



Factors Affecting Teacher's Absenteeism in Secondary School of Kathmandu Valley

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Abstract

This study examines the factors affecting teacher's absenteeism in secondary school of Kathmandu Valley. Absenteeism is the dependent variable. The selected independent variables are job stress, working condition, performance appraisal, motivation and health condition. The primary sources of data is used to assess the opinions of respondents regarding job stress, working condition, performance appraisal, motivation, health condition and absenteeism. The study is based on the primary data of 127 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation and multiple regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of factors affecting teacher's absenteeism in secondary school of Kathmandu Valley.

The study showed a positive impact of job stress on absenteeism. It indicates that higher the job stress, higher would be the absenteeism. Similarly, the study showed a negative impact of health condition on absenteeism. It indicates that good health condition of teachers leads to decrease in absenteeism. Likewise, the study showed a negative impact of performance appraisal on absenteeism. It indicates that fair performance appraisal mechanism leads to decrease in absenteeism. In addition, the study also showed a negative impact of motivation on absenteeism. It indicates that motivation programs organized for the teacher leads to decrease in absenteeism. Further, the study showed a negative impact of working condition on absenteeism. It indicates that friendly working environment leads to decrease in absenteeism of teachers.

Keywords: absenteeism, job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation, performance appraisal

1. Introduction

Absenteeism has been a major human relations problem for business organizations and industry worldwide because of huge financial burdens on organizations and has detrimental effect on productivity and performance (Barmase and Shukla, 2013). Employee absenteeism is a worldwide phenomenon which due to the financial impact on a national's economy is an important subject in the international agenda. Public schools are impacted as much by absenteeism primarily because of the effect on the delivery of quality education to learners. The problem of teacher absenteeism is a growing concern worldwide. A significant number of teachers are absent from their workstations on any particular working day worldwide. Teacher absenteeism is a chronic problem that cuts across national boundaries and it is much bigger challenge in developing countries (Reddy *et al.*, 2010). Teachers can be absent from their regular duties for many reasons. If they attend courses or accompany groups of students on trips they will not usually be recorded as absent from work. From the point of view of students, however, such absence can have the same effect as absence due to illness. Their regular teacher is not there; somebody else will take the class or some other

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temporary arrangement will be made. Yet teacher absence per se has attracted little interest from researchers. Self-determined absence from work or absence reportedly due to illness has formed the focus for those studying both its incidence and its concomitants. The debate on education has been present since the beginning of civilization. People debate about how education is provided, who should receive it, what should be taught and when education should be provided. In previous decades the debate is focused on inclusion because half of the society isn't able to participate in the education system. Today a main concern is on quality. Everyone has the possibility of attending school but not all receive the same quality education. New questions have arisen around the debate (Clotfelter, 2009). In the past, debate surrounding the quality of education has focused on principal responsibility, framed as the principal-agent theory (Ross, 1977). Teacher absenteeism is a very serious issue in most of the schools all over the world. Due to this challenge, the delivery of quality education is in critical situation since teachers are the key element in making the delivery of quality education.

Chaudhary and Sharma (2012) examined the relationship between the employee motivation and its impact on productivity as well as absenteeism. The study found that a highly motivated employees work hard in carrying out each and every duties and responsibilities resulting lower absenteeism. The study also showed that an organization with highly motivated employees will keep the faithfulness of the employee at the high climax reducing turnover and absenteeism. Similarly, Nazir *et al.* (2015) examined the impact of financial reward over the employee. The study reported that financial rewards caused positive job satisfaction of employees and boosted their commitment and decreased the turnover in the organization. The study also stated that high level of employee dissatisfaction is recorded in employee compensation and the amount of work they perform and the amount of responsibilities they accept. Likewise, Shahzadi (2014) showed a significant and negative relationship exists between employee motivation and employee absenteeism. Further, Jehanzeb *et al.* (2012) examined the significance of reward on job satisfaction and employee turnover. The study indicated that rewards have positive and significant impact on motivation. In addition, Zafar *et al.* (2014) argued that rewards are not directly effecting the employee motivation in some organizations. The study also revealed that reward has an insignificant impact on employee motivation. Further, Aiza and Abdus (2013) examined the impact of motivation on employee absenteeism. The study showed that employee motivation influences employee absenteeism of public middle level and the result demonstrated that motivation of employees. The study also showed that positive employee motivation has a positive impact on employee performance. Likewise, Njanja *et al.* (2013) showed that cash bonus have no effect on employee performance and showed that who received cash bonuses and those who did not all agree that the cash bonus affects their performance the same. The result also revealed that increase employee motivation as employees will get more autonomy more challenging job assignments and responsibilities.

In the context of Nepal, Maharjan (2012) examined the relation between work motivation and job satisfaction of teachers. The study reported that there is a positive association between work motivation and job satisfaction of teachers. The study also showed that work motivation and job satisfaction are highly positive correlated and indicated that the administration must increase the scale of salary according to the market price of other commodities to motivate the teachers in their teaching. Similarly, Gautam (2013) showed

a negative relationship between HR management and employee absenteeism. The study also showed the evidence that high assessment organization of Nepal has less employee absenteeism. Likewise, Biswakarma (2015) examined the relationship between workplace and employee attitude. The study revealed that workplace and employee attitude showed positive and significant relationship. The study also revealed that the perception of justice in an organization has a positive relationship with employees' turnover intention. Further, Shrestha and Mishra (2015) analyzed the impact of stress over the performance of employee. The study showed a positive and significant practical implications for improving organizational performance by providing appropriate stress management interventions to reduce employees' job stress and psychological strain, and enhance their job satisfaction and reduce the intent to turnover. The result also revealed that job satisfaction is inversely related to psychological strain but there is no statistically significant relationship between job satisfaction and job stress.

The above discussion shows that empirical evidences vary greatly across the studies on the factors affecting teacher's absenteeism in secondary school. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidences in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, in order to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The major objective of the study is to examine the factors affecting teacher's absenteeism in secondary school of Kathmandu Valley. Specifically, it examines the relationship of job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation, and performance appraisal with absenteeism of teachers in secondary school.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: section two describes the sample, data, and methodology. Section three presents the empirical results and final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

The study is based on the primary data. The data were gathered from 127 respondents through questionnaire. The study employed convenience sampling method. The respondents' views were collected on job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation, performance appraisal and absenteeism. This study is based on descriptive as well as causal comparative research designs.

The model

The model used in this study assumes that teacher's absenteeism depend upon various factors. The dependent variable selected for the study is absenteeism. Similarly, the selected independent variables are job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation, and performance appraisal. Therefore, the model takes the following form:

Absenteeism = f (job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation and performance appraisal).

More specifically,

$$A = \beta_0 + \beta_1 JS + \beta_2 HC + \beta_3 PA + \beta_4 M + \beta_5 WC + e$$

Where,

A = Absenteeism

JS = Job stress

HC = Health condition

PA = Performance appraisal

M = Motivation

WC = Working condition

Job stress was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am pressured to work long hours”, “I have unachievable deadline” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.769$).

Health condition was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel tired while doing the job”, “When I am at school I cannot be mentally free and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.746$).

Performance appraisal was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “School delivers the effective performance appraisal with authentic approach”, “There is no biasness among the teacher while evaluating their performance” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.785$).

Motivation was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am given supportive feedback for the work I do”, “Companies acknowledge and recognize my work” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.745$).

Working condition was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I feel like I am part of team (shared mission, values, efforts and goals) “My efforts are recognized and acknowledged in tangible ways” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.749$).

Absenteeism was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Health condition affects absenteeism “Working condition affect absenteeism” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach’s alpha ($\alpha = 0.790$).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with the hypothesis formulation.

Job stress

Stress exists in every organization either big or small the work places and organizations have become so much complex due to which it exists, Work place stress has significant effects over the employees' job performance and the organizations are trying to cope with this scenario. Tracey (2002) stated that employee turnover rates are influenced by employee dissatisfaction within the job environment and reduce their contribution to the job. Similarly, Ryan (2011) examined the relationship between stress and absenteeism. The study found that there is a positive relationship between job stresses and absenteeism. The study also found that due to increased stress level in the hotel industry many hotel employees want to leave their jobs resulting higher absenteeism and turnover rate. Likewise, Babakus *et al.* (2009) revealed that employees in service jobs in the hospitality industry are increasingly caught in the middle between discerning customers' service excellence demands and management's productivity and performance requirements. Overall job satisfaction will lead to the binder which is the result of higher level of job satisfaction and may lead to good work life and reduction in stress which will further lead to lesser employee absenteeism (Cote, 2003). Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between job stress and absenteeism.

Health condition

Health condition can be described as a process of enabling people to take action, to exert control over the determinants of health. Nutbeam (1998) stated that health may be seen as an ability to act. Thus, health elevation may correspond to holistic health theories where health is seen as a person's ability to act, given the standard circumstances in his environment to fulfill his goals. Similarly, Antonovsky (1996) examined the relationship between health condition and absenteeism. The study found that health conditions need to be of greater focus so that an organization can decrease employee absenteeism and increase employee performance. A common problem within workplace health situation is that interventions are often directed to improving individual lifestyle and individual behaviors and not of the organization as a whole (Semmer, 2006). Increase of overall employees' health conditions will drastically decrease employee absenteeism and employee turnover (Nielsen *et al.*, 2010). Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between health condition and absenteeism.

Performance appraisal

Performance appraisal of public bank is measured using a 5-item scale. Respondents were asked to indicate the responses on the 5-point scale where 1 for strongly disagree and 5 for strongly agree performance appraisal is a formalized process of worker monitoring and is intended to be a management tool to improve the performance and productivity of workers for employees' satisfaction (Brown and Heywood, 2005). Similarly, Aleassa and Megdadi (2014) examined the impact of HR practices on the behavior and attitudes of employee. The study found that the impact of HR practices on the behavior and attitudes of

employees depends on the employees' perceptions and absenteeism. Likewise, Dusterhoff *et al.* (2014) stated that satisfaction toward the appraisal is the most measured response for the organization. Furthermore, Pettijohn *et al.* (2001) determined that performance appraisal system that is perceived as equitable can improve employees' organizational commitment. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between performance appraisal and absenteeism.

Motivation

Motivation can be defined as the influence that account for the initiation, direction, intensity and persistence of behavior (Bernstein *et al.*, 2008). Kelly (1974) found that motivation helps to maintain and alter the direction, quality and intensity of behavior of employees. Similarly, Hoy and Miskel (1987) found that employee motivation is the complex forces, drivers, needs, tension states, or other mechanism that starts and maintains voluntary activity directed towards the achievement of personal goals. Employee motivation affects productivity of employees. A poorly motivated labor force will be costly to the organization in terms of lower productivity and performance, excessive staff turnover, increased expenses, frequent absenteeism and a negative effect on the morale of colleagues (Jobber and Lee, 1994). Motivators include intrinsic factors such as possibility for promotion, demanding work, recognition, achievement and responsibility (Stanley *et al.*, 2012). Motivator factors operate only to increase job satisfaction (Hansen and Dusenbury, 2002). Motivation is a feeling of enthusiasm or energies that directs and sustains behavior (Perry and Porter, 1982). Likewise, Raza *et al.* (2015) found a positive significant relationship of intrinsic motivation (such as job security, job responsibility and job enrichment) as they help in engaging employees while focusing on continuous learning, organizational citizenship behavior and process improvements which help in expanding abilities, learning new skills, enhancing knowledge and ultimately feeling motivated and satisfied with the work done with employee work performance and job satisfaction. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between motivation and absenteeism.

Working conditions

Workplace environment includes such factors as managerial support, peer encouragement, adequate resources, opportunities to apply learned skills, technical support, and consequences for using training on-the-job (Burke and Hutchins, 2008). The study revealed that removing barriers to application in the work environment is so important that training opportunities should be turned down by employees if proper follow-up support is not available (Rossett, 1997). The attitude and behavior of an employee's supervisor is a particularly important element in skill application and transfer of learning. Managers can show support for training in a variety of ways ranging from simply allowing employees to attend the training to participating in the training itself as an instructor which will lead to decrease in employee absenteeism (Birdi *et al.*, 1997). Similarly, Gelade and Ivery (2003) analyzed the relationship between work climate, human resource practices and employee absenteeism. The study found a negative and significant correlations between work climate, human resource practices, and employee absenteeism. Likewise, Aisha and Hardjomidjojo (2013) revealed that incentives, motivation and working conditions have significant impact on employee performance. Further, Jayaweera (2015) stated that there is a positive and

significant relationship between work environmental factors and job performance. Based on it, this study develops the following hypothesis:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between working condition and absenteeism.

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

On analysis of data, correlation analysis has been undertaken first and for this purpose, Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients along with mean and standard deviation has been computed and the results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall's Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 127 observations. The dependent variable is A (Absenteeism). The independent variables are JS (Job stress), HC (Health condition), PA (Performance appraisal) M (Motivation) and WC (Working condition).

Variables	Mean	S.D.	A	JS	HC	PA	M	WC
A	4.256	0.697	1					
JS	4.434	0.406	0.368**	1				
HC	4.174	0.408	-0.109	0.114	1			
PA	4.116	0.630	-0.370**	0.275**	0.253**	1		
M	4.155	0.454	-0.310**	0.281**	0.199**	0.266**	1	
WC	3.604	0.697	-0.098	0.105**	0.200**	0.159*	0.059	1

Note: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 revealed that job stress is positively correlated to absenteeism. It indicates that higher the job stress, higher would be the absenteeism. Similarly, health condition is negatively correlated to absenteeism. It indicates that good health condition of teachers leads to decrease in absenteeism. Further, performance appraisal is negatively correlated to absenteeism. It indicates that fair performance appraisal mechanism leads to decrease in absenteeism. In addition, motivation is also positively correlated to absenteeism. It indicates that motivation programs organized for the teacher leads to decrease in absenteeism of teachers. Likewise, working condition is negatively correlated to absenteeism. It indicates that friendly working environment leads to decrease in absenteeism of teachers.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall's Tau correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been carried out and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of job stress, working condition, health condition, motivation, and performance appraisal on teacher's absenteeism.

Table 2

Estimated regression results of job stress, health condition, performance appraisal, motivation

and working condition on absenteeism

The results are based on 127 observations using linear regression model. The model is $A = \beta_0 + \beta_1JS + \beta_2HC + \beta_3PA + \beta_4M + \beta_5WC + e$ where the dependent variable is A (Absenteeism). The independent variables are JS (Job stress), HC (Health condition), PA (Performance appraisal) M (Motivation) and WC (Working condition).

Model	Intercept	Regression coefficients of					Adj. R ²	SEE	F-value
		JS	HC	PA	M	WC			
1	2.682 (6.139)**	0.429 (4.566)**					0.133	0.325	20.851
2	1.764 (5.312)**		-0.627 (8.783)**				0.371	0.276	77.142
3	1.764 (5.312)**			-0.684 (9.233)**			0.395	0.271	85.253
4	1.479 (4.665)**				-0.687 (10.094)**		0.439	0.261	101.886
5	1.351 (4.228)**					-0.710 (10.421)**	0.455	0.257	108.605
6	1.654 (4.121)**	0.047 (0.488)	-0.627 (8.783)**				0.367	0.277	38.461
7	0.951 (2.391)*	0.002 (0.018)	-0.363 (3.854)**	-0.440 (4.828)**			0.462	0.255	37.915
8	0.831 (2.153)*	0.006 (0.069)	-0.244 (2.481)*	-0.272 (2.645)**	-0.336 (3.185)**		0.498	0.246	33.034
9	0.566 (1.487)	0.006 (0.069)	-0.177 (1.821)	-0.117 (1.066)	-0.249 (2.371)*	-0.333 (3.263)**	0.534	0.238	30.596

Notes:

- i. Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- ii. The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- iii. Absenteeism is dependent variable.

The regression results show that the beta coefficients for job stress are positive with absenteeism. It indicates that job stress has a positive impact on absenteeism. This finding is consistent with the findings of Ryan (2011). Similarly, the beta coefficients for health condition are negative with absenteeism. It indicates that health condition has a negative impact on absenteeism. This finding is not consistent with the findings of Antonovsky (1996). Likewise, the beta coefficients for performance appraisal are negative with absenteeism. It indicates that performance appraisal has a negative impact on absenteeism. This finding is not consistent with the findings of Pettijohn *et al.* (2001). In addition, the beta coefficients for motivation are negative with absenteeism. It indicates that motivation has a negative impact on absenteeism. This finding is not consistent with the findings of Kelly (1974). Further, the beta coefficients for working condition are negative with absenteeism. It indicates that working condition has a negative impact on absenteeism. This finding is not consistent with the findings of Gelade and Ivery (2003).

4. Summary and conclusion

Absenteeism has long been a major human relations problem for manager’s supervisors. It places huge financial burdens on organizations, schools and has a determine effect on productivity and performance. Identification of the factors influencing teacher’s absenteeism is crucial for the corporate managers and it is even crucial in education sector especially in case of a developing country like Nepal. So relationship between teacher’s absenteeism and various factors influencing teacher’s absenteeism are stated as the research questions followed by the development of hypothesis. Many individual factors appear linked

to absenteeism: past absence history, education, personality and the abuse of drugs and alcohol. The largest single component of sickness absenteeism is associated with genuine incapacity attributable to illness and injury.

This study attempts to examine the factors affecting teacher's absenteeism in secondary school of Kathmandu Valley. The study is based on primary data of 127 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that the change in school environment and policies pertaining to job stress, health condition, performance appraisal, motivation, working condition affects the absenteeism of teacher's in secondary school of Kathmandu valley. The study also concludes that working condition followed by motivation and performance appraisal are the most influencing factors that affect the absenteeism of teacher's in secondary school of Kathmandu valley.

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