illness or injury should be provided.
7. If worker is not actually sick, he has no right to ask for sick leave.



#### 4) MATERNITY LEAVE

The maternity benefit Act of 1961 is passed by the Govt. of India. A worker(woman)is entitled to get this benefit. But she has to complete qualifying period of her service in the industrial establishment as laid down by the law. In general, period of benefit is about 12 weeks and on an average benefit is given average daily wage or rupee one a day whichever is higher. The qualifying period is 160 days service during 12 months preceding the date of delivery, inclusive of period of lay-off, if any. But nil in case of immigrant women, if pregnant at the time of arrival in Assam. 1

#### Leave in case of sickness of Relatives.

It is not necessary to have leave on the sickness of relative of a worker, If it is routine and ordinary. But in case of serious illness and like serious accident, a person who is about to death and close to worker as parents, brother, sister, wife in such case he can not be expected to attend the work.

#### The scheme of employee state insurance :

The Employees' State Insurance Scheme is the first of

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1. R.C.Saxena, Labour Problems and Social Welfare Page 409- 1974.

its kind in Asia. It is the first step towards the achievement of a comprehensive scheme of **social** security. Employees' State Insurance Act passed in 1948. The workers who are covered by this scheme get periodical benefit from the corporation. When worker suffers from sickness he gets benefit of maximum fifty six days in a year. Not only sick leave is granted but treatment is given under this scheme to the sick worker by the corporation. Record is maintained with the Insurance Medical Practitioner, doctor and a card is given to the sick worker. It is hoped that the scheme will be implemented with the determination and with a sense of service by those incharge of the scheme and with willing cooperation of the employers as well as workers.

With the introduction of such social security benefits the ill habits such as turnover, absenteeism, low morale sickness may stop and industrial melody will not affect.

#### Some aspects of absenteeism without leave :

To eliminate the strain on physical and mental health Govt. of India has passed the Holiday Act. Special provision has been made in the act. Factories Act 1948 provides for the earned leave. For getting such leave, a worker has to go through proper channel. Leaves are classified as privilege leave, casual leave, sick leave,

maternity leave etc. Who can grant the leave? :

The Officer-in-Charge or the head of the department can grant the leave, under the rules and regulations laid down. Accordingly leave is granted to the workers.

When to apply for the leave ?

According to Section 79 of the Factories Act 1948, an application for the leave ~~ix~~ must be sent before fifteen days. In public utility concerns, it is necessary to apply for leave before one month. So far casual leave is concern, it should apply in advance. But in case of emergency or with the nature of situation it can be sent through other worker ~~ax~~ as and when circumstances compel.

As per the rules and regulations made by the industrial establishment, in case of leave, worker has to go through the rules only. If worker is availing the leave facility as per rules, there is no problem to take any action on such worker. On the other hand, if worker is availing the leave facility and again remaining absent from the work then action should be taken in such case considering the causes of absenteeism.

Management's action to absence :

Worker may take undue advantage of inattention of the

management. But now a days management too becoming sensitive since it is suffering from many troubles and heavy losses. To remain absent continuously for a long period is misbehaviour and sign of low morale. In this situation management can take action on such absentee workers. The weapon in the hand of management is to issue memos and finally charg-sheet. After evidence and enquiry, default on the part of worker is genuine, in such cases management may terminate the services of such worker by issuing termination order.

Generally following procedure is followed in case of absentee worker. In the first instance, memo is given i.e. a warning memo. Secondly, a chance memo is given to improve the condition and finally a charge sheet is issued against such absentee. After evidence and enquiry last and final action is taken i.e. termination of services.

#### First Memo.

If a worker remains absent without permission then a memo is given to him informing about the default due to absence from the work.

#### Second Memo.

Second memo consists of information about the first memo and it is final warning to the absentee worker.

### Charge sheet and enquiry

Still worker remains absent when the issued second memo, then enquiry has to be undertaken. An opportunity is given for the explanation. After regular enquiry, if fault is noted, action is taken against misconduct.

### Termination of services.

If it has been proved in enquiry, that the worker remained absent though he was well informed in advance, but again committed the same mistake in such circumstances, he is terminated from the services.

### Termination of services in case of physical fitness.

Some workers may suffer from physical unfitness, the diseases such as tuberculosis, cancer, etc. and other such types of diseases, due to such reason if worker remains absent, continuously, in such case he should be terminated as unfit for the job.

If a worker becomes blind accidentally, and unable to do his job, he is terminated. The workers who are unfit for the job and other light services are not available with the employer, which would fit them, then termination is the last resort.

### Short Period absence and long period absence - difference.

To remain absent without notice to the supervisor for

short period for reasonable reason and if such worker is most regular in such case short period absence is not liable for the misconduct on the part of worker. However worker is habitual on the absentee and he remains absent from the work without permission for not a reasonable reason, it is treated as serious misconduct.

The model standing orders framed under the Industrial Employment (Standing order) Act 1947 usually provide that habitual absence with leave for more than ten days is misconduct. If worker has applied for the leave but leave is not sanctioned and due to urgency worker remained absent, after enquiry its reason behind such absence was justifiable than no problem, otherwise it is serious misconduct. Since habitual absence is misconduct there is no appeal to such absence and liable for the termination from the job.

#### Extent of absenteeism

Now a days, like strike, absenteeism become a regular headache to the industry. It is very difficult to wipe off. No doubt some percentage of absenteeism in industry is expected, due to some unavoidable reasons and it is bound to accrue. But since there is no hard and fast control on the rate of absenteeism, it is increasing day by day. The rate of absenteeism is expected

from 3% to 5%. But it varies from 7% to 30%.<sup>1</sup> In some seasons of the year, it reaches upto 40%. Looking to these figures, it is definite that there is no such unavoidable reason due to which the rate is increased. If there is any such reason it may be rectifiable, otherwise it is the mistake of management or low morale on the part of the worker.

Many studies have been undertaken by various countries to know the reasons of absenteeism, but the rate of absenteeism differs from industry to industry, place to place and occupation to occupation and it is quite true that reasons to such absenteeism are also different.

In USA a study has been undertaken and it has been observed by the investigator that the rate of absenteeism among youngmen is higher than elder employees. Likewise, in United Kingdom, it has been investigated the reasons for absenteeism. It is found that the problem of absenteeism was very serious than that of strikes. They even pointed out that an average of some three million working days have been lost through strikes, but nearby three hundred million working days have been lost each year through absenteeism. 2

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1. C.B.Mamoria, Personnel Management. Page 332.
  2. C.B.Mamoria, Page 233.

It is the case of advanced countries. Though India is facing ~~the~~ problem of unemployment within the same, the problem of absenteeism strike, labour turnover is serious among the employed workers. If the figures of unauthorised absenteeism, strike, turnover added with privilege leave, casual leave, sick leave and maternity leave (in case of women worker) it would be found that the figure of non working days in the year in the industries in India may be very large than the total working days.

The Royal Commission on Labour rightly reported that high absenteeism prevails among industrial labour mainly due to their rural orientation. Afterwards many investigator pointed out that the variation in rate of absenteeism in the Indian industries from 7% to 15%. It's ~~is~~ incidence is high in plantation and in mines, and it is higher in Northern Indian than in southern India. 1

#### CAUSES OF ABSENTEEISM

Since industrialisation is rapidly increasing with the scale of production and development, some problems are also bound to occur. Frequent labour turnover, chronic absenteeism, strikes etc. ~~are~~ usual and serious problems ~~are~~ ~~now~~ a days.

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1. Rudraswamy V. A study of absenteeism in Textile SITRA



The concept of absenteeism has been studied in many ways because of it is related with the productivity. So it is necessary to find out the possible reasons due to which labour remains absent from their work. In this regard, Acharya TLA states, in Modern industrial establishment, except perhaps in very small ones, the individual personally is, more or less, irretrievably submerged in the general mass through the sheer accident of being thrown together with other individuals for a certain purpose during a good bit of each days' life. The individuals have no elbow room and is hammered into a set pattern. In consideration, the human spirit clamours for open spaces, unfettered air, so that it could kick its legs about for a change. 1

Angus Hone puts his view about reasons for absenteeism that, absenteeism is related to new values and norms which are developing amongst the work force as a result of technological developments. Work and leisure are now cherished by the worker, and there he wants to enjoy along with the monetary benefits he gets for his services. The economic consideration, therefore, decides

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1. A symposium - planning for labour, Don't punish the absence but recreate Society, page 324.

whether one would like to absent from work. 1

The Royal Commission Labour observed that, high absenteeism among Indian labour is due to its orientation and its frequent urge for rural exodus. 2

Dr.K.N.Vaid classifies chronic absenteeism into five categories. The observation depended upon the type of worker and is motto to attend the job. He included some causes to such type. He classified the absenteeism by considering various factors viz. Economic need, social need, status, sickness etc.

1) Entrepreneurs absentee :

The workers who fall under this category, they are not interested in the job and engaged in other economic and social activities. They are undertaking these activities not only for the purpose of money but for status, and social recognition.

2) The status-seeking absentee :

The persons who are getting more social value in their work place and locality for developing and maintaining such social status, they remain absent from the work. These status seekers actually draw satisfaction from

their identification with need oriented social groups.

Aim of such persons is to become and appear as man of social status.

3) Epicureans absentee :

These persons are not loyal and dislike to take initiative, responsibility, discipline and physical comfort, ~~for~~ they always think about money, status and power. Just to think does not serve anything, on the contrary, it creates problems, belly-aches, withdrawals etc. such persons are always trying to avoid the work it feels them is frustrating.

4) Family oriented absentee :

The workers falling under this category are more popular who are always busy and interested in family matters even too small ones. More involvement in family does not allow to attend the job responsibilities and it results in chronic absenteeism.

5) Sick & old absentee :

It is quite natural that who are sick and old workers, they remain absent frequently. The reason is ill health weak constitution and chronic disease or old age.

Mr.D.Sinha who has classified the absenteeism in the study of control of absenteeism, classification is under

three heads viz. implant causes, personal causes, community or social causes.

SITRA'S publication has given following causes -

- i) Unsuitable working conditions.
- ii) Unfavourable mental attitude arising out of boredom, discontent with wages, resentment against supervisors.
- iii) Lack of provision for general welfare.
- iv) Inadequate medical facilities for minor injuries.
- v) Increased distance between management and worker.<sup>1</sup>

The causes of absenteeism have been classified by the Labour Bureau, Ministry of Labour, Employment and Rehabilitation, Government of India, under three heads viz. 1) Sickness, accident and maternity, 2) social and religious and 3) others.

Absenteeism under the third head refers to unexcused absence, not well supported on any valid grounds. The workers for instance, remain absent on account of drinking and gambling habits. 2

Dale Yoder opines that, absence is frequently result

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- 1. C.B.Mamoria, Personnel Management Page 236 Op.Cit.
  - 2. Report on Labour Investigation Committee, 1946, Page 101

of illness, tardiness may result from transportation problems, beyond worker control, snow storm, floods, traffic accidents and congestion.

Opinions of experts regarding the absenteeism as well as investigation made by various study groups and institution, reasons for absenteeism varies as the location of industry, problems of workers and labour management, relations. While summarising above all reasons, not such a single genuine cause for long absence but many causes are there, like wise unsafe and unhealthy working conditions, inadequate welfare facilities, industrial fatigue, drinking and gambling habits, poor industrial relations, night shift working, job dissatisfaction, low morale, social, religious ceremonies, festivals, accommodation problem, indebtedness, personal and family workies, inadequate wages etc.

#### Common absentee pattern :

Till today many studies on absenteeism have been conducted. These studies have investigated common absentee pattern. The studies conducted in West too, have such generalisations regarding absenteeism.

Dale Yodar made some generalisations. Few generalisations are appropriate although it appears that -

1. Supervisory employees generall show lower rate of

absenteeism than hourly rated employees.

ii) Paid sick leave plans do not appear to increase absence if it provides for a brief waiting period (one or two days).

iii) Absence are more common before or after holidays and on Mondays.

iv) Women have reversed an historic pattern and now have fewer absence than men.

v) Some employees may be described as absence-prone. They have many more absences than others.

vi) Younger workers have more absence, than elders.

vii) A minority of the workforce generally accounts for the largest share of absence. 1

Labour Investigation Committee found the common absentee pattern in India industry as -

i) Absenteeism is highest on Mondays and lowest on Wednesday and Thursday.

ii) Women are off the job more than men but fewer long absence.

iii) Absenteeism go little up the day before and the day after a Holiday.

iv) Non-manufacturing companies have lower absence rate than engaged in manufacturing.

- v) Workers of large industrial establishments tend to be more absent than the employees in small industries.
- vi) Strong labour unions for some or the other causes are responsible for the large absenteeism.
- vii) Absenteeism varies from department to department within a unit.
- viii) The percentage of absenteeism is generally higher in the night shift than in the day shift.
- ix) India suffers from seasonal absenteeism. The rate of absenteeism is higher during March April May i.e. in sowing season and in harvest (September October) season.

#### EFFECTS OF ABSENTEEISM

When worker remains absent from the scheduled work it makes machines unoccupied or idle. Not only production hinders but it has many ill effects on the worker, employees and society. Absenteeism concept itself is an evil so it creates evil effects. Following are the some of evil effects of absenteeism :

##### 1) Loss of Production

Absentee of the worker without prior permission from the scheduled work ~~compels~~ compels to stop the work, if there

is no additional or reserve workforce. Once production is stopped machines may remain idle and employer has to suffer from the loss of production.

2) Lower productivity :

It is quite true that all human resource employed in the work organisation can not remain absent at a time, but if the rate of absenteeism is high in such case it becomes very difficult to maintain the rate of production. The rate of production is impeded, it affects on production capacity and investment, proper return on investments can not be possible and it results in lower productivity.

3) Low quality of product :

It is the policy of the employer to keep some labourforce on temporary basis to adjust them in place of permanent labour when they are on leave, holiday etc. On such circumstances, if permanent labour is absent then temporary labour is replaced but due to long inexperience these workers do not produce goods to the standard fixed. This leads to lower quality of production and employer suffers from this low quality production to the distinct loss.

4) Industrial Relations :

The organisations, where the rate of absenteeism is very high ~~can~~ may take the problem of poor industrial relations. Management does not treat well to the worker who are



frequently absent. It results in poor industrial relations. It is said that absentee workers are treated as orphan child of management and step child of supervisors.

5) 0 Effects on workers.

The foremost effect of absenteeism is on worker. As the policy adopted by the employer is 'No work No pay', it suffers from economic loss to the worker. Since the pay is deducted on account of absence, worker can not meet his basic needs as a result the whole family may be affected.

6) Replacement cost of worker.

Chronic absenteeism compels industrialist to maintain some reserve work force on temporary basis. To maintain some temporary workforce, to deal with trade unions and labour legislations employer has to pay on he has maintained such workers. Continuous and prolonged absenteeism compels to terminate the services. But in place of such workers employer has to recruit the workers. The recruitment process is costly and time consuming within the same. It is least possible to get liable and trained worker. Once new worker is recruited he has to be trained. The period from the termination of the absentee worker to the period of training of new worker employer has to suffer economic loss, if the replacement cost, and not only employer has to increase this cost but has to suffer from the production too.

### 7) Effect on society

Man is social animal. He has some social groups, lives in, works with the people. To acquire knowledge, good habits, skill, one has to strive for the same and has to waste time, money and efforts. These are some bad habits for which he need not to spend much time, money and efforts. They can easily be acquired. Habitual absenteeism is the similar type of ill habit. One person gets it affected, it spreads over within the group. These habitual absentees affect on the income of the worker, industry, and it results in low quality and quantity of production and it suffers society at large.

### MEASURES TO CONTROL AND REDUCE THE ABSENTEEISM.

Since workers are remaining absent from the scheduled work, it is indefinite that they remain absent from the day and upto the day. So it is difficult to know and fill the gap as absentee is uncertain in its nature. A small percentage of absenteeism is bound to occur due to some unavoidable reasons such as unexpected death in the family of a worker or the any other natural calamity. But habitual and prolonged absenteeism is concerned it is necessary to find out its reasons and thereby some remedial measures to such reasons.

As the studies have investigated that absenteeism vary department to department, unit to unit, within the same, there is not only a single reason for absenteeism.

The labour investigation committee aptly noted that, 'The most effective way of dealing with absenteeism is to provide holidays with pay or even without pay and permit workers to attend their private affairs occasionally and, thus regularise absenteeism. Instead of merely taking disciplinary action for its provisions and suitable housing facilities in industrial towns would also go a long way in improving absence. 1

i)  
Unless working and living conditions are improved and the necessary commitment of labour force in the place of absentees, and job security is given to the worker, in the same work organisation.

ii) Workers health, safety and welfare.

Industrial accident caused worker to remain absent from their work. An arrangement should be made as per the nature of work and there must be industrial safety to the work on the job. Production goes through many

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1. The Labour Investigation Committee report- page 180.

processes, so there may be dusty atmosphere, due to dust and fume, gas, for removing it, some precautionary measures should be taken to keep the healthy atmosphere. Management should provide the welfare facilities in accordance with the provisions laid down in the Factories Act.

iii) Leave and Holiday :

Management should change the view to grant the leave and holidays as per the reasons. Holidays as per the act, but weekly holiday should on the local bazar (Market) Day. This does not mean that allowing leave for any reason, but by considering the seriousness of circumstances it should be liberalised.

iv) Effective Employee communications and motivation.

An effective communication among the workers and management should be that belongingness to the organisation should be increased through better and effective communication so that the rate of absentee may come down. Motivation and morale are the two sides of same coin. Employee motivation plays an important role in the individual and industrial sector. For better work, workers should be appraised, appreciated, in some cases they must be rewarded which will lead to high morale and they feel better for the industry and will help to reduce the rate of absenteeism.

v) Better Labour-Management-relations.

Better labour management relations need not to face the problem like absenteeism so seriously. If there are such problems, it is for both, to develop the relations among the labour management and labour to labour. The worker participation in management should be implemented as it gives clear idea about what the management is to the representative of the worker and what the workers are to the management on the other.

vi) Employee Development Programmes.

Management should undertake better employee development programmes such as training, education, seminars for improving their morale, to increase the skill of the workers and to develop the feelings of worker regarding belongingness to the work organisation.

Since worker is getting the job, he must obey the rules and regulations of the work organisation. The problems with him should be noticed to the management through the workers representative on the management and get solved the difficulties.

The employer, the employee and the state are the three important aspects, who have a definite role to play. If each performs it properly and harmoniously, the

work in the industrial centre is promoted and stabilised the problem of absenteeism can not be effectively solved. It may also be suggested that necessary incentives may be provided to the workers for recording regular attendance in the factories and establishments. 1

The encyclopaedia of social sciences suggest the following measures to reduce the rate of absenteeism.

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- i) Personnel Management should encourage notification, especially in cases of sickness when the duration of absence is likely to be long.
- ii) In case of personal and family circumstances, e.g. illness of children, in case of married women employees, which make absence unavoidable, leave should be granted liberally.
- iii) To reduce unavoidable absence due to sickness and industrial accidents, programmes of industrial hygiene and safety should be strengthened.
- iv) Regularity in attendance can be encouraged to some extent by the offer of a bonus and other pecuniary inducements.

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1. S.N.Mehrotra- Labour Problems in India Page 49.

- v) Absenteeism is probably a natural human reaction to the routine of modern factory life. There is a maladjustment between man's instincts and desires and the regular working habits that are imposed upon him. The routine can be relaxed or modified by grant of leave with pay by shortening or by redistributing scheduled hours, by having employees living nearer to their places of work, and by adjusting the physical condition of the plant, especially noise and ventilation. 1

It is not only the managements' job to wipe off the chronic absenteeism, but covers workers and government too. It should be controlled, according to the nature of reason, which covers the responsibility of whom i.e. management, worker or the state.

Since the industrial establishment is managed by its top management to attain the goals and economic objectives, it is the prime duty of management to protect the welfare of the human resources employed in the organisation. But to reduce the chronic absenteeism, management has to adopt the following measures after analysing its causes -

- i) Payment of wages, bonus and job security :

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1. C.B.Mamoria - Personnel Management.



Workers are paid in the form of wages. Management must pay as per the provisions, Payment of Wages Act and minimum wages act. Single worker should not be exploited for the want of wages and bonus, within the same. After training period management the problems of inefficiency, undesired conflict, low productivity, dissatisfaction on the part of workers and their low morale resulting in frequent absenteeism can be largely eliminated. Industrial relations in a democracy should be based on an integrated approach aiming at individual satisfaction, group satisfaction and achievement of the goals of the community and of the nation as a whole. 1

#### Absenteeism - a brief review in cotton textile mills.

Frequently, the data regarding absenteeism in various industries in India is published in Indian Labour Journal. The general trend of absenteeism published in the journal states the highest rate of absenteeism, appears in cotton textile mills. Then it is followed by engineering industry, coal mines, cement, iron and steel and match industries.

Since the study is concerned with the problem of absenteeism in cotton textile mill, the absenteeism average rates are as under :

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1. C.B.Mamoria- Personnel Management Page 243.



In Bombay, yearly average absenteeism rate varies from 19.5% to 25.3%, so far last 15 years average is concerned, the rate of average absenteeism in solapur varies from 26.5% to 26.6% and the absenteeism rate at Ahmedabad varies from 13.6% to 14.6% and that of Karnataka, varies from 17.8% to 24.1% while the rate of Kanpur mills varies from 11.6% to 24.8%.

On an average, the absenteeism rate yearly averages at Bombay 22.4%, at Solapur -36.5%, at Ahmedabad-14.1% and at Kanpur and Karnataka the same are 20.9% and 18.2% respectively. It shows that the rate of absenteeism at Kanpur in textile industry is lower i.e. 18.2%. On the other hand, it is double at Solapur i.e. 36.5%. The trend shows that the rate of absenteeism is highest at Solapur in textile Mills.

So far monthly analysis is concerned, the absenteeism rate at Bombay Increases in the month of November and December while at Solapur and other places it increases in the month of October-November and again in the month of February, March and April, Since the seasonable harvesting season period is concerned.

*Absenteeism is not a serious problem in textile mills. As the simple reason that Badi workers can easily replace the*