



## RESEARCH DIRECTIONS

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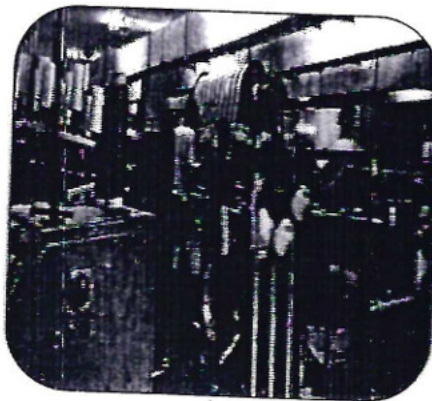
### A STUDY OF LABOUR ABSENTEEISM IN POWERLOOM UNITS OF ICHALKARANJI

**Dr. Naushad M. Mujawar**

Associate Professor & Head, Deptt. of Business Management  
ShriVenkatesh Mahavidyalaya, Ichalkaranji, Dist: Kolhapur.

#### ABSTRACT

It is universal fact that labour absenteeism has direct bearing on the productivity of the firm. Loss of work-man days lead to increase the cost of production per unit. It adds considerably to the cost of industry. Increasing rate of labour absenteeism is an indicator of indiscipline in the organization as well as a reflection of supervisory ineffectiveness. The uncontrolled



and over absenteeism results in loss of labour-man days, hampers or at least slows down the production, increase in labour cost, delay in execution of party's orders and so forth. Therefore, the problem of absenteeism is required to be detected in the beginning before it becomes chronic. The chronic absenteeism, if not taken seriously, may lead to loss and some time closure of business.

**KEY WORDS** labour absenteeism , chronic absenteeism , Absenteeism signifies.

#### INTRODUCTION

Absenteeism signifies the absence of an employee from work that is unauthorized, unexplained, avoidable and willful. An employee is to be considered as scheduled to work the employer has work available for him and the employee is aware of it and the employer has no reason to expect, well in advance, that the employee will not be available for work at the specified time. The term 'Labour Absenteeism' has been defined as follows.

- **Encyclopedia of Social Sciences:** Absenteeism is the 'time lost is industrial establishment by the avoidable or unavoidable absence of employees.'
- **Webster's dictionary:** 'Absenteeism is the practice or habit of being and 'absentee', and an 'absentee' is one who habitually stays away.'
- **Labour Bureau, Simla:** 'Absenteeism is the total man-shifts lost because of absences as a percentage of the total number of man-shifts scheduled to work.'

#### 1.2: Causes of Labour Absenteeism

Very often, the causes of labour absenteeism are debated from the firm level to the macro level. Workers may be absent from their job because of either their own or another family member's sickness, because of death in the family, or for other personal reasons. But there are also working-environment



- 4) **M. Prabhu (2013)** argued that the high rate of employee absenteeism may signal weak labour-management relations and low productivity.
- 5) **Barkha Gupta (2013)** said that employee absenteeism is a growing issue in retail sector, however, it can be controlled and minimized by implementing good working condition.
- 6) **S. Vijaylatha and Dr. G. Brindha (2014)** found that around 65% of the employees are absent due to ill health, 40% due to poor performance appraisal, 60% are absent due to social and religious causes while 58% due to family problems.
- 7) **Dr. Abhinav Patel and Sanjay Thakkar (2014)** revealed that the absenteeism is one of the ever present problem in the pharma industry. He identified the alcoholism, family disputes, health issues, transportation problems, religious issues and age factors are prominent factors responsible for labour absenteeism in pharmaceutical industry.
- 8) **Khushbu Dubey and Dr. Pooja Dasgupta (2015)** found that employees experience a higher level of stress since their work is heavy and tiresome, which makes them to be absent. Most of them feel that they are underpaid because they feel that for the same qualification other companies give them better compensation. Further, female employees remain absent as they do not feel comfortable with all the shifts, mainly the night shifts. He said that lack of the recreation and personal needs due to work pressure encourage them to take leave.
- 9) **Habeebur Rahman T (2016)** found that the working condition greatly influences the level of absenteeism in textile shops. The routine health problem has been identified as one of the important causes for frequent absenteeism. Salary is found to be a non determinant in influencing level of absenteeism. Hence the employees are very well aware that frequent absenteeism will lower their take-home salary.

### 1.5: Statement of the Problem

In order to avoid the potential loss of work-man days due to chronic absenteeism in the power loom units, its owner has to take the timely steps to detect the problem of absenteeism. The total number of loss of work-man days would reveal the magnitude of financial loss of the unit. There may be a variety of reasons behind labour absenteeism which can be classified as **personal** and **organizational** reasons. It is important for the owners / management of power loom units to understand the magnitude of labour absenteeism and also to analyze the reasons behind it.

In the light of foregoing discussion, the researcher undertook an exploratory and analytical study of labour absenteeism in power loom sector of textile industry of Ichalkaranji and attempted to address the following pertinent questions.

- (i) What is the magnitude of labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji?
- (ii) What are chief causes behind labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji?

### 1.6: Objectives of the study

The following objectives were set as for the study.

- 1) To study the problem of labour absenteeism in the select power loom units of Ichalkaranji
- 2) To analyze the reasons / factors behind labour absenteeism.
- 3) To investigate the correlation between various factors and magnitude of labour absenteeism,

### 1.7: Hypotheses

For the present study the following hypotheses were set.

- 1) There is no significant difference between magnitude of labour absenteeism of observed sample units.
- 2) There is no significant association between 'personal and organizational factors' and 'magnitude of labour absenteeism'

**1.8: Significance of the study**

The proper investigation of factors behind labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji would hopefully be useful for monitoring and evolving the long-term policy to eradicate the problem of labour absenteeism or at list to make it less intense.

The study would also be significant for the academicians and researchers in the field of human resource management.

**1.9: Scope of the study**

The topical scope of the study was confined to labour absenteeism in power loom units. The geographical scope and chronological scope was restricted to Ichalkaranji one calendar year respectively. The functional scope was confined to analyzing the reasons (factors) behind labour absenteeism and investigating the correlation among them.

**1.10: Sample Selection**

It was decided to incorporate 10 power loom units operating in Ichalkaranji which were selected by using Tippet's Random Numbers and 5 workers from each selected unit were randomly selected as sample respondents from the list of workers provided by unit owners. This is how the total sample workers arrived at were 50.

The care was taken to incorporate all categories of workers like machine operator, jobber, mender & folder, candiwal and wahifunny workers. The following table shows the sample powerloom units and number of workers selected for the study.

**Table-1**  
**Sample Respondents Selected for the Study**

Unit No.	Name of Powerloom Unit	Estd.	Product Range	Number of Workers Selected
1	Laxminarayan Textile	1988	<i>Jakard butta, butta sadi, dhoti</i>	05
2	Sunil Textile	1999	<i>sari, dhoti</i>	05
3	Pruthviraj Textile	2008	pure cotton sari	05
4	Vishal Textile	2001	<i>big border dhoti, sari, uparna</i>	05
5	Rahul Textile	2000	<i>dhoti, sari, uparna</i>	05
6	Sanskriti Textile	1990	<i>Grey dhoti, Malmal</i>	05
7	Shri Balaji Textile	2005	<i>super patti, chemeric</i>	05
8	Shri Balaji Textile	2003	chemeric, big border dhoti	05
9	Ganesh Textile	2007	big border dhoti, sari	05
10	Mehata Textile	1998	<i>sari, uparna</i>	05
<b>Total Sample Respondents</b>				<b>50</b>

**1.11: Data Source and Instrument of Data Collection**

The entire study was based on primary data that were collected from office records of sample power loom units. The data regarding factors behind absenteeism were collected from the sample respondents through a well-structured questionnaire.

The questionnaire was structured to collect the data from respondent regarding reasons responsible for their absence from duties. The questionnaire included two parts as follows:

**Part-I : Personal factors (Ex-plant factors)**

That part included ten factors describing personal reasons responsible for absenteeism.

**Part-II : Organizational factors (In-plant factors)**

That part included seven important organizational factors describing the unit related reasons responsible for absenteeism.

The questionnaire was translated into Marathi language considering the education level of the workers. The selected respondents were personally visited as per their duty time and convenience. Each question in the questionnaire was made understandable to them and the data were collected. The data so collected were tabulated systematically and analyzed with the help of selected statistical tools. The hypotheses were tested.

**1.12: Analytical tools**

For data analysis, the statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, coefficient of variation are used and One-way ANOVA (F-test) is employed for testing of hypotheses.

**(II) DATA ANALYSIS AND HYPOTHESES TESTING****(1) Personal and Organizational Factors responsible for Labour Absenteeism**

Ten personal and six organizational factors were identified as the probable causes for labour absenteeism, the survey result whereof is presented in the following table.

**Table -2.1**  
**Frequency Distribution of Personal and Organizational Factors responsible for Labour Absenteeism**

Code No.	Personal Factors (Ex-plant Factors)	f	%	Code No.	Organizational Factors (In-plant Factors)	f	%
P1	<b>Gender</b>			O1	<b>Job Satisfaction</b>		
	Male	42	84		Satisfied	07	14
	Female	08	16		Not satisfied	43	86
P2	<b>Age (Years)</b>			O2	<b>Relationship with Employer</b>		
	20-40	26	52		Harmonious	17	34
	41-50	22	44		Strained	33	66
	>51	02	04	O3	<b>Relationship with Co-workers</b>		
P3	<b>Marital Status</b>				Harmonious	36	72
	Married	45	90		Strained	14	28
	Unmarried	05	10	O4	<b>Working Hours</b>		
P4	<b>Dependents (Members)</b>				8	12	24
	2 -4	36	72		12	37	74
	> 4	14	28		> 12	01	02
P5	<b>Education</b>			O5	<b>Working Conditions</b>		
	College Level	06	12		Satisfactory	18	36
	School Level	36	72		Not Satisfactory	32	64
	Illiterate	08	16	O6	<b>Distance from Residence</b>		
P6	<b>Mode of Transport</b>				< 5 k.m.	48	96
	Cycle	21	42		> 5 k.m.	02	04
	Bike	05	10				
	Transportation of Firm	00	00				
	Walk	24	48				
P7	<b>Health Status</b>						
	Good & Strong	04	08				

	Moderately Good	30	60
	Frequent suffering from illness	16	32
<b>P8</b>	<b>Indebtedness</b>		
	Indebted	36	72
	Not Indebted	14	28
<b>P9</b>	<b>Personal Habits</b>		
	Drinking (Alcoholism)	13	26
	Tobacco Chewing	07	14
	Smoking	11	22
	All	15	30
	Not at all	04	08
<b>P10</b>	<b>Mental Worries</b>		
	Family Problems	20	40
	Financial Problems	26	52
	Worried about future	04	08


Source: Primary Data

**(2) Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

In order to know the extent of labour absenteeism in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji, the unit-wise and month-wise labour absenteeism is taken into account. The following tables present the mean values (Grand Mean) of month-wise labour absenteeism in the sample study units and its summary.

**Table 2.2**  
**Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism in Power loom Units of Ichalkaranji**

Month	Unit -1	Unit -2	Unit -3	Unit -4	Unit -5	Unit -6	Unit -7	Unit -8	Unit -9	Unit -10	Grand Mean	Ske w	Kurtosi s
Jan	3.6	4.8	4.4	3.8	5.0	4.0	2.6	3.2	4.8	4.2	4.04	-0.58	-0.27
Feb	3.0	4.6	3.6	5.2	6.2	2.2	3.4	4.0	4.8	4.6	4.16	0.03	-0.06
Mar	3.4	4.6	3.6	4.0	6.2	4.6	5.0	3.2	5.0	4.4	4.40	0.57	0.42
Apr	4.8	4.6	5.4	3.0	4.6	5.6	4.4	4.0	4.2	5.8	4.64	-0.45	0.42
May	7.4	8.0	6.6	6.0	7.2	6.6	7.0	6.8	4.2	5.2	6.50	-1.00	0.92
Jun	5.6	2.8	2.6	3.0	3.0	2.4	3.8	3.6	5.8	3.8	3.64	1.12	0.14
Jul	2.8	4.6	3.0	4.4	3.4	3.6	4.4	4.2	3.2	3.0	3.66	0.21	-1.85
Aug	5.2	3.6	4.2	6.0	3.6	5.6	4.6	4.8	4.2	4.4	4.62	0.41	-0.61
Sep	2.4	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.2	2.6	3.0	1.2	2.0	2.0	1.78	0.52	-1.29
Oct	4.6	6.0	3.8	3.6	6.2	4.0	3.8	5.6	3.8	4.6	4.60	0.73	-1.20
Nov	5.6	5.8	5.2	4.8	3.0	6.2	3.8	5.2	5.2	4.0	4.88	-0.71	-0.21
Dec	4.6	4.2	6.8	8.2	5.0	5.0	4.6	4.0	5.2	4.0	5.16	1.61	2.20
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>4.56</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.41</b>	<b>4.55</b>	<b>4.36</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>4.36</b>	<b>4.16</b>	<b>4.34</b>		



Skew	0.49	0.02	0.02	0.29	-	-	1.22	-	-	-	-0.53
Kurtosis	0.05	1.63	-	1.02	-	-	2.88	1.42	1.47	1.58	2.85

Source: Office Records of concerned units

One-way ANOVA (F-test) is computed to know the mean differences between magnitudes of labour absenteeism across sample units during the study period.

Table 2.3  
ANOVA for Mean Differences of Labour Absenteeism

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F (Critical Value)	p-value
Between Groups	0.0001	1	0.0001	0.00013	4.35	.9911
Within Groups	13.7082	20	0.6854			
Total	13.7083	21				

Source: Values computed by the Researcher

As the F-value is 0.00013 and the p-value is .9911, ( $F = 0.00013 < F_{0.05, 1, 20} = 4.35$ ), the null hypothesis is accepted, which indicates that there is no significant difference between the magnitudes of labour absenteeism in the power loom units of Ichalkaranji.

Table 2.4  
Summary of Average Labour Absenteeism in Power Loom Units of Ichalkaranji

Unit No.	Name of Power Loom Unit	Minimum (Average Absent Days)	Maximum (Average Absent Days)	Mean Labour Absenteeism	Standard Deviation	C.V. (%)
1	Laxminarayan Textile	2.4	7.4	4.41	1.44	32.58
2	Sunil Textile	1.2	8.0	4.56	1.68	36.76
3	Pruthviraj Textile	1.2	6.8	4.20	1.62	38.57
4	Vishal Textile	1.0	8.2	4.41	1.83	41.40
5	Rahul Textile	1.2	7.2	4.55	1.75	38.46
6	Sanskriti Textile	2.2	6.6	4.36	1.49	34.10
7	Shri Balaji Textile	2.6	7.0	4.20	1.13	26.90
8	Shri Ram Textile	1.2	6.8	4.15	1.39	33.49
9	Ganesh Textile	2.0	5.8	4.36	1.03	23.56
10	Mehta Textile	2.0	5.8	4.16	0.98	23.50

Source: Values computed by the Researcher

Table 2.4 reveals the degree of variability in the labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji. There is abrupt variations in absenteeism at Vishal Textile (CV = 41.40%) while Mehta Textile has minimum volatility in absenteeism (CV = 23.50%)

**(3) Magnitude of Lost Work-man Days**

It is interesting to understand as to how many work-man days have been lost due to labour absenteeism. Table No. 2.5 speaks about the total lost work-man days in sample power loom units of Ichalkaranji.

**Table 2.5**  
**Total lost work-man days in power loom units of Ichalkaranji**  
**(No. of workers per unit=5)**

Unit No.	Jan	Feb	March	April	May	June	July	Aug	Sept	Oct	Nov	Dec	Total Lost Work-Man days	Total Available Work-man Days	% of Lost Work-Man days to Available Work-man days
1	18	15	17	24	37	28	14	26	12	23	28	23	265	1450	18.28
2	24	23	23	23	40	14	23	18	6	30	29	21	274	1450	18.90
3	22	18	18	27	33	13	15	21	6	19	26	34	252	1450	17.38
4	19	26	20	15	30	15	22	30	5	18	24	41	265	1450	18.28
5	25	31	31	23	36	15	17	18	6	31	15	25	273	1450	18.82
6	20	11	23	28	33	12	18	28	13	20	31	25	262	1450	18.07
7	13	17	25	22	35	19	22	23	15	19	19	23	252	1450	17.38
8	16	20	16	20	34	18	21	24	6	28	26	20	249	1450	17.17
9	23	24	25	21	21	29	16	21	10	19	26	26	261	1450	18.00
10	21	23	22	29	26	19	15	22	10	23	20	20	250	1450	17.24
Total Lost Work-Man days	201	208	220	232	325	182	183	231	89	230	244	258	2603	14500	17.95
Working Days	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	25	15	25	25	290		
Total Available Work-man Days	1250	1250	1250	1250	1250	1250	1250	1250	1250	750	1250	1250	14500		
% of Lost Work-Man days to Available Work-man days	16.08	16.64	17.60	18.56	26.00	14.56	14.64	18.48	7.12	30.67	19.52	20.64	18.14		

*Source: Values computed by the Researcher*

In all out of total available work-man days (14,500), 2,630 days have been lost due to labour absenteeism, which amounts to 18.14%. The problem of labour absenteeism is becoming sever in Sunil Textile and Rahul Textile as revealed by increasing percentage of lost work-man days 18.90 and 18.83 respectively, followed by Laxminarayan Textile and Pruthviraj Textile (18.28%) There is more loss of work-man days in the months of October (30.67%), May (26%) and December (20.64%)

**(4) Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism**

After all, workers are human beings, who due to personal reasons may remain absent from assigned duties. Ten such personal factors and six organizational factors are studied in respect of labour absenteeism in power loom units of Ichalkaranji and the results are exhibited in Table No. 2.6.



**Table 2.6**  
Association between Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism

Code No.	Range* of Personal Factor	Code No.	Range* of Organizational Factor	Mean Labour Absenteeism (Unit-wise)	Mean Labour Absenteeism (Month-wise)
P <sub>1</sub>	0.68	O <sub>1</sub>	0.72	4.41	4.04
P <sub>2</sub>	0.86	O <sub>2</sub>	0.32	4.56	4.16
P <sub>3</sub>	0.80	O <sub>3</sub>	0.44	4.20	4.40
P <sub>4</sub>	0.44	O <sub>4</sub>	0.95	4.41	4.64
P <sub>5</sub>	0.64	O <sub>5</sub>	0.28	4.55	3.64
P <sub>6</sub>	0.66	O <sub>6</sub>	0.92	4.36	3.66
P <sub>7</sub>	0.76	--	--	4.20	4.62
P <sub>8</sub>	0.44	--	--	4.15	1.78
P <sub>9</sub>	0.58	--	--	4.36	4.88
P <sub>10</sub>	0.73	--	--	4.16	5.16
<b>Mean</b>	<b>0.659</b>	--	<b>0.605</b>	<b>4.356</b>	<b>4.098</b>
<b>S.D.</b>	<b>0.141</b>	---	<b>0.299</b>	<b>0.148</b>	<b>0.953</b>

**Source:** Primary Data

\* Coefficient of Range = Highest value minus lowest value divided by highest value plus lowest value

\*\* Mean values of labour absenteeism were taken into account except the months of May (in which month most of the migrant workers prefer to go to their nature place) and the month of the October (in which Diwali vacation is given)

**Table 2.7**  
ANOVA for Association between Personal and Organisational Factors and Magnitude of Labour Absenteeism

Sources of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	F (Critical Value)	p-value
Between Groups	111.7225	3	37.2408	128.57	2.9223	.00001
Within Groups	8.979	31	0.2896			
<b>Total</b>	<b>120.7015</b>	<b>34</b>				

**Source:** Values computed by the Researcher

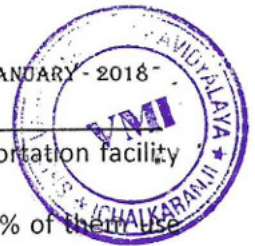
F value is 128.57 and  $p$ -value is  $< .00001$  ( $F = 128.57 > F_{0.05, 3, 31} = 2.9223$ ), which indicates that the result is significant at  $p < .05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected which leads to conclude that there exists the significant association between the personal and organizational factors and the magnitude of labour absenteeism in power loom units at Ichalkaranji.

### (III) FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The findings and conclusions drawn therefrom are presented hereunder.

#### (A) Findings:

- It was found the majority of the power loom workers are male (84%) and most of them were from young age group of 20 to 40 years.
- It was observed that 90% of the respondents were married and 72% of them had around 2 to 4 dependents. 28% sample workers were found to be having 5 or more dependents.
- Seventy two percent of respondents had school level education while 12% of them had acquired the higher education too.



- (iv) It was found that out of 10 sample power loom units, none of them provided the transportation facility to their workers, the prominent reason being the small size of the firm.
- (v) Majority of sample respondents (48%) every day come to their duties on foot, while 42% of them use cycle. Only 10% of them have their own bikes.
- (vi) It was somewhat disturbing to find that a big chunk of power loom workers (60%) have 'moderately good' health status and 32% of them reported that they had been frequently suffering from this or that type of illness. This may be due to over strained work or the effect of cotton dust on their lungs. During interview, some sample respondents reported that they were frequently suffering from cough, bronchitis and other lungs related diseases.
- (vii) It was found that most of the respondents (72%) were indebted. During interview, they reported that they had taken loan from urban co-operative banks, credit co-operative societies and even from private money lenders.
- (viii) It was very shocking to note that 30% of sample power loom workers were addicted to drinks, tobacco consumption and smoking. Only 8% of them had kept themselves away from addictions. More specifically, it was found that 26% respondents had the habit drinking wine and 14% of them had been addicted to tobacco chewing. 22% of sample respondents were smokers.
- (ix) It was found that 52% of sample respondents were trapped by 'financial problems', while 40% were having 'family problem'. This finding read with finding no. 6 above, it was clear that due to serve financial problems, the power loom worker had taken loans even at the exorbitant rate of interest.
- (x) It was worrisome to find that majority of power loom workers were 'unhappy' with the job they have been doing presently and their relationship with their owners were mostly 'strained' (Score: 66%) however, the 'harmonious' relationship was found among co-workers.
- (xi) Sixty four percent of sample respondent reported that the working condition in the units were not desirable. Good working conditions can abstain the worker from remaining absent from their duties. However, here it was found that only 36% power loom owners had provided desirable working conditions.
- (xii) It was found that during the study that majority of power loom owners had created the awareness about the ill-effects of absenteeism even then it was found that the problem of labour absenteeism has not been controlled.
- (xiii) Some time the distance of work place from residence may become the prominent cause for remaining absent from work. However, in the preset study it was found that majority of power loom units (96%) were situated within 5 k.m. from the place of residence of worker. Only 4% were situated beyond that.
- (xiv) On an average, there are around 18 percent lost work-man days in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji, which hampers the productivity and increases the cost of production.

## **(B) CONCLUSION:**

It is concluded that the problem of labour absenteeism is growing in power loom sector of Ichalkaranji and both personal factors (Ex-plant factors) as well as organizational factors (In-plant factors) are responsible for growing labour absenteeism.

## **(C) SUGGESTIONS:**

- (i) The power loom owners may take the proper steps to change the undesirable habits of their workers through personal counseling and special programs organizing the lectures or slide show of expert doctors on evil-effects of addiction.
- (ii) The power loom owners, through their association, may arrange for short-term credit to workers which would relieve them from the burden of indebtedness, especially from taking loan from private money lenders at exorbitant interest rates.
- (iii) Comfortable working conditions should be provided and regular health-check-up camps may be organized with the collaborative efforts of Power loom Owner's Association and local doctors or NGOs.

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**(III) Reports/ Office Record**

- 1) Office Record of concerned Power Loom Units
- 2) Attendance Catalog (Present-Absent Information) of concerned Power Loom Units
- 3) Reports of 'Power loom Association', Ichalkaranji