Article title: Can we Consider Hotel Employees as Presenteeises?

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Research Note

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Abstract

Presenteeism is an issue that seriously affects the workplace as it can lead to the onset or increase harmful behaviors among employees. The empirical analysis was done to investigate such a concept among employees working in one of the stressful industries, namely, the hotel industry. Unfortunately, the high majority of the employees involving in this study were reported as presenteeises, they were engaging in such harmful behavior. Eventually, hotel management has to pay attention to such issues in terms of their wellness programs and absence management policies in order to be able to keep their employees healthy and productive.

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Introduction

Presenteeism concept can be considered as one of the newly recognized issues within management science, it is believed that it has been entered the literature in the 1990s as a significant factor that negatively affects human resources in the workplace (Uygur *et al.*, 2018). Presenteeism describes employees who remain at work but are not as productive as usual due to being ill (Omar *et al.*, 2016). In other words, employees present their bodies into the workplace with fatigue souls.

Researchers (*i.e.* Baker-McClearn *et al.*, 2010; Gosselin *et al.*, 2013; Ospina, 2015; Panari & Simbula, 2013) argued that Presenteeism is linked to serious workplace consequences; for instance, it threatens employee efficiency, workplace safety, product quality, humanization, production, sales opportunities, customer service and the performance as whole. Presenteeism as stated by Coldwell (2013) costs 1.5 times more than absenteeism, for example, Presenteeism costs the U.S. businesses about \$150 billion annually. In addition, Presenteeism is responsible for 74% of lost time due to health-related issues, while absenteeism accounts for only 26% (Merrill *et al.*, 2012 and Willingham, 2008).

In a competitive businesses environment like the hotel industry, having a healthy employees physically and mentally is a necessity for reaching the business goals. Employees in the hotel industry facing working conditions that are exceeding the legal regulations, for example, long and irregular working hours, this, in turn, affect negatively on the balance between the work and their personal life (Deery & Jago, 2009). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is formulated: *Employees working in the hotel industry are engaging in Presenteeism.*

Methodology

A random sample of 20 five-star hotels located in the Greater Cairo region in Egypt was chosen for investigation. 335 surveys were valid for the final data analysis. A 6-item Stanford Presenteeism Scale (Koopman *et al.*, 2002) was used.

Results

Results reported that mean score of hotel employees level of presenteeism was 3.22 (SD = .74). According to Figures (1), most of the respondents 94.3% (n = 316) present at work while being sick for different reasons as follow; work Load 49.9% (n = 167), work pressure 17% (n = 57), sickness was mild 17% (n = 57), and passion for work 14.3 (n = 48).

Figures (1): Presenteeism Percentage and Reasons

Besides, half of respondents reported different health problems they have; Back problems 16.7% (n = 56), Gastritis 10.1% (n = 34), Insomnia 9.6% (n = 32), Allergies 7.8% (n = 26), Arthritis 4.8% (n = 16), Emotional problems 1.2% (n = 4), and .3% (n = 1) for Asthma, Blood pressure, and Diabetes. However, the rest of the respondents 49% (n = 164) did not report any health problems (see Figure 2 below).

Figures (2): Types of Reported Health Problems

Conclusion and Recommendations

Presenteeism is a negative issue facing the workplace and can lead to the onset or increase in harmful behaviors. The hotel industry is not an exception. A number of recommendations that may help include the following:

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- Interest needs to be paid to the importance of adopting wellness programs that help employees to be physically and psychologically healthy.
- Hotel culture also needs to be examined when addressing the presenteeism issue; employees need to be aware of the most common lifestyle factors and chronic conditions that contribute to their illness.
- Hotels should create absence management policies the way that do not include disciplinary measures for employees with health conditions, by enforcing employees to come to work despite suffering sick, the problem will be shifted from absenteeism to presenteeism.

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