

FACTORS AFFECTING HIGH ABSENTEEISM IN GARMENT INDUSTRY: A CASE STUDY IN BRANDIX CASUALWEAR LTD

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Absenteeism is one of the major workplace problems that significantly affect employees' productivity in any industry. Currently, it has become a serious problem for the highly competitive garment industry. Absenteeism refers to non-attendance of employee for scheduled work. Unscheduled absenteeism badly affects the progress of an organisation resulting in loss of productivity, increased costs in hiring additional workers, quality issues and etc. In reality, absenteeism has become a critical issue in Brandix Casualwear Ltd, Seeduwa, Sri Lanka and therefore identifying factors affecting absenteeism helps take precautionary actions for a worst case scenario which can happen in the future. However past studies focused on exploring reasons for absenteeism were not found in this company. This study was designed to identify the factors that affect absenteeism prevailing in the production department of the Brandix Casualwear Ltd. It was an attempt to model the association between the number of absent days and reasons for absenteeism. The ultimate objective of this work was to suggest solutions to minimize absenteeism. A questionnaire was developed to explore the reasons for this issue. It was distributed to a sample of 134 employees in the production department. Number of absent days of the selected employees within last 6 months of the year 2013 was considered in this study. It was found that the reliability of questionnaire is considerable (Cronbach's $\alpha=0.79$). Four factors were extracted from questionnaire through factor analysis and those were identified as Job Satisfaction, Relationship with Management, Health Problems and Personal Matters. However, it was revealed that only two factors, Relationship with Management and Job Satisfaction were significantly associated with absenteeism. Furthermore, the regression model with those two variables explained 67.7% of variability on absenteeism. The mutual relationship between employees and management was identified as an important factor that reduces the absenteeism of employees. Apart from that, absenteeism can be reduced to some extent by providing facilities to the employees to improve their job satisfaction.

Keywords: Absenteeism, Factor analysis, Garment industry, Job satisfaction, Relationship with management