A study by Borofsky (2000) predicts involuntary dismissal for unauthorized absence, lateness and poor performance in the selection of unskilled and semiskilled British contract factory operatives. The report contains the results of a predictive validity study which examined the relationship between the employment status of a group of temporary contract operatives in a British factory, 90 days after being hired (N=50) and their scores on the Employee Reliability Inventory. Scores were systematically related to employment status. Operatives who were involuntarily dismissed by their employer for unauthorized absence, lateness, or poor performance had poorer scores than those who remained on the job.

The findings of the present study also support the above study as employers of large, medium and small scale do dismiss workers for unauthorized absence, lateness and poor performance.

Arthur and Jelf (1999) studied the effects of gainsharing on grievance rates in the United States. The writers attempt to understand the long-term effect of gainsharing by examining longitudinal changes in two key indicators of workplace union-management relations, namely, grievance rates and employee absenteeism.

Gainsharing is a very effective method of reducing absenteeism and grievance rates because workers generally work hard when they are assured that they will be provided good equitable shares of production profits. But, this is not seen to be practiced by industries and also almost impossible under conditions of widespread unemployment, general recession and existence of loss-making industries in the economy. The author does not clarify the type of economic situation in which gainsharing is possible. Moreover, looking at employer's attitude of only rewarding good work as an incentive but not making workers partners in their profits, the possibilities of gainsharing seem like a dream in the present economic scenario.

Brown and Fathi (1999) studied absenteeism and employee sharing in an empirical analysis based on French panel data. The authors investigate the effects on absenteeism of two types of employee sharing plans-profit-sharing and employee share ownership-in 127 French firms over the years 1981-91. Both types of plan were associated with statistically
significant reductions in absenteeism. Most effective was the presence of a share ownership plan by itself (not in combination with profit-sharing) which was associated with a reduction in employee absence of approximately 14%. The presence of both plans together reduced absence by about 11% and the presence of only a profit-sharing plan reduced absence by about 7%. Among firms in which both types of plan were present, a given sharing plan reduced absence more effectively when it was introduced second than when it was introduced first, in fact, where employee share ownership already existed, the introduction of profit-sharing actually increased absence slightly.

Now this is not an effective method of controlling absenteeism since such an approach can be applied only by employers earning profits. However, in the present scenario of widespread unemployment, recession and declining profit ratios, some employers are not even able to recover variable cost. In such a situation employees themselves will not be inclined to be partners in ownership and profit sharing. Thus such plans cannot be implemented under unfavourable and adverse economic conditions.

The present study focusing on Indian workers in Vadodara district include a substantial proportion of workers coming from villages who are concerned only about satisfying their minimum basic requirements of life and do not desire much of luxuries or higher standards of living so that such employees may be interested in profit and ownership-sharing but will not willing to concentrate totally on their job by ignoring their social and religious commitments. They consider their social and professional responsibilities to run parallel, and to be equally important in order to be a successful social animal. Such feeling is shared even by some of the young and old age workers.

The method of profit sharing and ownership sharing for reducing absenteeism will prove to be very effective mainly among the highly qualified, career-oriented and monetarily-inclined employees.

Drago and Wooden (1992) investigate into the determinants of labor absence in terms of economic factors and workgroup norms across countries. The authors analyze causes of absence from work using data from a survey in 1988 distributed to workers in Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and the United States. The results indicate that workgroup cohesion (the degree to which employees work together closely and harmoniously) was associated with low levels of absence if job satisfaction was high, but with high levels of absence if job satisfaction was low. Some employee characteristics associated with lower rates of absence
were male gender, short tenure, part-time status, and high wages, shift work, sick leave entitlements, and low unemployment rates were associated with higher rates of absence. The authors also find that the determinants of whether a worker was absent at least once in a given year are distinct from the determinants of the frequency and duration of absences among those workers who were absent at least once.

The above study is found to be consistent with the present study which also finds that higher job-satisfaction levels lead to lower absenteeism and vice-versa. Also, lower absenteeism was found among male workers who had a short period of employment, working part-time with high wages. Moreover, the present study also corroborates the evidence that shift work, sick leaves entitlement are factors that also contribute towards higher rates of absenteeism.

However, in the present unemployment scenario in the economy, most of the workers are not much concerned about their job-satisfaction. In spite of being dissatisfied with their work, they do remain regular, fearing termination. They consider it better for them to be employed without any or low job satisfaction, than to remain unemployed. Workers are concerned about job-satisfaction only if they have expanding job opportunities within a progressive industrial sector that rewards workers with healthy HRD practices.

Hall (1987) in United States examined the impact of flextime in turning absence into presence. Flextime allows employees to determine their own work hours to reduce absenteeism and job turnover and increase job satisfaction. Flextime is particularly helpful to married women, mothers, and single-parent and dual-career families. Professors of management Jon Pierce and John Newstrom of the University of Minnesota studied the insurance companies to assess the effects of various degrees of flexibility. They found that employees with fixed hours had the highest absentee rates. Employees who could change their schedules every quarter had less absenteeism than those with greater flexibility. Some researchers believe that choosing a schedule that must be adhered to over an extended period may generate a greater feeling of commitment to the company than unrestricted flexibility.

Hall's study of flextime is very effective in decreasing absenteeism and increasing job-satisfaction. Such an approach can be successfully applicable to all types of workers in all economic situations and equally among male and female workers. A similar observation is also made in the present study with workers having fixed hours showing the highest absence rate. Besides being helpful to married women, mothers, single-parent and dual-career families.
as suggested by Hall, Flextime can also be helpful to workers engaged in extra sources of earning income through side business or part-time job, workers undergoing higher education and workers continuously suffering because of either their own health problems or those of their dependent family members, in encouraging regularity among them. Moreover, the present study notes that workers with shift duty show less absenteeism as they are able to adjust/exchange their shift with other shift workers engaged in similar work whenever need arises. For instance, if a morning shift worker is committed to some family occasion in the morning, he can exchange his shift with an afternoon shift worker so that he is able to keep his social commitment without having to absent himself from work.

A study by Johns and Xie (1998) shows perceptions of absence from work in the People’s Republic of China versus Canada. Cross-cultural theory is marshaled to predict how views of absence from work would be similar and different in Canada and the People’s Republic of China. Respondents (N=1,209) from both cultures had self-serving perceptions of their own absence levels, seeing them as exemplary compared with those of their work group and occupational peers. The Chinese showed a stronger tendency to generate estimates that favored their work group. Both cultural groups underreported their own actual absence. Chinese managers and employees agreed on absence norms, whereas Canadian managers provided lower estimates. Canadians and Chinese ranked the legitimacy of reasons for absence and attendance fairly similarly, but ratings showed that Canadians were less likely to endorse domestic reasons for absence, whereas Chinese were less likely to endorse illness stress and depression.

The results of the present study are consistent with the results of the above study with respect to differences in reasons for absenteeism because of cultural differences. The present study finds that workers belonging to different cultures, having different living patterns, habits and attitude show different reasons for their absence. Workers who have migrated from other states beyond Gujarat like Assam, Nepal, Rajasthan, Bihar, Punjab, Haryana, Uttar Pradesh, Kerala etc. remain absent generally because of health problems, visits to native places, work stress, tension and to some extent, job dissatisfaction. But for majority of the workers, job satisfaction is not the primary reason for their absence from work because the main purpose of their migration is employment so that they are usually indifferent of having job-satisfaction. However, dissatisfied workers do try to shift themselves to other organisations, which they feel, will provide them greater satisfaction.
On the other hand workers coining from around Vadodara district and within Gujarat remain absent generally because of domestic problems, festivals and social and religious occasions.

An important finding of the present study is that management is also inclined to keep a cultural mix of workers so that they do not show absence on the same day and the production process is not affected to a great degree.

O'Quin and LoTempio (1998) designed questionnaires which were completed by 91 respondents employed by two human service agencies: 63 employees of a stable (no layoffs in eight years) organization, and 28 employees of a non-stable organization (which had experienced recent layoffs, and in which many employees were supported by grant funding which varied from year to year). The questionnaire included respondents' perceptions of job security and satisfaction with pay (measured with subscales of the Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire), overall job satisfaction (measured with the Porter Need Satisfaction Questionnaire), and additional measures of intention to turnover, absenteeism, productivity, etc. A 2 (agency) X 2 (high/low security) multivariate analysis of variance indicated that ratings of job security were significantly related to job dissatisfaction in the agency perceived as non-stable but not in the agency perceived as stable. In both agencies, ratings of turnover intentions and pessimism about the future of the agency were higher among employees who reported feelings of insecurity. There were no differences in perceived absenteeism or productivity between employees of the two agencies.

The present study also shows a positive correlation between job-insecurity and job dissatisfaction in a non-stable organization and organization having higher labour turnover. In a stable organization with permanent employment, workers do not feel job-insecurity and their dissatisfaction is on account of other adjustment factors or personal problems rather than because of job-insecurity. However, there is a difference found in the productivity and absenteeism among workers. Workers experiencing higher job-insecurity generally worked hard, showed higher productivity and performed multi-skilled jobs to remain employed for a longer period. On the other hand, workers having job-security feel responsible only for completing routine work and lacked creativity and efficiency for maximizing output.

McDaniel (1997) studied an altogether different aspect of romance in the office. The author cautions managers who need to be aware of the problems that can arise in the event of a breakdown of an office romance. It is possible that a sexual harassment suit may be filed if...
such a relationship breaks down, particularly where one of the parties still wants the relationship to continue. A suing employee may allege that there were many subtle signs that should have alerted a manager, even though an employer needs to have "noticed" an employee being subjected to a hostile work environment in order to be legally liable. Such warning signs include radical changes in an employee's work habits, antisocial behavior, discomfort around particular individuals, questions about whether the employer has a sexual harassment policy, reluctance to work long hours, or an increase in absenteeism. The situation is complicated where a supervisor is involved because negative action taken by the supervisor against an employee with whom he or she had a relationship may be attributed to the employee's termination of the relationship, the employee may claim that favors given during the relationship ended as soon as the supervisor terminated the relationship; and other subordinates may claim that they were not given the same advantages that the involved coworker enjoyed. The breakdown of such relationships requires swift and delicate intervention by a manager.

Although absence because of sexual harassments have not been studied in the present study, it does become a problem often when one of the involved parties does not agree to the relationship or even when both parties agree to it they suffer from misunderstandings and conflicts. Situation of breakdown of an office romance does lead to absenteeism of one or both the parties.

Vandenheuvel and Wooden (1995) studied whether absenteeism differed for men and women. Despite the consistent finding in the absence literature that women tend to be absent more often than men, little attention has been paid to whether the process of absence differs by sex. This issue is examined using data collected from 1401 Australian employees from 61 different workplaces. Hypotheses suggest that the predictive ability of job satisfaction, age, commuting time, family responsibilities, stressful life events and shift work on absence behavior differs for men and women. To test these hypotheses, a multivariate model is developed and estimated. The results indicate that there are structural differences in the absence behavior of men and women, requiring the estimation of models separately for each sex. Schermerhorn et al. (1995), Dunn and Youngblood (1986) and Allen (1984) observed women employees to be more absent than their male counterparts. Drago and Wooden (1992) speculated that women are absent more because they are more sensitive to family needs. In terms of number of children, the authors also suggested that persons with dependent
children tend to be more absent as illness of a dependent limits the ability of the parents to attend work

As observed in the present study, labour force participation of women in industries is increasing. Also, employer's preference for women is more than male workers because women show greater flexibility, are less prone to labour disputes and easily adjust themselves to a changing organisational atmosphere. Male and female workers do not show much difference in absenteeism on account of family responsibilities, dependence, work responsibilities, workload and family and organisational stress. In joint families, responsibility of dependents and children are shared by other family members whereas in nuclear families, responsibility of children and dependents are usually taken care of by maid servants. Moreover, the growing system of dual-career families leads to higher education and systematic career planning so that workers tend to keep their family sizes small in order to manage their work life comfortably. Women do strive to win an equal position in their family as well as their organisation.

At the same time, the chi-square results in the present study show women as being more satisfied than male workers. Women generally working in secure and better facilitated organisations tend to readily quit if they are not satisfied with their job and are not directly responsible for meeting family needs. But women who are directly responsible for meeting family needs and who do not have support income do not leave the job inspite of dissatisfaction and a non-preferable work atmosphere.

French, Zarkin and Hartwell (1995) study the prevalence and employment consequences of smoking, alcohol use, and illicit drug use at five worksites. A survey of more than 1,200 employees at five different worksites was conducted to evaluate the prevalence of smoking, alcohol use, illicit drug use, and prescription drug misuse. Substance use profiles for the study subjects were similar to or slightly lower than estimates from large national surveys. Smoking, alcohol and illicit drug use, and prescription drug misuse had workplace consequences, such as reduced performance and absenteeism. The estimates obtained by this study may help employers to determine the extent of a substance abuse problem in their workplaces and specific areas to target for possible intervention. The results of a study by Ahmad and Saiyadain (1991) showed that all Indian employees, both regular and absentees, drink. On the other hand, only a large percentage of Malaysian absentees drink. The carry forward effect of drinking is undoubtedly a major factor in absenteeism.
However, contrary to the above studies, the present study shows, that workers consuming alcohol are found to be more regular and satisfied than workers addicted to smoking and drugs. Also, most workers are found to smoke and a very less percentage of workers are addicted to alcohol. While smoking is considered relatively affordable, consumption of alcohol is expensive and unaffordable with a low salary.

Bush and Wooden (1995) examined the relationship between smoking and absence from work using Australian evidence. The study reports on research into the relationship between absence from work and smoking, a key feature of the study in the data, which come from the National Health Survey (NHS) undertaken in 1989/90 in Australia. Involving responses from more than 54,000 individuals, the NHS provides what is almost certainly the largest and most comprehensive data set available in the world today containing information on both absence and smoking behaviour. Moreover, the data permit controls to be applied for a large number of influences thought to have some bearing on work attendance. Logit models of absence incidence over a two-week period are estimated, and smoking is consistently found to have a large and significant impact on absence. This impact, however, is not consistent across the sexes. The probability of a male smoker being absent from work is estimated to be 66% greater than that for a male who has never smoked. For females, the corresponding figure is just 23%. The findings also suggest that it is important to distinguish ex-smokers from other non-smokers, with the incidence of absence among ex-smokers being almost as high as that for current smokers. Finally, no evidence was uncovered to suggest that absence varied with the actual quantity of tobacco smoked, as measured by both the number of cigarettes smoked and estimated daily nicotine and tar intakes.

The present study corroborates the evidence provided by Bush and Wooden in that smoking habits do show a large and significant impact on absence. The present study finds that workers smoke because of job dissatisfaction. Those who were not previously addicted began smoking mainly to prepare themselves for a non-preferable and monotonous job. A worker previously smoking once a day increased his frequency to three to four times a day and began remaining absent. Moreover, the present study finds that workers who depend on smoking claim increase in their efficiency. Smoking is observed to help night shift workers keep awake, increase speed in working, and maintain a cool temperament in case of misunderstandings, fights or conflicts with seniors or juniors. Old-age workers smoke to maintain their efficiency. However, no female workers are found to have any smoking habits in the present study.
Webb, Redman and Hennrikus (1994) studied the relationships between high-risk and problem drinking and the occurrence of work injuries and related absences. A review of studies on the relationship between alcohol and work injuries revealed that the evidence is contradictory and that many of the studies contain methodological flaws. The study aimed to determine whether there is any relationship between problem drinking and high alcohol consumption and outcomes such as work injuries and related absences. The sample consisted of 833 employees at an industrial worksite. Problem drinking was measured by the Mortimer-Filkins test, while alcohol consumption was measured by a 7-day retrospective diary. Work injury data were obtained from medical reports completed at the worksite medical center, while absence data were obtained from company records. Chi-square analyses revealed significant relationships between problem drinking and work injuries and injury-related absences, but not between high alcohol consumption and work injuries and related absences. Logistic regression analysis revealed that no variables were significant predictors of work injuries. However, when uninjured subjects were excluded, a second analysis revealed that Mortimer-Filkins test scores, recent stressful life events, age and job satisfaction were significant predictors of two or more injuries. Injured subjects were almost twice as likely to have two or more injuries if they had high numbers of recent stressful life events and low levels of job satisfaction. Logistic regression analysis revealed that age, Mortimer-Filkins test categories and job satisfaction significantly predicted injury-related absences. Problem drinkers were 2.7 times more likely to have injury-related absences than non-problem drinkers, and subjects with low levels of job satisfaction were 2.2 times more likely than others to have injury-related absences. The study then goes on to discuss the implications of the results for workplace alcohol polices and programs.

The present study does not study the relationship between high alcoholism and problem drinking and work injuries and injury-related absences.

Donaldson, Dent and Sussman, (1996) studied the organizational implications of smokeless tobacco use in the lumber mill industry of United States. A study was conducted to examine work performance - related characteristics of smokeless tobacco users, smokers, and former tobacco users. Data were drawn from 146 employees of the Pacific Lumber Company, California, who provided information about their health behavior, quality of work life, and performance at work. Smokeless tobacco users reported less, healthful sleep patterns drank alcohol more often, were intoxicated more often, reported less job satisfaction and organizational commitment and reported that both chewers and smokers do not work as hard.
and take more breaks than do quitters. In addition, specific differences among chewers-only, smokers-only, smokers-and-chewers and quitters were revealed. The study concludes that developing worksite cessation programs for smokeless tobacco users would benefit organizations.

The results obtained for the present study are consistent with those of the above study in indicating the workplace behaviour of chewers and smokers. The present study also shows that workers having pouches, beedi and cigarettes show ill-health, low quality of work life, low work performance, less healthful sleep, less organisational commitment, high job-dissatisfaction and generally more breaks in work.

Melamed, Ben-Avi and Luz (1995) studied objective and subjective work monotony in affecting job satisfaction, psychological distress, and absenteeism in blue-collar workers. The relation of objective work conditions (work underload, repetitive or varied work) and subjective monotony to job satisfaction, psychological distress, and sickness absence was examined in 1,278 male and female workers. Subjective monotony was moderately related to the objective work conditions. Hierarchical regression analyses showed that the effects on all outcomes were partially mediated by subjective monotony and were also directly related to repetitive work and work underload. Job satisfaction and psychological distress were mainly related to subjective monotony, whereas sickness absence was equally related to the work conditions and subjective monotony. The highest impact was observed for short-cycle repetitive work. Testing sex interactions revealed that sickness absence was related to the work conditions in women but not in men. The findings highlight the significance of noting the actual work conditions in predicting employee outcomes.

The present study also observes objective work conditions and subjective monotony to affect worker’s absenteeism and job-satisfaction. Work underload, repetitive or varied work are seen to affect most of the male workers whereas job-satisfaction, psychological distress, and sickness absence is seen to affect most of the female workers in increasing absenteeism and reducing job-satisfaction.

Johns (1994) studied absenteeism estimates by employees and managers who have divergent perspectives and self-serving perceptions. The social cognition literature and a deviance model of absenteeism were used to generate a series of predictions about employees and managers estimates of levels of absenteeism. Employees revealed a clear self-serving pattern in comparing their own absenteeism with occupational norms and their own work


group's absence, and they underestimated their own actual absenteeism. Managers estimated lower occupational norms and lower work-group absence than did their subordinates. Managers also saw their own work groups as having lower absenteeism than the company average, an estimate that also appeared to be self-serving. These results suggest how people make sense of absence in a social context.

During the present study it was observed that workers remaining absent did not consider themselves to be responsible for their own absence but claim dissatisfaction from the management because of their absence. A percentage comparison between workers showed that non-absentee workers claim their co-workers to be responsible for remaining more absent.

Dun (1999) studied satisfaction from life versus job satisfaction. While research on life and job satisfaction continues to interest scholars and practitioners in management, a controversy exists in the literature regarding which of the major theories (compensation, segmentation, or spillover) is most appropriate. Dun’s study found partial support for the spillover model testing a sample of 63 professional card dealers employed in Nevada’s legalized gambling industry. More specifically, positive correlations were obtained among life satisfaction, satisfaction with one’s pay, and satisfaction with the work itself.

The present study also finds positive correlation between workers life satisfaction, their pay and satisfaction with their work itself. But workers with higher salary are also found to be dissatisfied with their work because of other work-related adjustment problems. On the other hand, workers with less salary do feel job satisfaction if they have preferable work to do alongwith a healthy work environment. It shows that in the current scenario workers do not treat wages as top priority in measuring their job-satisfaction levels.

Gwaltney (1994) reveals in his study that at least 50 percent of all employee absenteeism in the United States is not caused by bona fide illness or other acceptable reasons. In the field of law enforcement, this places additional burden on the managers and officers who must cover for the missing employees. Rather than accepting an absenteeism problem, police managers need to focus on solving the problem. Frequently, speaking individually to problem employees gains immediate positive results. However, organizations can extend incentives designed to encourage employees not to use sick leave unnecessarily. Allowing employees to accrue sick leave and offering monetary incentives to those who use little sick leave are approaches that are successful.
In Vadodara district, 67.3% of management personnel consider Employees State Insurance (ESI) Facility to be responsible for increasing absenteeism. Within these, 72.7% of the workers provide false medical reports for taking holidays which incurs direct cost to the organisation in terms of production losses and reduction in profits. The reason for such falsification is that workers who find existing sick leaves to be inadequate for managing their personal work depend on ESI facilities for fulfilling their requirements. Indian management also needs to adopt the system of incentives to encourage workers not to use sick leave when it can be avoided and provide monetary incentive to those who use less sick leaves. Managements must also discourage doctors from supporting workers by issuing them wrong medical reports and bills and thus prevent the misuse of ESI by the workers.

Schnake and Dumler (2000) studied predictors of propensity to turnover in the construction industry in United States. Relationships among perceived equity, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and propensity to turnover were investigated in a moderate-size firm in the construction industry. Analyses for 79 hourly male employees showed the strongest predictor of propensity to turnover was extrinsic satisfaction. This finding is contrary to previous research that showed strongest links between intrinsic satisfaction and propensity to turnover. Satisfaction with a supervisor was also significantly and positively related to propensity to turnover.

In the present study, satisfaction turns out to be negatively related to propensity to turnover. Lower the satisfaction, higher is the turnover and vice-versa. These results do not match those of the above study.

Yee (1984) studied the issue of whether new settings offer better work environments for paraprofessionals in the United States. The study was a part of a special issue on frontline workers in the long-term-care industry. Workforce issues in traditional long-term-care (LTC) settings are compared to issues that arise in the context of newer community-based congregate programs. Such comparison offers two potential advantages: Cost-effective strategies for improving workforce stability, quality of work, and quality of care may be transferred, and career opportunities for paraprofessional workers may be extended across a broad range of new and existing LTC service settings. Four factors that are linked to job satisfaction, motivation to provide quality care, and improved skills and task performance among frontline workers are clearly applicable to new LTC settings. These are communication between the worker and care-plan decision makers; the availability,
frequency, and proximity of supervision, worker autonomy to negotiate tasks with clients, and the functioning of the paraprofessionals as a team member.

Yee's study promises to be very useful in the Indian context in increasing job-satisfaction and reducing absenteeism among Indian workers. In the present circumstances, workers feel the need for a result-oriented work atmosphere, helpful management, availability of resources for efficient and timely completion of work, providing timely delivery for maintaining goodwill of the organisation and work autonomy.

Heaney, Israel and House (1994) studied the effects of chronic job insecurity on job satisfaction and health among automobile workers. Work conditions characterized by uncertainty and ambiguity are potential stressors for employees. One such stressor is job insecurity. This longitudinal study of 207 automobile manufacturing workers indicates that chronic job insecurity is predictive of changes over time in both job satisfaction and physical symptoms. Extended periods of job insecurity decrease job satisfaction and increase physical symptomatology. These results indicate that job insecurity acts as a chronic stressor whose effects become more potent as the time of exposure increases. The study suggests that worksite health professionals should develop strategies for reducing the impact of job insecurity on employee well-being, particularly in industries where employment opportunities are declining.

Job-insecurity is found to have a significant impact on absenteeism and job-satisfaction. Workers having job-insecurity are generally found in small and medium scale industries in Vadodara district mainly employed on temporary, contractual and casual basis. Workers suffering job-insecurity generally have continuous dissatisfaction with the management which hinders their efficiency, reduces interest in working and increases tension, stress and rude behaviour which affects their health. In turn, they feel unhappy with their job and personal life. They suffer from a fear of becoming unemployed and their subsequent inability to manage their livelihood. Thus, the suggestion of the above quoted study that it is the duty of worksite health professionals to develop strategies to reduce the impact of job-insecurity and increase workers well-being seems well-placed in the Indian context. Also, it is the duty of the government and industries to develop and expand plant sizes and set up large-scale production processes so that workers get wider employment opportunities.
Bender and Sloane (1998) revisited a study on job satisfaction, trade unions, and exit-voice in Great Britain. Many studies have found that unionized workers express less job satisfaction than nonunion workers. The “exit-voice” explanation of this phenomenon is that dissatisfied nonunion workers tend to quit, whereas dissatisfied union workers tend to remain in their jobs and express their complaints through various voice mechanisms provided by their union. They conclude that union workers relative dissatisfaction is in most cases entirely “genuine” and stems from poor industrial relations or from union forming where satisfaction would be low anyway.

Results of the present study also claim unionized workers to be more absent and dissatisfied than non-union workers. Generally, non-union workers consider leaving the job if they are dissatisfied with the existing employment provided they have better opportunities to shift elsewhere. Unionized workers remain in employment to settle their scores with the management and to fulfill their requirements. But in the present circumstances, unionized workers consider withdrawing their membership of a union as it is thought to be unfit for fulfilling their demands. Irrespective of whether workers are unionized or non-unionized, they share the same attitude of settling their disputes with the management directly without any third party intervention. Workers are aware of fulfilling their own needs through mutual co-operation with the management. Workers are also aware of the fact that managements do not want union intervention to solve their problems so that workers prefer to remain employed for a longer period which ultimately benefits employers. Also, the overall situation of unemployment and recession does not give much liberty to workers to voice their protests and create disputes with the management since they are responsible for fulfilling their livelihood.

Monthly Labour Review in 1987 provided a study on linking employee fitness programs to lower medical costs and absenteeism. Conducted a survey of 17 worksite exercise programs for the Washington business group on health and indicates that these programs improve employee fitness, help reduce health risks, reduce absenteeism, and lower medical costs. The report was undertaken through a cooperative agreement with the office of disease prevention and health promotion of the U.S. Department of health and human services.

Physical fitness programs prepared for improving health and reducing absenteeism among workers similar to those for the Washington Business Group does not fit totally for the Indian workers. Although workers in the later context desire to have good health, most of them are hardly engaged in fitness programs. Small and medium sectors are also not found.
interested in developing and promoting exercise and fitness clubs to improve the health status of their workers. Such programs can be successful in developed economies where all the workers are conscious of their health and have the money and inclination to maintain the same. Workers in Vadodara district prefer to engage themselves in extra earning from part-time or side business in their free time. Moreover, if industries do start exercise programs, the ratio of workers may be high initially but will decline continuously. Such programs will be preferred by executives rather than by unskilled and semi-skilled workers or even some of the skilled workers. Workers interested only in earning their livelihood will be less interested in attending such exercise programs.

Business Line (2000), December 26, conducted a report on “Apollo Health Package For Corporates.” The package was designed to check high incidence of sickness among corporate executives, reports that Apollo group of hospitals has introduced a “Corporate Wellness Program” to check the high incidence of sickness among corporate executives. The service called “Doctor within your corporate” is customized and supported by a network of medical experts. The service will initially be offered to corporates in Hyderabad and Delhi on an annual membership basis. It will be extended to other major cities over the next three months. The service will benefit corporates with lower medical costs, reduced absenteeism and higher employee productivity. The health scan offers a set of medical and lifestyle-related questions and assesses the health status of individual corporate executive on the basis of answers given.

The health package introduced by Apollo is found to be highly effective in reducing ill-health and increasing regularities and productivity among workers. But as observed in the present study, the medium and small scale industries, claiming themselves to be loss-making units, do not show much concern to adopt motivational measures to increase regularity and general awareness among workers. A package similar to that introduced by Apollo may be successful where employers are inclined to spend resources—financial as well as physical—for creating such a comprehensive package to reduce ill-health and medical cost among workers. But looking to the extent of industrial sickness, most of the industries will not be interested in formulating such packages. Moreover, such packages may be attractive only to the urban workers and not the rural workers.

A study conducted in Financial Express (1999), reviewed “New Fitness Diet For Coke Employees” initiated by Coca Cola India (1999). The employees of Coca Cola India have become health and fitness conscious. The company has responded by providing them...
with an in-house Gym and a diet filled with fiber and proteins and less of fat and calories. It also helps the company keep employee absenteeism low. The female employees use the gym to keep their stomach flat and tone up their body. Their male counterparts use it as a stress reliever. The café provides food comprising greens, vegetables, salad, meatballs and steamed rice. It is taking care not to cross 1,500 calories per meal.

The concept of In-house gym by Coca-Cola India also sounds to be an effective method to keep employees fit. But again such fitness initiatives can be adopted by employers earning profits. Also, the industries are required to impart a general awareness training to every worker highlighting the importance and usefulness of such fitness programs in maintaining good health, energy and regularity among workers.

A study conducted in Economic Times (1996) for corporate healthcare reveals that corporate healthcare has come of age in India with about half a dozen health centers catering specially to the corporate sector being established in Mumbai in the recent past. These centers provide a complete range of treatment at one place in a business class environment, besides memberships to health clubs at discounted rates. It is not only the top level executives who avail of such facilities but also the lower rungs executives and factory workers. Corporate houses make bulk bookings at health centers and obtain cost discounts, which help companies in medical cost management. By providing the employee with the best medical treatment, medical costs are exploited to the maximum and absenteeism due to illness is cut down. Corporate managements have access to all medical records of employees by which a medical risk profile of the company is drawn and preventive measures are taken up. These centers come in handy for companies where medical check-ups are mandatory before recruitment.

While such healthcare centers as those in Mumbai do seem to be an effective measure in reducing ill-health and increasing productivity among workers, it needs to be emphasized that if industries want their workers to become health conscious it is the prime responsibility of employers to first fulfill their basic needs and requirements. If workers are not provided with their essential requirements at the work place and family they are less likely to be interested in such health care centers and take benefit. Such packages are successful in industries where employers are able to satisfy most of the requirements of workers, but in those industries where workers are dissatisfied with their job to a great extent, such health packages will certainly not work.
A study on the Indian toy manufacturing industry in Economic Times (1999) reveals that low productivity and lack of testing facilities are major problems ailing Indian toy units. Inspite of availability of as good a technology as available in any other Asian country, the Indian toy manufacturing industry accounted for only 0.02 percent of the $75 billion world toy market in 1999. The problem of low productivity has been attributed to lack of training and absenteeism. Toy units in the country are 60 percent less productive than the ones in Asia. The absence of testing facilities has resulted in the lack of safety or quality certificates for Indian toys. With no toy designing taught in any Indian design institute, the local units are left with no option but to copy the international designs.

Many industries in Vadodara District whether small, medium and large scale, suffer from the same problem as pointed out in the above study. Low productivity is the result of lack of training and absenteeism. The absence of testing facilities has resulted in the lack of safety or quality certificates for many industries even in Vadodara district. The industries are not able to sell their products thereby suffering losses. Moreover, high prices of the product drives away consumer. As a result, foreign markets are able to capture and monopolize Indian markets by providing quality products at reasonable prices. It is feared that such a situation will lead to ultimate closure of many hitherto protected industries rendering many workers jobless and accentuating the problem of unemployment.

The Financial Express in 1998 reported a study conducted by the South India Textile Research Association which revealed that labour productivity in Kerala is the lowest among the textile mills in Southern India. Unauthorised absenteeism in the textile mills of Kerala is estimated to be 10.6 percent. The table below summarises the absenteeism rate quoted in the study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Textile Mills – Absenteeism (in %)</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>State</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
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<tr>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
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<td>Karnataka</td>
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A. Authorized, B. Unauthorised, C. Sickness, D. Overall

The above study notes that unauthorised absence reduces labour productivity. Breaks in work reduces interest in work and speed of working which is corroborated by the results of
the present study. Inability to adhere to timely delivery schedules for goods erodes the goodwill of the industry and leads to cutbacks in future orders which increases industrial sickness resulting in lay-offs and closure of industries.

The Financial Times (1998) reported on August 21 that the National Aluminium Company (NALCO) expected its net profit to fall by Rs 633 million to 4.87 bn in 1998-99 because of an expected decline in aluminium production by 20%. NALCO runs the largest integrated aluminium complex at Angul in Orissa. The angul smelter's pots with a plant capacity of 230,000 tonnes currently uses only 238 pots out of a total of 436 pots. The production was expected to become normal by December 1998. In the quarter ended June 1998, aluminium production fell by about 14,000 tonnes to 35,811 tonnes and it was forecasted to further decline by about 50,000 tonnes in 1998-99 (aluminium production of 203,823 tonnes in 1997-98). The decline in the production was attributed to the lack of maintenance, employee absenteeism, and hot summer.

From the above report, it can be understood how costly employee absenteeism proves to be for any industry - larger the industry, larger are the costs. Absenteeism, in general, leads to lower output and lower profits limiting/constraining further expansion thereby leaving no scope for further growth and development of the industry, in particular, and the economy, in general. This is the situation with many organisations in the current economic scenario where employers and workers are unable to satisfy each other's needs but are yet working to fulfill their prime demand of livelihood and waiting for a period when both parties can progress beyond.

A report in Business Line (1998) on February 26, announced that Eastern Coalfields Ltd (ECL) proposed to suspend payment of wages to its employees from March 1998 due to a liquidity crunch. ECL is the subsidiary of Coal India Ltd (CIL). Benefits like leave encashment, perks, medical reference and over-time were decided to be stopped or deferred. To cope with the crisis, ECL proposed to close down uneconomic mines/areas, shift surplus manpower to other subsidiaries, reduce costs by 50 percent and implement a voluntary retirement scheme. The company planned to enforce austerity measures, stop coal thefts, and regulate absenteeism by employees. ECL was referred to the Board for Industrial and Financial Reconstruction (BIFR) in October 1997. The company was unable to achieve the production target of 32.5 million tonnes for 1997-98. The poor performance is attributed to the failure of longwall face of Khotadih UG project, non-lifting of committed quality of coal.
by National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC) from Rajmahal and delay in commissioning of long wall equipment at Jhanjhra UG project

Many industries of Vadodara district are also currently experiencing liquidity crunch. Delay in wages, quarterly payments and half wages have forced workers to depend on loans and advances thereby postponing their important demands. Absenteeism has increased still further and labour turnover has become a headache for many industries. Many of the large and medium scale industries, in order to overcome the liquidity crunch, have introduced voluntary retirement, stopped promotions and increments and have become strict in maintaining regularity. This has helped in changing workers attitude towards becoming more productive and result oriented because if they are rendered unemployed it will either be a question of their survival or they will not be employed on the same position and salary in any other job elsewhere.

The Business Standard (1995), April 13, reported that UP Digitals sell off plans had been approved and that Dayal Dials (DD) had successfully bid for the acquisition of UP Digitals ltd (UPDL) of Rs 3.18 crore. UPDL at Nanital was established in 1978 in technical collaboration with HMT with an installed capacity of 250,000 numbers of assembling watches. Watch cases manufacturing units were added to it in 1981. But with HMTs refusal to give remunerative prices for its products, a low capacity utilization of 40 percent for watches and 11 percent for watch cases and labour absenteeism forced the company to register losses of Rs. 3.59 crore till 1993-94 on a paid up equity of Rs. 35 20 lakhs.

Wooden et. al (1987) suggest that age is negatively associated with absence although absence declines with age. Allen (1984) espoused that the relationship between absence and age is quadratic, i.e. although older workers have high rates of unavoidable absence then their younger counterparts mostly because of health, their avoidable absences are less frequent.

The relationship of age with absence and job-satisfaction in the present study is found to be ambiguous. The reasons for remaining absent for young and old age workers are different. While some of the younger workers remain absent for fulfilling their personal commitments, some remain absent because they either have support income or side business so that they did not depend entirely on wages for earning their livelihood. Some of the younger workers remain absent because of less salary, non-preferable work, lack of creativity and challenges at work, non-supportive superiors and lack of requisite welfare facilities. On the other hand, the younger workers depending on industrial wages for livelihood remain
regular despite having unfavourable work atmosphere. Workers are also found to remain regular in order to gain experience even though they may be dissatisfied from job. Some old age workers remain absent on account of job dissatisfaction, less dependence on job having other sources of earnings and ill-health. On the other hand, some old age workers remain regular despite job dissatisfaction as they depend entirely on industrial wages for a living. Also, some workers, although dissatisfied and have extra sources of earning do attend work regularly as they enjoy the company of their co-workers and desire a busy work life.

Kuzmits (1986) finds that long distance from the place of work could be the cause of absenteeism for a number of reasons – travel time, ill health, vehicle breakdown, adverse weather, social/religious activities or dissatisfaction with work. On the other hand, short distance to work may not actually lead to absenteeism but to late coming. However, since the employee is not present at the time the work begins, he/she is considered to be absent. Chwee (1994) also found that distance from home made a major impact on absenteeism.

The present study corroborates the above findings in the Indian context. Longer distance from workplace is observed to be a significant cause of absenteeism along with non-availability of timely transportation, tiredness, fear of accidents and packed vehicles. Absence of female workers is found to be more than male workers in this respect. However late coming is observed among both the long and short distance workers. Short distance workers, having reasonable time for leisure, remain absent because of social activities. Workers coming late are considered absent as they are not allowed to attend work which leads to discontent against management. Workers are of the opinion that if management is unable to provide transport facility to long distance workers, they should at least be granted late coming since private transportation is not always available on time. Workers have to incur commuting costs and bear loss of salary on account of late coming which creates job dissatisfaction, reduces efficiency and creates stress at the workplace. Unavailability of employment opportunities nearby residence forces workers to bear the salary loss and mental stress because of long distance traveling.

Saiyadain (1991) found that neither the distance between workplace and residence nor the transport facilities contribute to absenteeism. However, working hours and denying employees sufficient free time for social/religious/personal activities do contribute to absenteeism.
The first part of Saiyadain's study is not consistent with the observations of the present study in that non-availability of transport facility and distance between workplace and residence does have a major impact on absenteeism as already discussed earlier.

However, working hours and denying employees sufficient free time for social, religious and personal activities contributing to absenteeism is found to be consistent with the observations of the present study in the Indian context. Workers working for longer hours and those coming for long distances do not get sufficient time to enjoy personal and social activities. Also, tiredness from work and traveling renders them unable to attend any such function. In such cases, remaining absent becomes their only recourse in order not to miss important and significant social/religious/personal commitments.

Drago and Wooden (1992) observed that education is inversely related to absence, as lower absence level could be a factor of good work habits, pleasant working conditions or good health as an outcome of a more educated workforce.

The present study also finds that higher the educational levels, higher is the general awareness and lower absence. Workers become health conscious and develop better working habits and strive to keep their work atmosphere pleasant and lively for achieving better results.

Leigh (1986) found years of working experience or tenure to be positively associated with absence, whereas other studies found the relationship to be negative (Youngblood, 1984, Watson, 1981).

The present study shows that years of experience are, in fact, related to absenteeism but again the relationship is ambiguous in the Indian context. Workers having less years of experience remain absent for having non-preferable work to do, inability to adjust in the organisational culture, lack of training and chances of growth and fear of superiors. Workers with longer years of experience remain absent because of job dissatisfaction, low salary, no or less chances of promotions, and increments, favoritism, nepotism, less work responsibility and lack of respect. On the other hand, workers who are dependent entirely on industrial wages, remain regular irrespective of their years of work experience. They do not consider job satisfaction as an important factor in continuing their employment.

In the Malaysian context, among other factors, Chwee (1994) identified age, sex, education, and work experience as having a major role in causing absenteeism among employees in the service division.
In present study, age and sex is not found to have a major effect on absenteeism but work experience and education do play a major role in increasing absenteeism.

Sayadain (1991) observed absenteeism to be independent of addiction to alcohol and gambling or indebtedness. The present study also finds that addiction to alcohol does not effect absence at work.

Chwee (1994) and Drago and Wooden (1992) observed that lack of safety on the job, higher income, and demanding supervisory attitude contribute to high absenteeism.

The present study, consistent with the above study, also finds that workers, in general, do remain absent because of non-availability of safety appliances to prevent accidents. But workers depending only on industrial wages for their living do not remain absent on account of non-availability of safety appliances. Such workers are found mainly in small scale industries.

Workers having higher income do remain absent if they are able to fulfill their basic requirements with less expenditure. This group of workers is generally the casuals doing unskilled work, having no future plans, do not spend much on luxuries, are not concerned about increasing their standard of living or giving better education and bright future to their children. However, majority of the workers do not think in this manner. Their ever increasing demands leads them to feel that they are unable to fulfill all their requirements with their present salary although the salary is quite sufficient for their livelihood. Workers also remain absent because of their supervisor's demand for skill-intensive work.

Sayadain (1991), Crane (1982) and Kharool (1975) viewed illness and supervisor's failure to enforce standards to lead to high absenteeism which is true also in the Indian context in the present study. Illness and inability of superiors to provide better training, challenging and preferable work and inability to manage work efficiently does lead to absenteeism.


The fact that low job satisfaction leads to high absenteeism is also observed in the present study but this is not the primary condition for absenteeism for majority of workers because unemployment and recession have changed workers attitude. Now they want to be
employed under any circumstances to earn sufficient for their livelihood. This does seem to point to the possibility that job satisfaction and absenteeism may indeed be independent of each other.

Allen (1984) found that married persons tend to have lower absence rates. In present study also married persons show lower absence rates than unmarried workers as the former have family responsibilities which unmarried people do not have. The latter are not directly responsible for fulfilling their family needs for which they have support income of family members. At the same time, unmarried workers, being qualified, career-oriented and having better plans for their future, do not remain absent unnecessarily and manage important personal work only after duty hours.

Employees with considerable experience feel relatively safe and secure in their jobs and are less concerned with possible dismissal if they are absent more than an average employee. The organisations usually think twice before they terminate the services of experienced employees (other things remaining the same) because they are difficult to replace and it takes long time and more money to train a new employee. On the other hand, employees with lesser years of experience are relatively younger and younger employees tend be more absent (Wooden et al., 1987).

Organisations in the Indian context, too, give a serious thought to terminating the services of skilled and highly experienced workers. Since skilled and experience workers are responsible for managing the workforce, help in decision-making, provide constructive inputs and take care of many other responsibilities at work, the management is unsure of getting equally capable workers. It is not that the workers remaining absent are less efficient and non-productive. The management usually adopts motivational methods to reduce absence rates of skilled and highly experienced workers. Young workers with less experience who are less efficient are replaced easily if they remain absent since they are available in surplus.

A study by Ahmad and Saiyadain (1991) found that more regular than absentee Malaysian and Indian employees perceived their work to be dangerous and monotonous. The study found that absence of helpful supervisory behaviour contributed to absenteeism, a result consistent with existing literature in the West (Drago and Wooden, 1992). However, more Malaysian absentees found management as more understanding. This seems to reinforce the earlier argument that shortage of manpower may make management compromise with requirements and procedures.
The present study also observes regular workers to fear dangerous work because of lack of safety appliances. Also, monotonous work causes absenteeism among the result-oriented workers and among those who prefer challenges at work. Also, the present study finds that if supervisors are helpful, workers feel interested in their work, prefer to take more responsibilities and attend work regularly.

Most of the workers in Vadodara district do not find management to be understanding. They claim that management is only concerned about completing their production targets and do not care about workers' needs and grievances. The reason for such a careless attitude of the management is that in India, workers are available in surplus and the overall unemployment situation in the economy has resulted in a labour market full of unemployed workers who are ready to work at a very low wage and accept any kind of work.

The same study by Ahmad and Saiyadain (1991) shows Indian employees being lesser educated, faced with limited or no opportunities for alternative employment, tend to be more particular for their jobs. Higher education seems to guarantee greater job-availability and being absent from work does not generate the sense of job insecurity.

The present study supports the above observation. The less educated workers, having limited opportunities, are more particular in their jobs and being less paid, do not want further deduction in wages by remaining absent in spite of being dissatisfied with their job. But in the present situation of recession and unemployment, even the higher educated workers do not have much of employment opportunities. In order to retain their job for a longer period, they work efficiently by becoming more multi-skilled and regular to avoid unemployment. Only the highly qualified workers, not dependent entirely on industrial wages remain absent and look for better opportunities if they are dissatisfied with their current job.