In research field, the time has come to study in depth any subject at micro-level. This observation holds good equally in the choice of the title and theme of the present research work on hand. After exhausting the list of M.B. works on labour economics done in Indian and foreign Universities, it was found that much of work pursued in Indian Universities dealt with research at macro-level. For instance, the studies such as wage-policy and economic development, Industrial Relations and Economic development etc., may be cited. However, such broad and overall coverage of the problem did not impress the author and the guide. After a good deal of discussion and through search for a topic of research belonging to the category of micro-level, it was noticed that a wide research gap existed in the area of labour economics and the selection of the above mentioned subject was done as no study was undertaken in Mysore State on the aspect of absenteeism.

Importance of the chosen subject is quite obvious from the point of a developing country like India committed to rapid and increasing scale of industrialization. The absenteeism of labourers in different industries in India in general and in Mysore State in particular is a great menace to the industrial relations, productivity and progress.
Hence, it is utmost essential to study the causes of absenteeism of different kinds and to suggest the remedies to it. In view of these considerations, the present study appears to be of more use to the state of Mysore in particular as certain selected industries are studied in greater details keeping the main core intact.

Objects of the Study:

The present study is undertaken with a view to throw light on the following objectives:

1) To know the nature and extent of absenteeism in the selected industries of Mysore State.
2) To analyse the causes of absenteeism.
3) To ascertain the seasonality aspect of absenteeism; and
4) To suggest ways and means to curb absenteeism.

Methodology:

Data on absenteeism on All-India level is published by two agencies - Labour Bureau Simla and Annual Survey of Industries. Indian Labour Journal also publishes data on absenteeism for a few states. Data on absenteeism for industries of Mysore State is primarily drawn from Quarterly Bulletin of Statistics, Mysore. QBSM gives data on absenteeism in 13
industries since 1957. The information on absenteeism is available cause-wise, with pay and without pay. The rate of absenteeism is expressed as percentage of manshifts lost due to absence to manshifts scheduled to work. On scrutiny it was found that data given upto 1964 is less useful for the purpose of this study in the sense that data available is only for one quarter or two quarters whereas the study requires data for all 12 months of a year to study, the incidence and seasonal characteristic of absenteeism.

However, data on absenteeism for all the 12 months in a year, are available from 1965 onwards. The study includes selected industries such as Silk, Cotton, engineering, manufacturing, mining, Coffee, tea and rubber, Cement and leather for detail analysis. The non-inclusion of other industries for the study is due to lack of data for the complete year.

The data on hand is rearranged industry-wise to get a clear idea of absenteeism. To assist the analysis absenteeism rate for each industry is broken into the following tables:

1. Authorised and Unauthorized absenteeism
2. Cause-wise distribution of absenteeism
3. Quarterly weighted average percentage of absenteeism regarding authorised and unauthorised absenteeism.
4. Quarterly weighted average percentage cause-wise of absenteeism.

5. Annual weighted average percentage of all selected industries in the Mysore State.

Quarterly and Annual Average percentages are worked out on the fact by the author of this research work.

On the basis of above information, nature and incidence and seasonal aspect of absenteeism in each industry are critically analysed. Suitable remedies are recommended to counteract absenteeism in particular industries.

Limitations of the Study:

The study concerned is not an empirical study based on primary data. Data used is published one. But this doesn't imply that data published is less reliable. The researcher deliberately avoided the study based on primary data as he is an University Lecturer already burdened with teaching work and it may not be possible for him to go out of station for the collection of primary data. More than that the time factor acted as a constraint to undertake study of the said category.

It is not a study on production and productivity of labour. Absenteeism is one of the many aspects of personality
of a worker influencing productivity. Other important factors determining productivity are capital, management, working conditions etc. Hence it is not ventured to study the effect of absenteeism on productivity of labour. Similarly the volume of production depends on variety of factors such as continuous supply of raw materials, supply of electricity and absence of strike and lock-outs in the economy. Therefore, this aspect is also kept away from the study.

However, this doesn't diminish the importance of the study. The study selected is first of its kind in the State. It serves as the basis for further useful research as far as absenteeism in the state is concerned. This study is believed to inspire or induce the galaxy of researchers to probe deeper into the issue.

Substance of the Study:

The concept is properly defined after critically examining the available old and new definitions on absenteeism. J.D. Hackett's definition is accepted as the most satisfactory one. He defines absenteeism as "a temporary cessation of work for not less than one whole working day on the initiative
of the worker when his presence is expected by the employer. With the help of this definition one can isolate absenteeism proper from improper or foign absenteeism. For example, the worker is not expected to work on public holidays. Hence, failure to attend to work on these days need not be treated as absenteeism. Suspension, lay-off, discharge and lock-outs are initiated by employers. Therefore, they are to be excluded from absenteeism. If a strike is in progress, workers on strike should not be treated as absentee workers since the decision to go on strike is taken by trade unions. Further, lateness must not be confused with absenteeism since workers who stay away from work for less than a whole day do not constitute absenteeism.

Measurement of Absenteeism:

Here various methods of quantifying absenteeism are critically discussed for the purpose of the present study. The formula for calculating absenteeism is like this.
Absence rate = \frac{\text{Manshifts lost due to absences}}{\text{Manshifts scheduled to work}} \times 100

There is no dearth of literature on causes of absenteeism. The novelty of this discussion lies in the fact that only important factors causing absenteeism are critically examined. It avoids repetition of scores of factors aiding absenteeism. For this purpose the contributory factors for absenteeism are inplant causes, economic causes, social causes, institutional causes, human relations as a cause and others.

This study deals with the rate of absenteeism in important industries of the country. The finding is that the rate of absenteeism in Indian industries has increased from 8% in 1951 to 31% in the year 1972. This information aids us in knowing the comparative rate of absenteeism in different industries of states in India. The industries on which data on absenteeism available are cotton, woolen, jute, tea, engineering, coal mining, gold mining and plantations etc.

This information enables us to study the trend of absenteeism in the neighbouring States like Maharashtra.