CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION
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Absenteeism has been and continues to be one of the major problems of industry. It results in loss of production, increased labour costs and reduced efficiency of the operations. It leads to one of the most common forms of wastages in the Industry. "Absenteeism" refers to a worker’s absence from his regular task when he is normally scheduled to work. Absenteeism lacks a uniform definition and is generally understood differently by different persons. Ordinarily, a Layman may define absenteeism as remaining absent from work. It means leaving one’s work place without permission.

In the industrial field, absenteeism needs a more restricted connotation. It is thus the total number of workers absent expressed as a percentage of the total number of workers employed. The Labour Department of the Government of India has given a more precise and comprehensive definition of absenteeism. The absenteeism rate is defined as the total manshift lost because of absence as a percentage of total man shifts scheduled.

It is an established fact that absenteeism affect almost every type of organised set up. Its importance is realised and recognised from a
government office to an educational institution and from a commercial house to a factory. But the seriousness of the problem is realised more in modern industry than in any other concern. The absence of a foreman or superior leads to dislocation of work and indiscipline hands lead to a great loss in. The absence of trained production as well as to breakage in machines and this has its repercussions on any other workers and sections of a factory.

Absenteeism is considered to be a reaction to aversive work conditions. Youngblood (1984) has raised the interesting point that workers may like their jobs but, on certain occasions, find non work activities more appealing. The major approach to understand why absence occurs has focused on withdrawal as a response to dissatisfying jobs and job conditions. Farrell and Stamm (1988) reported the two best predictors to be prior absence history and the organisations best policy after conducting a metaanalysis of 72 absences. People who have frequently been absent in the past are likely to be absent in the future. Organisations that have policies to control absence by either rewarding attendance or punishing absence have less absence.

The single most vexing problem associated with absenteeism involves the criteria for measuring absenteeism. Gaudet (1963) reports
that at least 41 different measures of absenteeism have been used in the past. Behrand's (1951) research was one of the first to apply multiple indices of Absenteeism. Huse and Taylor (1962) examined four indices of absenteeism - absence severity (total number of days absent), absence frequency (total number of times absent), attitudinal absence (frequency of one-day absence) and medical absence (frequency of absences of three days or longer).

In general the measurement of absence can be expressed as a ratio of the total amount of time lost through non attendance to the planned working time (excluding over time). Rate of absenteeism has been defined as the total man shift lost because of absence as a percentage of the total number of man shift schedule. Thus, for calculating the ratio of absenteeism one's require the number of person scheduled to work and the number actually present.

**Absenteeism rate:**

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\text{Absenteeism rate} = \frac{\text{Number of persons - days lost through job absence during period}}{\text{Average number of employees} \times \text{number of work days}} \times 100
\]
The Isreal productivity institute (1965) has given the most appropriate measure of absenteeism, a worker who was not present for more than half a day when the firm was in operation was considered absent. Decreases in absenteeism can be accomplished by increasing the reasons that an employee has for going to work (well pay, bonus and games), increased the negative consequences of missing work (discipline better record keeping) and the decreasing the negative consequences of attending work (reducing stress, boredom and personal problems).

Absenteeism is a common form of wastage of human material and requires scientific study and control. As far as practicable the causes of absenteeism should be found out, so that the rate of absenteeism can be controlled and held down to the lowest possible level. A low absenteeism rate not only reduces wastages of man power and national property, but is also an indicator of good employes employer relations, high morale and job satisfaction.

The causes of absenteeism may broadly be divided into three categories i.e. inplant causes, social and community causes and personal causes.

The inplant causes responsible for absenteeism refers to the causes inside the factories. These causes may be divided into four categories. First
ineffective and inadequate selection and placement procedure encourage round pegs in square holes. As a result, there is unnecessary wastage of human power and energy and dissatisfaction in job. Obviously, absenteeism and turnover may be reduced in industry by careful selection and by shifting men to work on jobs to which they may be better fitted.

Second is excessive industrial fatigue - heavy pressures of work leads to frequent illness and hence the employee searches for a new job. Hours of work, therefore, be reduced in the factories and frequent optimum rest pauses should be given as and when necessary.

Thirdly unsatisfactory working conditions such as poor illumination, ventilation, lack of housing, canteen, refreshment and shopping facilities not only create unpleasantness in the social climate of the factory but also accelerate poor attitude and low morale among the employees.

Fourth is poor supervision - poor and bossy supervisors very often lead to discontentment, unrest, conflict and tension, and hence absenteeism. It has been indicated in Hawthorne studies that absenteeism was reduced from 15% to 3% due to good supervisory relationship and judicious dealings.
Community and social causes which are inadequate housing and transport facilities, lack of suitable marketing and shopping facilities for treatments leads to absenteeism. Seasonal causes e.g. the cultivation season, the marriage season, amusements and religious festivals are also responsible for absenteeism especially in the case of Indian factory workers. There is no remedy for these seasonal causes of absenteeism except that a constant record of absenteeism may enable the management to reserve extra hands during seasonal periods so that there will not be much loss to the management.

Personal causes responsible for absenteeism are nervousness and fatigue, age and experience, sex, long hours of work, marital status, job satisfaction, nature of pay etc. Industrial psychologists have found these personal factors are of vital importance influencing absenteeism and turnover in industry. After recognising the real causes of absenteeism and sorting out the false and alleged ones, one should try to control the rate of absenteeism whenever it is excessive.

A conceptual model of absenteeism was formulated by Steers and Rhodes (1978) presented in Fig. 1.1. According to this model, the nature of the job and work environment interact with employee values and expectations to determine employee satisfaction with job situation. The
Fig. 1.1

Employee attendance model by Steers and Rhodes (1978)
job situation is described in terms of job scope, job level, role stress, work
group size, leadership style, co-worker relations and opportunity for
advancement values and expectations are determined by personal
characteristics such as education, tenure, age, sex and family size.

Actual attendance is the combination of attendance motivation and
the ability to attend. Attendance motivation is the product of Job
Satisfaction plus pressures to attend such as economic conditions,
incentives, work group norms, personal standards and organizational
commitment. Ability to attend relates to factors such as illness and
accidents, family responsibilities and transportation problems.
Attendance motivation and ability to attend interact to determine actual
attendance.

Absenteeism has plagued industry since the invention of machines.
In textile mills, the absenteeism rate was approximately 20%. During the
2-weeks period following each monthly pay day, absenteeism often
reached 35%. Factory owners levied stiff fines and dismissed many
workers but that had no impact on attendance. Absenteeism is also high
in companies that do not require proof of illness. High paying
manufacturing industries have higher absenteeism rates than do
low-paying industries.
The major approach to understanding why absence occurs has focused on withdrawal as a response to dissatisfying jobs and job conditions. Absence and job satisfaction are related, but researches have found quite small correlations between them.

Job satisfaction refers to a person's feeling of satisfaction on the job, which acts as a motivation to work. Positive attitudes towards the job conceptually equivalent to job satisfaction. At various times it has been linked to production, motivation, absenteeism, tardiness, physical health, accidents and job involvement. Job satisfaction is the function of the person's environment interaction. It covers both the satisfaction derived from being engaged in a piece of work or in any pursuit of a higher order. It is essentially related to human needs and their fulfillment through work.

Locke (1976) defined job satisfaction as a "pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job or job experiences". The concept generally refers to a variety of aspects of the job that influence a person's levels of satisfaction with it. These usually include attitudes towards pay, working conditions, colleagues and boss, career prospects and the intrinsic aspects of the job itself.
An individual's functioning in an organization is affected by the totality of his/her situation. Job satisfaction is, therefore the 'zest' displayed by an employee contingent on his adjustments in personal, social and work life. However, as the years have gone by, the definition of Job Satisfaction has remained a controversial issue and every industrial luminary has his own systematic piece of reflection with the definition. Pleitner (1981) construes job satisfaction axiomatically as positive-in-tuneness in the job situation, the extent of which is dependent on the degree of harmony between a person's expectancy and their fulfillment in reality.

One of the surest signs of deteriorating conditions in an organization is low job satisfaction. In its more sinister from it lurks behind strikes show down, absenteeism and employee turnover. It also may be a part of grievances, disciplinary problems, low productivity and other organizational difficulties. High job satisfaction on the other hand gladdens the hearts of administrators because it tends to be connected with the conditions that administrators want. Although high job satisfaction is the hall mark of a well managed organization. It cannot be persuaded into existence or even bought. It furnishes a measure of the progress that has been made in developing a sound behavioural climate in an organization.
Job satisfaction depends upon many work related factors, ranging from where we have to park to the sense of fulfillment one gets from his daily tasks. Personal factors can also influence job satisfaction. These factors include age, health, length of job experiences, emotional stability, social status, leisure activities and family and other social relationships. One's motivation and aspiration and how well they are satisfied by one's work also affect his attitudes his job. In a study by Singh and Dewan (1983) on Job Satisfaction in Bank employees it was found that official literary and job satisfaction were positively related. The managers were found to be more satisfied with their job conditions, accountants were next in this respect and the clerks were lowest.

For some employees, Job satisfaction is a stable, enduring characteristic, independent of the features of the job changes in job, status, pay, working conditions and goals have little effect on job satisfaction of these people. Their personal tendency towards happiness (satisfaction) or unhappiness (dissatisfaction) varies little overtime and circumstances.

A clear cut analysis of the western and Indian studies on Job Satisfaction throws light on some determinants of job satisfaction which may broadly be divided in three categories - personal factors (sex, age, intelligence, length of service etc.), factors related to job (nature of job,
skill of work, size and location of the factory etc.), factors controlled by the management (salary, security, vocational guidance, scope for promotions, working conditions, supervision etc.) Besides these contributors, researches on Job Satisfaction also point out the contribution of loyalty, facility for adjustment, the relative status of the worker in social and economic group with which he identifies himself, scope for creativity and achievement, interest in job etc. towards Job Satisfaction.

Crohan et al (1989) suggests that job satisfaction is related to satisfaction with all aspects of life. People who have positive attitude toward work are likely to have positive feelings about their personal and family life. Gerhart (1987) found that one's job situation is important to one's job satisfaction level at one time, are likely to be happy with their job several years later—even if they have changed occupation or employer or both. Others apparently remain dissatisfied in numerous work situations.

Several theories have been proposed to explain why people are satisfied with their jobs. Job satisfaction has been included in work motivation theories also, other theories focus directly on job satisfaction. Locke's value discrepancy theory proposed that satisfaction is due to the extent to which there is a discrepancy between what is expected for a job
Lawler's Facet theory considered that the level of satisfaction with a job facet is determined by comparison between expectation of what should be received from the job facet and perception of what is received. Expectations of what should be received are determined by perception of one's input to the job, the inputs and outcomes of others, and the demands of the job. Perception of what actually is reviewed on the job also is determined by equity considerations, specifically by the actual amount one receives compared to the amount others receive.

Social influence hypothesis, a third way in which job satisfaction can be explained, satisfaction results from perceiving others satisfaction. Also satisfaction with various aspects of work is affected by the individual's attachment to a highly cohesive work group and cohesive groups provide ample opportunity for social influence.

Finally Landy's opponent process theory emphasizes the emotional element people's emotional responses to their job experiences are subject to equilibrium processes. A highly satisfying job can become routine and boring through such process.

The attitude of job satisfaction is determined by the degree of fulfillment of an employee's needs on the job due to the presence or absence
of certain job factors or out comes. But when needs are not fulfilled or when motives are blocked an employee experience frustration and develop anxiety.

Motives are expressions of a person's need, hence they are personal and internal. In a work setting, motivation is often used as an explanation for worker's productivity, effort and attendants. Work motivation is concerned with people's goal directed behaviour in the work place.

Steers and Porter (1983) defined work motivation is that, which energize, directs and sustain behaviour. The energizing function of motivation is a state that causes people to act, that drives them to engage in a particular behaviour. The directing function of motivation implies that motivated behaviour has a purpose, it is directed toward achieving specific goals. The sustaining function of motivation explains why one's persist in his efforts to achieve his goal. Work Motivation creates conditions where people show high zeal initiative, interest, enthusiasm at any work with a sense of responsibility, loyalty, discipline, pride and confidence to effectively achieve the goals of an organization.

A good deal of understanding about work motivation has been derived from the experiences in actual work situations in organisations. Managers and supervisors have, over the years, and all over the world,
resorted to practices with the intention, directly or indirectly, of influencing motivation of employees in work situation, as a part of requirements of their jobs. While some of them have achieved wide acceptance and endured the test of time, at least in their basic ideas like pay, fringe benefits, working hours, physical conditions of work etc., there are many others like the style of supervision, extent of involvement of employees in decision making, responsibility, interpersonal conflict resolutions etc., which are of a social/psychological nature, have undergone considerable changes.

A general model of motivation was presented by Dunette and Kirchner (1965).
The source of motivation is described as a "state of disequilibrium or a sense of imbalance". This can be a need, desire, expectation, or some combination thereof, experienced by a person. A worker engages in certain behaviours in order to achieve the goal of reducing the inner state of disequilibrium. By observing the results of the behaviour (either directly or through information provided externally), the worker can judge whether or not the goal is closer to being achieved. Based on this judgment, the person can continue the current behaviour or modify the behaviour, or if the activation is weak or the goal unclear, give up.

Theories developed to explain work motivation specify a variety of processes by which behaviour may be directed. Some of the better known theories of work motivation are:

Maslow's need hierarchy theory - Maslow did not develop the theory specifically for work motivation. Maslow proposed that human needs are arranged in hierarchy and it is important for the organization to satisfy their needs.

ERG theory of Alderfer which can be considered as the second major theory based on hierarchy of needs concept, but with substantial modifications in terms of both the number of needs and how the needs
operate to motivate people. Alderfer proposed the ERG theory to meet the shortcomings of Maslow’s theory. He also provided specific measures for his theoretical variables so that the theory could be empirically tested.

Achievement motivation theory of McClelland-Mcclelland and his associates identified the achievement need in people as a relatively stable personality trait which enters into work performing behaviour. The level of achievement need in an individual can be assessed as high or low and individual with a high achievement need has an intense desire for success and an equally intense fear of failure.

Expectancy theory of Vroom is considered to be a cognitive one, which states that motivation is a function of workers expectations that behaviour will result in the attainment of desired outcomes. Other motivation theories propose that behaviour is controlled by perceptions of equity, the setting of performance goals and the use of reinforcement and punishment. Each of these approaches has received some research support, but none has proved to be a good explanation for worker motivation.

High levels of motivation results in workers desire to achieve and perform to the best of their abilities whereas low level of motivation leads to poor performance, apathy and turnover. Vroom, Landy and Trumbo
(1976) correctly concluded that work motivation does not differ extensively from other kinds of motivation. The focus is limited only because the subset of behaviour of interest are those relevant to a work environment.

The person exists in the organisation with his needs, motives and expectation of which he seeks fulfilment. Once his needs and expectations are fulfilled, he gets satisfaction. The effectiveness of the organisation depends on adequately matching or aligning the requirements of the organisation with the expectations of people. It is at this point that positive work motivation generates and since the superior as supervisor at every level is instrumental in bringing about this alignment of the organisation with the subordinate, it leads to the enhancement of work motivation of both the subordinate and the superior. In effect, the alignment ultimately leading to the attainment of the organisation's objective not only achieves the satisfaction of the subordinates expectations but also the superior's needs.

Modern age is the age of competition, rapid pace and complexity, in coping with which one face difficulties. Due to these day to day pressures and difficulties constant state of worry, tension, uneasiness and depression exists in today society. That is exactly what is named as anxiety though the degree varies from person to person.
Anxiety refers to a psychological state characterized by imaginary fears and apprehensions which amounts to disintegration of the individual, and enforces him to plan the ways of coping with apprehended situations. Anxiety lives in birth trauma and it more arises out of loss of love than lack of love. Coleman et al (1980) found that person with a serious anxiety disorder evaluates ordinary life events as threatening. Often, the person responds with avoidance rather than with effective coping skills. Because the avoidance behaviour brings immediate relief from tension, it is maintained.

Anxiety is likely to be accrue due to an individual's personal involvement in diverse stressful situations. Ross (1950) has defined anxiety as "a serious symptom that arises from faulty adaptations to the stresses and strains of life". This definition emphasis the stress and strains of life as a cause of anxiety.

Job anxiety refers to employee's predisposition to emotional tension caused by his generalised feelings of vague, fear and insecurity and apprehensions in respect to one of several constituents of his job life. The anxious employee most of time anticipates undesirable outcomes from various components of his job. An employee individually may show his anxiety through keeping himself from the job situation, doing less work,
quit off the situation in production period.

Job anxiety enforces planning on the ways of coping apprehended threatening job situations. A gainfully employed personnel may be only anxious to meet the requirements of the job, for the gains occurring out of it are not dissatisfying. Moderate degree of anxiety resolves adaptive purpose, elevating general arousal to state where the person is more alert, sensitive and better prepared to meet the dangers of life. Practically no research have been conducted in this area. Probably various attempts made by Sinha 1961, Dutta, Patel and Mohanty 1985 are first in India to study the effect of anxiety on behaviour of industrial employees.

Wolpe (1969) reported that persons with high anxiety level show symptoms of inability to concentrate, difficulty in making decision, discouragement and extreme sensitivity, hence hampering the performance of a person where as low level of anxiety show symptoms of depression, laziness and inactivity which in turn hamper a performance of a person.

Martin (1961) indicates that anxiety improves performance only upto a point. But after reaching a certain intensity it has adverse effects. It disrupts efficient operation of the ego, interferes with perceptual and
thinking processes. Extreme degree of anxiety produces neurotic symptoms and immobilizes the individual in toto. Constructive activity comes to zero point when there is extreme experience of anxiety.

Keeping in view the significance of job anxiety in the modern industrial world, it has become obligatory on the part of industrial psychologists to analyse the underlying components and to scientifically assess the extent of the job anxiety.

In view of these, the most important function of a psychologist in an organization is to deal with the problems of employee absenteeism, job satisfaction, work motivation, job anxiety etc. The industrial psychologists helps the workers as well as executives to bring to the surface many of their repressed and suppressed feelings helping them to see their own problems and solve them judiciously.

With this we may now pass on to the next chapter dealing with relevant studies conducted in this area.