

The Relationship between Work Related Stress and Absenteeism and Role of Addressing strategies

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Abstract: As the competition is increasing day by day, the organisational life is also becoming stressful. Work pressures, unhelpful colleagues, strict boss incompetent subordinates and few other external factors have huge effect on employee's stress level.

As we all know, stress is the body's reaction to any demand made on it, perception of events whether positive or negative activate stress. But it is totally individual based.

Occupational stress has a significant impact on employees' productivity and if absenteeism increases due to stress, then the organisational get affected negatively. High levels of work-related stress can lead to absenteeism, reducing efficiency and increasing costs for businesses. This study explores the relationship between occupational stress and absenteeism, examining key stressors such as workload, job insecurity, lack of work-life balance, and poor organizational support. It also highlights the psychological impact of stress that leads to absenteeism, including uneasiness, anxiety, and health issues. Understanding these issues can help organizations implement effective stress management strategies, such as employee wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and supportive leadership, to reduce absenteeism and improve workplace in a better way. By reducing stress, organisation can easily preserve the quality staff for long time.

Key Words: Work pressure, Employee stress, Job insecurity, Absenteeism

INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress can be defined as a psychological or physical effect an employee experiences due to the responsibilities, environment, or other pressures from the workplace.

As we know everyone has different stress tolerance, the intensity is determined by the individual employee, their specific role and the company culture etc.

Occupational stress is a critical issue in the modern workplace, affecting employees across the world at

different industries and at different organizational levels. It can be defined as the physical and psychological strain resulting from work-related pressures, such as high job demands, lack of autonomy, workplace conflicts, and job insecurity. Studies indicate that prolonged exposure to occupational stress can lead to various range of negative outcomes such as anxiety, depression, cardiovascular diseases, and reduced job performance.

One of the most visible consequences of occupational stress is absenteeism, which refers to employees frequently missing work due to stress-related health problems. According to research, workplace stress contributes significantly to absenteeism which costs organizations heavily annually in lost productivity and healthcare expenses. The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that stress-related absenteeism accounts for a loss globally.

Factors such as poor management practices, lack of employee support, and excessive workloads contribute to stress-induced absenteeism. In high-stress environments, employees may take sick leave, seek medical intervention, or do not get engaged in work entirely. This absenteeism not only disturbs daily operations but also affects team work, lowers morale, and increases the burden on remaining employees too and make them stressed.

Addressing occupational stress through these methods, such as workplace wellness programs, flexible work arrangements, and mental health support, are essential for reducing absenteeism. Organizations that invest in stress management initiatives benefit from improved employee retention, higher productivity, and a healthier workforce. Understanding the link between occupational stress and absenteeism can help employers develop effective strategies to create a balanced, supportive, and efficient work environment.

What is Stress:

Stress may be understood as a state of tension which is experienced by employees facing extraordinary demands, constraints, or opportunities. The pressure of modern life and high demand from jobs can lead to emotional imbalance that are jointly called as “STRESS” .

The term stress normally refers to excessive strain caused by extraordinary demands which causes us to lose something we desire.

Two faces of Stress:



Constructive stress (Eustress): It is a positive type of stress which refers to a situation where the individual is in balance or within tolerable limits. This type of stress can increase efforts, stimulate creativity, and increase diligence in one’s work.

Destructive stress (Distress): This type of stress is not healthy for the individual. Distress would indicate imbalanced tolerance limits. Excessive stress may lead to overload and breakdown of person’s mental system. Intense stress can create absenteeism, turnover, errors, and dissatisfaction.

OBJECTIVE OF STUDY

This Study will help us:

- *To know how occupational stress contributes to absenteeism?
- * To identify the key stressors affecting employees.
- * To highlight the consequences of absenteeism on organizations.
- * To suggest practical ways to create healthier work environments.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research takes a balanced approach by combining data and real-life experiences. It includes:

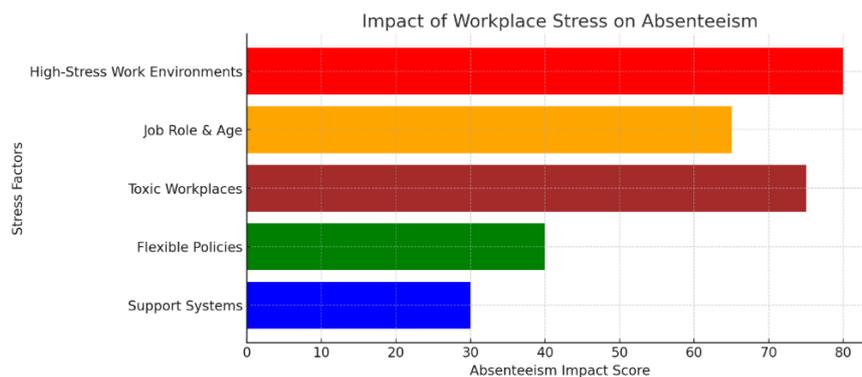
1. **Employee Surveys:** Gathering input from workers across industries to understand how stress affects their attendance.
2. **Interviews:** Hearing from those responsible for workplace policies and employee well-being.
3. **Analysis of Industry Reports:** Looking at trends and case studies to compare findings with broader research.
4. **Data Interpretation:** Using different to uncover links between workplace stress and absenteeism.

DATA INTERPRETATION

Analysing survey results and interviews, we look at trends that reveal how stress impacts absenteeism.

Key findings include:

1. **High-Stress Work Environments leads to Absenteeism:** Employees in fast-paced, high-pressure roles tend to take more leave due to burnout.
2. **Job Role and Age :** Younger employees report stress-related absenteeism more frequently than older workers, who may have developed better coping mechanisms.
3. **Toxic Workplaces Increase Absenteeism:** Poor leadership and workplace conflicts contribute to stress, making employees reluctant to come to work.
4. **Flexible Policies of Organization:** Organizations that allow remote work or flexible work schedules report lower stress-related absenteeism rates.
5. **Support Systems Make a Difference:** Employees with time-to-time counselling, wellness programs, or supportive management report less stress levels and fewer absenteeism.



Ways to Reduce Workplace Stress and Absenteeism

1. Provide Employee Support Programs: Offering mental health resources and stress management workshops can help employees to cope up with the stress.
2. Offer Flexible Work Options: Remote work, adjusted hours, can ease stress.
3. Improve Leadership and Management: Managers need to be trained to be supportive and approachable and it can reduce workplace tension.
4. Encourage Employee Involvement: Giving employees more control over their work can make them feel more engaged and less stressed.
5. Create a Positive Work Culture: Promoting teamwork, recognition, and work-life balance reduces stress and increases job satisfaction.

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CONCLUSION

Occupational stress acts as a major factor in absenteeism, and if ignored can harm both employees and businesses. Companies that prioritize employee well-being through better management, flexible work policies, and mental health support can reduce absenteeism and create more productive workplaces. Addressing workplace stress is not just about reducing absenteeism—it is more about building a healthier, happier, and more efficient workforce.

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