



A STUDY ON EMPLOYEE ABSENTEEISM

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Abstract

Employee Absenteeism is the absence of an employee from work. Its a major problem faced by almost all employers of today. Employees are absent from work and thus the work suffers. Absenteeism of employees from work leads to back logs, piling of work and thus work delay. The lack of attendance makes the employees suffer when it comes to getting salaries and the any deviation in the original salary would affect his financial planning in the current month and thus lead to stress to him and his family. Employee absenteeism is stemmed from so many factors such as employee job satisfaction, role conflict, work characteristics, lack of motivation, stress and other psychological factors. Especially, the job satisfaction is considered as most influencing factor in employee absenteeism. In view of this, the present paper focuses on the impact of job satisfaction as the decision variable to measure its influence on employee absenteeism. Andhra Pradesh Road Transportation Corporation is selected as the case study and the study presents the perception of the employees of select categories on various dimensions of job satisfaction on employee absenteeism.

Keywords: APSRTC, Job Satisfaction, Stress, Absenteeism.

1. Conceptual Overview of Employee Absenteeism

Absenteeism is referred as a pattern of missing work in which an employee is habitually and. or frequently absent from work with a view to gain any personal gain or overcome the stress that he faces in the day to organizational responsibilities. Absenteeism does not include excused absences, where an employer has actually granted an employee permission to miss work. All employers expect employees to need some time off from work occasionally, and many employers have company policies that provide for paid leave under approved circumstances. Absenteeism is costly for both employees and employers. The employee may not be paid for taking excessive time off or may even lose their job for calling in sick or for other absences. In fact, under some circumstances, an employee can be fired for no reason. Absent employees impact an organization's productivity, revenue, and costs. Absenteeism contributes to employee turnover, increased labor costs when replacement workers need to be hired, and to other management and hiring costs. Employee absenteeism is not a new problem. Since 1999, it has been observed that unscheduled absenteeism rates have reached the highest levels. On a normal workday, 3% of the total staff do not show up for work. It lowers the business productivity, undercuts teamwork and increases manpower costs, if the employer substitutes additional staff to accomplish pre-scheduled tasks for the day.

The Integrated Benefits Institute, which represents major employers and business coalitions, reports that absenteeism ascribed to poor employee health costs the U.S. economy about \$576 billion a year. As per the survey conducted by US-based human capital services provider Careerbuilder, 30% of workers have called in sick when not actually ill in the past year. The sick days, legitimate or otherwise, also become more frequent around the winter holidays, with nearly one-third of employers reporting more employees call in sick during the holiday season, the survey found. At the same time, 29 per cent of employers have checked up on an employee to verify that the illness is legitimate, usually by requiring a doctor's note or calling the employee later in the day. 17 per cent of employers have fired employees for giving a fake excuse.

Traditionally, absenteeism has been viewed as an indicator of poor individual performance, as well as a breach of an implicit contract between employee and employer; it was seen as a management problem, and framed in economic or quasi-economic terms. More recent scholarship seeks to understand absenteeism as an indicator of psychological, medical, or social adjustment to work. Absenteeism is considered as one of the most influencing problems that modern organizations have been facing. The rise in the absenteeism has not influenced the organizational work pattern but also has a significant impact on the flow of the organization's day to day activities and its productivity. Absenteeism generally arises when there is a failure of employee presence to the organizations without any written or oral permission. Such trend would naturally cause the disturbance to the organization's day to day activities and further it will have a significant impact on the work assignment. The absenteeism may cause huge impact on the morale of the organization, it may cause direct and indirect cause to the organization.

The effective supervision may be questioned due to absenteeism. The absenteeism will not only influence the direct cost in terms of low productivity but also, indirect cost in the form of staffing, re scheduling, modified training, effect on turnover and the opportunity cost of the organization. Since, absenteeism is the employee's intentional or habitual absence from work, the employees and employers will lose the valuable productivity days and the rise in the absenteeism will have



significant impact on decreased productivity and have a major effect on company finances, morale and other factors. It is observed that, several influencing factors or variables such as individual, organizational and social factors were identified as the main causes to the employee absenteeism. Further, the excess dissatisfaction and organizational commitment, work involvement were been influencing the employee demands and the result of these were causing employee absenteeism.

2) Profile of APSRTC

Among the five transportation systems, Road transportation system is the one of the oldest and the most widely used form of transportation system in India. The road transportation system in India has a long history. It is through roads, every village, every city and every hamlet can be reached. As Roads are the key sources for transportation of men and materials, in a developing country like India, with the rapid increase in intensity of traffic and introduction of heavier vehicles, the road pavements of better specialization and quality have become very necessary.

The road offers multiple facilities to the public not only for transportation for other services including goods transportation, creating boundaries and providing sources of development. The movement of goods is comparatively safer in road transportation system. Especially as majority of the roads connecting to the villages, the culture transformation, diversity is made visible to all the people through roads. And also, in a developing country like India, road is considered as one of the harbinger of economic development and prosperity. After the independence, in 1951, In 1951 India had a total length of 4,00,004 km of roads (surfaced roads being 1, 57,000 km). This length increased to 5, 24,000 km (surfaced roads 263,000 km) in 1960-61; 10, 22,000 km (surfaced roads 423,000 km), in 1971-72; and 14, 91,000 km (surfaced roads 6, 84,000 km), in 1980-81. In 1991 the total road-length increased to 23, 27,362 km of which 10, 90, 167 km was surfaced and 12, 37,195 km unsurfaced roads. As on 31st March, 1999 the total road length was 25, 25,989 km of which 14, 48,629 km were surfaced (57.35 per cent) roads.

APSRTC was established to serve as the source for rural development and easy commuting of common man. In tune with this objective, various services are provided to rural areas under Village Link Transport Scheme. Apart from this number of concessions are extended to various categories of people such as physically handicapped, students, journalists, senior citizens etc. as part of social responsibility. The transport industry well known for its dependence on human beings. It has a unique position in the economy as it is a big service providing industry. Logistics is the mantra of modern globalized world. The main objective of this industry is to provide these services through the involvement of staff of these transport undertakings to the people who are in need of such services.

In this context, it was felt necessary to study about the people working with this transport corporation. The study primarily relates to the Employee Welfare Measures In APSRTC and along with that Social Security measures implementation in APSRTC.. The researcher has made a concerted effort to study these issues relating to APSRTC. Is road network of the state of Andhra Pradesh is covering a overall sap an of above 91,313 mile which is approximately equals to 1,46,954 km. The state public works department has the responsibility of looking after the roadway transportation system of the state of Andhra Pradesh. The road transportation network of Andhra Pradesh is made up of the following:

- National Highways which covers 2,949 km
- State highways which cover a span of 42,511 km or 26415 miles
- District Roads which covers 101,484 km or 63,059 miles

The Origin of Andhra Pradesh State Road Transportation dates back to before independence in India with the establishment of NSR-RTD(Nizam State Rail Road Transport Department) which is considered as one of the wings of nizam State Railway in the erstwhile Hyderabad State. At beginning, NSR-RTD has 27 buses and 166 employees. It has started its journey with less than 30 buses and reached to the stage of more than 20 thousand buses with 778 bus stations. It has 21 Depots and 1,881 bus shelters in and around the state of Andhra Pradesh. The Corporation's buses cover 43.67 lakhs KMs. and carry 74.71 lakhs people to their destinations every day. They connect 14,123 villages to all major towns and cities in A.P which constitutes 95% of Road Transport. APSRTC operates to City and Mofussil areas. The Corporation's buses also ply to important towns and cities in the neighboring States of Tamilnadu, Karnataka, Odisha, Telangana. The entire network is under the administrative control of 12 Regional Managers in 4 Zones. APSRTC under the present name was established on 11th January 1958 in pursuance of the Road Transport Corporations Act 1950.

Operational key indicators specify the network capacity of APSRTC. Table no. clearly shows that the total number of routes as of June, 2013 is extended to 7752 and these are covering 23,388 villages. Still APSRTC is not able to be connected with 5010 villages. The corporation is earning average daily earnings of 1946.82 lakh rupees and a average daily volume of operation of 80.77 lakh kms. The occupancy ratio of APSRTC buses is 70% which is comparatively better sign than the advanced states in India. At present, the corporation is earning 2410 paise as Earnings per Kilometre(EPS) and for each bus,



it is earning an average income of 8690 rupees per day. Through different bus networks, presently the corporation is transporting 154.63 lakhs of passengers daily and it is one of the very good corporations which has 95.76% of punctuality. APSRTC has received the status of 9 out of 100 accidents for 11 lakh kilo metres and this is also one of the historic achievements by APSRTC.

3) Objectives of the Study

The study mainly investigates the employee absenteeism in APSRTC on the basis of two select dimensions. These are work environment and Job satisfaction. The study is based on research report submitted to Dravidian University, Kuppam, Andhra Pradesh State and is based on primary data sources collected from the employees of APSRTC in Chittoor District Depot. The sample size is 300 respondents which constitute drivers, conductors and Clerical and Administrative staff.

4) Work Environment in APSRTC

With a view to compare the perception of employee-respondents on work environment for APSRTC employees in Chittoor District in Andhra Pradesh State with the population, the mean of sample for every variable of work environment is computed. These response categories are imputed with numerical value as 5, 4, 3, 2 and 1 respectively. Hence, the mid value 3 is treated as hypothesized population mean.

Data presented in the Table 3.17 explains the value of mean, standard deviation and the sample size of each variable. The mean value relating to the work environment varies between 3.19 and 4.21 and standard deviation varies between 1.07 and 1.30. The item wise analysis revealed that out of 16 variables, 10 variables have the mean value greater than 3 (Hypothesized population mean). With respect to variables such as certainty of duties and responsibilities, adverse publicity by media creating impact on absenteeism and utilization of resources for performing duties have highest mean value implying that majority of employee respondents have viewed these statements as important dimensions of work environment. Standard deviation as a measure to explain the variability in the opinion of employee-respondents revealed that employee –respondents have least variation in the opinion on the variables such as conflicting non-organizational roles on the job, adverse publicity by media creating impact on absenteeism and unrealistic expectations of passengers.

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Variables

S. No	Items	Mean	Standard Deviation	Sample Size
1	Adverse publicity by media on drivers and conductors creating impact on absenteeism	4.06	1.085	300
2	Certainty of duties and responsibilities prevailing in APSRTC	4.21	1.160	300
3	Clarity about duties as informed by supervisors	3.53	1.239	300
4	Competitiveness (mileage per trips/ festival over duties) in the job creating impact on absenteeism	3.33	1.283	300
5	Complexity in the job in case of rush seasons	3.17	1.242	300
6	Conflict between problematic passengers and the demands of my job	3.26	1.273	300
7	Conflicting non-organizational roles on the job	3.31	1.079	300
8	Congruence of values in APSRTC	3.45	1.154	300
9	Existence of conflict in the APSRTC	3.66	1.256	300
10	Extremely adverse atmosphere conditions creating impact on absenteeism	3.23	1.273	300
11	Nature of the job during routine cases	3.29	1.112	300
12	Time out from the job	3.16	1.233	300
13	Time spend on treating passengers	3.93	1.210	300
14	Unrealistic expectations of passengers	3.19	1.081	300
15	Utilization of resources for performing duties	3.66	1.146	300
16	Workload in the job	3.80	1.304	300

Source: Compiled from field work

5) Impact of Job Satisfaction on Employees of APSRTC

This section provide the summarized results of field survey results obtained from the respondents, i.e., employees of APSRTC on various dimensions of job satisfaction and its impact on employee absenteeism.



Supervision is one of the most influencing factors in day to day work environment. Effective supervision will help the employees to perform their duties in a smooth way. The analysis of perception of employee- respondents on supervision as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor revealed that the mean of the variables that constitute supervision as a determinant of job satisfaction ranges between 2.81 and 3.93. And this suggest that the employees are not merely satisfied with the supervision in the APSRTC depots. Hence, it suggest that there is a need for effective supervision in APSRTC. The analysis of mean value of perceptions of both male and female employees of APSRTC on the variables of supervision revealed that the computed t-value in case of every variable of supervision indicated that there is no statistically significant difference in the opinion of male and female employee-respondents in the case of all six variables of supervision as determinants of job satisfaction. One-way ANOVA test for equality means revealed that there is no significant inter-discipline variation in the perceptions of employees of APSRTC in Chittoor on supervision as a determinant of job satisfaction. The results of Tukey post-hoc test of multiple comparisons revealed no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of employee- respondents across the organization disciplines on supervision as a determinant of job satisfaction.

The analysis of perception of employee-respondents on job security as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor revealed that the mean value of job security as a determinant of job satisfaction is 3.14 with standard deviation of 1.307. Standard error of mean is a measure of variability between sample means which indicates that if multiple sample of the same size from the same population is studied, the standard deviation of these sample means for the variable under job security will be 0.075. One-way ANOVA test for equality means revealed that that there is no significant inter-discipline variation in the perceptions of employee-respondents on the dimensions of job security. The analysis of Tukey post-hoc test of multiple comparisons revealed no statistically significant differences in the perceptions of employee- respondents across the organization disciplines on job security as a determinant of job satisfaction.

Job security is one of the most fundamental benefits that an employee expects from a organization besides the financial benefits. Job Security will influence the employees' attitude whether to be honest, punctual or very casual and have an impact on absenteeism. The analysis of the perceptions of the employee-respondents on work itself as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor revealed that the mean of the variables that constitute work itself as a determinant of job satisfaction ranges between 3.40 and 3.93. The statement I spend too much time on organization consulting activities has larger mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents. The statement there is a lot of variation (training organization consulting, non organization duties etc) in my job has smaller mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents. The calculated standard deviation for the statement there is a lot of variation (training organization consulting, non organization duties etc) in my job has larger value indicating more variation in the opinion of employees of APSRTC in Chittoor. Least variation in the opinion of employee –respondents is noticed in the case of a statement I spend too much time on organization consulting activities with smaller value of standard deviation. Standard error of mean is measure of variability between sample means which indicates that if multiple sample of the same size from the same population is studied, the standard deviation of these sample means for the three variables under work itself as a determinant will be between .048 and .066 implying less variation compared to single sample of the population. The t-test for equality means computed on the basis of gender revealed that that there is no difference in the opinions of the male and female employee-respondents on the work itself dimension as a determinant of job satisfaction.

The opinion of the employee–respondents on the statement there is opportunity for professional development (continuing education, training, mentoring) in the APSRTC varied with standard deviation value of 1.035. Standard error of mean is measure of variability between sample means which indicates that if multiple sample of the same size from the same population is studied, the standard deviation of these sample means for the variable under growth as a determinant is .060. The computed t- value in case of growth determinant states that there is no difference in the opinion of the male and female employee-respondents on the growth dimension as a determinant of job satisfaction.

The analysis of perception of employees of APSRTC- respondents on recognition as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor, the mean the variable that constitute recognition as a determinant of job satisfaction ranges between 3.71 and 4.17. The statement I receive recognition from passengers when I do a good job has larger mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents. The statement I receive recognition from my Superior when I do a good job has smaller mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents. The analysis of the opinions of the employee –respondents on the statement I receive recognition from my Superior when I do a good job has larger value of standard deviation indicating more variation in the opinion of employees of APSRTC in Chittoor. Least variation in the opinion of employee –respondents is noticed in the case of a statement I receive recognition from passengers when I do a good job smaller value of standard deviation. Standard error of mean is measure of variability between sample means which indicates that if multiple sample of the same size from the same population is studied, the standard deviation of these sample means for the three variables under recognition as a determinant will be between 0.043 and 0.062 implying less variation compared to single sample of the population.



The analysis of perceptions of the employee-respondents on salary as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor revealed that the mean of the variables that constitute salary as a determinant of job satisfaction ranges between 3.15 and 3.25. The analysis of perceptions of the employee-respondents on responsibility as a determinant of job satisfaction in APSRTC in Chittoor revealed that the means of the variables that constitute responsibility as a determinant of job satisfaction ranges between 3.45 and 4.08. The statement I believe that my passengers are showing appropriate amount of respect towards me has larger mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents. The statement considering the competencies of employees of APSRTC, the society is not showing the respect they deserve has smaller mean value in the opinion of employee-respondents.

The opinions of the employee –respondents on the statement considering the competencies of employees of APSRTC, the society is not showing the respect they deserve has larger value of standard deviation indicating more variation in the opinion of employees of APSRTC in Chittoor. Least variation in the opinion of employee –respondents is noticed in the case of a statement I believe that my passengers are showing appropriate amount of respect towards me.

6) Conclusions

The Employee absenteeism as perceived by the employees of APSRTC reveals significant factors. These include the nature of duties and the competitiveness which create stress and thus result in frequent employee absenteeism. Since the transport industry requires the services of the employees whose job involves working at typical work hours irrespective of sessions, the complexity in the job, time spent on treating passengers, work load in the job, unrealistic expectations creating a state of discomfort and these result in the employee absenteeism. Further, the study also reveal that supervision, job security, and recognition of the employees also influence the employee satisfaction and further recognition of competencies also an important factor which makes the employee satisfied or dissatisfied about the job. Finally, it is to conclude that a satisfied employee create his own willingness and self boosting who works dedicatively with less absenteeism and any deviations from the expectations of the employees will create stress and this would lead to employee absenteeism.

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