CHAPTER IV

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS
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The present Chapter is aimed at interpreting the results. The description of results have already been presented in the preceding Chapter III on which discussion of results will be based in this foregoing Chapter. For the purpose of interpreting the results the findings of the study have been classified into three sections which are given below:

(1) Relationship of organizational variables with absenteeism.
(2) Relationship of personal characteristics with absenteeism.
(3) Consistency in absenteeism behaviour among male and female employees.

In accordance with the classified aforementioned sections, discussion of the results will follow the pattern in the present chapter.

Organizational Variables and Absenteeism

The results given in Table 3.1 are emphasizing the relationship of organizational variables with absenteeism. Table shows that seven organizational factors were taken for investigating their influences on employees staying away
behaviour from work. To come out with a very clear picture each organizational variable will be discussed separately but for the sake of discussion number of these factors can be taken simultaneously for making the discussion fruitful and well meaning.

**Factor No.1: Amount of fringe and benefits**

The factor of amount of fringe and benefits has been found unrelated to absenteeism as correlational values given in Table 3.1 are very low. It is imperative to mention here that fringe and benefits are given by the employer in order to provide working facilities and life comforts to the job incumbents and their dependents as well. Management generally provides benefits to their employees with the contentions that it will strengthen job attraction and will reduce detrimental influences at work though, here Factor 1 failed to elicit any effect on absence behaviour. In the light of the result it seems that amount of fringe and benefits in the form of subsidised cafeteria services and recreational club facility, etc., in the organization, as well as medical, transportation, and educational facilities, etc., outside the work place to the employees themselves and their dependents, do not seem to be adequate for enhancing employees' quality of life.

India has its unique culture where traditions are deep rooted in every one's life either they are old or young
though, there has always been the efforts of people to transform their traditional living into a modern lifestyle. Such puzzling conditions enforce people to strike a balance between traditional and modern values and it consequently pushes men into a more complex and uncertain life network. Hence, fringe and benefits received by an employee which could have been sufficiently enough for the employee and his dependents are not found adequate because of relatively greater moral responsibility on the employee arising out of a very close intra-family relationships.

**Factor No.2: Amount of freedom at work.**

This factor is found to have no relationship with absenteeism (Table 3.1). Amount of freedom at work refers to the work atmosphere that to what extent an individual gets freedom or liberty at work in order to carry on his work activities in a free, supportive and joyful working environment. Such an environment at work is a necessary condition for establishing work attractiveness. In HMT-Srinagar, production line employees work under a very strict bureaucratic supervision, hence, employees in such work conditions are forced to become quite regular and disciplined but even then they enjoy almost maximum permissible leaves which generally seem to be the employees escaping behaviour from strict bureaucratic work environment. Therefore, on one hand bureaucratic management functions control absenteeism
upto a manageable extent and on the other employees' enjoy their maximum permissible leaves as a matter of right hence, the nature of work environment obliterate the significant relationship of 'amount of freedom at work' with the rate of absenteeism (Table 3.1).

In view of the above discussion, it is imperative to emphasise that sometimes bureaucratic work atmosphere is most likely to hamper in internalizing job responsibilities, duties, and organizational objectives. Strict bureaucratic environment keeps a man standing at a cross road which at its best may transform employees into a well disciplined and productive worker and at its worst it may turn an employee into a rebellion one, chronic absentee, and further, such condition may cause for high employees turnover too.

Factor No.3: Opportunity to learn new things at work.

Like other organizational factors, 'opportunity to learn new things at work' has not been found influencing absenteeism (Table 3.1). The obtained result is not beyond logic as the nature of employees' work at the production line is purely of a routine type which does not even pose challenge for the job incumbents. Moreover, since people work under strict bureaucratic work environment so they can't even think to aspire for the avenues to learn some new task. The nature of bureaucratic system is evident from the condition
that when an employee is appointed for a particular task then he has to strictly perform his work activity and has to strictly follow all rules and regulations of the organization pertaining to work. If anyone likes to entertain his family members, friends from outside etc., on his own will at work then he can not do unless the permission is sanctioned from the competent authority. Therefore, employees working at the production line under the condition of strict bureaucratic work environment hardly think or bother for getting any opportunity to have learn new things at work. This is the reason that factor No.3 and absenteeism have been found independent to each other.

Factor No.4: Autonomy to accomplish something worthwhile at work.

In the routine type of job accomplishing something worthwhile is a difficult rather impossible task. The employees in the present investigation have been taken from the production line where the task is routine, unchallenging, and psychologically speaking the task usually become highly monotonous. Thus, employees involved in the task of routine nature hardly get opportunity to 'accomplish something worthwhile at work' hence, this factor has no influence on the behaviour of absenteeism (Table 3.1).
The present findings regarding the relationships of Factor 3 and 4 with absenteeism (Table 3.1) seem to be contrary to the notions of the results of Baum, Blood, and Stuart (1975) as they contended that control policy based on legal compliances significantly improved attendance and performance.

Factor No.5: Participation in decision making.

At the present moment modern organizations are highly emphasizing on the participative type of management where participation in decision making has been given foremost importance. And it is believed that employees participation in decision making make them held responsible for various work activities in which they are themselves involved. This mechanism of giving participation to employees in decision making keeps employees job involved and make them feel important which consequently arouse among them the perception of high job attraction. Since employees taken in this study have been working under strict bureaucratic supervision as have already been emphasized time and again in the preceeding writings so, employees participation in decision making being very low or rather impossible under such conditions enforce job incumbents not to think of getting participation in decision making and hence, this factor has been found unrelated to absenteeism. The trend of result is not in consonance with the observations made by Bhatia and Valecha.
in the light of the various research findings that employees' participation in decision-making is the best way for reducing absenteeism.

Factor No.6: Amount of job security.

Job security does not merely provide guarantee to the job itself but it also assures employees' needs fulfilment. This factor on one hand keeps some employees stress-free at least from the point of view of the job itself and this condition is likely to develop and enhance job motivation, and satisfaction among job incumbents for the net probable outcome of employees' higher productive efficiency whereas, on the other hand, job security may keep one highly relaxed with relatively lesser concern for the job. The latter condition is most likely to prevail among the production line workers taken in this study as majority of them enjoy job security and remain thoroughly stress-free and consequently less concerned with their job. Hence, Factor No.6 i.e., job-security and absence from work behaviour have been found independent to each other (Table 3.1). The obtained result failed to prove the finding of Ugur (1982) that inadequate or unsatisfactory promotional opportunities as well as job insecurity are likely to be the attributes of high absenteeism among white-collar workers and insufficient supervision and selfishness among co-workers have been found
important source of absence from work among blue-collar workers.

Factor No.7: Income.

Like job security, employees' income has also been found to be very low correlated with absenteeism (Table 3.1). Since, job security and income are almost highly interrelated as job security ensures regular income so, the explanation for income being unrelated to absenteeism stands the same as given in the context of job security.

The studies of Ugur (1982), and Brook and Price (1989) have presented no support to the finding of the present investigation as the former researcher has depicted inversely significant relationship of pay with absenteeism.

In continuation of the above discussion it is evident from Table 3.3 given in the Chapter III that certain organizational variables have been found to be the sources of absenteeism. From amongst the noted nine organizational variables only one variable, i.e., 'inconvenient working hours' has been found to be the source of absenteeism for majority of employees (i.e., 66% of the total sample). It is further found that a thumbing majority (63.77%) of these employees perceived this factor avoidable but even they remained absent and a very few people found the factor unavoidable (10.17%).
Similarly, the other factors like 'unfair promotion policy', 'limited promotional opportunities', and 'autocratic supervision', found important organizational variables leading to absence behaviour which have been reported by a good number of people though, not in majority (Table 3.3). Overall picture which emerges from the findings is quite gloomy because as a result of poor work atmosphere what absence causing factors could have been avoided in a normal case have been found to be the source of absenteeism. The present finding is the reflection of the same above mentioned poor and strict bureaucratic work environment.

Apart from the above organizational factors discussed, there are other factors too which have been found as absence causing sources but have not been reported by the good percentage of employees are — 'unfair boss', 'untrustworthy co-workers', 'insecure job', 'poor organizational prestige', and 'poor organizational conditions'. It is important to highlight the major trend which is evident from the Table 3.3 is that whatever the percentage of people (i.e., below 33% but not less than 6%) attributing these factors as the source of absenteeism but majority of them attributed these as avoidable absence causing factors yet employees preferred to get abstained from work.
Personal Characteristics and Absenteeism

Table 3.2 contains the description regarding the relationship of personal factors with absenteeism. Almost 9 personal factors have been given in the table. The first three factors are psycho-personal variables and the remaining factors pertain to employees' social needs and their biographies. Comprehensive discussion of the results obtained follow.

Factor No.1: Need Satisfaction Through Work And Absenteeism.

It has already been emphasized at several places in the preceeding discussion that strict bureaucratic climate seems to be the major source of absenteeism. Almost every employee exhibits an escaping reaction against strict bureaucracy and hence, enjoy most of the legitimate leaves without showing any care and concern for the organization and this is the reason that need satisfaction through work (NSTW)-facet even being adequate has not been found to elicit any relation with absence behaviour.

Factor No.2: Importance Attached To Work And Absenteeism.

Importance attached to work (IATW) - facet is an outcome of the socialization process. In the process of socialization individual learns to give value to work by developing attitude towards the phenomenon of working. When an individual enters a vocation of his interest and aptitude
then he is likely to give more importance to his work which may create desire to stay at work. It is imperative to point out here that job interest and aptitude are not always the prevalent reasons for job attraction but sometime a few entities of the organization either reduces job attraction or become instrumental for absence behaviour. It is evident from the Table 3.2 that IATW is unrelated to absenteeism hence, the explanation to the above result remains the same as have already been given in the context of the finding of Factor I (NSTW).

**Factor 3: Work Identification And Absenteeism.**

Work identification being an outcome of the composite scores of its two-facets namely, (1) need satisfaction through work, and (2) importance attached to work and like these two-facets work identification as a whole has also been found to be unrelated to absenteeism (Table 3.2). The pattern of result is most likely occurred because of the faulty managerial practices as explained in the context of the discussion of the above two facets of work identification.

**Factor No.4: Friendliness With Co-Workers And Absenteeism.**

'Friendliness with co-workers' is found to be uncorrelated with absenteeism. The result obtained seems to be the consequence of moderate level of employees' relationship with co-workers which neither tide them together
in a well-organized formal group nor increasing disintegration among these employees is witnessed. Moderate type of interpersonal relationship among co-workers in conjunction with bureaucratic supervisory styles seems to be the consequence of insignificant low correlation with employees' absence behaviour (Table 3.2).

Factor No.5: Respect From Supervisor And Co-workers And Absenteeism.

It has just been mentioned above that 'friendliness with co-worker' is unrelated to absenteeism and the reasons for it have also been pointed out. Similarly, the factor of 'respect from supervisor and co-workers' has also been obtained unrelated to absenteeism. The reasons for a very low relationship between the factor, i.e., 'respect from supervisor and co-workers' and absenteeism are almost the same as have already been discussed in the context of factor No.4 (Table 3.2). But it is further important to emphasize that co-workers definitely seem to pay respect to their fellow workers which seems to be merely a formal behaviour of employees for each other and on the other hand, supervisors-subordinates relationship is found to be implicitly very poor because of the bureaucratic supervisory styles. Hence, low relationship between 'respect from supervisor and co-workers' and absenteeism have been found.
Factor 6: Feelings of Worthiness At Work and Absenteeism.

The job of the employees at production line is quite routine and unchallenging and this is the reason that employees with their work activities have been found to be moderately satisfied but it in no way provides them the feelings of worthiness out of their work activity hence, the relationship as mentioned in Table 3.2 has been found unrelated to absenteeism.

Factor 7: Perceived Relationship with Supervisors and Co-Workers and Absenteeism.

Relationship of factor 7 i.e., 'perceived relationship with supervisors and co-workers' with absenteeism is not sufficiently related to each other as shown in Table 3.2. The reasons for obtained insignificant relationship are almost similar to the reasons already given in the context of factors 4 and 5. As factor No.4 (i.e., friendliness with co-workers), and factor No.5 (i.e., respect from supervisors and co-workers) are almost identical to the present factor under discussion i.e., perceived relationship with supervisors and co-workers so, in the opinion of the present investigators, interpretation of the same stands sufficiently valid as given while explaining factor 4 and 5.
Overall picture of the findings of Factor 4, 5 and 6 have the notion of support from the obtained findings of Cheloha and Farr (1980), and Hackett and Guion (1985) that absenteeism and satisfaction are unrelated whereas, Taylor (1985); and Laldas (1984) advocated significant relationship of job satisfaction, work itself, interpersonal relationship with absenteeism, hence, latter studies do not support the present finding.

Factor No.8: Age and Absenteeism.

Absenteeism as a function of age is not found significant (Table 3.2). It is important to emphasize while discussing the result that employees taken in this investigation are quite young as both male and female are around the age of 30 years. At this very age young boys and girls faces tremendous psycho-social problems which sometimes force them to stay away from work but organizational bureaucracy to some extent keeps them duty-bound hence, significant relationship is found to be obliterated.

Factor No.9: Job Tenure and Absenteeism.

Like age, job tenure is also found to be low correlated with absenteeism (Table 3.2) as avereage job tenure of male is 8.17 years while females' job tenure is 9.53 years corresponding to average monthly income of Rs.2130/47 and Rs.2385/12 respectively are not sufficient enough to cater
the needs of, on an average, 5 to 6 dependents. All these overall conditions make them stressful and frustrated but strict rules neutralize the reactions of frustrations and channelize the behaviour of employees in a normal stream and consequently only permissible leaves are enjoyed by the workers but very freely as a matter of right. Thus, numerous above-mentioned factors either independently or in conjunction with each other seem to be intervening between the relationship of job tenure and absenteeism hence, the relationship between these two have been found to be unrelated.

Extending the discussion it is necessary to mention Table 3.4 that also covers personal factors. It is very clear from the Table 3.4 that factors like 'illness', 'domestic problems', 'difficulty in getting on time', 'local events of interests', 'feeling depressed', 'personal engagements', 'illness of family members and of other relation', 'frustration', 'lack of interest', and inadequate formal expenses, have also been studied and it has been found that illness, domestic problem, inadequate formal expenses, and to some-extent difficulty in getting on time have been reported by the majority of the sample as the sources of absenteeism and majority of these attributed the absence causing factor avoidable but even then they remained absent. On the other hand, it is also evident from the Table 3.4 that relatively
very low percentage of people have attributed the absence causing situation as unavoidable.

The above trend of results clearly emphasize that why people preferred to remain absent from work even in the situation which they could have avoided without much problem. To the mind of the present investigator the major shortcomings seem to be in the organizational functioning. The reasons which have been pointed out, time and again, in the preceding writings stand true here also.

Consistency In Absence Bheaviour Among Both Male and Female Employees:

It is evident from the findings given in the Table-3.5, and 3.6 that almost a larger chunk of both male (N=92/105, i.e., 87.52%) and female workers (N=183/195 i.e., 93.85%) of the sample group have shown consistency in their frequency rates of absenteeism during the periods of three consecutive years. On the basis of the consistency in absence behaviour a criterion may be evolved for isolating chronic absentees from general absentees. Moreover, employees absence behaviour in future can be predicted in the light of the employees consistent absence records. Our findings are in the line of the results reported by Breaugh (1981) and Keller (1983) that present absence behaviour can be predicted from the previous absenteeism records.
The reasons for consistency in behaviour seems to be an outcome of habit formation which develops among both men and women with their increasing age and experiences during the process of socialization. Work related behaviour are not merely determined by the work itself and the work environment at large, but the process of inculturation right from the early childhood, especially, in the adulthood, plays a significant role. Socialization and inculturation process as contended by Freud inculcates attitude towards work and this is turn helps to develop habits and occupational values. Behavioural habits and values attached to work become more prevalent with the individuals' more practical adulthood experiences when encountered with the work itself and with its total physical environment.

One would be definitely agreeing with the contention of the author of the present report that the nucleus of the formation and development of all attitudes, reactions, and habits is the social environment but the size of the nucleus broadens when an individual gets associated with the work organization and the area of environment become wide enough, hence, the change in the area of environment can be referred as the perceptible change in the size of the nucleus and accordingly experiences give rise to the development and formation of attitudes, reaction, habits etc.