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EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM AND ITS IMPACT: A LITERATURE REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to review the literature on employee absenteeism as a form of withdrawal behaviour apart from turnover. Absenteeism is one of the factors affecting optimum utilization of human resources. It is an industrial malady affecting productivity, profits, investments and absentee workers themselves. As such, increasing rate of absence adds very considerably to the cost of industry and hampers industrial progress. The absence of a few workmen is an imposition on others, affects work scheduling and adds to costs that push the price of absenteeism far beyond one day's salary. The economic and social losses occurring from absenteeism cannot be determined accurately. It is difficult to make even an approximate estimate of such losses because so many factors are involved which do not lend themselves to accurate measurements. In the first place, there is a lack of evidence concerning the seriousness of industrial absenteeism because records are inaccurate and incomplete. Only a small number of organizations attempt to understand this problem or make an effort to solve it. This paper presents the results of a study carried out by various authors to identify the reasons for absenteeism and its effect on productivity and it based on secondary data. Studies also examine the relationship between absenteeism and personal, attitudinal, and organizational variables. Throughout the paper, emphasis is placed on the indices used by investigators to measure absenteeism, and the problems that have arisen in the literature through the use of multiple indicators of absenteeism.

KEYWORDS

absenteeism, industrial, indicators, productivity.

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INTRODUCTION

Absenteeism is a significant problem in Ireland and one which costs businesses hundreds of millions of euro annually. As well as bringing a financial burden to most firms, absenteeism has severe and unnecessary repercussions for productivity. The most obvious cost is that of company sick pay schemes and disability benefit, it also brings with it many indirect costs. The missing worker must be replaced when absent, this may either be done through the hiring of an extra body or by existing staff working overtime. This disruption also brings with it consequences for customers who are subject to delays in the delivery of the product or service, www.ibec.ie This thesis will investigate the current level of absenteeism within Company X. the first part of this thesis will look at the current literature available on the topic and delve into the causes of absenteeism as outlined by 1BEC.

Absenteeism is a nuisance in the workplace and also represents a severe and unnecessary cost to productivity. The most obvious cost is that of company sick pay schemes, but there are many other quantifiable indirect costs. The absent worker must be replaced; there may be a need to employ a surplus of staff to maintain production and service levels. "The main causes of absenteeism are illness-related such as backache, stomach pains, and influenza. However, there are many other occasions when employees claim to be suffering from various illnesses, when in fact they have simply chosen to opt out of work rather than opting in. Job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is another cause of absenteeism, resulting from employees having to execute repetitive and monotonous tasks day-in-day-out. In addition to this, employees with low levels of responsibilities and little promotional prospects will have low levels of motivation. This will result in high levels of absenteeism. To overcome this, managers should change their thinking to encourage attendance rather than concentrating on reducing absenteeism. This will require an examination of the employees' environment and an exploration of the relationships that exists between them and their managers and also between employees and their colleagues. Very often what drives people away from their work is the sheer boredom of the job which is contributed to by the job itself and the environment in which they work. In many organisations there is an acceptable level of absenteeism, this level varies depending on the company. Often policies encourage absenteeism, such as only tackling the problem when it reaches a certain 'trigger point', such as, allowing people a certain amount of sick days per annum, paying attendance bonuses as part of their total salary, thereby acting as no strong incentive to attend work.

OBJECTIVES

1. To identify the causes of absenteeism
2. To suggest ways to reduce employee absenteeism
3. To find whether absenteeism has impact on regular work
4. To Check the satisfaction of employees regarding the management

METHODOLOGY

The data used for the study is secondary data. The input for the study is review of various literatures related to the topic. The paper relies on secondary data from published sources like books and journals.

WHAT EXACTLY IS "EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM"?

Dakely C.A. (1948) "Absenteeism is the ratio of the number of production man-days or shifts lost to the total number of production scheduled to work". Employee Absenteeism can be defined as stress that leads to work exhaustion. Sadly, it is the most gifted and committed employees that tend to burn out first. Because of their high standards and tendency towards perfectionism, these employees end up burning the candle at both ends. It refers to workers absence from their regular task when he is normally schedule to work. According to Webster's dictionary, "Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being an absentee and an absentee is one who habitually stays away from work." According to Labour Bureau of Shimla: - Absenteeism is the total man shifts lost because of absence as

percentage of total number of man shifts scheduled to work. In other words, it signifies the absence of an employee from work when he is scheduled to be at work. Any employee may stay away from work if he has taken leave to which he is entitled or on ground of sickness or some accident or without any previous sanction of leave.

IDEAS FROM VARIOUS AUTHORS

Martocchio & Jimeno (2003) stated that "We propose a model of the personality types that have a higher likelihood of using absenteeism to their benefit (i.e. to recharge and change negative affect) and therefore have the absence be functional (i.e., positive affect and higher productivity upon returning to the job) rather than dysfunctional (i.e., negative affect and person is still unproductive or has less productivity than before the absence event)." It is clear from the above lines that every organisation should take necessary measures to motivate employees even if they come after long leave. This will definitely boost up employee and help in producing high profit.

Ruchi Sinha (2010) in her study reveals that there only 4% employees remain away from their work and that too due to personal reasons. There is very high level of job satisfaction among the employees. It is clear that every employee have personal problems related physical, mental level. In this situation absenteeism is common and the organisation should understand the pain of employees so that when they return back to work the same level of hard work continues.

Wolter H.J. Hassink & Pierre Koning (2009) find statistically significant differences in absence patterns across groups of workers with different eligibility statuses depending on their attendance records and whether they had previously won. One finding is that absenteeism rose among workers who, having won already, were ineligible for further participation. In this scenario, employees will be under stress, that they cannot win again so organisation should come out with certain strategies to involve in different activities and also to participate in events which he had won already.

Nisam (2010) stated that stress among employees, health problems, loneliness at workplace, non-cooperation of colleagues causes absenteeism at workplace.

SUGGESTIONS

Major suggestions can be helpful in reducing absenteeism like Employee welfare facilities should be improved, Salary should be increased, Leave policies should be revised, Supervisors' behavior should be modified, Present working conditions should be improved, Transportation facility should be provided and so on.

CONCLUSION

With the increasing pressure on firms to search for and maintain a competitive edge, management have to increasingly experiment with new strategies, structures and control systems. These alone compel a review of the methods used to control and manage absenteeism. Employee "commitment" is at the heart of employee involvement programmes. Although it is a different concept to "involvement", they are closely linked since both are concerned with how employers can encourage employees to identify with the firm's business interests. Absence control methods are many and varied. The use of the word control or the expression "controlling absence" sounds negative and implies the imposition of policies and procedures upon people. It has also been suggested that policies aimed purely at control can actually lead to higher absence, as they often undermine employee commitment. Today's managers must look at managing attendance. To achieve this, they must create an environment in which employees are more likely to what to attend work rather than stay at home. Before management decides upon a particular method, they must face facts. There is no significant difference in the perception of absenteeism by the young employees and aged employees. There is no significant difference in the perception of absenteeism by lower income employees and higher income employees. Therefore, disseminating absence information to department managers and supervisors as frequently as possible is essential. Computerized systems will have a pivotal role to play in generating information.

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